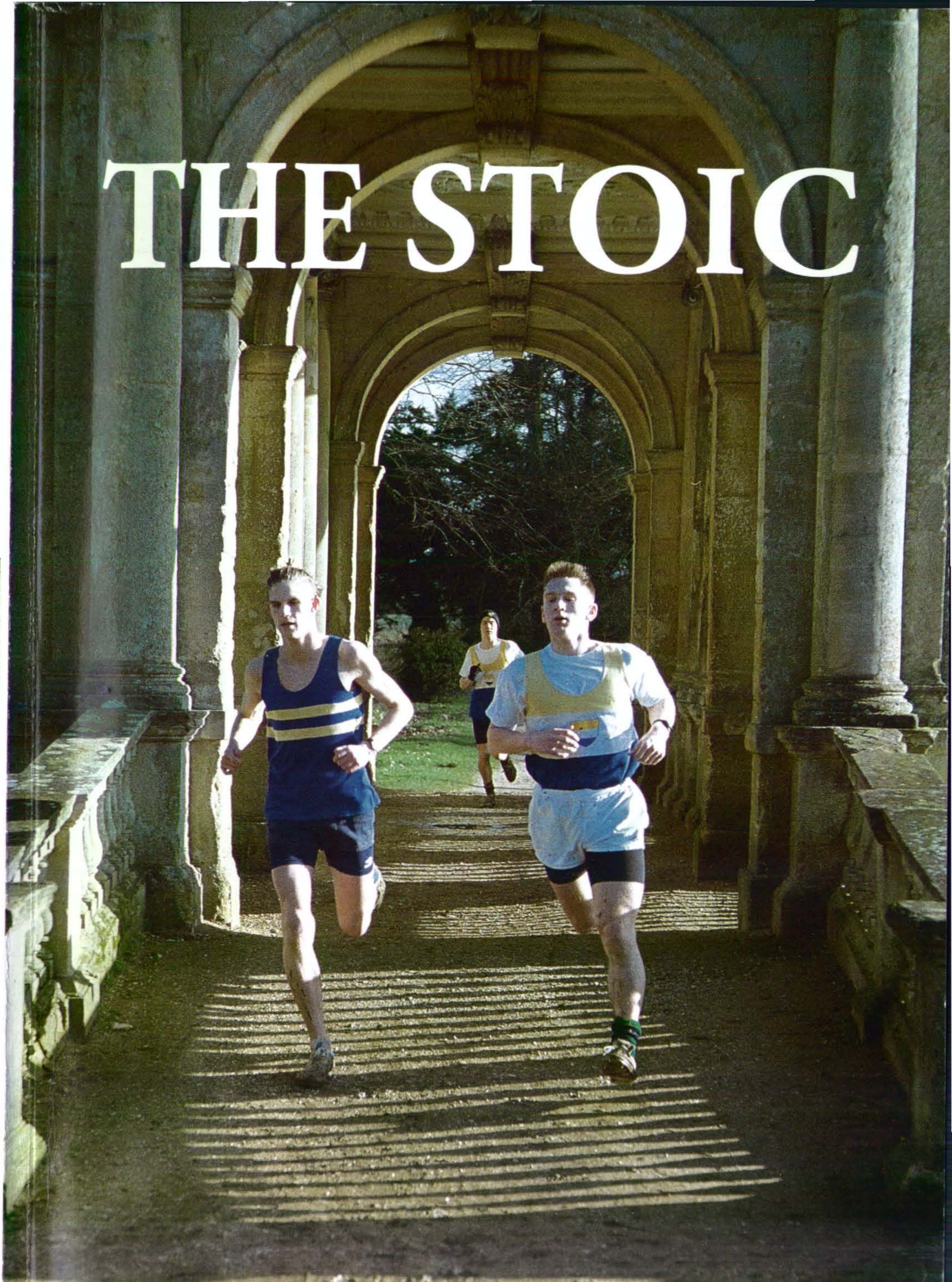
THE STOIC



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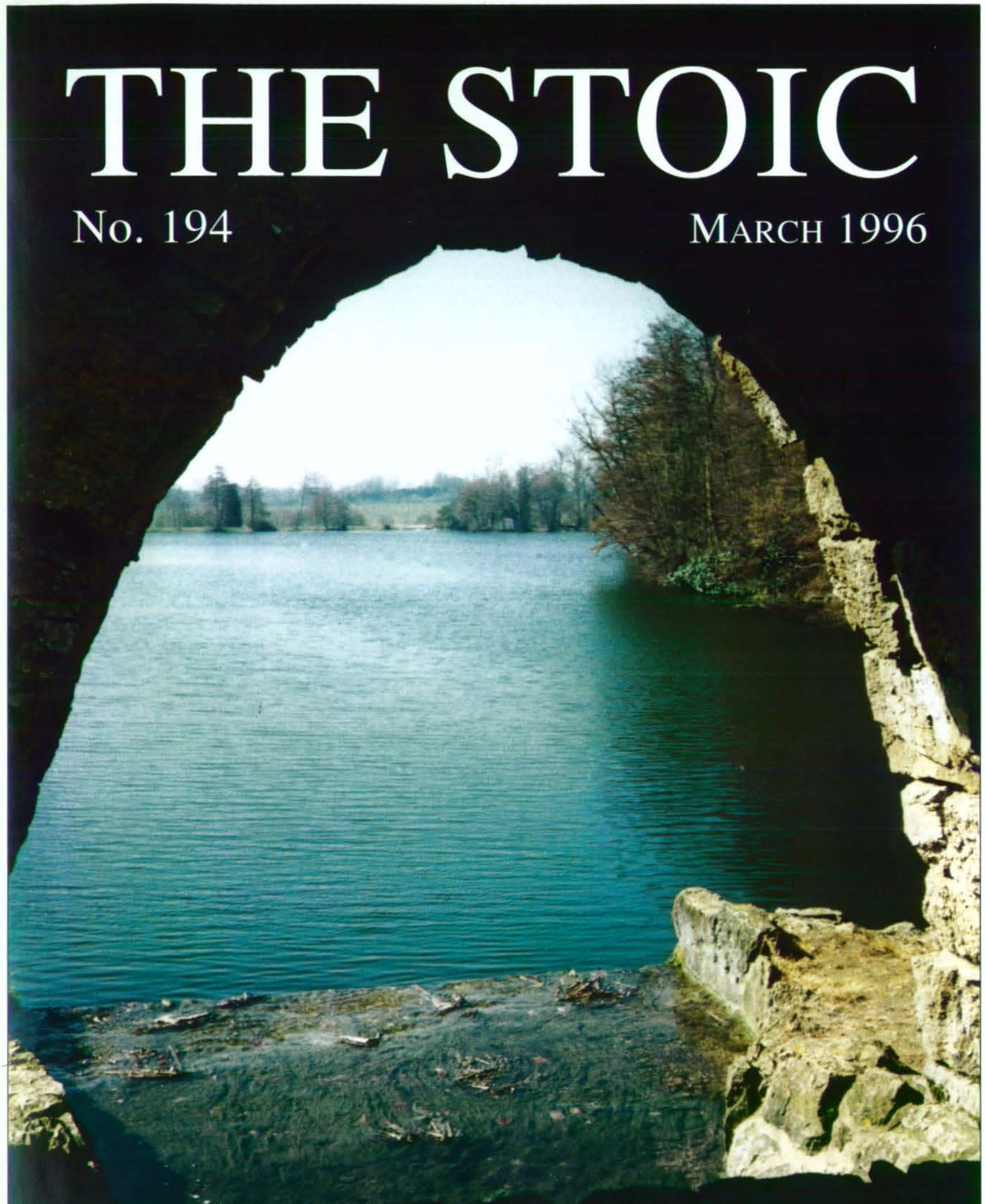

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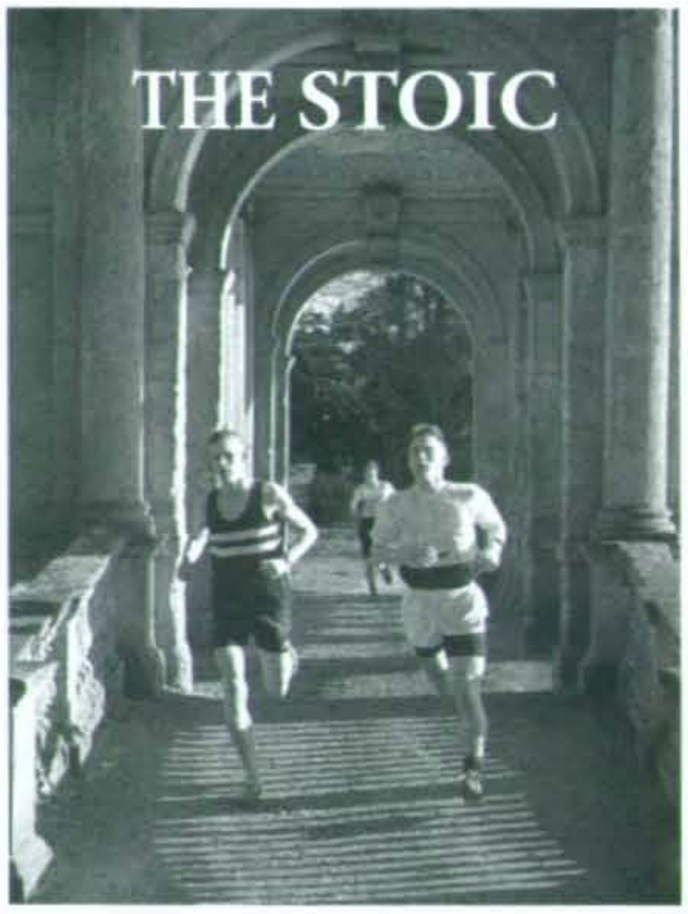
EDITORIAL AND CONTENTS

The past can be fascinating. So the editors were intrigued recently when sent an article written in 1900 about public school magazines. It came from the now defunct *Harmsworth Magazine*.

Schools at the turn of the century were, it seems, producing very stark publications. For fourpence one might receive about twelve pages of solemn school news: The *Wykehamist* was said "to keep pretty rigidly to school business", whilst the *Eton Chronicle* "does not include articles of a general character, but consists mainly of a record of school doings."

In 1900 originality in school magazines was viewed with a certain suspicion. *The Carthusian* was not commended for its daring pink cover, nor the Rugby *Meteor* for its pages "of dazzling yellow hue". The Harmsworth reporter was clearly no *fin-de-siècle* aesthete! Nor was he entirely happy with *The School Budget*, a magazine produced by one enthusiastic pupil at Horsmonden School. *The Budget*, with its proud motto of "Saucy and Piquant", was "distinguished by wit of a somewhat exuberant type and was evidently not subject to the censorship of the masters."

What, one wonders, would the *Harmsworth Magazine* have made of



the latest *Stoic*? Or what, indeed, will the editors of *The Good Schools Guide* make of it, having taken us gently to task last year, not for being saucy or piquant, but for being "ritzy" in our expeditions and for wallowing in Old Stoic nostalgia. A quick look through the latest issue confirms one's worst fears. If the Galapagos isn't a ritzy destination, what is? Could IJM's divers be persuaded to head for Clacton pier instead of Tenerife? Alas, too late! And as for nostalgia, that too is strong again, with many a wander through the highways and byways of the 1930s. Indeed, the magazine leads off with a feature on its two VCs. So we will purchase our next copy of *The Guide* with some trepidation!

The cover might also encourage the critics. Why runners? Why the Palladian Bridge? Why Crispin, George and Jimmy? Is it not, at the very least, an unfair Walpole monopoly? Fortunately, maybe, there is no longer a *Harmsworth Magazine* to turn a censorious eye in our direction.

It might just possibly, on the other hand, have given the cover its endorsement. It might have pointed out how appropriate an image might be of maximum effort being expended for the good of a team. Or it might have taken a metaphorical approach and interpreted the race as that of one's schooldays or that of life itself. There are good precedents, after all. Did St.Paul in *Philippians* not write of pressing on towards the goal, forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead?

As the *Harmsworth Magazine* clearly showed, school magazines seldom please everyone! Ritzy, nostalgic, saucy or piquant, whatever *The Stoic* this year may be, we firmly hope that it may help recall *something* of the race we have all been running throughout the past twelve months.

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STOICA

Photo: Andrew Pearce

The Unveiling Of The Leonard Cheshire Bust

On June 15th last year, a particularly memorable day for the School, a bust of one of its most distinguished Old Boys, made by another distinguished Old Boy, was unveiled by HRH The Duke of Kent outside Chapel.
Further details are on pages six and seven.
(Photographs by Andrew Pearce, Digby Oldridge, George Eves and Stuart Isaac.)

Arrival of the Royal Party on the North Front

The bust unveiled

Inspection of the Guard of Honour

The Duke and the Headmaster with the prefects

Speeches

After the Chapel Service

HERO AND HUMANITARIAN

Lizzy Davies writes of the unveiling ceremony outside Chapel of David Wynne's bust of Leonard Cheshire.

On a warm summer's afternoon last June the wider Stowe community gathered to pay a tribute to one of its most influential sons, Leonard Cheshire. Lord Cheshire became famous twice before the age of fifty for dramatically different achievements.

In 1944 he was awarded the Victoria Cross after completing more than one hundred pathfinding missions over enemy territory. He was the youngest Group Captain in the RAF and in 1945 was the official British observer of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki. This "preview of doomsday" had a profound effect on the rest of his life. After the war Cheshire became aware of the need for residential care for those suffering from incurable illnesses. So the Cheshire Homes came into being. He also spent years devoted to the welfare of disabled people through the Leonard Cheshire Foundation. In 1981 he was invested with the Order of Merit in recognition of this work. Thus Lord Cheshire received the two highest awards, for valour and for merit, which a British sovereign can bestow. He died on 31st July 1992, after suffering from motor neurone disease. The bust is a tribute to his life.

On the day of the unveiling the School welcomed a number of distinguished guests, including many Old Stoics. The ceremony was performed by HRH the Duke of Kent. Proceedings began with the majority of guests and School assembled in Chapel, to await the Duke, whose arrival was delayed for security reasons. With a captive audience there, JCG took advantage of the opportunity for having an impromptu Chapel practice. Many letters received afterwards by the Headmaster commented on the volume and the enthusiasm of the Stowe singing!

Meanwhile the Duke had arrived at the North Front to be greeted by the Headmaster and a quarterguard made up of members of Stowe's CCF and to be introduced to the Chairman of Governors and various members of the School. The royal party then proceeded to Chapel to participate in a Service of Dedication. The congregation heard readings from wartime newspapers and from Lord Cheshire's book, *The Hidden World*. Lord Cheshire's daughter, Mrs John Grimes, read the prayer *Usque Ad Mortem*, composed in 1958 by her mother and father. Prayers of dedication and blessing were led by the Right Reverend Maurice Wood, former Bishop of Norwich.

After the Service the choir sang on the Chapel steps whilst the Duke met David Wynne (OS), the eminent sculptor who created the bronze bust, and James Vane-Tempest, the winner of the competition to compose an appropriate inscription. It reads:

LEONARD CHESHIRE
V.C. O.M.
Hero and Humanitarian
1917-1992

His courage and selfless dedication to others are an inspiration and challenge to all Stoics

Members of the School gathered on the grass beside the Chapel to hear the Headmaster's speech and to witness the Duke unveiling the bust.

For a few days afterwards, when one came upon the new bust with its bold, bright plinth, it was something of a surprise. But very soon it became part of our lives, part of familiar Stowe. Appropriately close to the House where he was a boy, the bust looks challengingly across to the Chapel (where, as an Old Stoic, Leonard Cheshire came back on several occasions to preach). It will be a constant reminder of the achievements of a man whom Cardinal Hume once described as "one of the greatest Englishmen of our time."

Photo: Andrew Pearce

David Wynne on the creation of the Bust

The sculptor has kindly given The Stoic *an account of something of the creative process:*

There are various stages in the making of a bronze portrait head of someone who is no longer living. In Leonard Cheshire's case, first there was research into his character, his achievements and, of course, what he looked like. (For this I used videos, photographs and interviews with people who knew him). Secondly, I made a small head of him and showed it to certain people who had known him. I then decided on the period of his life, early middle age. I then modelled the full-size head in clay (which took about a month). I again asked some of his contemporaries to criticise the likeness. Finally it went to the foundry, to be cast into bronze (which took three months).

Sculptor David Wynne and the Chairman of Governors, Sir Peter Leslie, with HRH The Duke of Kent

The school flag is removed and...

Photos: Andrew Pearce

...the bust is revealed for the first time

Photo Charles Gargent

STOWE'S FIRST VC

Jack Anderson, whose outstanding courage was honoured in Chapel last November

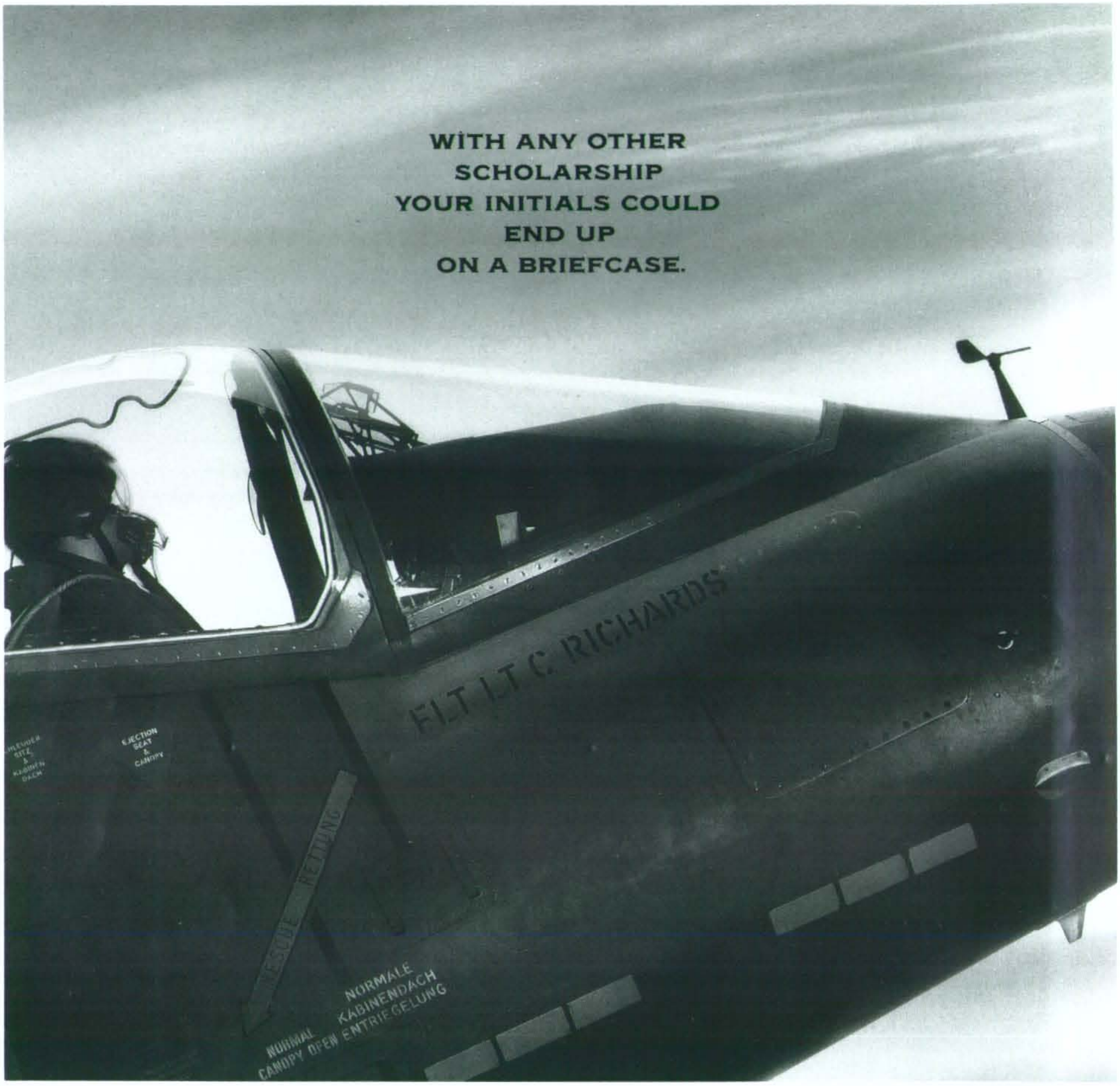
Leonard Cheshire was Stowe's second VC. He was beaten to the honour by his close friend and fellow member of Chatham, Jack Anderson. So it was fitting that last Remembrance Sunday there should have been a service in Chapel where a memorial to Jack Anderson was dedicated. Amongst those present were Mrs Maurice Few, his widow, Mrs Janet Anderson, his daughter, Mrs Sheila Slater, his sister, and several other relatives including two granddaughters and his Old Stoic nephew, Alasdair MacCormick. Old Stoic representation included Richard McDougall, the moving spirit behind the memorial, and Sir Peter Leslie, Chairman of the Governors, who happened to have been in the same regiment as Jack Anderson, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

It is interesting to speculate on what makes a hero. It would seem that, in Jack Anderson's case, the seeds of heroism were already there in the character of the schoolboy: modesty, ready good humour and typical Scottish resilience in the face of any misfortune. His schooldays were happy ones, spent first at Copthorne in Sussex and then, from 1931 to 1936, at Stowe. When Anderson was taking Common Entrance, the Headmaster of Copthorne recommended him to JF Roxburgh in glowing terms: "He is a sterling lad in every respect and I am sure he will do you credit. He is physically very robust and of a very frank and open character. He is essentially a trier of strong determination, very steady with his work and good at games – particularly football." He ended the reference with prophetic words: "He can be relied upon to give of his best." In the entrance exam Anderson's Latin proved impressive, his French and Maths moderate and his English extremely weak. He was accepted more for potential than achievement.

His five years at Stowe proved highly successful and led to a place at Trinity College, Cambridge, (where he read Modern Languages and was captain of the Trinity lst Boat). But personal circumstances were not always easy for Jack Anderson. His elder brother, Robin, had died tragically, when still at school. Whilst only nine, too, Anderson had lost his father. His very gallant mother sometimes struggled to support him. Financial considerations, indeed, led to his leaving Stowe a term early and missing the opportunity of becoming Head of House.

War was declared in the year that Jack Anderson took his degree and he swiftly enlisted. Within months he was a serving officer with the British army in France. As the Germans closed in, he found himself surrounded at St. Valery with little or no ammunition; with two hundred others he escaped through the enemy lines at night and, by hiding during the day, he managed to reach the coast. On that memorable Sunday on which the evacuation from Dunkirk occurred, Jack Anderson crossed the channel from Cherbourg. The return to England was much appreciated. He had not taken off his boots for the past two weeks!

Three years later he was in North Africa, playing his part in the British offensive against the Germans. In March 1943 at the battle of Hunts Gap, Anderson, now a Captain, led his Company with such bravery that he was awarded the DSO. "I never saw a man of such courage," wrote a Sergeant Major. "He seemed to bear a charmed life and went about as cool as a cucumber under machine-gun fire and mortar fire. I saw one mortar bomb burst almost at his feet and it killed or wounded the man next to him, but he came walking out of the slope just scratching his leg, and walked on. He was an inspiration to everyone." A month later, in April 1943, he won the VC during an attack on the strong German positions at Longstop Hill. The scene of his heroism could scarcely have been more remote: six miles north-east of Medjez el Bab, to the west of Tunis. Amidst devastating losses he took over the command of what was left of his leaderless battalion and finally, after five hours of fighting, succeeded in capturing the hill (and about two hundred prisoners) with only forty survivors. During the course of the attack he had led assaults on three machine-gun posts and, as the citation noted, "in every case was the first man to enter into the enemy pits". As soon as the award was made public, Roxburgh wrote delightedly to his former pupil: "I expect you can guess that when the 9 o'clock news announced your VC last night, there was rejoicing throughout Stowe, and Moss came up from the Shop to make quite sure that I hadn't missed it, and people began telephoning from all over the place." JF had been deeply moved when reading the citation. "I dare say you can imagine how one feels, having lived in absolute safety during the War..."



If you really want to make your mark, you'd be better off not joining the masses in the city.

Especially now the RAF are offering you the chance to see if you have what it takes to become an officer, through a sixth form scholarship.

To apply, you need to be between fifteen and seventeen and about to take your GCSEs or SCEs, with the intention of going on to sixth form.

Of course, we'll want to know if you have all the right credentials. (It takes more than just good examination grades to make an officer.)

You'll spend three days at Cranwell where, apart from giving you a medical to see if you are fit in body, we'll put you through a series of tests to see if you are fit in mind.

We'll bend, stretch and strain you and still expect you to make split second decisions. One day other people's lives may depend on it.

If you pass, your parents will receive an annual tax free grant of £1,050 to help with the cost of your studies. And you could have the chance to take your first flying lessons whilst at school. As well as a two week leadership training course in Scotland to get you familiar with what's to come.

So if you'd like to find out how to make a name for yourself, just start by placing it below.

For more information ring
0345 300 100 twenty four hours a day
(All calls will be charged at the local rate.)

Or simply complete and post this coupon to Group Captain S J Barclay OBE, Freepost 4335, Bristol BS1 3YX.

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The School celebrated with a whole day's holiday. "The speech in which I announced your honour and the holiday," JF wrote to Anderson, "was the most popular I have ever made in Assembly!"

Jack Anderson in his reply to Roxburgh referred to the VC with disarming modesty. "In actual fact I never exceeded my plain duty in winning it, but that doesn't seem to have deterred the publicity men at home. All the same I shall always be very proud of having been the first Stoic VC and I look forward to the day when my name will be at the head of a very long list." He ended with a nostalgic reference to his old school. "It is very nice to hear that Stowe is going as strong as ever and is just as pleasant a place as it always was. Memories of days spent there must be keeping a lot of fellows going out here, and one of the first things on my list when I get back home will be a visit to you all."

The African campaign had ended and the Highlanders were shipped to Europe. There was a temporary lull in fighting and Jack Anderson, now a Major, was champing at the bit. "I'm afraid I was never cut out to be a professional soldier," he wrote to JF, "and I find this present condition of almost peacetime soldiering rather trying. However, my battalion is really very fortunate, as we have a much more interesting and exciting role to play than most other units. Naturally one can't talk about these things now, but I'm very much looking forward to getting down to Buckingham and seeing you again when this wretched war is over." He was not to do so. Only weeks later, on the 5th October 1943, whilst fighting in Italy, Jack Anderson was killed. He was twenty-five. He left behind a young wife and baby daughter.

Such was the man Stowe honoured last Remembrance Sunday. It is easy, of course, and dangerous, to glamorize heroism and with it war. Yet the heroism of the past must surely be remembered for its inspiration to the future? As the great statesman Pericles put it, speaking to the Athenians of their fallen heroes, in another harsh conflict: "It is not only the inscriptions on their graves that mark them out; but in people's hearts their memory abides and grows. It is for you to try to be like them. Make up your minds that happiness depends on being free, and freedom depends on being courageous."

It is in such a spirit that we remember with gratitude the heroism and sacrifice of John Thompson McKellar Anderson, DSO, VC. *AGM*

Jack Anderson's widow and sister at the unveiling

Photo: Charles Gargent

The Making of the School's Flag

The two ceremonies for the Stowe VCs displayed the new Stowe flag, recently created by Elspeth Mullineux. Here she explains the year-long care which went into the flag's creation.

My first task was to establish the size of a flag to be flown from the Corinthian Arch; there are specifications according to the height of the pole. I set about contacting various flag companies to ask if they would be willing to supply fabric for the project – these specialised, light-weight, polyester materials are not available to the general public from normal retail outlets. It is essential that the correct fabric is used in order to allow the flag to flutter in light winds.There then followed the long task of enlarging the small 18cm by 15cm crest, produced by the Heraldry Society, to measure 145cm by 115cm and endless tests to produce the correct colours and to check the weather resistance of the fabrics, inks and threads which I planned to use.

After many months of preparation the production started. The designs were painstakingly traced, in sections, from the original enlargement and painted with special inks later to be transferred by heat press onto the base fabrics. The whole process was duplicated in order to produce a mirror image on the reverse of the flag. Mistakes were easy if one was tired or distracted – the motto proved a challenge!

The components printed on the "gold" or "silver" quadrants were trimmed, hemmed and then fitted together on the blue background like a jigsaw puzzle, very accurately, to ensure that the front and reverse shields lay exactly on top of one another. Each was temporarily fixed and then carefully secured by double machining – some parts by as many as five rows! All that then remained was the addition of the finishing touches, black outlining. The fitting of the sleeving, halyard and toggle, which would enable the flag to be fixed to the pole, completed my task.

At 8.00 am on Thursday, 11th May, the anniversary of the School's foundation, we clambered to the top of the Arch on a somewhat grey morning to watch the flag being hoisted. Long may it fly!

Common Room Matters

A happy and successful year was marred by the deaths last year of Peter Mulholland, the Domestic Bursar, Sheila Smith of the secretarial staff and Nick Grill, former Geography master. Obituaries are to be found on the next two pages.

Last December there died too, though of fuller years, Kenneth Box, whom many will remember as Stowe's Bursar. The words spoken at his funeral by Bob Drayson, the former Headmaster, are reproduced in this issue. *The Stoic* expresses deep-felt sympathy to the bereaved families.

Last summer Charles Macdonald stepped down as Second Master, a post he had held with distinction since January 1989, on the retirement of Muir Temple. He is at present (in Simon Collins' absence on exchange in Australia) enjoying a second spell as Head of Science. Tony Collins, formerly Head of Economics and, most recently, Director of Strategies and Development, has taken over as Second Master.

There are two new Housemasters this academic year. William Vernon has taken over from Tony Meredith in Chatham (where the Merediths had been since January 1980) and James Henderson succeeds Jonathan Kreeger in Temple.

There is a new Head of Religious Studies in Andrew Dalton (now that the Chaplain, Tim Hastie-Smith, has become Director of Admissions) and Stephen Malling has taken over the Physics Department, run for many years with great dedication by Oliver Ridge.

The Valete section, commencing on page 15, is a full one, marking the end of several notable Stowe careers. The forty-four years of service to the School of the Clerk of Works, Bryan Martin, are saluted on pages 18 and 19. John Bennetts, Head of Modern Languages for many years and the first and final Director of Humanities, has also retired.

Amongst the younger departures was Robert Dillow, who in his delightfully enthusiastic way contributed so much to the Modern Languages Department, the integration of European Study throughout the Stowe curriculum and, of course, many sports teams (most notably the lst Xl hockey). We wish him every happiness in his new role as Head of Department at Sedbergh.

Robert Dillow

Much youthful vitality has again come Stowe's way in the varied form of assistants and gappers. Connor Arnold did much on the games field. Tim Rofe and Damian Timms, further Australians, also made a big impact, the former in games and CCF, the latter in Club. Both too received the ultimate accolade, the Timothy Stunt Citation: "They coped with Connor when he was here. They were both very quiet during breakfast. They didn't talk shop over their muesli, they didn't mix their bacon and eggs with school politics and they have played cricket as well, which is, I believe, not unconnected with civilised living..." Paul Nimmo was, for one short term, an invigorating playwright-in-residence. Amongst the school's linguists the advent of Frank Serrano and Felix Sprang was much appreciated. Both also made a very helpful contribution in their respective Houses. Of Felix, another holder of the TCFS Citation, it is written: "To have come from Germany to a foreign country like England and to have put on a short play in English is an achievement in its own right, but a certain spice is added to the mixture when a fair number of the English people around didn't understand the play either before or after the production." Finally, mention must be made of the enormously versatile Jahan Sagafi-nejad, another fine Paradina Fellow.

The Bursary has undergone a period of rapid, recent change. Bruce Fraser, Bursar and Financial Director, left last Christmas after three years here, to take up an appointment in America, whilst Margaret Golding, who replaced Austin Waterworth as Assistant Bursar in 1994, left last summer to get married. In their places we have welcomed Rupert Litherland and Malcolm Cardy. Meanwhile, in the wake of Peter Mulholland's illness, Helen Jackson became Operations Bursar last September. Bob Sharp, who arrived two years ago as Buildings Manager, has now become full-time Estates Bursar. Succeeding the Clerk of Works, Bryan Martin, is Maintenance Manager Jim Mitchell. Marilyn Rydström, who became Stowe's Marketing and Campaign Director in 1993, has left to pursue a new career with Guide Dogs For The Blind.

Charles Macdonald and Tony Collins, the retiring and new Second Masters

Photo: Henry Irving

OBITUARIES

NICHOLAS GRILL

Nick Grill taught Geography at Stowe from 1983 to 1987. His tragic death in a drowning accident in February 1995 brought a sad and untimely end to a flourishing career in teaching and school management.

Few who have made a career move from industry into education could have achieved as smooth a transition from office to classroom as did Nick. He came to Stowe from British Leyland in Oxford and quickly established himself as a dedicated, industrious and effective teacher. He combined the cardinal virtues of patience and preparedness with firm classroom control and first-rate subject expertise, to motivate, challenge and stimulate pupils across the age range. He gave generously of his time in assisting them to achieve their full potential and they responded with excellent examination results. He set himself high standards in all aspects of his work at Stowe and his professional integrity, his generous spirit and warm sense of humour earned him the highest levels of respect from all members of the Stowe community. Nick made a full contribution to the extra-curricular life of the school. He was Underhousemaster in Chandos and he restructured and managed Community Service purposefully and efficiently. He was always busy but never turned away those requiring his support.

After leaving Stowe Nick spent six highly successful years as Head of the Geography Department at Dauntsey's School and moved in 1993 to take up the post of Deputy Head at Churcher's College in Petersfield, Hampshire.

Nick was a modest but ambitious man, quiet but articulate, loyal but never obsequious. He spoke his mind but was receptive to alternative ideas and viewpoints. He liked people and his natural sense of fun made him a good person to be with, but he also knew when to be serious. First and foremost a family man, he was devoted to Judy his wife and their three boys, Jonathan, Christopher and William. Colleagues, tutees and pupils at Stowe, Dauntsey's and Churcher's will wish to express gratitude for their happy memories of times spent in Nick's company and grateful appreciation for his life and work. Those who were nearest and dearest to him have our deepest sympathy.

DRF

PETER MULHOLLAND

Peter Mulholland died in August 1995 after a long illness. Born in Portsmouth in 1948, he spent his early childhood in Malta. He won a scholarship to Portsmouth Grammar School and went on to study Chemistry and Mathematics at Aston University. After refusing a commission he joined the army as a private – Peter wanted to start at the bottom. However, he was sent to teach O-level maths and meteorology to commissioned officers.

Later he did three tours of duty in Northern Ireland, one in Canada, and ended up with the Royal Artillery's 4th Armoured Division in Germany in 1984. It was here that he met Norma, his wife, who was a Captain in the QARANC in Berlin. Peter's final posting was to Bramcote Junior Leaders Regiment. Whilst in service he represented the army in sailing regattas and also managed to break his back playing rugby. It was partly as a result of this injury that he decided to leave the army.

Peter felt that he still had a great deal to offer and decided that the public school system would enable him to continue to use the skills that he had learnt during his army days. He was selected from more than seventy applicants by Brigadier Tim Pulverman to become the school's Domestic Bursar. The duties of this new post were far-reaching and included domestic staffing, security, health, staff contracts, acquisition of furniture, events, social needs, transport and internal communications. During his spare time he taught sailing and umpired rugby matches.

Dismissive of minor problems and pain, he worked through 1993 and 1994. However, after many tests and a short stay in hospital in 1995, he was diagnosed as having invasive cancer. Despite this he continued, whenever he felt well enough, to carry on, working from home with Norma as his secretary. Finally, in August, he was forced to relinquish his post.

He will always be remembered for his hard work and kindness. A memorial service was held on the 25th November in the School Chapel, which was well attended by staff, pupils and relations. Peter now lies in Stowe Church graveyard – his memorial is a step from the Temple of Concord and Victory. *Frank Thomson*

Peter, his son, daughter and wife Norma

KENNETH BOX

When Rachel and I arrived at Stowe in January 1964 we knew that we had a considerable task ahead of us, and it was a great comfort to me to have two senior men loyal to their finger-tips – one on the Common Room side and one in administration – in whom I could put complete trust: Alasdair Macdonald, Second Master, who died quite recently, and our good friend Kenneth Box, the Bursar. Neither had an axe to grind – both just wanted to help in any way they could, and that is something I shall never forget. When I think of Kenneth I am reminded of Alfred Lord Tennyson's words "O self-less man and stainless gentleman". He was at all times kindly and courteous.

Kenneth was born at Beckenham in 1908, a Kentish man; his father died when he was five; he went to school in Dulwich, leaving at seventeen to become a trainee at Shell; but in those early years he widened his experience, becoming something of a Jack of all trades, even driving a London bus and enlisting as a special constable during the General Strike, before joining the Stock Exchange for a year or so – good experience for a school bursar.

Later he became Estate Manager for the Earl of Dulcie on his estate in Gloucestershire and this gave him just the right experience to join in 1934 the staff of Allied Schools as a trainee bursar, which included six months service at Stowe; it was at this stage that he fell in love with an attractive young lady – Alice – and they were married in 1939.

Kenneth saw war service in the RAF and became a Squadron Leader in Bomber Command as Operations Controller. After being demobbed he rejoined Allied Schools as Bursar of Wrekin for five years until 1950, when he was promoted to Stowe. They say of bursars that a bad one invariably says "yes" and a good one "no"; Kenneth's was gentle and courteous – "I'm sorry, old man, I am afraid I can't give you the answer you are looking for." He spoke straight, but he eased the pain.

We all have fond memories of Kenneth as a bursar and as a man. Most of my early remembrances are of a professional relationship – we never had a cross word; if I requested action, action followed quickly and quietly, engendering warm respect. A good friend of Kenneth's was Derek Bateman, Secretary to the Governors of the Allied Schools – he speaks of Kenneth and Alice as close friends over fifty years and "a great help and support at all times, always enthusiastic." He writes:

"My wife and I so much valued their friendship over so many years; we so much enjoyed hospitality in their home."

We give thanks then for that fine man Kenneth Box, loving family man and friend to so many. As we think of him, we are each grateful for what he gave to us – and I give to Alice and her family those comforting words of Edward Parker:

Life's race well run,
Life's work well done,
Life's victory won,
Now cometh rest.

R.Q. Drayson

SHEILA SMITH

All who knew her will remember Sheila Smith with affection, sorrow and the greatest admiration.

It is some two-and-a-half years now since an innocuous spot on her leg was diagnosed as malignant melanoma. From that time her life became an inspiration and an example to all. Through diagnoses, prognoses, depressing therapies and false hopes her courage, humour and determination never failed.

Her family and many friends at Stowe – of the Matrons' Mess, Reprographics and the General Office – will miss her, always remembering her mischievous humour, her loyalty and her devotion. *Tony Selby*

PAT WHARTON

We have recently received word of the death in Sydney, Australia, at the age of 72, of Mrs M.P. (Pat) Wharton, a former Matron of Bruce.

P.G. HUNTER

Shortly before we went to press we learnt with great regret of the death on Tuesday, 30th January, of Patrick Hunter, at the age of 93. Joining the Staff in September 1925, as one of the earliest, if not the first to do so, he served the School as Classics Tutor, and also for many years as Senior Tutor, until his retirement in 1962. In common with many other alumni of Winchester and Magdalene, he was blessed with the qualities which compose what was once known as 'one of Nature's gentlemen', and many who read these pages will have reason to remember him with respect, affection and gratitude. A full appreciation of his long career at Stowe will appear in the next issue of *The Stoic*; in the meantime, those who knew him may care to test their memories by identifying him in the photograph on page 36 of this issue.

VALETE

OLR

I can clearly remember the first term in which I met Oliver Ridge. The initials OLR, his Physics and, of course, his Daimler Dart had already been made known to me; but the reputation which preceded his arrival for a second spell of teaching at Stowe spoke little of the man himself or of the human qualities which have been the hallmark of his devoted service to the School. He had joined Stowe for the first time in 1964 but in 1969 was head-hunted by Manchester Grammar School, who persuaded him to leave in order to run their Physics Department. Fortunately, Oliver, who had much missed Stowe's warmth and community, was successfully wooed back in 1976 to succeed Tony Selby (who wished to step down), as Head of Physics. I had been prepared in those early days for his passions for fast cars, Labrador puppies and cats but not for the intensity of his concentration on whatever was in front of him, his searching intellect, and his entirely selfless sense of duty to the School; I was soon to learn and appreciate their significance for the well-being of the Stowe community and its individual members.

The excellence OLR sought in himself was complemented by his high expectations of those in his charge, who, in response, achieved results which far surpassed their initial aspirations. The 1980s were golden years for Physics at Stowe. As Head of Department, OLR led a strong team by example, devoting long hours to preparing exam papers, practicals and demonstrations and to marking. By wielding a screwdriver in corners and recesses which ordinary mortals would not dare to enter, he maintained impossibly complex equipment at zero cost to the School. His Speech Day exhibitions were memorable displays of Physics in action. Well before the days of League Table and Value Added puzzles and paradoxes, the reputation of the Department in GCE and Oxbridge examinations extended far beyond the Oxford Water, and it is a great tribute to OLR that success in Physics became the norm under his leadership. The relentless effort and skilful application of human and physical resources required to sustain this position are less well charted, but not forgotten.

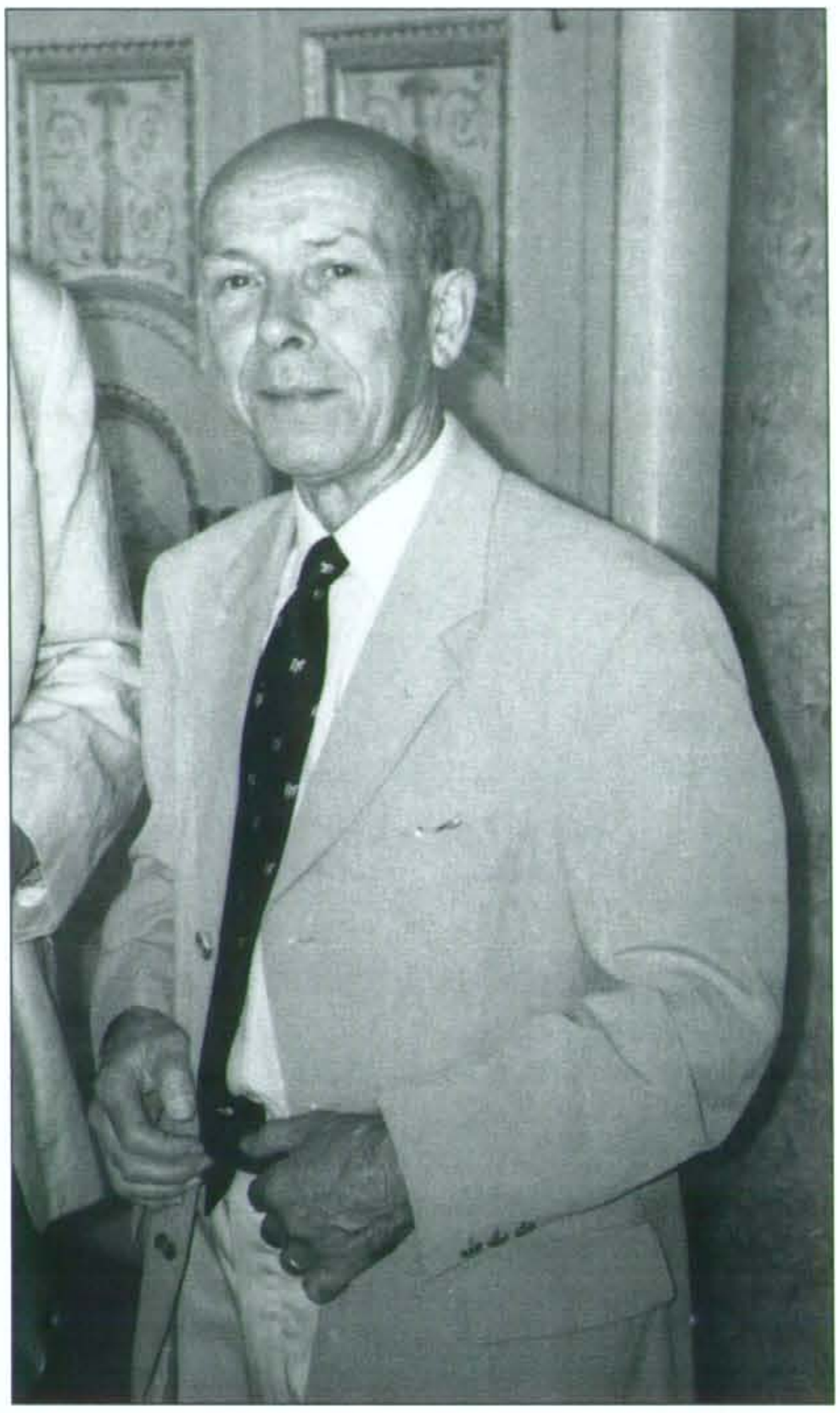
Whilst Physics was the backbone of OLR's mammoth contribution to the high quality of education at Stowe, he was always willing to offer, and often the first to volunteer, his services in whatever field and whenever required. Games skills would not rank high in a list of OLR's many talents and the Bourbon was probably the last place he wanted to be on a cold January afternoon looking after the Colts D Hockey squad, but he was there, regularly, year after year, perhaps making up the rules as he went along but giving unstintingly of his precious time. No-one so bored by, and ignorant of, the rules of any game has ever refereed or umpired with more dedication.

Time was precious. There was so much to do and insufficient hours in the day to meet all the demands upon him, but he never turned anyone away. "Have a word with OLR," became the standard advice when computers, cars, washing machines or, indeed, anything mechanical misbehaved. Emergencies were dealt with so promptly and efficiently that one was left wondering whether there had ever been a problem in the first place. Maintenance manuals and wiring diagrams were not required; OLR's knowledge and understanding of why things work and fail, how the various bits are put together, and his manual and mental dexterity, make a formidable combination and one which was frequently used to help those in need.

OLR's technical mastery extended to the extra-curricular front. He installed a Chapel PA system and led the MT section of the CCF and Shooting with distinction, but perhaps his most significant and lasting impact has been in Computing. OLR's prowess in this field and his legendary indefatigability were used to much advantage in the early days of IT, when he steered the School through a technological maze and, moreover, along a cost-effective pathway, to invigorate and bring up-to-date all Stowe systems but particularly those in the General Office and Bursary. He was instrumental in the computerisation of Examination, Old Stoic, Activities and Blue Book administration, writing all the programs himself.

Service to others was the mainspring of OLR's career and life at Stowe. Whether playing the 'cello or double bass in the School orchestra, encouraging and cajoling his tutees, organizing Athletics timekeeping, or indeed in all his many roles, OLR provided invaluable support for individual and School. Stoics and colleagues, past and present, would wish me, in saluting his achievements, to record their gratitude for his twenty-three outstanding years at the School. They will be pleased to learn that OLR's expertise in Computing will not be lost. He will continue to play a major part in the growth and development of IT at Stowe as a consultant, we hope, well into the next millennium!

DRF



John Bennetts

JAB

John Bennetts came to Stowe in January, 1973, taking over the Modern Languages Department from his ebullient and popular predecessor, David Manly. Not the easiest of undertakings, it was the more difficult for taking place in mid-year and for the fact that his staff consisted largely of Housemasters, nice men all, of course, but not necessarily the most amenable to change!

Sudden change, however, was not John's style. He knew his own mind and he knew how to get his way, but gentle persuasion and sweet reasonableness were more his line. Add to these his enthusiasm, his meticulous efficiency, his manifest command of his subjects, his mercurial wit and his sense of fun, and it is not surprising that he at once won respect from staff and pupils alike. Of his own teaching skill news had already preceded him from Kingswood and generations of Stowe linguists were to appreciate his kindly patience, thoroughness and personal interest. He guided them, and us, through the many complexities of recent changes in syllabus and curriculum with unerring brilliance and he showed a full understanding both of the needs of his department and of the characters of his teachers, their individual strengths and tastes. Above all he was a great team man and to share a set with him was a privilege and a luxury, for he accommodated his own predilections to those of his partner.

Stowe linguists owe much, too, to John's wife, Françoise, who for many years gave invaluable help in French conversation practice and preparation for interviews. Rewarding and often amusing work it may have

Françoise (right) with her Old Stoic daughters, Caroline and Sonia, and Betty Wiggins

Photos: Bram Wiggins

been, but hour after hour of it must at best tax the patience and at worst drive one barmy. To her eternal credit Françoise maintained her unruffled equanimity which was matched only by her elegance.

Both she and John are keen *cinéastes* and throughout his time here John ran the Film Society with enormous zest, deploying his encyclopaedic knowledge of films from all ages and countries, a healthy antidote to the banalities of the Saturday night shows. They were also amongst the most loyal and frequent concert-goers at Stowe and no musical event was complete without their presence. Most of Françoise's close relations seem to be virtuoso instrumentalists and their younger daughter, Sonia, is a gifted clarinettist. Both she and her elder sister, Caroline, incidentally, are Old Stoics and studied Modern Languages with distinction and without any of the awkwardness which sometimes attends pupils in classes taken by their parents.

John and Françoise have the gift of surrounding themselves with beautiful things and both their homes here were full of superb pictures, books and *objets d'art* (though sadly there seemed to be no room for John's own splendid paintings of their beloved Cevennes!). It was always a delight to enjoy their hospitality and their company. We wish them many years of happy retirement in France and hope that they may sometimes come our way again.

Muir Temple

Friends and former colleagues of John and Françoise at their farewell party in the Music Room (Photos by Bram Wiggins)

Charlie Macdonald and Muir Temple

Margaret Temple, the Stephans and Cyril Atkins

David Arnold and Brian Mead

Sylvia and David Gatehouse with Betty Wiggins

Tony Sparshott, Jonathan Kreeger and Cyril Atkins

CA and the Macdonalds

BRYAN MARTIN

Recently retired as Clerk of Works, Bryan Martin served for no less than forty-four years at Stowe. Charles Macdonald and Muir Temple, who both worked with him as Housemaster and Second Master, pay appropriate tribute.

Ever since its foundation in 1923 Stowe has been exceptionally well served by a long line of devoted and loyal members of the Bursar's staff. Bryan Martin, who retired this term after forty-four years of service, is such a person. For his first twenty or so years he worked in the engineering department, becoming Chief Engineer in 1968, and no-one was surprised when in 1973 he was appointed Clerk of Works with the responsibility for overseeing day-to-day maintenance in the School, no mean task with much of the extensive buildings and plant beginning to show their age. During his years at Stowe many important new buildings appeared, including the Workshops, the Roxburgh Hall, the New Classrooms, Lyttelton, the Laboratories, the Swimming Pool, the Drayson Hall and Bruce. All of these have added enormously to the maintenance burden, when the drive for greater efficiency and productivity has led inevitably to a smaller staff. In addition he has supervised an impressive programme of refurbishment and reconstruction in houses, classrooms, departmental offices and the like.

He is a great practical man, a solver of problems who will cheerfully turn out in the middle of the night to give first aid to a leaking pipe or attend to a power cut. Generations of Housemasters found him a wonderful source of support in times of crisis. Always willing to help, Bryan has organised loud speakers on Speech Day, coaxed reluctant minibuses into life and coped with the special demands of events such as the School Ball. He has even stepped in as an emergency groundsman to mow the cricket square. The list is endless.

Bryan's knowledge of Stowe's buildings is uniquely valuable, so it is good news that he has agreed to be available as a consultant for special projects and we shall look forward to seeing him from time to time. Bryan will have a very active retirement, for he is that sort of person, but he has earned some time for himself and Cathy. We wish them both a very happy retirement.

CPM

Bryan in attendance as Lord Mountbatten lays the Foundation Stone of the Drayson Hall in 1977

Stowe is not so much a complex as a complexity of buildings ancient and modern and more or less well adapted or designed for their present purpose. Gormenghast, by comparison, was a doll's house. Most staff and more pupils know a part of all this intimately. Only one man knows it all, hence the words most frequently heard in the last forty-four years: "Ask Bryan".

And we did. And he was always ready with help, advice, information and above all speedy action. That the intricate organisation needed to maintain this extraordinary place worked so smoothly was largely due to Bryan's quiet and patient efficiency. In a sense he was his own worst enemy, for he inevitably found himself taking on responsibilities and making decisions far beyond the normal range of a Clerk of Works.

As every Housemaster knows, disaster strikes at the worst possible moment. Fortunately for us Bryan's home telephone number was available – and so, therefore, was Bryan. He would be on the scene in no time organising repairs or carrying them out himself. Nothing was too much trouble, no time was too inconvenient and never a complaint. The most he would allow himself was a rueful smile, especially when, as so often, the cause of the fault was a failure to heed his advice. How spoilt we were and how often since leaving Stowe I have wished I could pick up a phone and dial his number!

Often enough he anticipated trouble and was dealing with it before the call came. I never caught him out. "Sorry to ring you so early, Bryan, but..." "No problem, sir, if it's about the decorations on George...

Bryan with Albert Oliver
on the latter's retirement as Chief Engineer, 1968

the flood in your junior changing room...the sound coming from the boiler-house, it's all in hand."

No man is indispensable but Bryan came closer than most. No one was missed sooner when he took a holiday (happily for us a rare event). He gave his time unstintingly, often, as at the height of the summer lets, in adverse conditions. We are all heavily in his debt and I salute his long and loyal service. Long may it be remembered! We also owe much to his wife, Cathy, not only because she, too, worked for many years at Stowe but also because she put up with so many calls for Bryan's off-duty services. We wish them both a happy retirement and many hours of pleasure on their narrow boat.

Muir Temple

Bryan with long-serving members of the Bursar's Domestic and Support team in the late 1970s:
Standing, left to right: Kenneth Wild, Bill Bergen, Elsie Jones, Sid Jones, Mabel Warden, Leo Johnson, Kate Varney, Charlie Oakes, Jean Blackwell, Ted Hawkins, Bert Lillingstone, Denis Goodwin, Lionel Robinson, Dan Holmes.
Seated: Duggie Richardson, Wilf Stokes, Beryl Stokes, Cyril Atkins, Malcolm Burley, Bryan Martin, Colin Grattage, Len Head, Lewis Whitehead.

Photo: R & H Chapman ©

TCFS

Twenty-five years ago two twenty-eight-year-old men arrived at their new schools, Timothy Stunt at Aiglon in Switzerland and the writer at Stowe. A further sixteen years were to elapse before their paths would eventually cross, Stowe having the great good fortune to acquire Timothy in January 1986 as a teacher of history.

Within a term it seemed to everyone that he had been here for years. From the earliest days, invitations were issued to neophytes, assistants and "gappers", as well as to the more aged fellows of the community. His "Welcome to Stowe" became legendary, new members of the Common Room having their lives improved immeasurably by the many impromptu and convivial evening occasions in Timothy's rooms, amusingly located directly above "The Duke's Bathroom", to which access was gained via a trap door; a conversation-piece beyond compare.

Many Stoics, both past and present, have reason to be grateful to TCFS, not only for his erudite teaching at all levels, but also for his role as Deputy Housemaster of Chandos, from which position he dispensed discipline, sympathy, advice, good humour and friendliness in a superbly individual blend. It is hardly surprising that the Housemasters under whom he served, John Dobinson and Steven Hirst, have great respect and affection for him. Needless to say, the House benefited greatly from such excellent relationships.

He is a man of great wisdom, learning and encyclopaedic knowledge; a first-rate ecclesiastical historian (note his many fine contributions to the Dictionary of National Biography) and a wildly enthusiastic and expert etymologist; can any of us "in the know" now ever forget the arcane delights of 'marzipan', 'protocol' and, dare I say it, 'vanilla'?!

To many lovers of the grape Timothy will be long remembered as the Common Room Cellarer, where his oenological expertise served us all in good stead, reaching its finest manifestation at the termly Common Room dinners which he planned so meticulously, no detail ever being forgotten. He also organised the meetings of the Corkscrew Society in later years and, as a consequence, many a Stoic has reaped (or gathered in, perhaps?) the benefit of Timothy's knowledge and experience.

In his last two years Timothy became President of the Common Room, a role which he performed with both dedication and ability, never hesitating to explore any avenue which might improve the well-being of that august body. His marvellous jokes (none of which I feel able to reproduce here!), confided tête-a-tête in sepulchral Boris Karloff tones, were invariably outrageously funny, often provoking in him that familiar lung-wrecking laugh, which to the uninitiated could cause the gravest anxiety as to the continued survival of the raconteur.

We will remember Timothy as a great bon viveur, a lover of human foibles and idiosyncrasies and the kindest and most generous of men, once delightfully described by Steven Hirst as "a strict liberal"! Nothing was ever too much trouble for him where the welfare of others was concerned; a fine schoolmaster, scholar, humanitarian and loyal friend.

Timothy has now followed across the Atlantic at least some of those into whose history he has researched and although not perhaps landing at Plymouth Rock, he and Nancy now reside in neighbouring Connecticut, a mere 'plane ride away from his many friends at Stowe, who, knowing his penchant for travel, await future visits with pleasurable anticipation.

MW

TCFS, the definitive Zoltan Karpathy,
in a Common Room version of *My Fair Lady* in 1989

Photo: LEW

JSK

It seems only the other day that J.S. Kreeger mi was a member of The Twenty (as Stowe's prestigious top fifth form was then called), studying Greek. It was a lively set, and J.S. Kreeger mi was undoubtedly the liveliest of all! It seemed inevitable that he would have a distinguished sixth form career and win a scholarship to Cambridge. He duly did. After Cambridge he might well have opted for some branch of the media, for he is a natural entertainer, but instead he chose schoolmastering. The mass audiences, therefore, may have lost out, but there have been many smaller audiences which have gained, for Jonathan is an academic version of Action Man, bubbling over with superb impressions, jokes and puns as well as new ideas to dazzle the examiners.

It had always seemed likely that Jonathan would return here to teach, and so he did, in January 1989, a shrewd close-season signing from Cranleigh, to teach Classics and English and be Head of Drama. Jonathan's time as Head of Drama was a golden age. One remembers a succession of plays hallmarked with twenty-four carat quality (the result of meticulous attention to detail and natural flair), shows like *The Magistrate* (was it really a Junior Congreve?), *After Magritte* (was it really a House play?), the deeply moving *Our Town*

JSK as Kipps in the Common Room production of *Half a Sixpence* in 1992

Photo: LEW

and the-musical-to-end-all-musicals, *Damn Yankees*.

There may well be ghosts which come out in the Roxy, when midnight strikes, to re-live the routines of *You've gotta have heart* and *What Lola wants*!

Jonathan's commitment to Stowe was total. He could probably have taught any subject, but limited himself to Latin, Greek, Classical Civilisation, English and Theatre Studies. He was father-figure to *The Voice*, an inspiration to that newspaper and its successive boards of editors.

He led classicists up the Acropolis and down the slopes of Delphi. He was a film buff extraordinaire, with an infectious delight in Hitchcock and the Marx Brothers. As an accomplished pianist and singer, he both entertained and coached (often at the same time). He was Stowe's Magnus Magnusson (at quiz time), Tommy Steele (come *Half A Sixpence*) and Uncle Mac (at the annual scholarship exam). As a host and cook he was supreme. Heather and I were extremely lucky that for five terms he was with us in Chatham as Underhousemaster; there he was a class act, outstandingly supportive, ever alert to the needs of the House and always totally loyal. For the past five years he has been Housemaster of Temple. *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*! All manner of things were done to improve the life of the community. No House could have had a more passionate or articulate champion; so much was achieved in so comparatively short a while. Only Jonathan can know the full extent of the time and emotional energy which he poured into it all.

J.S. Kreeger mi has now moved on to Oxford. He leaves behind a big vacuum (cue for several JSK puns!). We will miss very much that impish sense of fun (and of course we will miss Bramble too). We wish him every happiness in his new life and can assure his new classes that, in the words of another great entertainer, *You ain't heard nothin' yet*!

AGM

As broadcast film and television specialists, Spurway Film & TV are privileged to have spent a year filming everyday life in Stowe School. In gratitude, we wish the staff and pupils every success for 1996.

Whatever your budget, Spurway Film & TV bring together professional technicians and the very latest multimedia technologies to produce broadcast quality videos for information, marketing and training.

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BDF

It was said of Queen Victoria that she came into her reign at a gallop and left at 90 mph! Whilst nothing quite so cataclysmic as the invention of the steam train occurred at Stowe during Bruce Fraser's time on the bursarial throne, nonetheless, there were enormous changes, great restructurings and, although the bottom line might not have been a thin red one, much ground was gained!

Bruce had never been anywhere near an English public school when the Governors appointed him in the Spring of 1992, but his credentials in the City, his breadth of experience, his rigorous disciplines, his taste for the challenge and, be it said, his American sense of humour, marked him out for the job. It did take him a little time to win the respect of colleagues anxious to improve the standing and facilities of their own particular areas and having to get used to hearing him say "no"; but his clear reasoning and his insistence on affordability, in husbanding the limited financial resources of a young school such as Stowe and in getting "as many bangs for our bucks" as possible, soon won the day. Indeed, it could be said that a major achievement of his time was to educate us all into a clear recognition of financial realities, the need to make priorities and to install structures and personnel to tackle the Rubik-cubesque conundrum of a great school living in a national monument.

A man of enormous personal diligence ("lunch is for wimps" could have been said of him!) he expected of himself and of others no less than the most complete dedication. It was also said of him that if he was jokey or rude to you, then that was a sign of having won his affection! Some found a few of his comments "deeply chilling" (e.g. "Don't get mad: get even!") but he always laughed easily and knew when not to.

The achievements of his relatively short time with us are legion: the appointment of senior, capable, professional managers in the Marketing, Estates, Grounds, Works, Commercial and Domestic/Support areas; bringing the Catering function in-house; improving the organisation of the SSES, the liaison with the National Trust and with Allied Schools Central Office; the management of our Health and Safety practices; the new Fire Detection system and improving good working relationships with English Heritage and the planners at AVDC.

During his time Lyttelton House was converted to a girls' boarding House, the old Stanhope was made into the European, Careers, EFL and Special Tuition Centre, and Grenville House received a new Housemaster's accommodation. The Geography Department have their new weather-station and the cattle-grid war was won without a shot being fired! The new Teaching Staff Salary structure was implemented in this current year.

All in all, a most impressive list of accomplishments which leaves us all the richer for his presence and contribution, if not quite as breathless as hanging onto Queen Victoria's runaway train. He always threatened to run away to a little shack in Wyoming; if he has been seduced by a more lucrative venue in Denver, Colorado, we forgive him and thank him for his enormous contribution and encouragement – and for his gift of a Cup for Public Speaking. We raise a well-merited cup of Oriachovitsa Hungarian wine to him and his lovely and long-suffering wife, Pauline, and their future life together with Jessica, whilst hoping that he will come back to see the fruits of the momentous changes that he has effected here with us.

JGLN

IN RETROSPECT: GEORGE UNSEATED

The Stoic has been lent photographs of a moment in the 1950s when George and his mount were removed from their plinth for renovation. We would welcome receiving details from anyone who remembers the occasion.

Photos: John Bloomfield (OS)

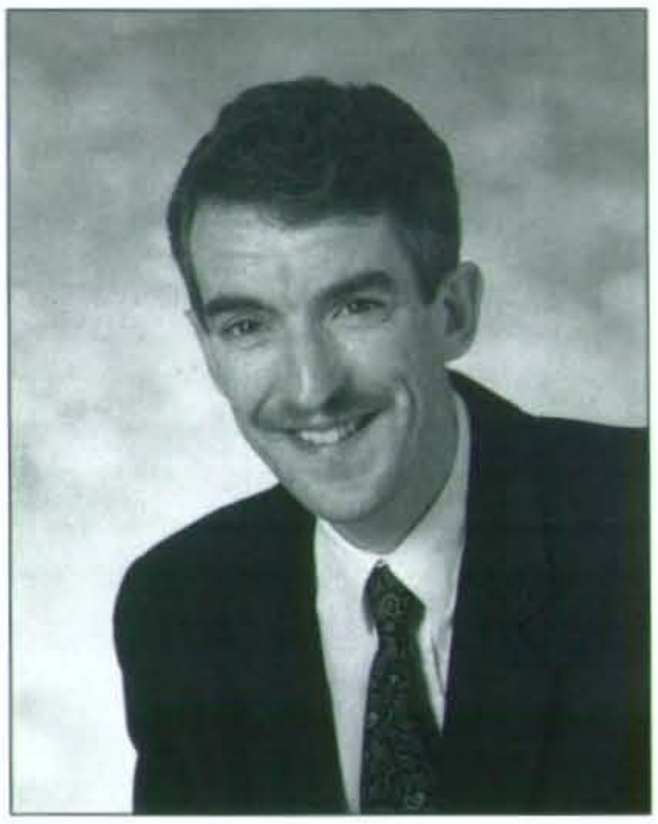
SHM

Educated initially in Kent, Stephen Malling started his career as a radio telecommunications engineer. After several years in industry he retrained as a physicist and has since taught at Reigate Grammar School and King Henry VIII School, Coventry. Whilst in the Midlands Stephen attained an MSc at Warwick University, coached the County U16 rugby side and became father to two daughters. He now enjoys surfing the internet, coaching one of the school rugby teams and playing the occasional match for the local rugby side.

ELW

Born and bred in the northern wastes of Lancashire, Eleanor Walmsley studied French, Spanish and Linguistics at Queens' College, Cambridge. After graduating, she taught French-in-Industry, at Hereford Cathedral School and, most recently, as a tutor at Cambridge. ELW represented Cambridge on the athletics track and is a keen follower of several sports, being a lifelong devotee of Wigan Rugby League and Lancashire County Cricket Clubs. Her main love remains fast cars and she is probably responsible for any speed-trials and the unaffordable MGs to be found littering the campus!

Salvete



AD

Andrew Dalton studied History at Nottingham University, where he also completed his PGCE before being appointed to King Edward's, Bath. Further study in Theology enabled him to become Head of RS at the school and also licensed as an Anglican Lay Reader. He was also most recently Deputy Head of the Lower School before arriving at Stowe. He is a keen photographer, plays most racket sports and enjoys family life with his wife and three sons.

Salvete

FAB

Fiona Baddeley has a first-class degree in English and Art History from York University. She began her teaching career at the Tate Gallery where, "as an impoverished PhD student", she supplemented her income by giving lectures and tours. Teaching becoming more important than research, she accepted a position at the Open University and worked concurrently at a London preparatory school. Then, after teaching truants and young offenders for a year, she went to Africa for two years to teach. Back in England and now firmly convinced that teaching would remain her chosen career, she took a PGCE in English and Drama at Cambridge University. Her long involvement in theatre make it a particular pleasure to be teaching English and Theatre Studies at Stowe.

We also welcomed last September Ofelia Antolin, the Spanish Assistant, from Madrid University, Fred Armitage, a physicist on exchange from Australia (with Simon Collins), Vanya Desai, this year's Harvard Paradina Fellow, Perrine Loridon, the French Assistant from the University of Lyon, Tuck-May Locke, our new Accompanist-in-Residence, and Patrick Mohler from the University of Frankfurt, the German Assistant.

MOJ

Michael Jahn read English and German, first at the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe Universitat, Frankfurt, then at Royal Holloway, University of London. He was the German Assistant and Under-housemaster in Temple in 1992 and received his Certificate of Education from Oxford Brookes University in 1995. He is married to Stowe's Head of Economics. In his spare time he is a keen basketball player and enjoys all aspects of information technology, particularly 'surfing the net'!

Malcolm Cardy

Malcolm Cardy came to independent education after twenty years in various accounting roles in commerce. Training in accounts, administration and dealership management at Vauxhall Motors led to work at City Motors in Oxford. Following a period at a wholesale company in Thame he became Accountant at St. Edward's, Oxford, implementing a change from manual to computerised accounting and developing the administration computer network. He joined Stowe in July, replacing Margaret Golding as Assistant Bursar (Finance). He is married with two sons, Mark (a musician) and Tom (who is studying Design at Chelsea).

SALVETE

LJG

Lisa Greatwood studied Molecular Biology and Biochemistry at Durham University and she liked the town so much she stayed on to complete her post-graduate Certificate in Education. She is fascinated by different countries and their cultures and loves to travel. In her gap year she travelled around the world before reaching India, where she taught for four months in a girls' boarding school in Rajasthan. In her spare time she enjoys outdoor pursuits and sports, particularly lacrosse.

SALVETE

Rupert Litherland

The School's new Bursar joined us from the Army Staff College, Camberley, where he was "Bursar" for three years. Educated at St. George's College, Salisbury, Rhodesia and Sandhurst, he was commissioned into the 10th Gurkha Rifles in 1968. He subsequently went on to command that Regiment and the Brunei Garrison, and held a number of appointments in MOD and HQ NATO. He retired as a Colonel from the Army's principal academic institution to take up his post at Stowe. His interests include rugby refereeing, cricket, squash, golf, ornithology and fly-fishing, and he is currently doing an MA in Defence Studies.

Helen Jackson

Helen Jackson, the new Operations Bursar, qualified in Hotel Catering and Institutional Management at the Dorset Institute, now Bournemouth University. She was Assistant Domestic Bursar at St. Anne's College, Oxford, and Domestic Bursar at Oaklands College, St. Albans, before becoming Accommodation Services Manager at the BBC's residential training centre near Evesham. Her interests include riding, hill-walking, skiing, photography and the piano.

Around and About

Photo: Mrs Annie Nichols

The Headmaster with Witold Kawalec and the latter's sculpture, Lord of the Dance, which Harry Kemp donated to Stowe in memory of fellow Old Stoic poet, James Reeves. It is sited in Kinloss garden.

Right: Holly Taylor, who arrived in Lyttelton House at Christmas. *The Stoic* also salutes the births this year of Jack Ayers, Camilla Johnson and Salima and Sabria Behilil.

Another Nepalese expedition was made this year, this time under the leadership of MJG.

Photo: MJG

Photo: Classic Snaps

In the summer heatwave several Old Stoics walked from Murrayfield to Twickenham in aid of the Andy Birt Trust. Details of this impressive undertaking can be found on page 148.

Photo: SCT

Sir Ludovic Kennedy, guest speaker at a Theological Society meeting.

Photo: Digby Oldridge

ALBUM OF HIGHLIGHTS

Joe Maxwell winning the U15 80m Hurdles at the Independent Schools Championships in July.

Photo: George Eves

Left: Edward and Richard Dobbin on Sports Day achieved a remarkable fraternal feat. Both won the 100m and 200m races, at intermediate and senior levels respectively.

George Clarke (former Second Master) and Miss Sally Coles (former secretary to three Stowe Headmasters) at their wedding.

Brian Stephan and his recently completed bust, which now stands in the School Library. Also present: Sculptor David Wynne and Biddy Stephan.

Photo: Stuart Isaac

Around and About

Photo: Digby Oldridge

The Most Revd. the Right Hon. Lord Coggan of Canterbury & Sissinghurst preached in Chapel.

Playwright John Mortimer, QC, another of the Theological Society's distinguished guests.

Photo: Digby Oldridge

Above: Regional champions of the 1995 Young Consumer competition: Rupert Connell, Lizzy Davies, Jonathan Morrison and Robin Creek.

Left: James Tearle, a top finalist in a nationwide competition of Chemistry teachers from all kinds of schools, receives his award, from Ian Laing, President of the Board of Trade.

Right: The Lower Plateau, on the Bourbon Field, as work began in August on the new astroturf surface.

Photos: DCB

ALBUM OF HIGHLIGHTS

Photos: SOC

A Science, Engineering and Technology week gave third-formers guidance in the use of sophisticated equipment. Activities included simulated sports drug testing, experiments with Moon rock samples and control of a model lunar explorer robot. Above:
Rory Scott and James Defty.
Above right: Robin Jones and Chris Johnstone.

Right: A small part of the entire Third Form which visited Roman Bath in the autumn term.

Below: There was another successful hockey tour to Holland. Max Konig and Jodie Ives are photographed for the tour brochure by Digby Oldridge.

Photo: Classic Snaps

The winning Grafton House Junior Hockey Team in half-time reverie with CHJ during the final, played on the Milton Keynes astro.

Photo: DCB

Photo: DCB

Around and About

The British Ambassador to Brazil with the Headmaster in Rio de Janeiro, during the latter's time in South America with a delegation from the DTI Overseas Project Board, as a representative of the independent schools.

Right: Jonathan Legge at the Independent Schools Athletic Championships.

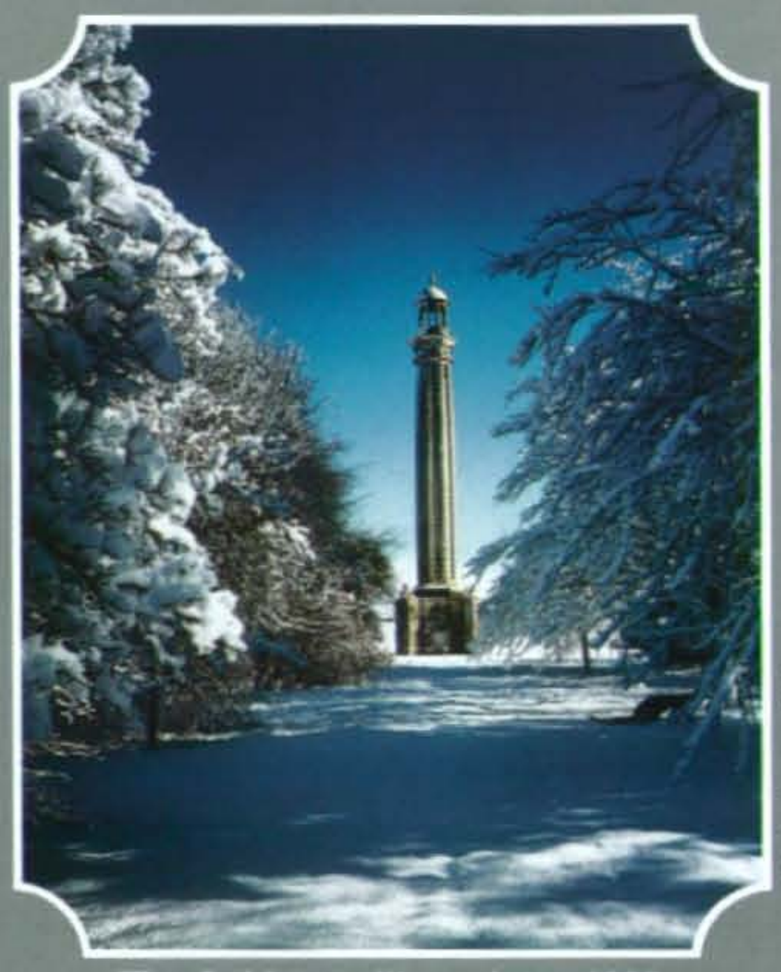


Photo: Louise Chitty

The Cobham pillar, winter 1995

Photo: David Woodnutt

The Headmaster greeting guests at Speech Day. This year's speaker was Sir Claus Moser.

Below: Creative textiles exhibition in the Art School, part of the many Speech Day displays.

Photo: DCM

BLM and Stoics in Sydney. See page 126 for the Australian Rugby Tour report.

Photo: David Woodnutt

Jenny Taylor at the Stowe Fashion Show (see page 60).

Photo: Digby Oldridge

ALBUM OF HIGHLIGHTS

Photo: Louise Chitty

A lake pavilion resplendent in snow, 1995.

Inside the new Careers Centre.

Photo: Roger Tomlinson

Bob Drayson, the former Headmaster, with his wife Rachel in Australia during a recent holiday. His appreciation of Kenneth Box is on page 14.

Above:
Jeremy Pemberton and Miles Walsworth-Bell receive The Central Award of Excellence on behalf of the school's newspaper, *The Voice.*

This year's *Stoic* editors, left to right:
George Eves, Leo Brown, Lizzy Davies, Oliver Bray, Henrietta Bolland, Andrew Pearce, Angus McCarey, Fenella Hunt, Mark Wates.

Photo: Vikram Tellis-Nayak

Robert Secret reflects on

STOWE OPERA 1995

Les Contes d'Hoffmann (Offenbach) and Don Giovanni (Mozart)
(photographs by Stuart Isaac)

Stowe Opera in its fifth season produced two contrasting operas with an interesting link – *The Tales of Hoffmann* opens and closes in a tavern by a theatre in which a performance of *Don Giovanni* is taking place.

Hoffmann is based on short stories by the romantic German poet E.T.A. Hoffmann and is a problematic opera inasmuch as it was left unfinished by Offenbach. Originally conceived as an opera with spoken dialogue, many subsequent performing versions were published with this dialogue set to music by various other composers, and we have been left with a rather turgid, overlong score far removed from Offenbach's original intentions. For Stowe Opera's performances stage director Stuart Maunder and I tried to reinstate as much of Offenbach's version as we could. This involved reconstructing the dialogue, cutting the score and scoring and transposing some of the music.

Stowe Opera's reputation has been rising in the operatic world – so much so that over 250 professional opera singers applied to audition for the 1995 performances. Sitting in a church hall in Ealing on several days in December and January, hearing those whom we have sifted out as being the most likely candidates, is a difficult and tiring task! Many criteria have to be applied – suitability of the voice, how singers will look together on the stage, acting ability, to mention but three. We were fortunate with both casts, and the three weeks of rehearsals at Stowe leading up to the performances made for a very happy and stimulating time.

The only sad note was that over the last two years Peter Mulholland had become my right hand man in running the day-to-day business of the opera; he was too ill to help this time and during the rehearsal period he died. He had become a great favourite with everybody connected with the opera. We were very grateful that Bridget Vick was able to take over some of his administrative duties, also working on publicity and the programme.

The Tales of Hoffmann.
Nicholas Todorovic (Dr Miracle) and Rosamund Barker (Antonia), the end of Act III.

Left: Julian Gavin (Hoffmann) and Rosamund Barker (Antonia), Act III duet.

Don Giovanni is a very dark opera and Stage Director Michael Walling's dramatic and sometimes stark direction of the work served to emphasise this aspect of the opera. It was by far the most controversial production Stowe Opera has ever staged, and polarised opinion in our audiences. I had many letters after the performances which ranged in opinion from "the most compelling operatic performance I have ever experienced" to one person (mistaking me for the Stage Director) accusing me of being perverted! Like it or not, there is little doubt that Michael's production had great integrity. *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* was well received and met with universal approval. Julian Gavin, who sang Hoffmann, has taken up a contract as a principal at English National Opera and Stuart Maunder, Stage Director, went on to work on *Götterdämmerung* at The Royal Opera House.

A very good article about Stowe Opera by Julian Budden in *Opera* opened as follows:

"Mozart and 'the Mozart of the boulevards' provided this year's offering, both mounted with scrupulous attention to detail and performed by a young cast, fortified by a strong Antipodean contingent, under the alert direction of Robert Secret." He went on to say of *Hoffmann*:

"Thanks to Stuart Maunder's lively production and the acting ability of the singers, all went as well as a marriage-bell, to the delight of a packed house."

Stowe Opera is undergoing a change. As I write I am forming the Opera into a company which will be managed independently of the school. Having learnt all the acronyms involved in staging – DSMs, ASMs, LX and the like, I am now having to educate myself in all the terms of the business community – no one told me about this when I left music college!

Stowe Opera will perform
THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO
on August 17th, 18th, 23rd, 24th and 25th.
Box Office and enquiries: 01280 823334

Don Giovanni.
Left: Robert Burt (Don Ottavio) and Simone Sauphanor (Donna Anna) swear vengance. Opening Act I.

Bottom left: Menrig Davies (Don Giovanni) talking himself out of trouble, Act II.

Bottom right: Guy Harbottle (Leporello) and Katherine Paterson (Zerlina), the Wedding Scene Act I.

T.H. White at Stowe, 1936, photographed by Kenric Rice

T.H. WHITE AT STOWE

Memories of a Famous Novelist

1996 sees the fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of Mistress Masham's Repose, *the novel by T.H. White which uses Stowe as its setting and inspiration.* The Stoic *is marking this anniversary with three articles. In the first Tony Meredith discusses the novel and its background. In the second he introduces some fresh reminiscences from Old Stoics who knew White when he taught at Stowe in the 1930s. The third article is an excerpt from a new and as yet unpublished biography by Donald Demarest, who was one of White's tutees.*[1]

1 MISTRESS MASHAM AND STOWE

Mistress Masham's Repose was written by T.H. White during the Second World War, whilst he was living in Ireland. It was published in America in 1946 (in England a year later), was an immediate success and has enjoyed many reprints since. "If the author were just an average writer," enthused John Betjeman fifty years ago, "this would still be a first class story. But he is one of our best living writers, and he has written a thrilling story. What a book! What a well-told story! What superb description! What wit! What poetry!"

The book was inspired by Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Stowe. White had arrived at Stowe in 1932, at the age of twenty-six, with a First from Cambridge, one of those larger-than-life characters who made the school between the wars a particularly colourful place. He was already a published author, with a book of poems to his credit and four novels. But it was two books written during his time at Stowe which made his early reputation: *Goodbye Victoria* and *England Have My Bones*. There were also two successful humorous novels, *Earth Stopped* and *Gone to Ground*.

All these books, however, as well as *Mistress Masham's Repose*, might never have been written, if White had been sacked from Stowe, only months after his arrival, as at one time seemed likely! Shortly before his arrival he had written *First Lesson* under a pseudonym, James Aston. It dealt with an affair between a middle-aged Cambridge don and a twenty-year-old chambermaid, by modern standards tame subject matter indeed. But when news leaked at Stowe that White was Aston, there were several parental complaints. "Although I was told it was a filthy book," wrote one father to the Headmaster, J.F. Roxburgh, "I felt it my duty to wade through it. I regard it as the most putrid bit of beastliness I have ever seen or heard of and I hasten to ask you if there is any truth in the horrible allegation that such a depraved specimen of human garbage can have found his way by some mystery to Stowe." Roxburgh replied gently that he had read three-quarters but found it "too boring to finish" and "quite innocuous".

However, he replied to another parent in different vein. The book, he agreed, was utterly abominable, filling him with disgust. It was the "work of a degenerate", but he assured the anxious mother that White was "a particularly nice fellow and a very healthy, manly and satisfactory person, devoted among other things to riding and hunting." Roxburgh then wrote to White, promising only luke-warm support: White could stay on at Stowe, he confirmed, provided that complaints over *First Lesson* did not multiply. Fortunately they did not.

So White stayed on for four years, an inspiring but unconventional schoolmaster, until the success of *England Have My Bones* in 1936 allowed him to retire to a nearby cottage in Stowe Ridings to concentrate on writing. He stayed there two further years and it was during this time that he spent much effort in training a goshawk, an epic struggle he later turned into a very successful book. It was at Stowe Ridings too that he wrote *The Sword in the Stone*, the first part of his best-selling quartet of novels on the theme of King Arthur, *The Once And Future King*.

Throughout the rest of his life – White was to die in 1964 aged fifty-seven – the Stowe years were to figure prominently in the creative process but nowhere so obviously as in *Mistress Masham's Repose*. The heroine is Maria, a ten-year-old orphan, the last descendant of the Dukes – White based the character on a local girl, whom he had later hoped to marry – who lives in the decaying palace of Malplaquet (Stowe). Mistress Masham's Repose is the name of an island on the eleven-acre lake, on which White has transposed the Rotondo. Here Maria discovers the descendants of the people of Lilliput, tiny creatures who have been living there for two centuries since escape from captivity. Maria's guardians, the evil Vicar of Malplaquet and Miss Brown, the governess, are dastardly enough to try to capture the Lilliputians for base profit. But Maria, aided by a zany Professor who lives in the Ridings, eventually wins through. Also on her side is a splendid cook, who cycles up and down the basement corridor (surely Plug Street) when she has to answer the bell.

White, of course, would have known Stowe in a much wilder state than that of today and this inspired him to imagine the mansion as virtually derelict. Only six of the 365 windows, wrote White, were not broken! White does not use his setting slavishly, but embellishes Stowe with his imagination. In one section, for example, Maria has to escape from the villains in the mansion to go down to the lake to see the Lilliputians. Having crept down moonlit corridors, "creaking on the bare boards," she is on the level of the state rooms. She

takes a short cut through the Grand Ballroom, "where her feet shuffled on the fallen plaster from the Adam ceiling". Above her are three-ton crystal chandeliers, "too big to sell". She passes through the Third Duke's library, "which had a monster plaster Garter on the ceiling, in gold relief, in celebration of the Order of the Garter which that duke had at last obtained after twenty years of chicanery." She goes through the Main Dining Room, "which had once housed a mahogany table exactly as long as a cricket pitch" and into a little drawing room, "where two Grinling Gibbons mantelpieces had been wrenched from the walls to sell, leaving caverns which looked frightening at night."

At last she comes to "the great double doors which led to the South Front" and finds herself silhouetted in the moonlight between two stone caryatids, "with an antique frieze, stolen by the Fourth Duke from Herculaneum, thirty feet above her head." The steps down the South Front are of marble!

Later on, when the good Professor is searching for Maria, who has been locked in the dungeons (a hint of the Club perhaps), he finds his way into the Gothic Library, alias the "Gothick Billiard Room", which "still had the coat armour of all Maria's ancestors painted on the imitation wooden tracery of the ceiling". Later he searches the Orangery ("where Gibbon had scratched out a semicolon in the famous last paragraph of *Decline And Fall of the Roman Empire*") and the Menagerie ("where the Earl of Chesterfield had once been locked by mistake for two years as a monkey").

White salutes the Comte de Paris' stay at Stowe by allowing the Professor to search the Gun Room ("out of whose window the Duke of Orleans had been accustomed to shoot larks with the corks from champagne bottles"). The novel ends with Maria and the Professor returning to Stowe via the Corinthian Arch. It is twice as big as the Arc de Triomphe and had been erected to welcome the lst Duke "when he came back after conquering the Nabob of Ooze at Marzipan." "It looks noble," observed the Professor, "with the sun behind it. You scarcely notice it is falling down, at least from a distance."

Mistress Masham's Repose, then, is a wonderful blend of fact and fancy. White had kept in touch with Roxburgh and sent him a copy even before the novel was published in England. Roxburgh, strangely, waited four months before reading it, though the response, when it came, was a warm one: "Your fan mail must be enormous," he wrote, "and I should not have added this note to it if I had not thought that you might care to hear direct from Malplaquet." It was, said Roxburgh, the most brilliant thing White had done. He had particularly enjoyed the description of the evil Vicar and Miss Brown in the Cobham monument.

Different readers will enjoy the novel for different things. But those who have known Stowe at first-hand will surely have that extra pleasure of being able to compare fantasy with reality and thereby identify the process of a great literary imagination at work.

T.H. White [centre] in his final term as a schoolmaster, 1936.
"I adored teaching," he later wrote. But for the rest of his life he worked only as a writer. "It suddenly dawned on me that if I didn't look sharp, and get out of the teaching profession, it would be a case of Goodbye, Mr Chips."

2 TIM WHITE REMEMBERED

Nearly sixty years on, several of Tim White's former pupils remember their flamboyant, former English Tutor.

Tim White is still remembered with affection. "Apart from JF," writes Antony Goldingham, "he made a more lasting impression on me than any of the other masters." It is a judgment borne out by the many who replied to *The Stoic*'s invitation for contributions to its T.H. White anniversary feature.

Although White saw himself first as a writer and secondly as Head of the English Department, it seems he was an inspirational teacher. Comments nearly all pay tribute to the vigour and content of his lessons and tutorials.

"One looked forward to his classes," comments Antony Goldingham, "because they were never dull and often digressed into interesting sidelines, not always fully understood." "He was an exciting teacher," writes Robert Law. "One never went to sleep in his class. Much of the subsequent enjoyment I have had in reading English Literature could be said to have been stimulated by him." John Hunter remembers his "refreshingly independent air", Michael Wilson his rude remarks about a fellow Stowe master, Earl Haig his ability to stop him writing long-windedly. "My outstanding memory of him," writes H.E. Vickers, "was his enthusiasm and his eagerness that we share it with him."

John da Silva has already described (in Sylvia Townsend Warner's biography) Tim White lecturing the upper school in the library, "walking around, his gown flowing out, (a very good looking figure) talking fluently about Norman Douglas' *South Wind*, completely holding the attention of every boy there." White, he said, was never known to have given any punishment. He did not need to do so: "We were all too interested to misbehave and he was never the type to invite ragging."

Sometimes he taught in his own form-room, which was situated above the old chemistry laboratory. "I remember how he and we objected to the constant smells of H_2S from the leaking fume-hood ventilation trunking that passed up the walls of our form-room," writes E.S. Chapman. "The very poisonous nature of H_2S was then not fully recognised." If the setting of his lessons was sometimes old-fashioned, not so their content. Recently down from Cambridge, Tim White was well versed in the ideas of I.A. Richards and E.M. Tillyard, which were revolutionising literary criticism. John da Silva remembers a diet of Aristotle's *Poetics*, Longinus and Quintilian, Richards' *Practical Criticism* and *The Meaning of Meaning* and Tillyard's *Poetry Direct and Oblique*. White was harsh, said da Silva, towards romanticism and sentimentality. "His teaching methods were strictly classical."

Photo: Kenric Rice, Stowe 1936

For the cleverer pupils he was obviously stimulating company. But his digressions in class would hold the attention of all. C.B. Croft remembers White giving his class instruction on beer-drinking and pubs. "He advised us to drink beer in half-pints because, he said, it was fresher, a sentiment I doubted in later life." He also demonstrated how to toss a coin in such a way as always to win, a trick no doubt picked up in a favourite hostelry. For all his intellectual brilliance, Tim White displayed a bohemian instinct: "He seemed to accept Stowe," recalls Earl Haig, "as something to tolerate – he was no dedicated schoolmaster, quite happy to slip away to his cottage, somewhere hidden where one would never be allowed to visit."[2] Kenneth Craddock-Hartopp chuckles over White's choice of Shakespearean text: "I think we'll do *Cymbeline* this year – it's the rudest of his plays." Craddock-Hartopp recalls that, when teaching the class how to write essays, White would cite by way of example the works of James Aston (his own early *nom de plume*).

Tim White's temper was unreliable, no doubt sometimes as the result of a hangover or a problem with his latest book. At such moments the English Tutor could be a difficult man to deal with, as Peter Orde discovered:

"Unfortunately we were never in tune. I suspect that he, with all his ability, had little idea how to teach, and I, although I had read deeply and wrote graceful prose, was not mature enough to interpret what he was saying and benefit. He lost patience and told me to find some other subject in which to specialize. He had a severe headache and was suffering from sinusitis; I expect I could have persuaded him, later, to take me back. However, outside his door I met Bill McElwee, the

History Tutor, who ascertained the trouble and invited me to join his historians." A year later Peter Orde won a scholarship to Oxford. "I got in, I was told, not because of the history papers, but because of my English essay." He remembers White being much more human towards him, as soon as he had left his Side: "We had good talks and laughs together. I wish I had seen more of him."

Tim White cut a striking figure at Stowe. Sober suits were worn in those days by all pupils and most masters. But White was his own man. Alex Hellawell remembers him as "a choleric, red-faced handsome man in a well-cut tweed hacking coat and light corduroys." Peter Orde similarly: "A florid, moustached man who wore long, check, tweed hacking jackets with a spotted handkerchief flowing from his breast pocket, corduroys and a very old tweed cap."[3] Kenneth Woods points out that White's "unique" dress was not at all "the de rigueur of JF". "If he was due for a day with the Grafton," writes Antony Goldingham, "he would arrive in morning class with his gown partly hiding his hunting clothes." Kenric Rice also recalls White resplendent for the hunting field as well as causing surprise "dressed in officer's uniform for an OTC parade"[4]. White's sartorial elegance was a topic of much interest in the school, his appearance much remarked upon. "I was always intrigued," writes Goldingham, "by the way a few bits of wiry hair would stick up at the back of his head."

Most of his lessons, with his own tutees, took place in his own study, which is now the Nugent girls' common-room. Peter Orde recalls "large, chunky armchairs, covered with hessian, and a sofa between the two windows. The room was also shared with a red setter, assorted snakes, and (I think) a parrot." Kenneth Wood remembers him similarly. "He would be seen playing classical music, surrounded by his menagerie." H.E. Vickers recalls two Siamese cats "who made a horrible wailing noise."

Hunting was just one of the country pursuits which White was keen to develop. When he arrived, he was only a beginner on a horse, writes Earl Haig. "We talked about salmon fishing, about which he was keen, going off suddenly on long treks to the north of Scotland in his Lancia."[5] Alex Hellawell can still see him standing by the rose garden in Chapel Court practising casting with a trout rod. He was keen with a gun too, though Craddock-Hartopp thought him "the worst shot in Bucks" and John Hunter remembers him being unpopular "for shooting the tufted duck in the Octagon". During his four years at Stowe he carefully kept different diaries of his country interests which he used in *England Have My Bones*. In view of his limited equestrian and shooting skills some of the Stoics, says Goldingham, thought this book showed him as something of a poseur! However, they still looked up to him. The raffish, bohemian side, which complemented his desire to be a country gentleman, they found most appealing. Peter Orde sums up:

"He was, I found, no dedicated teacher. His interests were country sports, especially hunting and falconry, also flying small aeroplanes, and bucolic night life centred on pubs and farmhouses in the neighbourhood – good copy for his next book, perhaps; his writing was of necessity a high priority in his life."

The boys found him a man of interesting contrasts. Friendly and aloof, encouraging and derisive, cheerful yet melancholy. "He seemed always to be enjoying some pleasures of life," recalls Earl Haig, "whether it was sunbathing by the lake or practising his horse over some hurdles near the football grounds – or missing the pheasants round Bill McElwee's house at Vancouver. But in spite of all the pleasure he never looked happy."

His interest in alcohol was well known. There were stories which he circulated, says C.B. Croft, of his taking a pub in the holidays (where he claimed to have slept with the till under his bed). The only person he purported to respect, says Michael Wilson, "was a four-bottle-man, i.e. a man who regularly drank four bottles of port a night!" His love-life was a similar topic of Stoic interest, and most probably not at all as depicted by his biographer, Sylvia Townsend Warner. Great was the talk one morning when a pupil arrived for a tutorial to find him still in bed with a local lady. Peter Choyce, who found him "an amusing, excellent teacher" also remembers that his time at Stowe "was spent pursuing women as well as foxes." Barmaids featured in a number of legends. "There was a story", writes John Hunter, "that he was keen on a local barmaid and took her off to London in his open Bentley.[6] As they passed some stockbroker-belt "tudor" houses, she remarked 'I do love these old houses, don't you?' whereupon he turned the car round and took her back to the pub." There was some truth in the barmaid gossip. Obsessed with one young barmaid, White had taken to spending six hours a day in her pub "as temperately as is consistent with remaining in her good graces".

Sixty years is a long enough time to blur most memories, yet T.H. White lives on vividly for many of his former tutees and pupils. Above all, perhaps, it is T.H. White the motorist, which is the fondest, most abiding image. He had an elderly black Bentley[7] to begin with, "an unusual two-seater model, with a pointed rear end". Antony Goldingham remembers White paid £75 for it. After he had comprehensively crashed this one night, through a wall and into a house, he acquired another, similarly distinctive vehicle, a Lancia Lambda, famous for its "coffin-like" proportions and wicker seats. In Bentley and Lancia he was at his most engaging, "a glamorous figure" (writes Michael Brown) "chugging along the long drive between Stowe and Chackmore".

[*The Stoic* is most grateful to the Old Stoics who wrote in on the subject of T.H. White and would be delighted to hear from others whom, inadvertently, it may have failed to contact.]

3 AN ENCOUNTER WITH T.H. WHITE

Donald Demarest [right], an American at Stowe in the 1930s, was one of T.H. White's tutees. He subsequently went to Cambridge and at the start of the war returned to the United States, where he has enjoyed a successful career as an editor and writer. We publish below a short extract from the biography of T.H. White which he has recently completed and is as yet unpublished.

It was a bright September morning in 1934 when I sat waiting for him in his study whose broad French windows gave onto the lawn that led to the school chapel. I was waiting rather impatiently because I wanted a favour from him. I had just passed the School Certificate which provided entrée to a university and I wanted to take a scholarship in English Literature at Cambridge. This meant I would need tutoring. And Mr White was the only man who could provide it.

I was not at all sure he would. In fact, when I briefly broached it with him a few days before in one of the endless school corridors, he had practically dismissed the possibility out of hand. But he had invited me to come and discuss it this morning...

There had been a note pinned to the door: "Go in. Find something to read. Make yourself comfortable. Have gone to the village to replenish my buttery. Help yourself to cigarettes in the box shaped like an aeroplane on the mantlepiece. Tim."

Of course, the boys at Stowe were forbidden to smoke, but the invitation seemed typical. As was the use of his nickname. Mr White could be counted on to behave eccentrically, diametrically opposite to what could be expected from most schoolmasters. I had smoked the occasional Wild Woodbine in the rat-redolent refuge of the Temple of Ancient Virtue, but felt awkward doing so on school premises.

Instead I sat on the overstuffed sofa under the French windows and took in my surroundings. The opposite wall was divided by a stout oaken door. On either side of this were Hogarth and Rowlandson prints of overweight lechers and ladies in 18th century costume whose bosoms were spilling out of their dresses. On my left were bookcases crammed with morocco-bound tomes and bright Albatross paperbacks. Above an untidy desk was a painting of naked Rubensesque she-devils tossing poor souls into a violent cauldron of vermilion flames. It was boldly signed T.H.W. On my right was a large fireplace with carefully arranged logs and kindling, ferns, and what looked like a murky aquarium.

I got up to take a closer look. On the mantelpiece apart from the silver racing plane with gold-tipped cigarettes in its cockpit, there was a profusion of Venetian glass tumblers, a fretted pipe-rack, a stuffed jay and a ceramic goblet shaped like a skull. Further out a top hat, a riding crop and hunting horn were perched on moulting deer antlers. On one side of the door, under the prints, was a mounted fox mask with a scroll GRAFTON, BUCKINGHAM, TO DAVENTRY, 2 HRS 20 MINS. and a stuffed salmon...

The room smelled of tobacco, beer, animals, bird excrement and a musky, not unpleasant human odour.

I took a volume at random from the shelves and sat back on the sofa. It was a battered, extremely ancient and crumbling treatise in Latin on prehistoric or mythical animals, with woodcuts depicting such species as the Basilisk, the Cockatrice and the Mantricore. It was scribbled all over (even though it must have been an immensely rare and valuable book) in clear but minute handwriting in green ink...

I turned one page sideways to read White's comments about the Salamander...Just then I heard a sinister rustle under the sofa and pulled my legs up. But when I heard nothing else, I decided it was my imagination and went on reading...I was so absorbed that I didn't hear the door open and looked up guiltily to find the room's owner wrestling with some packages and an Irish setter that was doing its best to upend him.

Mr White laid down the box which was stamped YOUNGER'S SCOTCH ALE and handed me one of the wrapped bottles from under his arm. "Here", he said brusquely, "put this sherry in the cupboard under the bookcase."

Close up he looked smaller and less awesome than he did on the lecture platform or disappearing down a corridor in hunting pinks. Although he was over six foot, he was fine-boned with small delicate hands and feet. He was wearing a tattered tweed jacket, a fisherman's jersey and grey flannels. Carefully and neatly opening the box he removed a brown bottle and set it on the floor. Only then, fending off the dog with one hand, and without removing his pipe, he gravely extended the other to me.

"Sorry to be late. The Bentley was being bitchy. All machines are female, you know, especially planes and racing cars." His voice was deep and musical, seeming to come from the toes of his polished boots. "Incidentally, meet Brownie. She thinks I'm her husband and so is insanely jealous."

T.H. White had reddish curly hair, piercing blue eyes and a sweeping moustache over an astonishingly full and scarlet lower lip. He stared at me with an unwinking and benevolent curiosity... I decided that he looked remarkably like the Phillips portrait of Byron – a reproduction of which was in the school library – or a

Photo: Donald Demarest

T.H. White with his merlin ('Balan') in Stowe Ridings, 1938

flattering cartoon of the Duke of Gloucester. I was too shy to tell him this, but remarked on the variety of his books and that some were my own favourites.

"I see you have been reading my *Bestiary*," he said. Embarrassed, I mumbled something about being scared to handle such an old and apparently priceless volume. "That's all right. That's what books are for. Not to be kept under lock and key." However, he picked it up and put it back in the bookcase.

Mr White turned to me with a boyish, almost defiant expression. "I plan to do a translation of the 12th Century Latin with appropriate annotations. There are probably only two people alive who know more about the subject than I do..." He busied himself opening the beer with a gadget made from a deer horn. Then he poured its contents into two of the Venetian goblets, exactly filling each. He looked at me.

"I presume you are not a teetotaller. If so have some ginger beer." I shook my head and reached for the glass which he withheld. "Get the second book on the left from the bottom shelf," he said, "and open it at page 73." This turned out to be the blue Oxford edition of the collected poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. It opened automatically to page 73, which was dog-eared and scribbled over. The poem was 'The Windhover'. "Take a sip of beer," he said, finally relinquishing the glass. "Sit on the sofa. Read it to yourself and then read it to me."

I stumbled through the poem, mentally matching some of his own cadence as he had read it to a class, and looked up. Mr White was waiting patiently with his arms on the mantelpiece. He nodded.

I read it aloud, attempting to catch some of his remembered rhythm, his emphases, his dramatic rise and fall. "MOR-ning's minion. KING-dom of DAY-light's DAU-phin.. dapple-dawn-drawn Fal-con, in his RID-ing..."

He waited several seconds after I'd finished as if he were swirling the phrases against his palate. "Good", he said at last. "Tell me what it means." I more or less reproduced what he had told the class and his sharp eyes hooded. "Not bad. Of course, it is only the high-brows with their heads up their arses who get off the track on words like 'wimpling'. Any ordinary flier could explain it with hand gestures."

He sipped at his beer. "I hear you're having trouble with your father," he said suddenly but not unkindly, and I surprised myself by not blushing. "They tell me that he kidnapped you after the divorce and brought you to England."

This time I felt my face flaming. I had believed this was my secret. Mr White puffed at his pipe, audibly. "My own parents were divorced when I was fourteen. Big scandal in the papers. (Puff) I didn't get over it until I went up to Cambridge."

This time I was sure of the noise under me. It

Illustration from *Mistress Masham's Repose*. By permission of The Folio Society.

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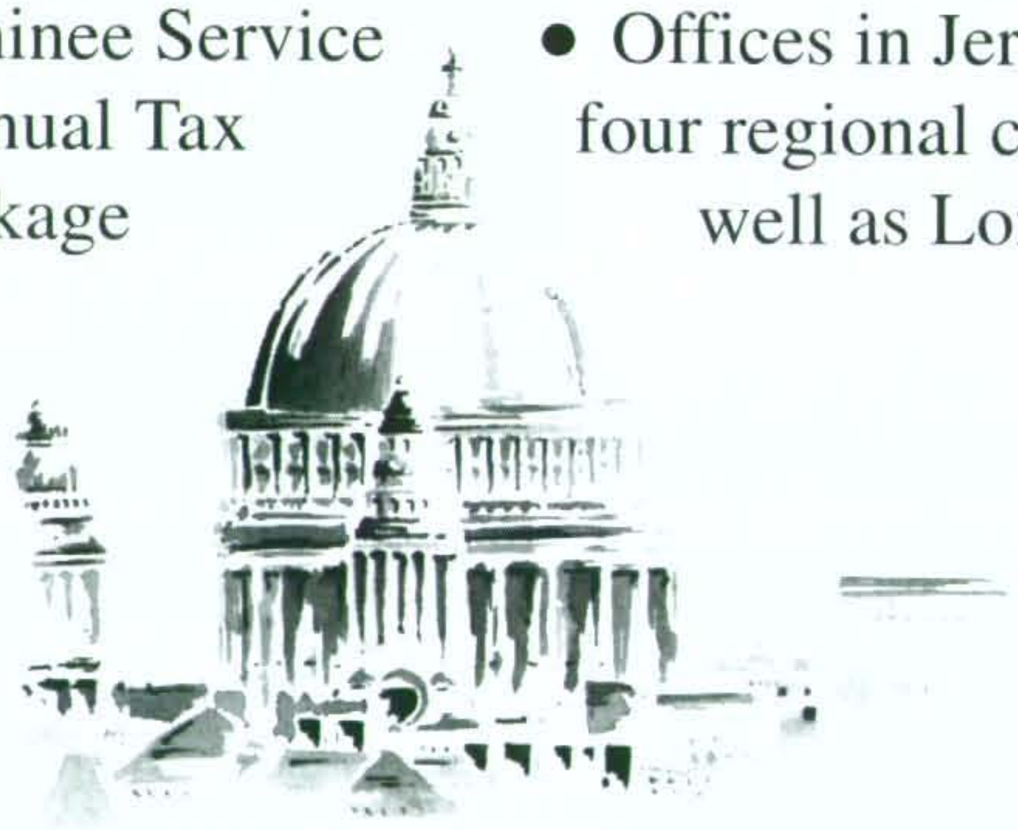

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sounded stealthy and implacable, too much of both to be mice. I peered over the arm. What seemed to be a spring or a grey-green stick had protruded from the bottom of the sofa. It started to undulate. I could feel a tickle at the base of my skull. Automatically I raised the heavy edition of Hopkins.

I felt my arm caught and Mr White's breath, saw his face, purple with veins straining in his forehead, inches from my own. "It's a grass snake," he hissed. "A pet. It won't do you any harm... you murderer."

Then he collapsed onto the sofa beside me, panting. "I'm sorry," he said in a strained whisper. "I should have warned you. They are harmless, beautiful, independent creatures." But he hadn't released his grip on my arm even though the book had fallen on the floor. "The boys slaughter them. Wantonly. This room is a refuge."

He went back to the mantelpiece and leaned against it, his head in his arms. From behind he looked almost vulnerable. After some minutes he turned, having apparently recovered his composure and humour.

"Grass snakes," he said, "are fascinating creatures. It's impossible to impose on them, or to steal their affections, or to have any two-way degradation. They are always themselves with a separate silurian beauty. They are more ancient than the mammoth and infinitely more lovely. One could meditate upon them, like a jeweller, for months."

"How many of them are there?" I asked. "Do they have names?" "Considering the treatment snakes have had from Christians it would be inappropriate to insult them with a Christian name. It would be ridiculous to give a snake a name, any more than a motor car. If one had to address a snake, I suppose it would be proper to address it by its generic title: 'Snake.' Right now I have two. A husband and a wife."

He finished his beer and wiped the foam from his moustache. "I can't blame you," he said, "for your instinctive reaction. Terror of snakes is a human taboo dating back to Genesis and beyond..." He looked into the bottom of his glass and set it back on the mantelpiece. "Come, we will feed Mistress Snake. Generally snakes only dine once a month, but since she is pregnant she has to eat for twenty."

I finished my beer and, from somewhere, swiftly and unexpectedly – perhaps from a pocket, perhaps from the aquarium – Mr White produced a live frog. He brought it to me. It felt warm and weightless in my hand. "Frogs are a great delicacy for snakes... Here, Madame, my friend has a treat for you."

The snake poured toward me in a swift zig-zag, making a sandy, rustling sound on the parquetry. She stopped a few inches from my extended hand, hissed twice and slowly raised her jewelled head, her unblinking amethyst eye. Her flickering forked tongue brushed my fingers as lightly as a feather.

One moment the frog was in my palm. And then it was gone, leaving a warm dampness. I could see it disappearing down that yellow-dominoed length, changing in size from a tennis ball to a ping-pong ball by the time it reached the snake's slightly swollen middle. Then she slithered back to her refuge beneath the couch.

"I should like you to write a paper on grass snakes," Mr White said. "Now that you have made a personal acquaintance with one of the species."

He returned to the mantelpiece – his refuge as the sofa was for the snake – his 'querencia'. He refilled his pipe, tamping it with the tail of the model aeroplane and relighting it by flicking the propeller which produced a small yellow flame.

"There's no great shakes getting a scholarship to Cambridge," he said when the hooked briar was functioning satisfactorily. "All you have to do is convince the dons that you are on familiar terms with their pets, neither overawed nor unmoved by them. However, I warn you that I am a ferocious taskmaster. And you'll have to start back at the beginning with grammar and punctuation."[8]

Footnotes by Donald Demarest

(1) Unlike Bill McElwee and other masters, THW never had many tutees: only six in all. We met in his study. In his last two years I was his only tutee. He would then hold a lot of our tutorials walking around the grounds, riding in the Bentley and playing darts in local pubs.

(2) To my knowledge THW never had a "cottage" until he left Stowe in 1936 and rented the cottage in the Ridings. (I visited him there and helped "man" his first goshawk, after I left Stowe. Away from School he lived in various pubs - chiefly The Crown in Tingewick, run by Jimmy and Flodie Blaize, who later joined him on Alderney. Once he was left to run it alone - hence the sleeping with the till under his bed. The barmaid whom he wanted to marry and set up in a pub in Cambridge was also at The Crown.

(3) According to Nigel Clive, when he first arrived he wore "smart London clothes". His sporting attire came later. Some masters, not all (not George Rude certainly) wore sober attire. The boys in those days wore the school uniform, grey flannels in the week, blue suits on Sunday. First and last days of term we were allowed to peacock in holiday garb.

(4) I can't imagine THW wearing an officer's uniform for an OTC parade. He was too vehement a pacifist and detested the OTC. Perhaps this was Bill McElwee?

(5) There are several mentions in these recollections of his Lancia. I can't remember any car apart from the Bentley, and, later, in the Ridings, an ancient Austin. When news of *Sword* success came, just as the Austin was dying, he bought the Jaguar which he had the rest of his life. Perhaps he borrowed a Lancia. He couldn't have afforded one. There are different and marvellous stories about the crash which demolished the Bentley...

(6) & (7) See above re barmaid and Lancia Lambda. THW used to brag that he had a "Rolls-Bentley" i.e. a Rolls motor in a Bentley body, but experts have questioned this.

(8) Excerpted from *The Once and Future Merlyn: In Pursuit of the Elusive T.H. White* by Donald Demarest. Copyright 1995.

Restoration work on the Temple dedicated 'To Venus of the Gardens' (VENERI HORTENSI).

(Larger photos: MJB. Photos of detail: Al Bianco)

Stowe Gardens Restoration

On 15th July 1995 the newly restored Temple of Venus was officially opened again to the public, thus marking at Stowe the centenary of the National Trust. It now looks superb, with domes like Kent's original ones of the 1730s added to each side pavilion, and doorways restored to the front and back. All the roof, stone and plaster work has been fully conserved, while the interior boasts a replica coved ceiling. No doubt there will be mixed feelings about the fact that too little of Sleter's original interior paintings has survived for the lewd scenes of adultery and a naked Venus to be repainted. In the four niches outside, however, copies have returned of the former busts of Nero, Cleopatra, Faustina and Vespasian. Kent's Bastion, the promontory on which the building stands, has been recreated with a new ha-ha and wall along the line of the original, revealed by careful excavation. Apart from the absence of Carpenter's group of Cain & Abel in front, the Temple now looks externally much as it did by 1738 and well reveals the effectiveness of Kent's bold design.

Elsewhere in the grounds the National Trust continues to make rapid progress. Most of the woods alongside the Grecian Valley have now been thinned and replanted with over 5,000 new trees and shrubs. The new paths follow old routes as revealed from excavation and maps, as is also the case in the newly aligned tracks in the Elysian Fields. In the 'Japs' at Lamport, the wire and electric fence is now in place

and birds are being kept as in the second Duke's time. Even the Army has helped in demonstrating how the removal of branches from a dying beech tree by means of explosives can create new habitats for wildlife. Repairs to the ha-ha wall alongside the Straight Course or Buchanan Avenue have been finished and work is now in hand from Bell Gate to the Temple of Friendship. Outside the garden the National Trust has been able to acquire part of the New Inn Farm and the whole of Home Farm, allowing much more of the wider landscape and parkland to be conserved.

Meanwhile, the vast Temple of Concord and Victory is nearing completion, now scheduled for 1996. The visitor tearooms will be moved to a temporary site in the National Trust carpark and the lavatories will probably be re-sited in that area too, leaving the magnificent Temple of Concord once again to dominate its Grecian Valley.

MJB

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THE YEAR

Photo: Andrew Pearce (Richard Thomson-Moore)

Still Life by Jenny Ridge, whose work was placed in the top five in the country by her A-level Exam Board.

— THE SENIOR TUTOR'S YEAR —

IT

IT and Europe continue to fill our screens. All Stoics now acquire competence in Word Processing and use of spreadsheets, and there is huge pressure on the Computer Centre as project dates loom. Information retrieval from CDRom is a growth area and two departments are on the Internet. The Science Department is just getting a class set of Palmtops, which can be linked to Dataloggers to provide hands-on experience of modern measurement. The Library catalogue is almost computerised and pupils will soon have access to CDRom there too.

Moves

The European Centre in Stanhope is to be opened officially by Sir Leon Brittan early in 1996, although it is already much in use. There has been some shuffling of classrooms to provide recognisably coherent areas for each subject. Theatre Studies has moved into the old AVR next to the Paul Dobinson Theatre; Classics is now in the old Careers and Geology area; Geology has moved into the main Science Building, as originally envisaged; History of Art has moved into the Art and History block.

Exams

Four of our five Oxbridge hopefuls achieved the necessary grades, three for Engineering at Cambridge and the fourth for Biochemistry at Oxford. We hope that non-science subjects get more of a look-in this year. November 1995 saw the last Oxford exams; from now on, pre-A-level Oxford aspirants will apply for conditional offers like everyone else. The exams had become an anachronism, but it was fun teaching towards them. 60% of the Class of '95 achieved A-level grades for at least one of their universities in the UK. Two have gone on to college in the States (one to Brown) and several to university in Germany and Italy. Many Stoics are now applying after A-level and it is good to note that 90% of the Class of '94 is now at university somewhere.

Our 1995 A-level results maintained the overall improvement of recent years, with a modest increase in the average UCAS points per candidate to a new high of 19.2. 35% of the year group achieved 24 points or more. Amongst the splendid artists Jennifer Ridge was in the top five nationwide for her Exam Board. Value Added between GCSE and A-level, according to ALIS, remained steady at just under l grade per candidate.

The Fifth Form did well to maintain and even increase slightly last year's high proportion of A grades, now at 31% of all entries. 94% of the year achieved 5 or more passes at Grade C or better. Thirteen boys scored 7 or more A grades, six of these with a clean sweep of As.

What next?

Education continues to undergo upheaval nationally, whilst it is used as a political football in the run-up to the next election. Watch this space for news of short, fat GCSEs, long, thin GCSEs and fresh alternatives to A-level.

GMH

— THE IT YEAR —

Houses with Windows

All ten boarding Houses now have 486 PCs running Windows and inkjet printers. The computer room has 24 Windows-based machines and a smaller computer room with six machines is under development next to it. A computer room is also planned for the Science block so, whatever IT-related classes are going on, there should always be somewhere for Stoics to continue their individual work on a computer.

Jukeboxes are back

The library and the computer room both have computers linked to jukeboxes of CDRoms, giving staff and Stoics access to around forty disks of reference material which includes the full Oxford English Dictionary and many multimedia titles. Network access to newspapers and careers material is provided over the networks in the computer room and the European Studies Centre (becoming a single network covering much of the teaching area of the school with the installation of some more cables during the Christmas break). Art and all three science departments also provide access to specialist material on departmental multimedia machines.

Ring around the world

One of the most exciting recent IT developments is the Internet which is already in many homes and offices and is being explored in many schools. Stowe is currently exploring Net access through BT Campus World and RM Internet for Learning, two educational servers providing restricted Net access and curriculum services, and several departments have their own Net access. Middle Sixth physicists have used the Internet to gather information for their A-Level Research Paper and modern linguists are finding Campus World a useful source of teaching material. Contact with other schools via E-mail or Discussion Groups is beginning. Dedicated lines, giving faster access than present telephone links, are planned and a limited E-mail service for Stoics will be provided.

ME

CHAPEL

"...but most of all I took away the impression of a happy place whose values are in the right place."

"The young people from the School were simply delightful... They will certainly have a civilising influence wherever they go."

"Visiting Stowe was a most uplifting experience for me."

"I was so impressed by the whole atmosphere of the School."

"What a super place and what a good spirit in Chapel."

"It was a joy to attend your Service and to feel that it truly was a time of worship for many young people and not just a public school compulsory formality."

"I was so impressed with the maturity and spirituality of the boys I met. I found that they could discuss things at an intellectual level but were also able to express something of their personal faith in a very direct way..."

These are the comments of some recent visitors to Stowe who preached and had lunch with us: Lord Morris of Castle Morris, Baroness Blatch, Emma Nicholson, MP, the Bishop of St Albans, Lord Coggan, Baroness Cox and Baroness Mcfarlane. What more can I add? It is a privilege to serve the Stowe community. I have invited members of that community to share this report since it is they who make this school what it is. A place where young people prepare not just for life but for eternity.

I shall content myself with a few 'thank yous.' To my many colleagues who speak and preach in Chapel I am especially grateful. The degree of support I receive is enormous, with Rob Jackson, Anthony Bewes and now Andrew Dalton, our new Head of Theology, providing a particular source of encouragement.

John Cooper Green, Jamie Henderson and the Chapel Choir ensure that the Chapel resounds with "glorious praise" and while it is hard to believe, they really did succeed in making this year's Carol Service even better than ever before.

Annie Nichols and her flower ladies and Patricia Smith and the cleaners provide invaluable support and were again tireless in their work this year, but as always, each year, it is my Chapel Prefects to whom I owe the greatest debt of thanks. Tom Chambré and his assistant Jamie Pelly really did ensure that the Chapel could operate quite effectively, without the Chaplain! It is always a treat to have a prefect who knows what you want done before you ask, and who does it all with energy and ability. Furthermore, it is an enormous encouragement to know that someone is able to be even later for everything on a regular basis than me!

And the high point of the year? With another huge Confirmation Service, the Service of Dedication of the Cheshire Bust, and a series of preachers of unparalleled excellence that we have enjoyed, it seems hard to choose. Let me suffice with the normality of two holes of golf after celebrating Ascension Day morning with Communion at the Rotundo with 150 Stoics at 7.00 am! The secular and the sacred inextricably entwined!

TMHS

Confirmation

The following were confirmed by the Right Revd. Colin Bennetts, the Bishop of Buckingham, on 21st May 1995 in the Chapel:

Tamsin Abecasis, George Alcock, Marusya Boxell, Hugh Carling, Amber Nuttall, Henry Titley, Oliver Henderson (prepared by ELCT and RSD); Alexander Bayley, Leo Brown, Sam Emery, Peter Horrell, Matthew Newnham (prepared by PASF and PAHS); Tom Arkwright, Michael Hyslop, Tom Johnson, Nick Kirkwood, Ben Pattinson, Alistair Rykens (prepared by SCT and MJB); Ben Bloomfield, Oliver Booth, Edward Bowring, Mark Denning, Harry Granville, Giles Hayward, Jack Hazell, Jonathan Legge, Hamish Mount, William Morley, Ashley Smatt, Barney Wrightson (prepared by TMHS and SJBA); William Austen, Peter Gomme, Hamish Gordon-Lennox, Dominic Gwyn-Jones, Benjamin Hales (prepared by RBJ); Richard Going, Alistair Lockhart-Smith, Andrew Maclean, Sam Tyler (prepared by KFD); Hugo Chance, Damian Darkko, Christopher Johnson, Thomas Kulei, Alexander Medwell-Bates, James Sleater, Jerome Starkey, James Vane-Tempest (prepared by TMHS and ACNB); Roy Chambers, Richard De Butts, Tristan Lake, Sam Morley, Peter Thomas, Gavin McIntyre (prepared by ACNB).

A Chapel Prefect's View

by Tom Chambré

Moving chairs, lighting candles, tidying up books, ensuring that Stoics leave Chapel in an orderly fashion, being asked to read in Chapel at the last minute and being rude to the Chaplain to keep him humble (something we have learnt from his treatment of his prefects!) are all part of the life of a Chapel Prefect.

Major services like the Confirmation of over 50 Stoics or the Service of Dedication attended by the Duke of Kent are remembered for the number of hours spent planning, sorting things out and tidying up, rather than for the events in themselves, wonderful though they were.

Having a fellow Irishman give the Lenten Address was, however, a special treat for me! The Revd. Leonard Browne of St Barnabas, Cambridge spoke with power and authority and stirred up interest in new and unexpected quarters while at the same time feeding the faithful.

It has been enormous fun acting as Chapel Prefect this year and it's just possible that the Chaplain has at last learnt something about the distribution patterns of solicitors, estate agents and builders in Belfast over the last thirty years. I certainly tried to teach him!

Reflections on the Year

by Jonathan Corbishley, Tom Smith Walker and Harry Speir

At the heart of Stowe is an active Christian centre. Many events – Crossfire, Bible Studies, Confirmation Classes, "just looking groups" and prayer meetings – serve to encourage, unite and teach us. Many people come from outside the School to explain and expand upon different aspects of the Christian faith. Their variety is breathtaking. One week a missionary, the Revd. Steve Coulron, or an ex-convict, Ron Simms, or a former Chicago Bear, the Revd. Steve Conner or a team from Albania. The next, the former Speaker of the House of Commons, Viscount Tonypandy, or Home Office Minister, Baroness Blatch.

Crossfire is a wonderful chance to get together to teach, to pray and to encourage each other each week, and it is amazing to see the number and variety of Stoics who come along. But with speakers like the Dean of Peterborough, the Revd. Jonathan Fletcher, the Revd. Simon Scott and former Merseyside police-man, the Revd. Charlie Royden, this is perhaps hardly surprising! But the atmosphere is excellent.

A particular highlight recently was the extraordinary art exhibition in the Chapel by Paul Hobbs. He expressed incredible truths through the simplicity of his work and we all found him fascinating as he helped us to see the world in a new way.

But for all of us the most memorable aspect of the year was leading Chapel ourselves. When your peers stand up to lead Chapel it inevitably arouses interest in the School! We found other Stoics were supportive, generous in their comments and seemed genuinely to have found it useful too! We all loved doing it and learned so much from it. It was a wonderful opportunity.

Confessions from the Chapel Committee

by James Mahon

Stoics are more generous than you may think. This year they again gave almost £9,000 to a whole lot of different charities. While some of this came from parents and visitors it still means that each Stoic gives about £10 a year. Many give a lot more. While it is easy to try to squeeze more money out of fellow pupils using a mixture of guilt and 'Kray twin' subtlety, this in fact robs giving of its point. Giving should be from the heart. A recognition of the source of all that we have. A 'thank you'. Educationally it should also remind us of our vast wealth, compared to the poverty of so many.

As before at the Birtathon, the Summer Term's Charity Night aroused huge interest and brought in over £1,500 for various cancer charities in a fairly painless way (except for Tom Chambré's ego, which was seriously dented by Ashley Smatt's IV Form syndicate who decided to avenge themselves on him by paying £275 to "Splat the Prefect").

Giving is a rather serious business which makes it all the more important that, if fun can be injected into it, it should be.

Viscount Tonypandy with William Barratt, William Bloomfield, Toby Dixon, Damian Hoare and Emily & Edward Hastie-Smith

Photo: TMHS

Sermon preached by Viscount Tonypandy in Stowe Chapel

15th October 1995

I want to tell you three stories that are linked together by an invisible thread. If you do not spot it, do not worry because I will reveal it to you. Like all threads it is strong, but not necessarily obvious until it is shown to you.

When I was a boy, I lived in the Rhondda Valley in South Wales. I was brought up in a mining community. Until the law was changed even children as young as ten would work down the mines all day. One evening I was sitting at the table with my mother and two brothers. My brother, Emrys, aged twelve, had already spent two years working in the mine. As we sat that evening with the oil lamp on the table – this was before all the houses had electricity – the whole house was shaken. I saw the terrified look in my mother's eyes. "It's the mine!" she said. My mother, brothers and I ran for the door, threw it open and headed for the mine.

Every door in the street was opening, shafts of light being thrown out onto the dark street – everyone had friends or relatives working down the mine. They carried out rescues in the coal mines using the same method up to the 1960s. The rescuers would take a bird in a cage down the shaft and hold it out in front of them. They would move forward until the bird fell off its perch and died – then they would know it was too dangerous to go on any farther and would retreat.

My step-father's job was to open the lift, in the shaft, cranking it up and down through half a mile from the coal face every day. That night we all crowded around the entrance to the shaft, waiting to see who was involved – that was everything. As the rescuers worked I watched them all through the night.

The second story is about a visit I made to the Seychelles when I was a Foreign Office Minister. The British Royal Navy used to have a base there. They would intercept ships carrying slaves from Mombasa in Kenya to America. Once they had captured the ship they would release all the former slaves on the Seychelles. It is a beautiful place and they stayed.

During my stay there I visited a leper colony. There were only three inhabitants there – two women and a man. They would just sit staring out across the water to the place where their families lived. The two women perhaps out of embarrassment, shyness or not speaking English, said nothing to me. The man I spoke with: he had lost all his fingers and thumbs – only stumps remained where once they had been.. His toes too he had lost and only one tooth remained in his mouth. And then I saw another person – a young person – young at least beside my age at that time, a young man of twenty-eight who had come to nurse these poor lepers in the colony. "Are you a Christian?" I asked. "That's why I am here," came the reply.

The third story is another from my own experience. Two years before it gained its independence and ceased to be a British colony, I joined a Parliamentary group travelling out to Kenya. Whilst I was there I visited the only Secondary Technical School which existed in the whole country at the time. The Headmaster was a Methodist friend of mine – you'll have to excuse me, Chaplain, for that little commercial!

There were three steps up to the door of the school. As we approached I saw a boy standing at the foot of them. He wore a khaki shirt and shorts and was barefoot – not out of choice, but because he could not afford shoes. He stood to attention as we walked past him and into the school. I wondered what he had done wrong to deserve this punishment.

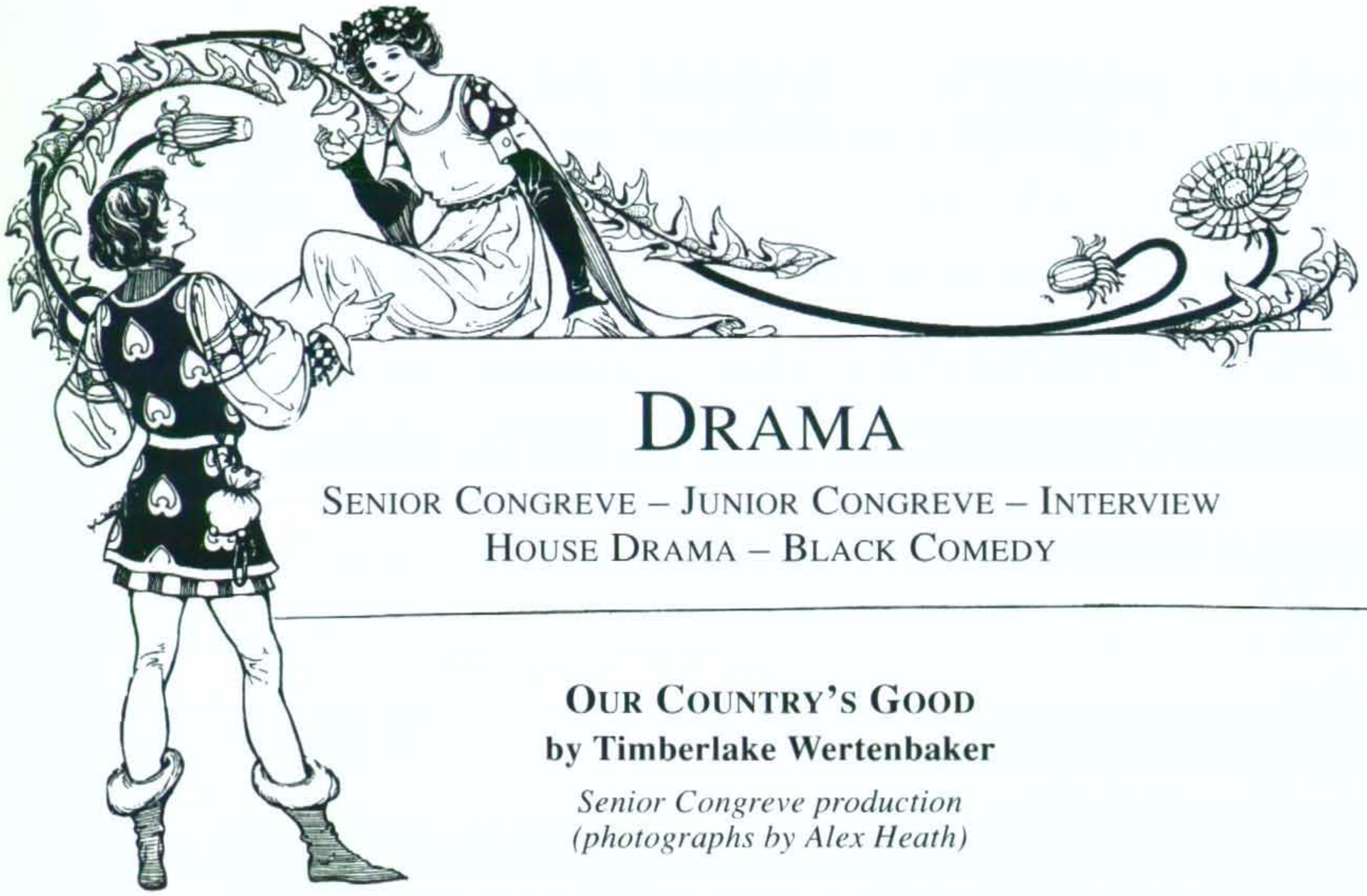
At the end of my visit, I noticed the boy still standing there and this time asked the Headmaster what he had done wrong. He had done nothing wrong – he had been waiting there by the school steps for three days – waiting to see if a place could be found for him in the school. A place was found for him – but most were not so lucky.

What links these three stories is the word 'care'. Those people in the Rhondda cared. That young priest in the Seychelles cared. That young man in Kenya cared. This ability to care is what enhances life, and makes people matter.

I was privileged for three years to sit in the House of Lords next to one of your greatest Old Boys – Lord Cheshire. Now there was a man who Cared with passion and energy – driven by the love of Christ, and his was a care that changed and enriched life.

Young people, all of you have this ability to care. It is God-given. It is what makes the difference. Learn to care, learning to make the difference. To care is to do God's work in his world, for his glory.

Amen



DRAMA

SENIOR CONGREVE – JUNIOR CONGREVE – INTERVIEW
HOUSE DRAMA – BLACK COMEDY

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD
by Timberlake Wertenbaker

Senior Congreve production
(photographs by Alex Heath)

Credit should be given for originality in choosing this fairly recent (1988) play. The ideas involved in this play are interestingly worthwhile, though this critic wondered if perhaps they were rather too heavy to handle by this particular dramatist. Perhaps there are problems, too, when dramatising the essentially episodic nature of a novel. However, "Mr. Farquhar's balanced words" in *The Recruiting Officer* should be an example to his less illustrious successor. The themes in *Our Country's Good* are significant enough. The year is 1788 and a group of convicts arrives at the penal colony of Botany Bay in Australia. Although brutalised by habitual rough treatment, the convicts are invited to take part in the first play ever performed on the Australian continent, George Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*, a polished Restoration comedy of manners. The scene is set for a battle between the forces of enlightenment and bigotry, liberalism and repression, punishment and reform. A debate on justice may indeed be set up in the play but the writer's bias is clear from the beginning and the audience's sympathies are fairly crudely manipulated. It is a battle of ideas, the moral outcome of which is known from the start. Still, the idea of this conflict being fought out in a colony consisting only of soldiers and convicts should be interesting; if only the narrative complexities permissible in a novel could have been more dramatically streamlined for the stage.

The production itself had much to recommend it. The costumes were very good, especially those of the 18th century military men. The movement on the stage was generally good; much of the acting was excellent; the actors concentrated on what they were doing and on what was going on on the stage around them and there was firm discipline, albeit slightly at the expense of pace and volume. The subtler scenes were subtly done, but tended to come across as set pieces, somewhat divorced from the play as a whole. Indeed, if a criticism were to be made, it would be this sense of the production being a shade too static; sometimes the actors seemed stranded on the stage. Sometimes they seemed too distant and this had an effect upon the acoustics in the centre of the auditorium. Perhaps some of the scenes could have been brought forward on the stage a little more. This seemed to be the case, for example, in the otherwise excellently crafted scene involving the officers' dinner, when there appeared to be an unnecessary space at the front of the large Roxburgh stage. Perhaps, too, some of the cuts made to the original text made the narrative occasionally rather difficult to follow. But enough cavilling ratiocination. The meticulous attention to detail on the part of the

Angus Havers and Davina Brennan

Sam Emery (Ralph Clark)

directors, David Barr and Fiona Baddeley, together with the absence of things going wrong in what was obviously a technically complex production, is to be warmly congratulated. The stage management, sound and lighting were all highly professional in their execution. The set design was clever, effective and sophisticated. Paul Harris's music added helpfully to the atmosphere of the play, directed flawlessly by Simon Post and with the solo instrumentalists producing many good sounds.

David Barr's productions are always characterised by the actors' careful attention to speaking. This was no exception to that rule and, in particular, some of the difficult regional accents were convincingly achieved and perfectly sustained: from Angus Havers' Irish brogue to Alexis Marcq's Cockney whine and Helen Kerford-Byrnes' broad Devonian.

On the side of the Enlightenment was the Governor of New South Wales, excellently acted by William Kemble-Clarkson, whose understanding of liberal ideals was wearily restricted by his experienced awareness of the difficulties pertaining to their practical translation. Although we know that Captain Phillip had retired from commanding ships of the line, was he possibly directed here to be just a little too doddery? After all, the enlightened statements which he issues are vigorously pursued in the play. He is clearly someone who is not going to change his civilised notions when encountering bigoted subordinates. Still, William Kemble-Clarkson spoke with particular clarity and the character's humanity was presented most convincingly by him as he advised the incredulous opposition that "a play is a world within itself, a tiny colony; the theatre is an expression of civilisation." It was just a little unfortunate that he was required to be such a tired old man when voicing such exciting and refreshing notions in so bleak and sparse a situation. His effectiveness was shown, after all, in the progress of the convicts as actors. At first, and most realistically, the latter were unable to distinguish between the characters in the play and those in real life. Five months on, however, we had a moving scene where the convicts were able to discuss the play with the enlightened intelligence for which Captain Phillip must have hoped.

Ranged against Captain Phillip was the arbitrary justice dispensed by his military officers. Kristjan Byfield's performance as Major Ross was particularly noteworthy in this regard. He represented the menacing force of reaction impressively, sustaining an ugly variety of Scots accent throughout. When Captain Phillip mentioned the liberal outlook of Rousseau, Ross complained that he was French and he sarcastically challenged Second Lieutenant Clark to "change society." The Major's philistinism was made particularly dramatic when, together with Captain Campbell (Gavin McIntyre) he interrupted Lieutenant Clark's rehearsal to flog various perceived malefactors. A fine ensemble was presented on the stage when we saw, juxtaposed one against the other, Arscott (Andrew Pearce) being whipped in the shadows while Clark was struggling to continue with his rehearsal on the other side of the stage. The duality of this conflict in approach was developed in the characters of the Advocate General (William Barratt), trying to reason with Captain Trench (Nicholas Barrington-Wells).

Sam Emery gave us a particularly impressive performance in representing the most complex character in the play, the young Second Lieutenant Ralph Clark. He was appointed by the Governor to direct the play in the face of opposition from fellow officers and problems of starvation and mutiny amongst the convicts. Sam communicated a real sense of tension as he lurched between frustration, sympathy and exhilaration. He acted meticulously throughout the performance as he

Oliver Bray (Harry Brewer) and
Fenella Hunt (Duckling Smith)

Angus Havers (Ketch Freeman)

reacted to the vagaries of the other characters, sometimes responding to protracted narratives and at other moments showing his callow vulnerability when pitched among the female convicts or coping with more experienced senior officers. The range of tasks required from him was considerable: from struggling with the heat of an Australian night to mistaking the attempted seduction of a hard-bitten female criminal as some sort of dawning cultural awareness. "So she caught him and kissed him with an impudent face." His vulnerability to temptation was made all the more convincing by his delivery of such lines as "I'm not a convict; I don't sin!" Clark's process of self-discovery concluded perhaps a little unconvincingly with his falling for the superior and literate convict, Mary Brenham.

Another commendable performance came from Alexis Marcq, who acted convincingly and spoke clearly as the dubious Cockney "gentleman", Robert Sideway. Again, the accent was impressively sustained throughout and the wheedling cockney well suited the craven, toadying nature of the character.

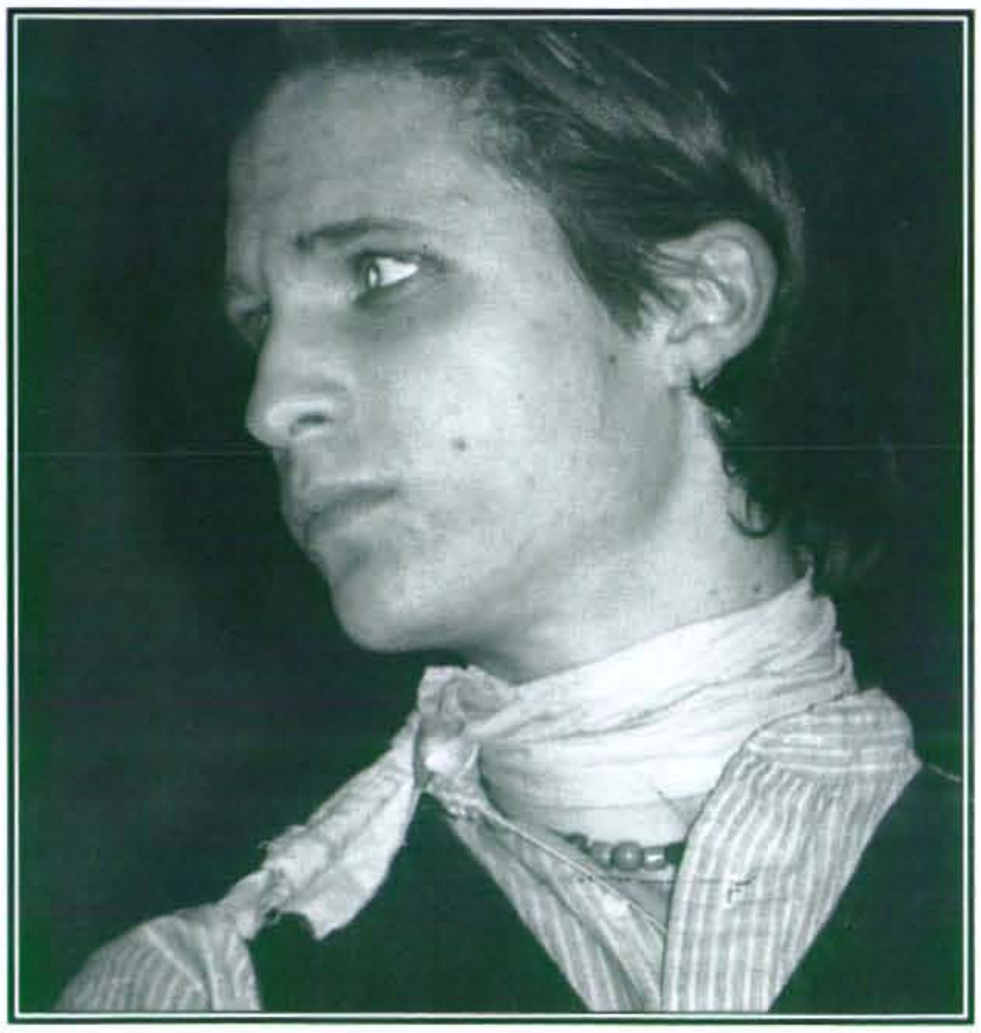
Midshipman Harry Brewer (Oliver Bray) and his convict-mistress, Duckling Smith (Fenella Hunt), also did well. They achieved a convincing change of dramatic status when they were quarrelling in their boat. Again, this was an ensemble for which the directors and the technical crew should be warmly commended. The boat with its sail drifting through the mist (well-controlled dry ice) provided the audience with a fine spectacle. Harry and Duckling acted well and had clearly been most carefully directed. The scene where Duckling attempted to comfort Harry when he was dying was decidedly moving.

The other convicts were well done, too. Kate Stephens provided a sensitive presentation of the rather frail, superior literate convict, Mary Brenham. Helen Kerford-Byrnes sustained an excellent performance as the wilful, attention-seeking Dabby Bryant and Davina Brennan gave us a splendid performance as the ill-fated Liz Morden, an abused and betrayed daughter back in England now subject to the lethal caprice of Major Ross's justice. Angus Havers did most creditably as the somewhat engagingly shifty Irishman, Ketch Freeman. Toby Dixon came over very well as the more educated John Wisehammer, with his concluding satirical verse involving the title of the play and suggesting that they were all in that predicament for "our country's good." His sense of language touchingly illustrated the moral concerns in the play: "intimidation, injustice, innocence." It is to the enormous credit of the directors and actors that each of the convicts, male and female, came across as distinctive characters and yet the overall sense of human vulnerability, of afflicted and unfortunate people trapped by nature and circumstance, cumulatively emerged as a powerful and moving statement, a microcosm of human comedy and tragedy observed with astonished clarity by the Aboriginal Australian, played by Leila Brahimi.

Perhaps this critic's early reservations were a comment on his own inadequacy. Perhaps this play was a good choice because it allowed so many Stoics to act out such a variety of different parts. We had the pleasure of seeing a large number of talented young people excel individually. The more one considers it, looking through the list of characters and actors in the programme, the more it is clear that this play is richly packed with an amazing variety of different human personalities. It is a tremendous tribute to David Barr, Fiona Baddeley and their team of magnificent actors and technical crews that so many distinctive and distinguished performances could be achieved simultaneously. Indeed, the more I think of it, the clearer the different strands of the play separate out in my memory. In fact, they have quite won me round.

PASF

Toby Dixon (John Wisehammer)



The Business
by Paul Nimmo

Junior Congreve production

The Junior Congreve – always a showpiece in the drama programme – was this year a particularly special event because it marked the premiere of a new play, written for the occasion. Paul Nimmo, the author, was Stowe's playwright-in-residence during the summer term. He stimulated the creative writing scene in various ways, but the bulk of his talents was devoted to directing the cast of *The Business*, who rose to the occasion superbly, presenting a splendid performance of a very inventive piece of theatre.

Photos: Andrew Pearce

Because it is a new play, the plot deserves to be outlined here, particularly for the benefit of those who were not able to see it.

The Business depicts an ailing company, which has sold its factory, and now supports a middle management team stuck fast in its incompetence and in a mindless routine. Sameness characterises them, and their stale banter echoes their sense of lost purpose and lost individuality. They are a team, a business, in name only.

There is another business, however, Frank and Stella Morris's Wine Bar, and this completes the satisfying basic design of the plot. The Morrises (nicely played by Kristian Byfield and Victoria Casewell-Lunn) introduce the story by inviting the audience in an amiable Cockney in-your-face manner to hear how the two businesses merged. In the first place we see that it is to Frank's Wine Bar the management team repair for their lunch-time moan and tipple. And at Frank's, soccer is at the centre of cultural reference.

Nemesis enters the business in the striking form of Gabriella Flint, played with panache by Kate Maxted. A man-eating troubleshooter, her aim is to get results by application of the humiliation technique! A series of eight individual interviews has the team fancying their chances, romantically speaking, but facing rejection and discomfiture. On her side, Gabriella is led to despair by their hopeless ineffectuality. Mrs Flint, excellently portrayed by Leila Brahimi in tone, posture and manner, is the intimidating new owner of the business. She breaks the deadlock by announcing to Gabriella that romance is bad for business, and to the workforce that they have – amusingly – been sacked for sexual harassment!

Off to Frank's they go, unemployed but free – free to be part of Frank's vision: he, their manager-coach, will make footballers out of them, aspiring to forge them into a team which will win the local league. Frank's team talk realises a theme: that a team is an organic whole, consisting of inter-dependent parts. The symmetry is completed when we hear, in contrast, Flora Flint intoning, "It's the business that counts, not the people," after sacking everyone.

Frank's team after its initial – and predictable – 24 to 0 defeat, is inspired by its shared vision eventually to win the league. New premises are required and a neat reversal is effected by the playwright: the Flints sell 'the business' to Frank, taking control of his Wine Bar in exchange. Flora Flint has become re-humanised at the same time as each of the members of the business team has rediscovered new meaning in life.

This parable was projected by lovely pieces of theatre. We see the be-suited business team introduce themselves in chorus-line style. They break into song and dance routines, rendering, for example, 'She's the one' as they vie for Gabriella's affections. In this way their sameness is given wonderful vitality and a comic absurdity is also presented. Similarly, fantasy is injected when the cast act out a slow-motion routine to the tune of *Nessun Dorma*, amusingly ridiculing the pretentious and sentimental 'slo-mo' TV sequences. The eight members of the business team, spiritedly played by the junior boys, are projected skilfully in many ways – as when each approaches Gabriella in her office (almost like a sequence of dwarfs expectantly approaching a taller Snow White) and then has to hide as a colleague arrives. Mrs Flint unexpectedly turns up and barks out to her daughter, "What are you hiding?" – whereupon the answer "Me" is echoed eight times in an hilarious moment of classic farce.

A surreal note was struck by Flora Flint's husband, Donald, a cross-dressing flamboyant character who is until the end brutally suppressed by his dominating spouse. Will Skidmore excellently portrayed his sudden flights into song and dance – a starved imagination breaking free.

The production was superbly aimed, a 'junior' entertainment providing fun and sophistication, with every inch of stage space employed and movement and language proving equally dynamic. But every drama must have a story and Paul Nimmo served us remarkably well with his narrative idea (I haven't even mentioned an affecting sub-plot featuring Angela Doobey and Gordon Holliday, played by Jenny Addison and Roy Chambers respectively), and the Stoics, cast and crew alike, deserve congratulation.

EST

Paul Nimmo Interviewed

Fenella Hunt talks to the playwright-in-residence about this year's Junior Congreve

Just having finished a stint at Framlingham, Paul Nimmo was already used to being 'Playwright-in-residence' when he came to Stowe last summer term. Not only did he contribute during his time here to the Drama Department and Creative Writing sessions, but he also wrote and directed the Junior Congreve. Before he left I took the opportunity of interviewing him. The venue was the Paul Dobinson Theatre, scene of his recently performed play, *The Business*.

The Business tells of a stereotypical business, plagued with routine and stagnation, falling apart and having its work force transformed into a winning football team. The formula is not indicative of a major blockbuster. I asked Mr Nimmo from where his inspiration came. Not always having been a playwright, he had spent some time working computer manuals at an ordinary office in the city.

"The day's work, like the play, revolved around routine. Not only were the manuals themselves tedious and uninteresting but the journey to and from work was similarly monotonous! Everyone with their own purpose, moving with the same motion, with the same attitude... All dressed in dark, official colours; straight shirts; pin-striped suits, umbrellas, briefcases, newspapers and hopeless regularity..."

School, he said, had been a similar experience of conforming to rules and staying in line.

Mr Nimmo used an adult-based script in *The Business*, yet the cast he was working with consisted of Lower Sixth girls and 3rd and 4th form boys.

"Was it easy", I asked, "working with such a young cast?" To begin with, he said! The initial ease of working with keen, curious young actors soon changed, however. They were good at the drilled movements, but character-creation was less easy.

I proceeded to question him on the more immediate issues with which he was involved. He was somewhat detached about them, so I moved on to wider things. He has written many other plays. Was he worried, I asked him, about using other people's themes subconsciously. He nodded. After one performance of his play *The Ship*, one critic had described it as very similar to Shakespeare with its themes of family unity and twinship. But the problem did not worry him. His only concern, he said, was producing funny, entertaining work.

I asked him "Why comedy"? Comedy, he said, was an essential way of maintaining audience attention. "It's a definite route to their emotions." It was his love of expressing humour through language which had led him to plays and away from novels and poems. "Plays allow a much more intimate contact for the author with his audience" and as a result were much more satisfying for him as a writer.

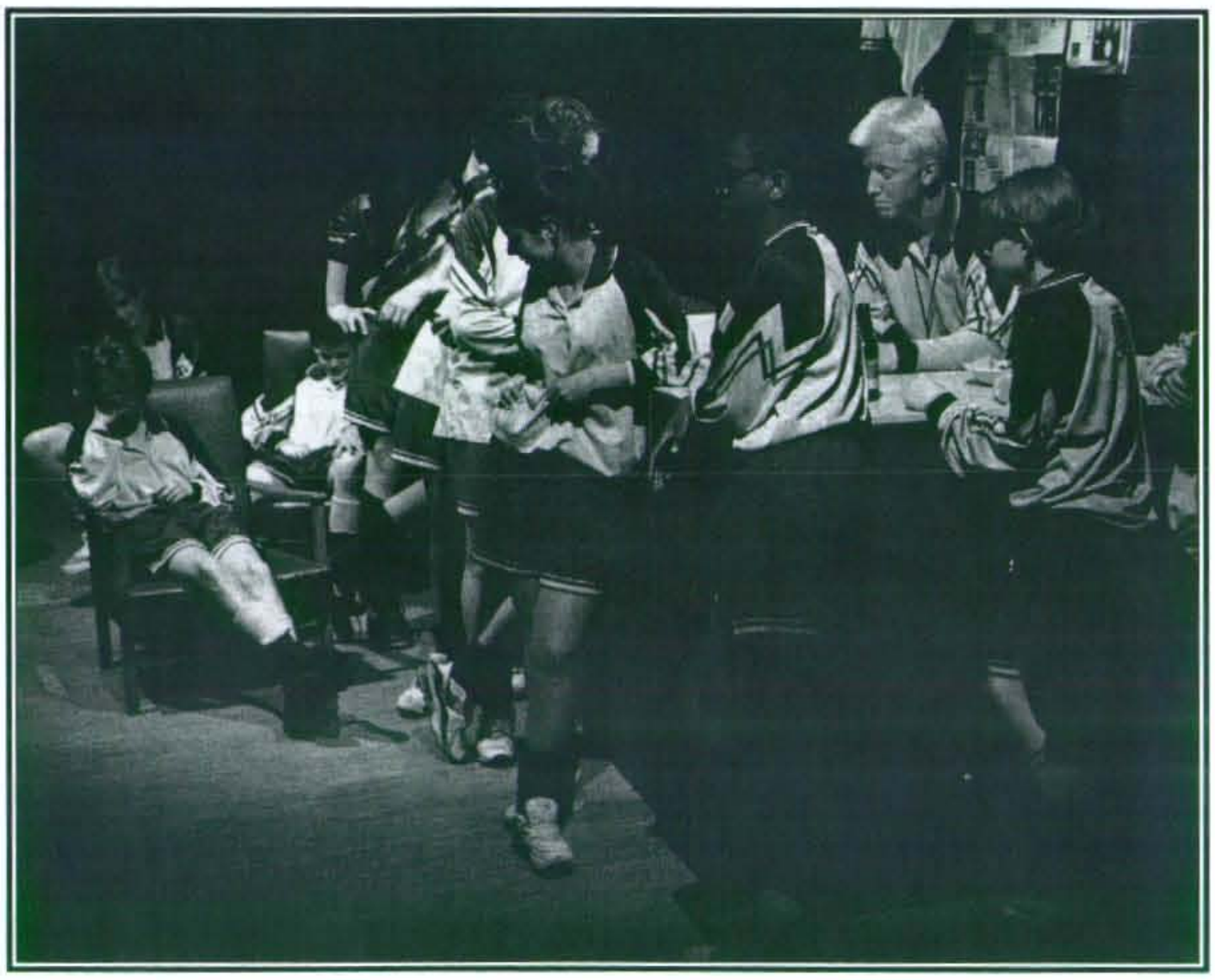
A group of us had been to a performance of *The Ship* in London. How, I asked him, did one get to that point, having one's plays performed in London? He tried, he said, to get his plays performed anywhere; getting them performed was the important thing, the gaining of experience. Initially he had entered various radio script competitions. He consistently had come 2nd! Then he tried various fringe theatre competitions. At last he was spotted by one of the script writers in one such theatre and her assistance had given him the "foot in the door", an opportunity to put on *The Ship* and, hopefully, another production. But he emphasised the precariousness of the profession. The need for an agent was essential, as was the need for good reviews. "Without the one, you can't get the other!"

And for the future, I asked him, could we expect a series of novel and innovative plays? He smiled.

"Of course! There's one in the process of being written, about an old man and a young boy competing to build the best dry-stone wall."

At least it sounded like a subject that not even Shakespeare had thought of before! It was time to round off the interview, but I knew that I would be failing a large percentage of my readers if I did not pose one further, vital question.

"Mr Nimmo, what football team do you support?" "Tottenham Hotspur," came the firm reply.



House Drama Festival 1995

David Barr reviews last spring term's House drama

Ben Hardt and the actors of **Bruce** produced the Alan Ayckbourn comedy *Gosforth's Fête*, with William Kemble-Clarkson as the unfortunate Gordon Gosforth and organiser of the village fête. As rain begins and the fete starts to disintegrate he has a discussion with the tea girl, Milly (convincingly played by Roy Chambers) about his secret affair and her pregnancy, not realising that the public address system has been switched on. Andrew Smith raised the tempo in a spirited entrance as Milly's fiancé, having heard for the first time of Milly's infidelity. Damian Darkko was an impressive stage presence as the 'grande dame' invited to open the fête, with a suitably hen-pecked Alistair Johnston in tow as her husband.

The **Temple** play was a theatrical *tour de force*, written and directed by the inexhaustible Ashley Cahill. A stage version of Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*, it is the story of a teenaged criminal who undergoes a spine-chilling programme of brain-washing and socialisation. Ashley played the central role with understanding and energy, conveying powerfully both the mindless violence of his early life and the later vulnerability and weakness as the prison authorities purge him of his criminal tendency. A large and well-directed supporting cast together with the use of the whole theatre as an acting space and skilful handling of lighting and sound effects made the production a very powerful one for the audience and communicated the ideas and emotions of the novel in a way which was always engrossing.

Very different both in mood and scale was the **Grenville** production of Tom Stoppard's *Rough Crossing*, ably directed by Sam Emery. Rupert Connell as the imperturbable and incurably impertinent steward made the most of Stoppard's verbal punning and provided light relief amidst the agonized soul-searching of Sam Emery as Twai and the other leading characters.

Chandos presented Larry Shue's comedy *The Foreigner* which concerns the complications which arise when an Englishman, played with a deadpan innocence by Ben Bateman, pretends to be a Frenchman when he goes on holiday to a log cabin in the backwoods of the USA. Jerome Starkey gave a spirited performance as the garrulous Betty, owner of the cabin. The part of Kenny was played in high camp style by Vikram Tellis-Nayak. The darker shenanigans of the Klu Klux Klan are represented by Dan Collier as the formidable Owen Musser and his sinister gang of Klansmen. Nick Barrington-Wells gave a strong performance as the local preacher who turns out to have corrupt designs on Kenny's fortune.

Cobham's play, *Talk in the Park*, lasted for only five minutes! There were star performances by Angus Campbell, James Hill, Tom Gamble (a female American hippie), Kassim Lawal (a Nigerian tribesman) and Richard Harris (as a gormless businessman).

Grafton gave a very professional performance of a series of Monty Python sketches, some of them very familiar but given new life by spirited acting from a huge number of Graftonians – not least from the Housemaster himself. There were hilarious performances by Iain Armstrong in a variety of roles, Mark Denning and Tom Honeyman Brown, not to mention the directors themselves, Adam Carling and Matthew Furse-Roberts, who threw themselves into their stage roles with gusto.

In one of the most ambitious productions of the Festival Mark Wates directed **Walpole**'s production of *What The Butler Saw*, Joe Orton's hilarious and scurrilous comedy. Chris Dixey played the unprincipled Dr Prentice with appropriate *sang froid* and Gavin McIntyre gave a very amusing performance as his insatiable wife. Victoria Casewell-Lunn, as the hapless job applicant, Oliver Bray, as the outmanoeuvred Sergeant Mutch, and Matthew Whittaker, as an innocent bell-boy, become pawns in the Prentices' hands and spent most of the play being un-dressed and re-dressed in each other's clothes, in true Joe Orton style.

The Drama Festival this year was remarkable not just for the range and quality of productions but for what it showed of Stoics' talent and initiative, which gave us two very enjoyable weekends of drama.

Natalie Stopford and Tessa Braithwaite in Nugent's *Stepping Out* which was performed in the summer, out of the festival

Jamie Pelly, Alexander Ratut and Sam Emery in Grenville's *Rough Crossing*

Photo: Richard Plyer

BLACK COMEDY
by Peter Shaffer

Paul Dobinson Theatre, summer term. (Photograph by Andrew Pearce)

Kate Stephens and Ashley Cahill

Black Comedy is a sophisticated farce in which the fictions which the central character – artist Brinsley Miller – has built up around himself are progressively undermined and exploded. Currently engaged to "the idiot deb" Carol Melkett, he has invited her father round to gain his approval for their marriage. On the same evening they expect the millionaire art collector George Bamburger to view, and they hope buy, Brinsley's avant-garde sculpture. To impress both, the young couple have taken advantage of their neighbour Harold's absence to borrow his antique furniture without his permission.

The play begins in darkness but with Brinsley and Carol on stage awaiting the imminent arrival of their important visitors and behaving as though their flat is properly lit. Two minutes in and a fuse blows. The audience see the stage lights go up for the first time, but for the rest of the play the characters stumble and grope, as though in complete darkness. The unexpected return of Harold necessitates desperate and surreptitious attempts to replace his furniture with consequent scope for comic stage business. They prove ultimately to be in vain as Harold discovers the deceit and in a towering anger denounces Brinsley and his "little nit of a girl friend". Thus a long-standing friendship is brought to an end. Similarly Brinsley's engagement to Carol does not survive the evening as his ex-girl friend, Clea, turns up and, discovering that she has been replaced, makes use of the darkness to pose as Mrs Punnet, the cleaning lady, and informs the assembled company of Brinsley's four year relationship with Clea and his low opinion of his "bit of Knightsbridge candyfloss and her daddipegs."

The darkness is the reason for the electrician, who eventually arrives to repair the fuse, being mistaken for the millionaire art dealer. Hopes of future fame and fortune are raised as he declares Brinsley's sculpture cheap at 500 guineas, only to be dashed when he reveals himself as a German refugeee with only ten pounds, eight shillings and tuppence in the world. The long-awaited Bamburger appears in the closing minutes of the play only to disappear through a hole in the floor where the electrician has been working.

The directors (Emma Taylor and Jane Hamblett) and the cast succeeded in maintaining throughout the performance acting which really seemed to be going on in the dark, with hesitant movements, outstretched arms, cautious fumbling and blank eyes.

Natasha Ivanova, as Miss Furnival, brilliantly captured the sense of an over-refined and repressed middle-class lady; she carefully sustained a growing inebriation as the evening wore on and façades were dropped. Kate Stephens as the ruthless Clea managed to combine sensuousness and (as Brinsley puts it) the cosiness of a razor blade. She gave a strong sense of pleasure as she used the cover of darkness to expose Brinsley's shallowness. She will certainly be more capable of dealing with him in later life than the airhead Carol would be.

Sam Emery's performance as Harold Gorringe was a *tour de force*. Taking up the many suggestions of the text that Harold has amorous designs upon Brinsley, Sam played him in high camp mode, missing none of the humour and enjoying some very funny stage business.

Colonel Melcett was played with restrained hauteur by Oliver Bray. He portrayed the kind of prim smugness that just asks to be shocked – and it was. Tamsin Abecasis gave an inspired performance as his daughter. She skilfully communicated a spoiled, thoughtless, upper-class girl, used to getting what she wanted and pushing the world before her.

It was Ashley Cahill's Brinsley, on stage for virtually the whole of the play, who was clearly responsible for maintaining the momentum and creating the sense of disintegration. At the outset he presented himself as a character in control – if rather nervous about forthcoming events; by the end he had dissolved into defeat and chaos and, we hope, had learnt a lesson which he wouldn't forget.

DSB

Wallowing in Nostalgia

A report by Lorien Pilling
on Stowe's most recent Fashion Show

Photographs by Digby Oldridge

One Saturday evening in mid-February provided some sparkling entertainment for everyone in the form of a fashion show, organised for charity. All the money raised went to help the work of the Sporting Federation for Handicapped Children.

After the original idea for the show had been conceived, Mrs Scott, Mrs Mullineux and Mrs Weston were given the almost impossible task of finding the outfits and then altering them to fit the various models. Many of the clothes were kindly donated by Oxfam but were in need of repair, as they had spent some time in the cellar of a shop, and the rest of the costumes were very generously lent by various members of staff. Once the clothes had been collected they had to be arranged into suitable outfits, the right decade and even individual years!

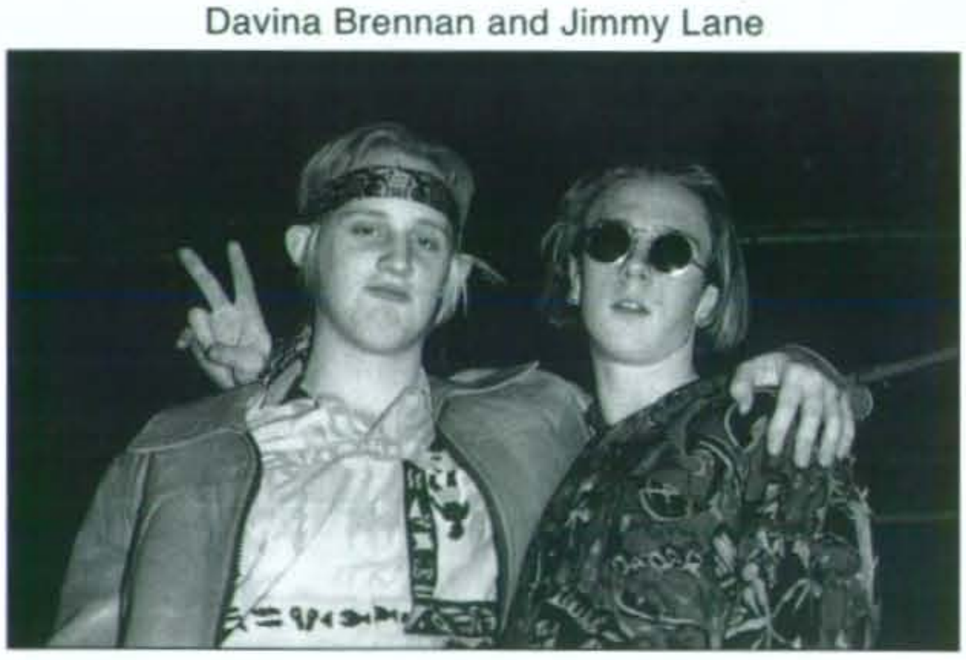
The fashions on display spanned four decades, from the 1950s to the 1980s, and the diversity of the clothes was noticeable, ranging from flower power to flares. The sixth-form models were accompanied, as they paraded on the catwalk, by a soundtrack of the musical classics of that era, compiled by IJM. This made the atmosphere very nostalgic, despite the fact that the majority of the audience were too young to remember those years. In between the different decades IJM provided a historical but humorous commentary in which he noted the various changes in the fashion of each decade, such as the changing hemlines and size of heels on the shoes.

Vicky Clarke-Peyton (below) & Natasha Ivanova (above)

Many of the outfits on show were finding their way back into the fashion of the nineties and the models generally approved of the clothes they were wearing, but, for some of the more garish garments, the models took some persuading before they agreed to wear them. The models' parading sequences came off very smoothly, thanks mainly to much practice and the hard work of Alison Marston and Kate Maxted, who choreographed the moves.

One of the many highlights of the evening was the re-staging of Marilyn Monroe's famous pose over the air-vent, from the film *The Seven Year Itch*, with Kate Stephens as the famous peroxide blonde. The show was given an air of unpredictability by the Walpole supermodels, Simon Ridley, Nick Pinkney and James Lane. The audience was very receptive towards all the models and appreciated and acknowledged the effort which had been put into what was a very successful show. The organisers wish to thank all those who worked on the costumes in their free time and also those people who helped to keep the panic to a minimum behind the scenes during the show.

Ross Atherton and Nick Pinkney
Davina Brennan and Jimmy Lane



MUSIC

KEY EVENTS – CAROL SERVICE
CONCERTS – STOWE COMPOSERS
A-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY

An exciting year culminated in a performance of Saint-Saëns' *Carnaval des Animaux* at the Valedictory Concert in June: the performance of the leavers was an outstanding one, and so too that of one or two non-leaving instrumentalists. At this concert we said farewell, among many others, to Caroline Ricketts, Leader of the Orchestra, Katrin Buckenmaier, Henrietta Mackenzie, Jason Cheng, Jeremy Dale and Mark Holt: six musicians who left large holes in the many groups in which they played such important roles.

Tuesday evening recitals and concerts have continued to flourish and the A-level solo recitals during the summer term were especially impressive. The Speech Day Concert, directed by JCG and JECH, featured another *Buckingham Concerto* by Paul Harris (for clarinet and flute), foot-tapping renditions of 'Jamaican Rumba' and Gershwin's 'I got rhythm' (with Jason Cheng starring as the soloist in his favourite jazz pianist role), and the Classic FM-made-popular 'Montagues and Capulets' (from Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet*). Many commented upon the wonderful orchestral playing.

The new academic year brought new people and new ideas to Stowe's music. Six young music scholars from Christ Church Cathedral School, Ripon Cathedral School, Beachborough, Beechwood Park, Sussex House and Lockers Park joined the team of key players, while two new live-in staff joined the department. Tuck-May Locke joined us as our Accompanist-in-Residence and lives in Cobham: Benjamin Davey, already a visiting teacher much in demand, increased his piano teaching at Stowe to an extent that he is now here for most of the week and therefore lives in Chatham. Both continue to develop lives outside Stowe as performing musicians and we feel we are lucky to have their talent on the teaching staff. In particular, the Accompanist-in-Residence is an exciting new post which, in offering an opportunity for a recent graduate to practise and develop accompanimental skills in the Stowe community for a year or more, at the same time gives Stoic musicians the chance to rehearse with an accompanist for almost limitless sessions before a concert or exam performance.

Composing is thriving: several concerts have featured our young composers' efforts. And the jazz band has an exciting new brass section which promises to be spectacular in the future. A 'Music at Stowe' CD is on its way...

JCG – a chorister's view

Photo: Andrew Pearce

Key Events from the Music Diary

Solo Recitals took place as follows:

7th February: Jeremy Dale, clarinet.

28th February: Mark Holt, flute.

7th March: Henrietta Mackenzie, piano.

14th March: Caroline Ricketts, violin.

21st March: Katrin Buckenmaier, piano.

9th February: The PREP SCHOOLS' CHORAL FESTIVAL took place in the Chapel all day. Over 400 singers took part from many different schools: the Chapel Choir altos, tenors & basses sang Evensong at 4.00 pm with all the treble voices.

12th February: The joint CHORAL SOCIETY of Stowe and Thornton College performed Fauré's 'Requiem' and Rutter's 'Requiem' in the Chapel.

12th March: The WIND & BRASS prizes took place and were adjudicated by Duncan Prescott.

18th-20th March: The CLARINET QUARTET undertook another Prep School Tour, this time in Sussex.

25th April: The CHAPEL CHOIR sang Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral on the feast of All Saints. The service music included Stanford in C and Harwood's *O how glorious is the kingdom.*

16th May: The STRING SEXTET performed Brahms' String Sextet No 1.

4th June: The PIANO COMPETITION took place and was adjudicated by Philip Fowke.

11th June: MUSIC FOR A SUMMER'S EVENING took place in Kinloss garden and featured performances by the String Orchestra, Clarinet Quartet, String Sextet, Chamber Choir and Jazz Band.

25th June: The MOZART TRIO PRIZE was adjudicated by Stephen Dodgson (OS) and the overall winner was again Mark Holt (organ & flute).

14th October: The HOUSE SINGING FESTIVAL took place and was adjudicated by David Fanshawe (OS). Winning performances were given by Lyttelton (unison) and Chatham (part-song).

15th October: A performance of Verdi's 'Requiem' in the Chapel in aid of the Churchill Cancer Unit, Oxford.

7th November: The CHAMBER CHOIR gave a recital of popular arrangements of favourites by Gershwin, Cole Porter and others.

CELEBRITY CONCERTS included: Alan Price & The Electric Blues Company, 'Miller Magic' in the Garter Room, Showaddywaddy, Ensemble Bash, City Waites and a Christmas Concert by I Fagiolini.

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The Carol Service

It is 5.35 pm, Sunday 10th December: the Chapel is beginning to fill with a large, rather noisy congregation of parents and friends. The organ is being played by James Clark (Mathias's *Processional*) and the choir – seventy singers strong – is assembling ready to enter the Chapel.

Lights dim and finally disappear at 6.00 pm; there is at last a hush in the building as we prepare to move from darkness to light as in the Advent story. As candles are lit, the building – superbly decorated – takes on a new, spiritual atmosphere in readiness for *Once in Royal David's City* – the traditional verse 1 solo being sung by Catherine Browning.

JCG's choice of carols is superb and certainly unbeaten by the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols broadcast from King's College, Cambridge, nearly a fortnight later. The choir is in fine voice – as always – and the lessons are read with great style and distinction.

What made this year different? The brass players and the percussion section in the organ loft which were dramatic and triumphant in *O come all ye faithful* and *Hark! the herald angels sing.* The unexpected cymbal crashes, timpani rolls and thrilling introductions were tremendously exciting and rolled seamlessly into JECH's improvisatory preamble to the final voluntary.

It would be invidious to describe this year's Carol Service as "the best yet" but the music list was as follows:

—— ✦ ——

Once in Royal David's City

Adam lay y'bounden (Boris Ord)

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Ding! Dong! Merrily on high (arr. Richard Lloyd)

Lo, he comes with clouds descending

There is no rose (John Joubert)

Unto us is born a Son

Nativity Carol (John Rutter)

In the bleak mid-winter (Harold Darke)

O little town of Bethlehem

Candlelight Carol (John Rutter)

The Shepherd's Cradle Song (arr. Charles Macpherson)

The first Nowell

A New Year Carol (Benjamin Britten)

Alleluya! A new work is come on hand (Peter Wishart)

O come, all ye faithful

Hark! the herald Angels sing

Organ music before the service:

Processional (William Mathias)

Prelude & Fugue in E flat, BWV 552 (J S Bach)

Wachet auf, BWV 654 (J S Bach)

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen (Johannes Brahms)

After the service:

In dulci jubilo, BWV 729 (J S Bach)

Tu es Ptera (Henri Mulet)

—— ✦ ——

Orchestral Concert

The night before the Carol Service we find ourselves in the Roxy for the annual Christmas concert before an audience which is always going to be eclectic. And, to add to that, we this year had more than a cordial invitation extended to third, fourth and fifth formers to attend the event: probably a good thing, not least because many of them might not otherwise think beyond the attractions of the house video, but it does mean that the programming must be absolutely right. You can't really go wrong with the overture from *Carmen*, Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto no 2, Berlioz's *The Great Gate of Kiev*, and Mussorgsky's *March to the Scaffold* or, at any rate, if the audience don't take to it they probably will not enjoy any so-called 'classical music' so there's little point in worrying!

The audience did enjoy it. I played a very minor part in the concert (a few synthetic harp chords in The *Great Gate* and one or two others in Paul Harris's composition just about summed it up) and so I had the rare – and probably one-off – opportunity to sit with the audience for most of the performances. "Is the piano concerto that love music when they meet on the beach?" inquired my neighbour. Apparently it was, as he explained to me a little too loudly during the first two bars.

The Rachmaninov clearly showed Benjamin Davey's first-rate playing (reminding us of the wonderful solo recital he gave in the summer) but also displayed the orchestra still on fine form despite losing a large number of key players in July. Particularly enjoyable aspects were some of the brass playing – a young section but one which is already playing confidently and will evidently be outstanding in the future, and the rich tone of the 'cellos, so ably and musically led by Angus Havers and Angus McCarey. Not an easy score for a school orchestra but I enjoyed the performance all the more for not having to take that into account as I listened.

There were a few professional and Old Stoic musicians, but it was encouraging to see that PDH's programming was designed to show the Stoic musicians to their best effect and that our guests "stiffened" the group in the Bizet, Berlioz and Mussorgsky rather than held it all together. And, of course, the opportunity for our young musicians to play next to experienced players is invaluable and undoubtedly very inspirational for them.

Solo items in the evening featured Ambrose Dudley in Cimarosa's *Concerto for oboe*, Lizzy Davies in Gordon Jacob's *Concerto for flute* and Henry Coxe in our home-grown *Five Bagatelles for horn and orchestra* by Paul Harris, who directed the orchestra throughout the evening. Ambrose's performance was excellent and I particularly enjoyed his romantic performance – albeit one enhanced by Arthur Benjamin's arrangement: Lizzy's flute playing was, as ever, tremendous and the piece was enjoyable for its contrast in an evening otherwise largely consisting of classic pops. The *Five Bagatelles* gave Henry an opportunity to excel in a collection of miniatures clearly conceived as educational pieces which inspire and kindle enthusiasm for future performance of concertos: this was very enjoyable playing. *JECH*

Tercentenary Concert : Henry Purcell

Tuesday 21st November

Exactly three hundred years after Henry Purcell's death – to the day – the Chapel Choir performed some of his better known anthems in front of an unusually large audience in the Chapel. The Tuesday evening pupils' concerts usually take place in the State Music Room or in the Queen's Temple and it is relatively easy to fill both venues: the Chapel, however, needs far greater numbers even to appear half full. It must have been very encouraging for the choir, therefore, to find that there were several hundred people seated in the dimly lit building at 5.45pm.

Rejoice in the Lord Alway, we were told by the programme notes, "reflects Charles II's taste for bright and cheerful music." Certainly this performance had plenty of enthusiasm and it was good to hear and see the Head Boy, Angus McCarey, singing alongside his brother, Ben, who joined the Third Form this year: both were formerly choristers at Christ Church, Oxford.

Jehova quam multi sunt is an extremely demanding piece of choral music which, for almost any choir, requires a high degree of concentration from all involved. This performance was impressive. The Chapel Choir consists of almost 90 singers; Purcell would have been working with a choir of approximately 24!

The line-up of soloists in *O sing unto the Lord* was particularly impressive. Catherine Browning and Natasha Ivanova, both as much at home with Purcell's music as on the Roxy stage singing popular numbers, were joined by Angus McCarey, Tom Smith Walker and Paul Badley in a very enjoyable performance of this large and grand anthem. The Chapel Choir's enthusiastic singing of the chorus sections showed this large group to best effect.

The Brass Consort's rendition of *March and Canzona* provided great contrast to the choir's polyphony but nevertheless dovetailed with the start of *Man that is born of woman* (albeit with a soft 'reminder' chord from the organ). The quality of brass playing was superb and it was especially impressive to see the consort play without adult direction.

The choral soloists in the Funeral Music this time included Emily Williams and Angus Havers. The blandness of *Man that is born* and *Thou knowest Lord* provided a suitably sombre end to a most enjoyable concert. *Ashley Cahill*

Composers at Stowe

A personal view by Paul Harris

One of the most exciting recent developments in music education has been the introduction of composition as part of both the GCSE and A-level courses. Poetry and prose composition have always been part of language education – it's curious that educational thinkers have taken so long to realise how much young people have to say through the medium of music.

Stowe has had quite a tradition for producing composers. Remarkably, three important contemporary composers were all educated at Stowe: Stephen Dodgson, David Fanshawe and Howard Goodall; each has found a particular niche and established a distinguished reputation: Dodgson for his 'serious' concert music, Fanshawe for his experiments with African folk music and Goodall on the West End stage and on television (he's perhaps best known as composer of the music for *Black Adder*.) Our own Paul Drayton, who moved on a couple of years ago, is a composer of considerable talent and his many fine choral works (some written for Stowe) will continue to be performed and enjoyed by many. More recently, as a direct result of the GCSE examination, we have had the opportunity, and indeed privilege, to hear the musical creations of many of our students.

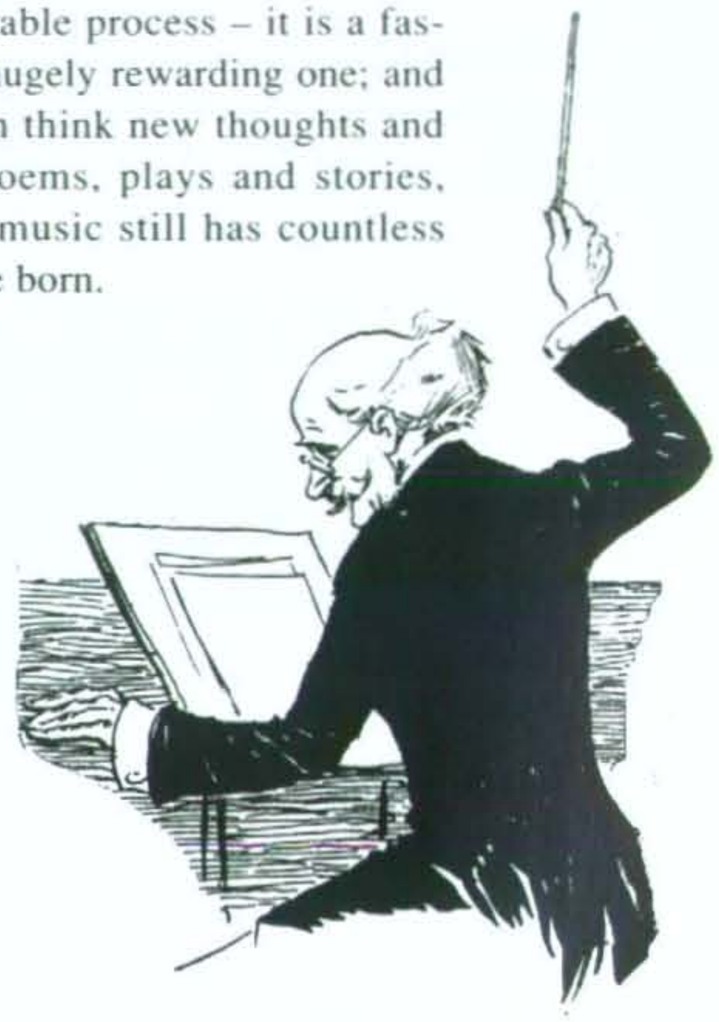
Writing music is not difficult. Certainly one has to learn the language, but there need be few rules and it is perhaps surprising how competent one can become really quite quickly. Unless you're a Mozart or a Schubert, composing is more akin to sculpting than the result of some divine inspiration. We have our raw materials and, by some form of artistic crafting, we learn to shape those raw materials into music.

I took over the composition teaching from Paul three years ago and it has been a wonderful experience so far. I begin my composition course by asking my students to consider one of the most frequently discussed and (some say) imponderable of questions – "what is music?" I believe a composer should at least have tossed this conundrum about in his mind as an introduction to this fascinating creative process. Music feeds off the imagination and so the budding composer must nourish and extend the depth of his own imagination. How can this be done? By constantly immersing himself in all forms of art and nature, literature and the theatre, words and thoughts. I am always amazed at the often extraordinary breadth of knowledge and experience great artists usually possess. A poet will often be intimate with the music of the great masters just as a composer will cherish the works of the great writers and artists.

So what is music? Well, I'm not going to give anything away, but suffice it to say it has something to do with the expression of feeling and emotion and the sculpting and organisation of sound. When I was at school, I clearly remember spending hours doodling at my piano during the evenings, to the great consternation of my father; he used to shout regularly and wonder why I was not doing my homework but wasting time 'messing about'. I don't believe I was wasting time; in fact the discoveries I made then – colourful combinations of notes, chord progressions, making up pieces (I did lots of those!) – all combined to produce a bank of ideas and experience. Three concertos, many sonatas, chamber works and more educational pieces than I could possible begin to count later, even my father now concedes that the time wasn't entirely ill-spent (although I probably would have got better A-level grades had I taken his advice!).

It's usually considered invidious to pick out particular student compositions for praise – there have been so many works that have shown a real flair in one way or another; but nevertheless there have been some outstanding pieces and I would like to mention them. Hugh Carling's song 'Tiger Tiger', a setting of the great William Blake poem, has that quality that sends a chill down your spine – it's simple, but highly effective. Ambrose Dudley's Mini-musical exhibits an ear for unusual harmonies and an elusive talent for matching the wit of his story-line with the music. Simon Post has a natural feel for melodic shape and structure. Even after just half a term's worth of lessons Mark Russell is developing a certain humour in his music – his '1.25 kg of Dairy Milk Down the Hatch' bodes well for the future. James Vane-Tempest, with his latest work for two pianos, saxophone, 'cello and percussion is already showing signs of an ability to write on a large scale. I wouldn't be surprised if we didn't have Vane-Tempest's Symphony No. 1 in the not too distant future.

Composing music is not a mysterious and unfathomable process – it is a fascinating and hugely rewarding one; and just as we can think new thoughts and create new poems, plays and stories, the world of music still has countless treasures to be born.



Technology in Music: The new A-level Course

"One day there will be computers that write all the music for you" is something I so often heard as a child, utterly doubted, but nevertheless wished was already true. To be seated at the piano improvising and knowing that somehow – almost miraculously – a machine was printing sheet music that would enable other musicians to perform *my music*: it seemed an impossible but tremendously exciting dream!

And yet, of course, it has now happened in the fast moving world of music technology and – what's particularly thrilling – it's come to Stowe. Three Apple Macintosh computers, running "Notator Logic", join our eight slightly older generation Ataris in the Roxy music classroom/library. A-level Music Technology started in September with three musicians keen to take their creative music-making to a much higher level than GCSE and yet who, interestingly, would probably not have opted for the more formal and traditional A-level with its study of selected composers and their works. What James Clarke, Christopher Vane-Tempest and Daniel Westwood can do today, which preceding young composers could not, is to compose at the electronic keyboard without necessarily needing to be able to read music – not, of course, that this is the case with these three enthusiasts! Their music-making is recorded onto floppy disc for as many playbacks as they wish and, at the same time, it is stored in musical notation form for hard copy print-out and subsequent performance on 'real' (non-electronic) musical instruments.

The essential ingredients seem exciting enough, but the icing is just as impressive: the latest equivalents of the Yamaha DX9s, so much a part of the late 1970s and 80s pop scene (the 15 piece "orchestra" in *Bohemian Rhapsody* was not real!), contain sampled sounds which are convincingly real and which come at a quarter of the price of the old Yamahas. Our Roland SK50s, which feed the Apple Macs, are by no means top of the range keyboards but they nevertheless have sound-banks and capabilities which would have made the 60s Hammond players green with envy (what *would* Benny Green sound like without the familiar Hammond backing?!)

There are drawbacks. That canned music that you were barely aware of while you shopped at TESCO (but the tune of which nevertheless bugged you for the rest of the day), the music you heard in the car-park lift and that unbelievably tacky – probably largely inappropriate – soundtrack on the low budget and unsuccessful TV series: all are the negative facets of electronic music which sound orchestral and yet which were invariably 'composed' very quickly and cost-effectively with one pair of hands on a keyboard computer in a single afternoon. And some of these music-makers can't even read music?

The genuine composers, however, are now able to use these technological advances as a means of hugely reducing the time it takes to complete their compositions. They can 'perform' their compositions in their home studios and make corrections and improvements long before the costly session players even set eyes on the score: they can make professional-looking printed copies of their compositions – making endless nights of manuscript copying redundant – and, above all, they record and notate all their ideas as they go along. (Yesterday's brilliant and novel melody – today frustratingly forgotten – is a thing of the past: they record all "doodling" at the keyboard.) Christopher Gunning, composer perhaps best known for the *Poirot* series music on Central TV and who came to Stowe in February to give an inspiring talk on commercial composing, maintains that the advantage lies not in the improvising/mixing capabilities but in the production of printed music at home through playing the orchestral parts onto a keyboard: he is an Apple Mac user but still prefers pencil and paper for first ideas and drafts.

In the Roxy, one term into the new A-level, the ideas and options are still fairly free. On the more structured part of the course, the pupils are required to learn the art of sequencing and recording: the composing/arranging, which I teach, allows much experimentation and therefore presents great scope for vivid imagination. All three musicians are fluent keyboard players but each is developing a very different compositional style. James, essentially a 'classical' pianist and known also for his organ voluntaries after chapel services, has more than a passing interest in jazz and is using the technology to write music which combines both styles and which – who knows – 20th Century Fox might one day wish to commission for a film! Christopher is fast developing the art of commercial music writing and already produces music which would probably provide a stronger "image" for slogans such as "Above all, it's a Rover" than that which this fast moving company has opted for. Daniel, whose jazz is well known for his saxophone playing in the Jazz Band and associated combo groups, is using the technology to grow his improvising talent and develop a style which, one hopes, might dislodge even Jules Holland!

JECH

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Photo: SCT

Mam Tor, Peak District, the 'Shivering Mountain'

Stoics continue to rise to (dare I say "enjoy"?) the varied challenges thrown at them by the D of E Scheme. Within only a few weeks of starting their Bronze First Aid Award they have learnt to save a life and been taught to be aware of the signs and symptoms resulting from "exposure" – a problem not uncommon on expeditions. They also try their hands at new skills, such as cooking or "creative textiles", learning techniques they would not otherwise have encountered. The same is true for "physical recreation" where they make a regular commitment to a sporting activity. But ask Old Stoics about their time in the D of E and it will be the expeditions which they remember most.

In 1995 we took groups to the Brecon Beacons, Peak District, Forest of Dean and Scotland. It is, of course, only on these sometimes arduous trips that pupils realise the value of all those routecard, navigation and "safety on the hills" sessions back at Stowe. Groups get lost but at least they know they are lost!

Scotland this year was a huge success. Three Silver groups walked 48 kms. around the Duke of Atholl's estate just north of Blair Atholl. The weather was varied but the scenery grand. Stoics walked impressively and the seven staff "shadowers" managed the routes too. The masters maintained the tradition of winning the annual football match.

Forty-four pupils will be involved in the scheme from September 1995, including a record number of twelve Golds. *AKM*

Some miscellaneous extracts from expedition diaries:

"We then joined a path along the top and went along the crags. It was very steep on either side. It was also very windy, so at times we felt as though we might get blown off..." (Caroline Smith, Gold 1995)

"By now I was very tired, my bad knee was slowing me down and my shoulders were beginning to take the strain badly. However, we continued uphill..." (Alex Williams, Gold 1995)

"By 8.00 am we were ready to go and after our briefing we left. The tops of the mountains were covered with a film of mist and, from where we stood, were invisible." (Ed Wainright-Lee, Gold 1995)

Silver, Scotland 1995

Standing left to right: Mark Worrall, Alexis Marcq, Ed Wainright-Lee, Tom Gamble, Tom Mulroy, Alistair Reith-Hennessy, Robin Creek, Allan Clayton. Kneeling: Oliver Trethewey, William Bathurst, Jal Mehta.

Photo: AGE

Base Camp at Cuilltemhuc, Scotland

"We soon reached the base of Cribin where we rested for a few minutes before beginning the long, hard slog up the hill. After a few stops and much effort to stop ourselves being blown away by the wind we reached the top, only to find that we then had to give up a lot of the height we had just gained." (Mark Worrall, Gold 1995)

"We had quite a long stretch along the top of the ridge... we could see no further than twenty yards as we hit the bottom of Corn Du and veered right along a very high ridge. Here we met people whom we presumed were the SAS." (Mark Worrall, Gold 1995)

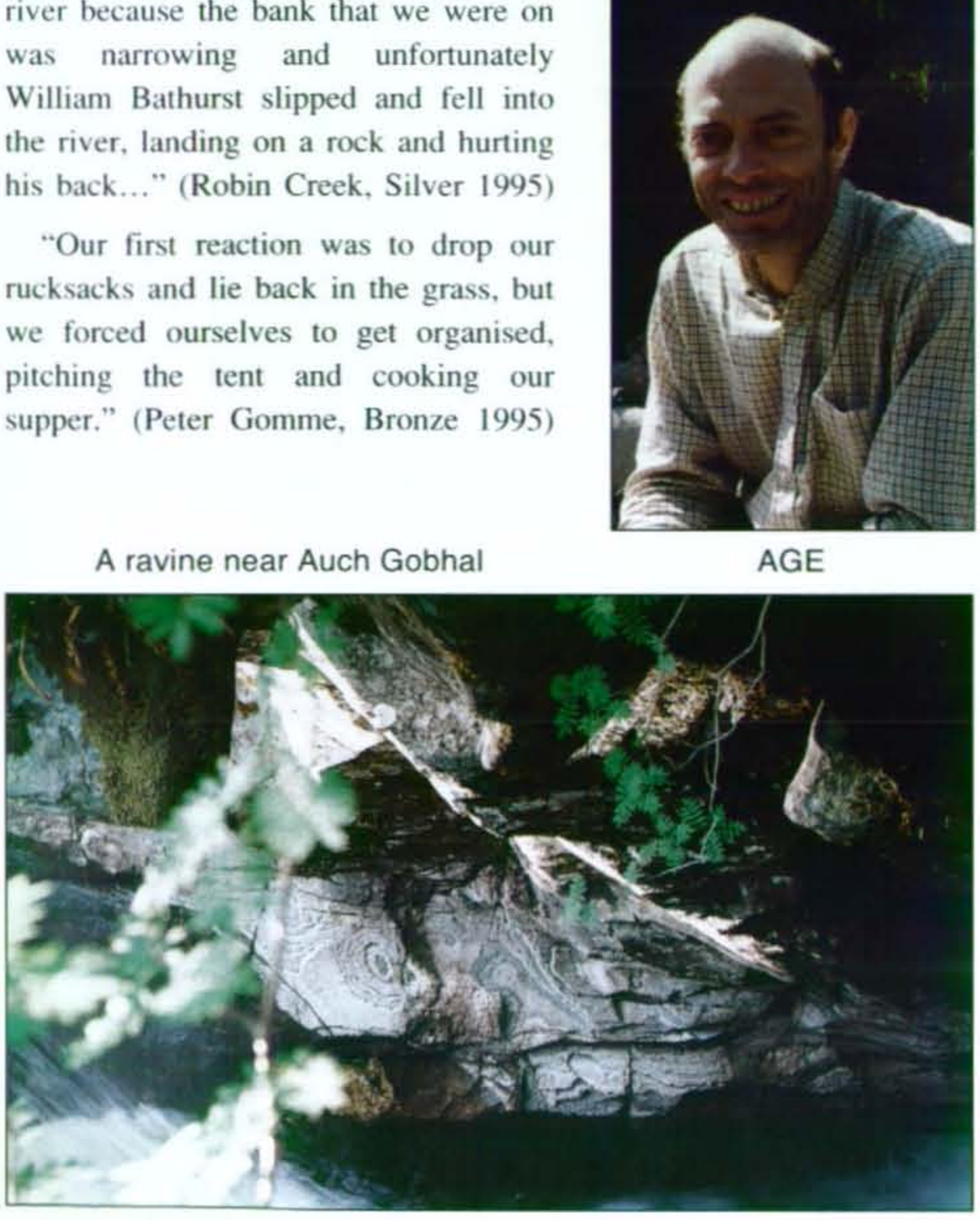
"It was at this point that we were attacked by a hawk of some kind, presumably protecting its nest, and Josh Lyle twisted his ankle trying to watch it..." (Robin Creek, Silver 1995)

"At one point we had to cross this river because the bank that we were on was narrowing and unfortunately William Bathurst slipped and fell into the river, landing on a rock and hurting his back..." (Robin Creek, Silver 1995)

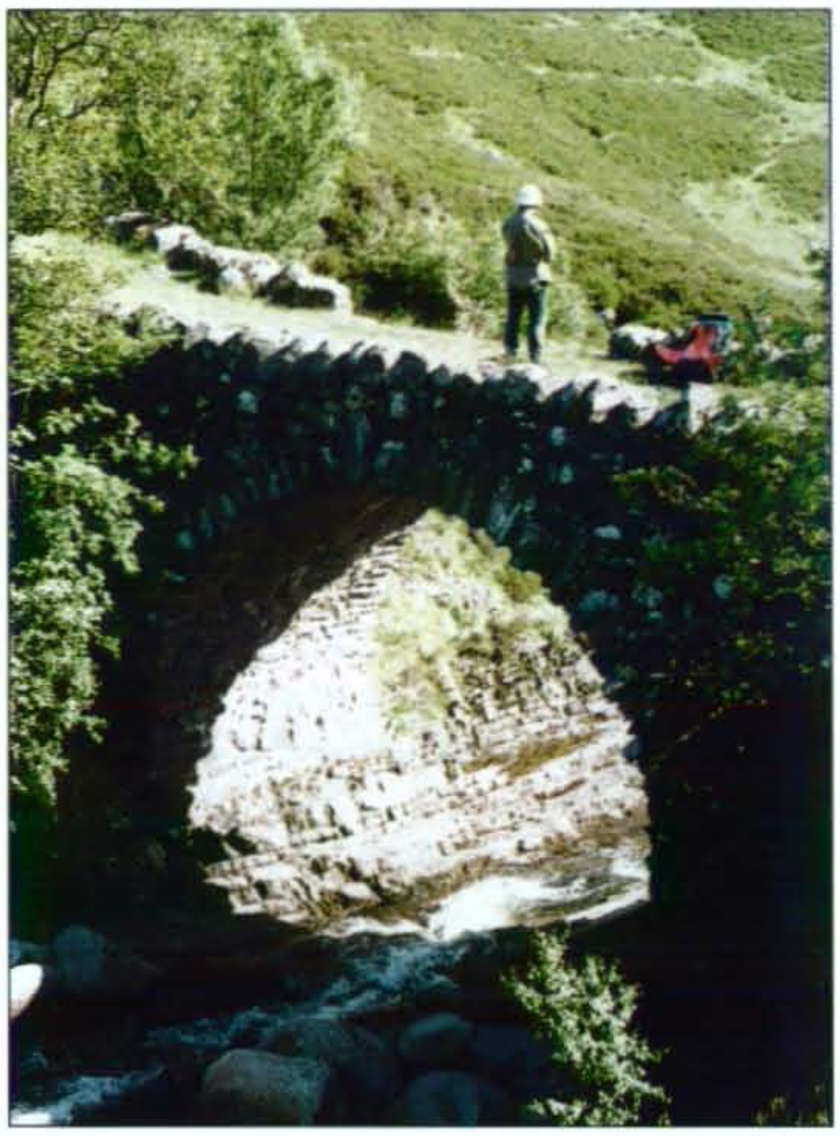
"Our first reaction was to drop our rucksacks and lie back in the grass, but we forced ourselves to get organised, pitching the tent and cooking our supper." (Peter Gomme, Bronze 1995)

AGE

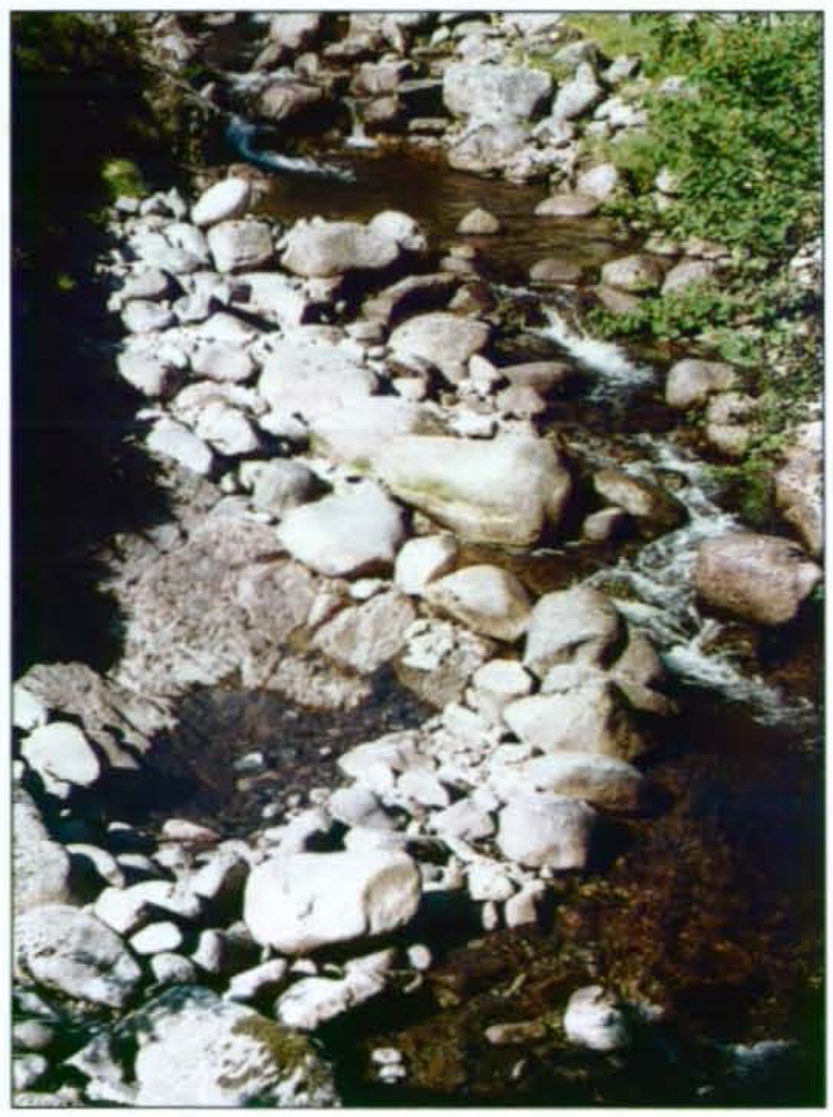
A ravine near Auch Gobhal



Photos: AGE



AKM on pack-horse bridge over the Allt Mhairc, Scotland



Bathing pools at Allt Mhairc

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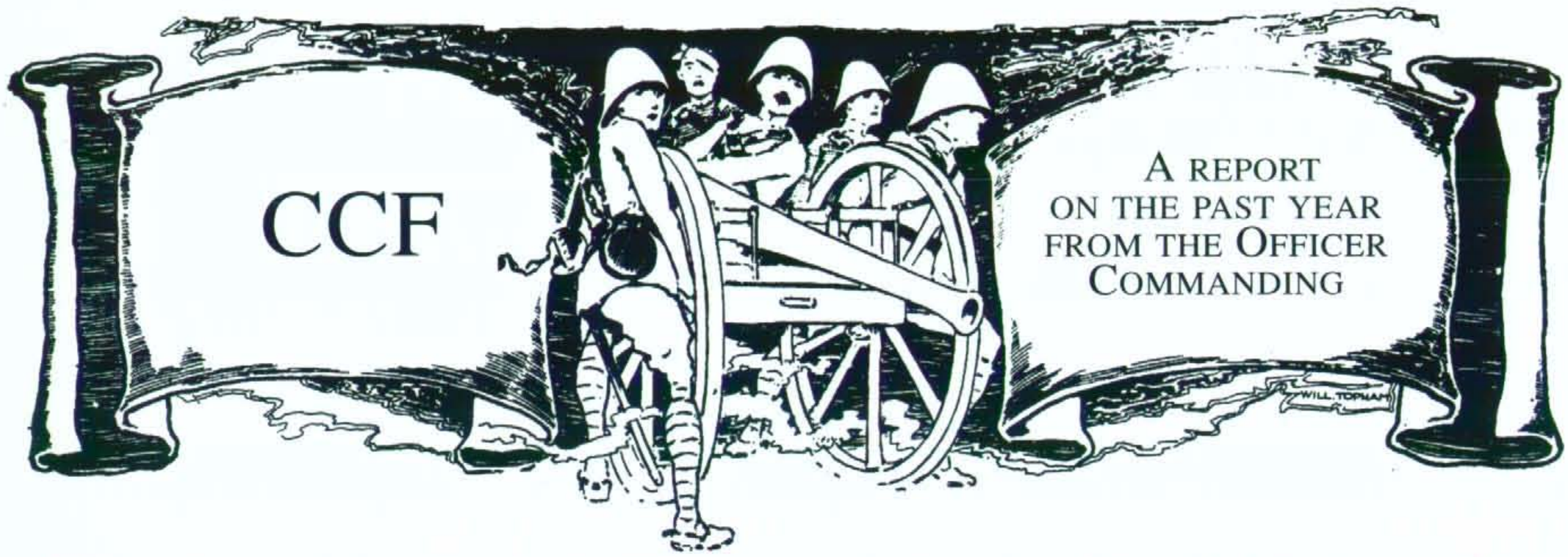


1995 has been an exciting year for the CCF at Stowe. What have we been up to? Let's run through a typical calendar year. January is a quiet time; the new entry are settled in and well into their training programme, and by now used to their weekly donning of military uniform. We also find that by this stage, the NCOs are warming to their positions of authority, and discovering the responsibilities that such authority entails. This is also the time of year that the bulk of our money becomes available, and this year we allocated a large portion of it to the establishment of a diving section. We added £5,000 of our own money to military grants of £3,000, and we now have eight sets of scuba equipment and a compressor to fill our air tanks. IJM, a fully qualified diving instructor, runs the section with SMcC (who is rapidly advancing to the point where we hope he too will qualify as an instructor). The cadets are free to opt to join the section on temporary secondment after they have completed their basic training, typically at the end of their first year. We charge £200 for a course which normally lasts a term, and this is well below the £350+ cost of identical courses in the commercial world. Last summer there was a trip to Tenerife, and this Easter we plan to go to Cyprus, followed by a week's diving at Scapa Flow in the summer. March saw the inaugural Stowe Patrol Competition which was run for us by the 5th Battalion, the Royal Green Jackets. We came second to Rugby School. This term also sees the fourth-formers travel to Bicester to compete for the Pioneer Cup, an inter-section competition run by our sponsoring unit.

The Easter break witnesses our Adventurous Training expedition to the Lake District. Eight days are crammed full of walking, orienteering, rock-climbing, abseiling, canoeing, sailing, mountain-biking, eating, ten-pin bowling, volleyballing and barbecuing.

Not surprisingly, there is a deal of kit to be sorted out at the start of the summer term. This is a difficult term because A-levels generally strip us of our most senior cadets. It is also the term when the fifth-formers must make up their minds whether they wish to continue in the CCF. For those who do, and for any others who are interested, we run a Junior NCO Cadre during which we give the boys a chance to take lessons in both the classroom and outdoors. The object is to prepare them for their responsibilities the following year. We also enter a team for the Longmoor Patrol Competition, a major weekend event in the Cadet Calendar – our performances improve each year and this year we feel confident that the March and Shoot trophy could well be ours! This is also the term of the inter-House Coldstream Cup competition, followed by the Coldstream Cup Dinner. Walpole retained the trophy by the skin of their teeth and for the first time Lyttelton entered a team. They did not come last! What about it, Nugent? Another important event of the summer term was the adoption of the CCF by 60 Squadron, RAF, who fly Wessex 2 helicopters. (Last year, I believe that every cadet in the school got a flight in either a Wessex 2 or an Army Air Corps Gazette). Finally, WEHV left to take up the reins of Chatham – his enthusiasm and commitment are sorely missed. KFD takes his place as the new Officer in Charge of the Royal Naval Section. The summer break begins with our Summer Camp, and this year we went to Penhale in Cornwall. In addition to this, some of the Navy Section spent a week on a Fleet Tender in the Clyde, Richard Barber did an air observer's course at RNAS Yeovilton, Charlie Blake got his glider wings, and James Craik-White completed the Cadet Leadership Camp at Frimley Park. And so to the new school year.

This September an unprecedented 75% of the fourth form opted to join the CCF, which we have all found very heartening. We also had ten join us in the LVI, seven of them girls, taking our grand total of females up to nine! A new fast track enables them to look forward to rank and responsibility after a term's induction. We also welcomed three new officers – AD to the Royal Navy, LJG to the Army, and SHM to the RAF. We now have more officers than I have worked with in my four years in the contingent, and it bodes well for the future. Field Day saw naval cadets sailing a 60' ketch in the Thames Estuary, the army conducting a 36-hour exercise on local farmland, and the RAF orienteering. Finally, the Casualty Cup continued to be competed for in its new format – over the assault course – and Temple won narrowly. This year the Casualty Shield was introduced for Lyttelton and Nugent to compete for, and Lyttelton won it (in a time that was faster than Bruce!). *RBJ*

Photo: WEHV

"By my reckoning, we're four cables off Dover's southern breakwater." Nick Mullineux navigating a Royal Navy Fleet Tender on the Clyde.

Photo: MOMC

"What's this rope for?" 'Syd' Going looking perplexed...what's new?

"Those who want to get on sometimes have to take up unpleasant positions." 'Syd' Going again, heading upwards.

Photo: MOMC

"It's really great – you just pull the trigger and..." Ashley Smatt enjoying himself in the dunes at Penhale.

Photo: MOMC

Photo: PVC

A spring morning on the banks of Bassenthwaite Water at the Adventurous Training campsite just north of Keswick.

"I've lost a contact lens." 'Krish' Byfield during an escape-and-evasion exercise on annual camp at Penhale, Cornwall.

Photo: RBJ

Lt. W.E.H. Vernon, RNVR (CCF) on his final mission being protected by his crack bodyguard of elite soldiers. Stand by, Chatham!

Photo: PVC

Richard Hignett and Sam Tylor doing something that clearly brings them pleasure.

Photo: PVC

A re-enactment of the Battle of Trafalgar at the point where HMS Leander tows away its prize, the French third rater, *Redoutable*. Or was it water sports on Bassenthwaite Water?

Photo: SSM

"I'm fed up with my canoe, what's yours like?" Watermanship on Bassenthwaite Water.

Photo: MOMC

Sunny Moore, Chesney Clark and Tom Smith Walker completing the March-and-Shoot competition in the SE District Patrol Competition at Longmoor.

Photo: MOMC

They thought they were there to canoe – they were, but had to take a swimming test first! Army camp at Folkestone.

"I banked left and got a four second burst up the rear end of the Focke Wolf." Captain Charlie Pickup (yes, that really is his name) of the Army Air Corps teaches the RAF section to spin a really convincing yarn!

Photo: GGJD

Societies

ANACREON

By its very nature as a forum for cooking and dining the Society is always successful, but 1995 was a vintage year with more meetings than usual. Several members cooked more than once – in fact, it was quite difficult to keep one or two of them out of the kitchen! All was organised by Amber Nuttall, the secretary, with tact and efficiency and we record our thanks to her and to the many families who took us in.

Culinary highlights included Veal with Puttanesca sauce, Aluana Specials, Roast Turkey (of course) and Paté Sable, Fruits rouges with a Raspberry Coulis and Vanilla sauce, and a South African barbecue. The cooking was both cosmopolitan and commendable. Nouvelle Cuisine Shasha involved excellent ingredients, colourful and artistic presentation and large quantities. We continued the tradition of trying a number of different wines with each meal, with a strong emphasis on Italian and South African. The highlight was a glass of nectar, Vin de Constance, provided by Alessandro Swainston.

GMH

BIOLOGICAL

This year the Society has enjoyed its customary range of entertaining presentations and lectures and continues to give Stoics an insight into biology in the "real world". Dr Alan Breen and Jenny Langworthy talked about chiropractic and their college. Their reception was a little mixed and their main thrust seemed to be "chiropractic is a branch of medicine – honest!" Dr Roy Wiles from the University of Buckingham spoke on "disappearing rainforests" and fascinated everyone with his wealth of first-hand experience. He showed some marvellous slides and some splendid material – including the world's largest flying seed and a penis sheath of mind-boggling proportions.

Dr John Morton (also of Buckingham University) spoke of "fat mice and men" – questioning our perception of "fat" and relating this to underlying hormonal imbalances and the behaviour of laboratory animals. More recently Dr Jimmy Irwin from the Pollution Inspectorate gave us the current situation concerning acid rain, including Britain's contribution to both the cause and remedy.

All in all, a stimulating and varied "season". Next year promises such "unmissables" as David James' (no, not the Liverpool goalie) 'Equador and the Galapagos, my way' and Lawrence Jones-Walters from English Nature discussing the politics of conservation.

RRA

BRIDGE

The big achievement this year was getting through to the semi-finals of the EBU Schools Cup, beating the arch enemy Bedford on the way. We did not survive the semis, missing the cut by a couple of places. Our success was largely due to the enthusiasm of the team, who played a few prepared hands at lunchtime every day throughout the spring term. They gained a great deal of confidence in their methods and in each other. And we have got three of the five still this year!

We beat St Mary's, Ascot again in the rematch in the Spring term. We have now moved out of a long-suffering Maths Department into the Classics Centre for our weekly sessions and have three tables regularly. A few weeks ago we took part in an EBU Simultaneous Pairs Competition in both bridge and mini-bridge and are waiting for the overall results.

The House Pairs was won by Bruce (F.A. Wallis and R.A. Chambers) and the Teams went to Walpole after a fierce struggle. Team: Francis Wallis (capt), Steven Spencer (sec.), Nicola Lange, Edmund James and Roy Chambers.

GMH

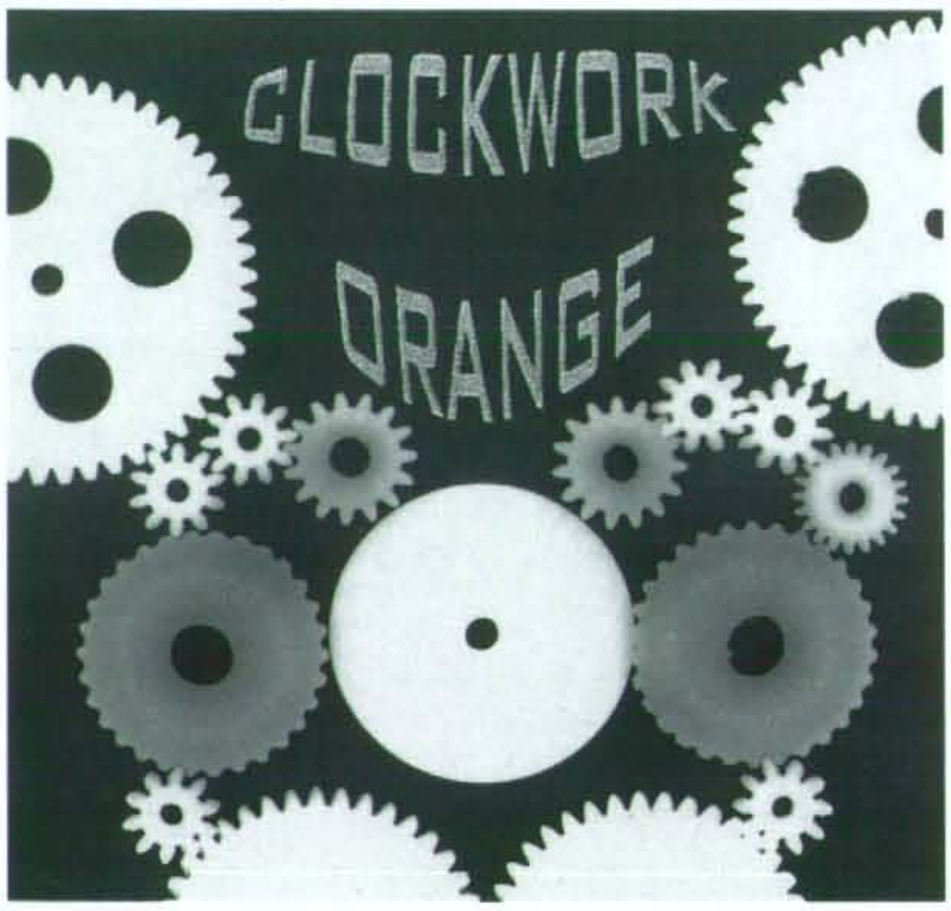
CHESS

The Chess Club continues to thrive with a good influx of young players this term. The club tournament is in full swing and there is a keen sense of competition.

CD Cover design

GCSE Photography

Jonathan Elkington



Compact disc packaging and graphics is a truly modern (post-modern?) graphical form. The designer is faced with problems of advertising, display, identity and communication, all within a small rectangle. CDs have only been in record stores since 1983, yet the advances in the commercial world since then have been remarkable.

The CD cover brief is ideal for introducing students to photographic design. Students had to base their images on "photograms", which are made by putting real objects onto photographic paper which records the shadows they cast. In most cases this was their first introduction to black and white photography. Students were encouraged to scan their images into the computer to make the incorporation of lettering easier.

Last June, Temple won the inter-House competition despite the presence in the Bruce team of Moritz Polonius, the strongest player Stowe has had in the last dozen years. The match, played over five boards, was full of excitement as fortunes fluctuated by the minute. Earlier this year some Akeley Wood pupils visited our club over a few weeks and are likely to do so again in the new year.

Finally, we thank Mr Taylor for visiting the club regularly to share his knowledge and combative skills with the boys, and thanks to William Austen (Chandos) for being such a helpful and reliable club secretary.

EST

CLASSICAL

A highlight of the year was the powerful production of *Oedipus The King* by the Actors of Dionysus, a travelling theatre company. Senior Stoics also appreciated meeting the company at an informal meal afterwards. We have also made visits to Greek plays in translation elsewhere, including two superb productions, Euripides' *Ion* at the Barbican Theatre in the spring and a moving version of Euripides' *Phoenician Women* at The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon in November.

In May the Classics Department staff gave sixth-formers varied insights into Homeric themes, while in March Jonathan Kreeger hosted a Greek dinner, with both tasty food and entertainments. Sadly in June we gathered at the Queen's Temple to take our leave and thank him for his lively contribution to Classics at Stowe.

MJB

COMMUNITY SERVICE

We have carried on with our traditional schedule of activities and I am very grateful to all those who have contributed to the scheme. We would hope in next year's issue to produce an illustrated account of the many different aspects of our work.

DSB

DEBATING

Senior debates were held two or three times a term and these, as ever, attracted large crowds, often a hundred strong and, on one occasion, nearly two hundred. The standard of speeches was high and the pleasing level of seriousness, both in the subjects chosen and in the preparation made, continued and progressed from the previous year. Senior debating titles included 'This House believes that English Literature should not be a compulsory part of an educational curriculum', 'This House believes that women are inadequately represented in society because they are inferior to men', 'This House has no confidence in Her Majesty's Government' and 'This House believes that there is no hope for the future.' Most memorably, John Mackenzie, QC, organised a trial of Lady Chatterley's Lover, where the Head of English was required to defend the book against the Chaplain, with Stoics speaking well on either side.

PASF continued to organise both Senior and Junior debates. Ross Atherton was Chairman of the Senior Debating Society with William Kemble-Clarkson as Secretary. Tom Smith Walker and Rupert Jupp were joint Secretaries of the Junior Debating Society.

In September 1995 William Kemble-Clarkson took over as Chairman of the Senior Society, with Tom Smith Walker and Rupert Jupp as Secretaries. We welcomed the arrival of FAB, who took over the Junior Debating Society, with Armand David as Chairman and James Lyon as Secretary.

PASF

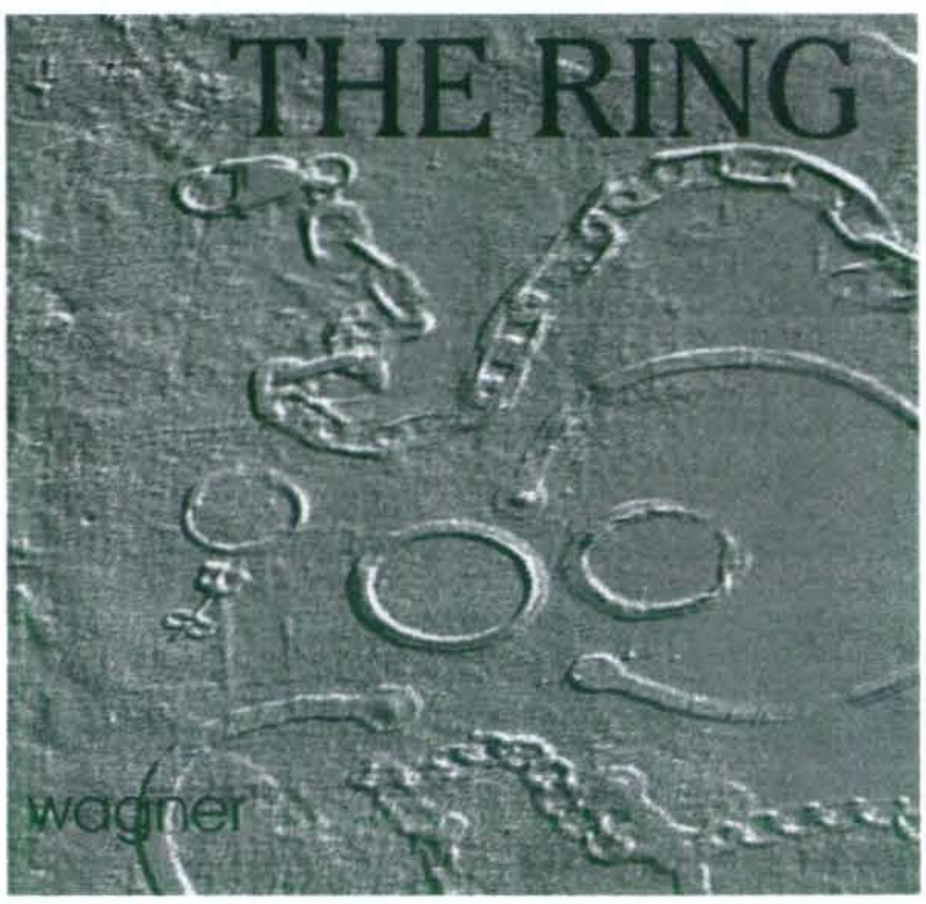
LITERARY

On January 25th Dr Valerie Sanders, the Head of the English Department at the University of Buckingham, spoke to us on *Persuasion*. On 8th March Michael Crick talked about his new biography of Jeffrey Archer and spoke about the difficulties in writing an unofficial biography of a living person. Given the variety of Lord Archer's life (and indeed persona), it seemed an exciting minefield and provoked a lively discussion with many interesting and enthusiastic questions.

CD COVER DESIGN

Peter Thomas

Emily Pritchard-Gordon



The following May, Edward Morgan, the Secretary of the Society, joined PASF at the launch of the book by Hamish Hamilton at the Travellers' Club in Pall Mall.

In the summer term there was a greater concentration on our A-level set texts. On 28th April the Headmaster spoke on *Antony and Cleopatra* and on 19th May PASF spoke on *Hamlet*.

Angus McCarey and Matthew Furse-Roberts took over as joint secretaries of the Society in September 1995. DSB spoke with his usual clever and provocative fascination about feminine roles and expectations in *The Wife of Bath* ("Who painted the Lion?") and Nicholas Jardine from Haileybury spoke on *Much Ado About Nothing*. We enjoyed a wonderful evening when a variety of Stoics read their own creative writing in the Library. This was organised by EST. The standard was very high and the courage of the participants was much respected.

PASF

SCIENCE

Chance spotting of a poster by some Stoic scientists whilst on a visit to the Royal Institution over a year ago led to one of the most stimulating and thought-provoking Science Society lectures for some time. The lecture was 'Unwinding the Creation', presented by Dr P.W. Atkins, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, author of many textbooks at school and university level, as well as popular science volumes. A busy man indeed, Dr Atkins kindly agreed to come to Stowe last Autumn and repeat his lecture. The arrival of his gold Rolls Royce outside the Science Block did cause a little stir.

Dr Atkins' lecture considered in an entertaining and fairly digestible way the mind-boggling issues of the origin of the Universe, where it was heading (not an optimistic view!), and even where it might have come from! This was not a lecture about Why, but How, and the lecturer maintained that science was at least beginning to provide answers to the latter question. The fact that one did not need vast amounts of charge or mass to be created to establish a universe, because the net charge in the universe is zero and the positive mass of the universe was cancelled by the negative mass associated with gravitational fields, left most of the audience grappling with ideas that were beyond their ken. Yet Dr Atkins had an air of authority about him and a style of presentation that made his explanations seem almost convincing and provoked some interesting discussion afterwards.

The first lecture of term, on Moonflight, was not on the same plane, or spaceship for that matter! A last-minute stand-in for the scheduled lecturer, Mr Terry Sproston, a local space enthusiast plunged us into darkness armed with a projector loaded with a variety of historical fact and fiction slides of moonbound transport, from which we emerged an hour-and-a-quarter later somewhat dazed from our flight!.

In the Spring term Professor George Kalmus, FRS, delved into the eerie world of sub-atomic particles with his talk on 'The Forces of Nature'. 'Nuclear Magnetic Spectroscopy', a modern analytical technique in Chemistry now appearing in the A-level syllabus was demonstrated in an entirely computer-based lecture by Mr P. Meadows of JEOL, UK.

Highlight of the next spring term should be another expedition to the Royal Institution for a Friday evening discourse on Lasers. As luck would have it, the Stowe Wind Quartet, now regular visitors there to entertain the members, will not be performing that evening, but the following week instead.

BHO

THEOLOGICAL

Once again the Society has been able to boast speakers of the highest calibre and it has been a pleasure to act as Secretary to men and women of such distinction. It is humbling and encouraging to find that they are willing to give up their time to speak to a group of teenagers. It says much for the passion of their beliefs and their genuine desire to serve others with their gifts and talents. (It probably says something about Stowe and the Chaplain's ability to twist arms – TMH-S is our "senior member"!)

CD Cover design

GCSE Photography

Simon Maude-Roxby

Jon Elkington does a literal interpretation of 'Clockwork Orange', whilst Richard Thomas evokes a jungly mood with 'Mana Maya'. Emily Pritchard-Gordon transformed her photogram, using "Corel Photopaint" for some instant embossing, a process which would have taken hours in the darkroom, but which took five minutes on the computer. Simon Maude-Roxby's solution is a puzzle, yet visually exciting. Rachel Arbuthnott's naïve approach serves to get the message across, whilst Charles Bell's 'Deep Forest' features a shadow-print of his live pet iguana.

These are only a selection of the fascinating work that pupils have produced where Fox Talbot's invention meets the computer.

AGE

Two of our best known speakers were Sir Ludovic Kennedy and John Mortimer QC. Sir Ludovic spoke passionately about the need to legalise euthanasia and gave emotive and seemingly powerful arguments in support of his case. If he failed to persuade his audience, this may be in part explained by his wife, former ballerina Moira Shearer's dismissive remark before the talk: "This does seem to be Ludovic's latest hobby horse!" They were charming guests.

John Mortimer's approach was far more relaxed, and although three times referring to a piece of paper to remind himself of his title, he never once addressed it! Instead he regaled us with endless anecdotes and stories, and in so doing revealed his belief in justice and the British legal system, in spite of all of its quirks and oddities.

Brigadier Guy de Vere Hayes, the Deputy Warden of Dover Castle and a Bosnian veteran, and Barney Mayhew, a peace keeper in both Bosnia and Rwanda, brought these harrowing conflicts before us, inviting us to reflect on human nature and the Christian response to war. Both found their audiences to be very responsive.

A far more academic approach to theological reflection was given to us by the Right Revd. Richard Harries, the Bishop of Oxford, who attempted to respond to Anthony Freeman's *God in us*, a book that sought to do away with any objective belief in God. If Bishop Richard failed to convince his audience with his "Reasons to Believe" it may perhaps have been because he did not always seem to be clear on what he believed!

Professor Baroness Mcfarlane gave the argument against the legalisation of euthanasia drawing on her vast experience as a professor of nursing and serving on the House of Lords Select Committee on medical ethics. As someone who has changed her mind on the subject having been convinced by the arguments, she was particularly well received, as she spoke with honesty and clarity.

As always many of this year's preachers gave seminars and made themselves available for informal talks about a wide range of theological and social issues: Lady Nairne (on the ordination of women), Lord Elton (on crime and punishment), the Countess of Limerick (on Cot Death Research) and Baroness Blatch (on capital punishment).

The Society remains a lively forum for debate and discussion, and after Tom Chambré's busy and fascinating year as Secretary, a role which he filled with dedication and humour, we look forward to yet more challenges to think and to be open-minded, with Sam Emery as Secretary.

Tom Chambré & Sam Emery

THE TWENTY

Last term the Twenty Club met for a number of informative evenings. After a review of our holiday puzzles, with prizes awarded for the best, we concentrated on "The Twenty Club Debate". PVC gave us an introduction to debating and then kindly chaired our debate on the motion "This House believes that euthanasia should be legalised." The three speakers proposing the motion were Roy Chambers, Rupert Burchett and Tom Sleater. They all spoke very well and the motion was carried.

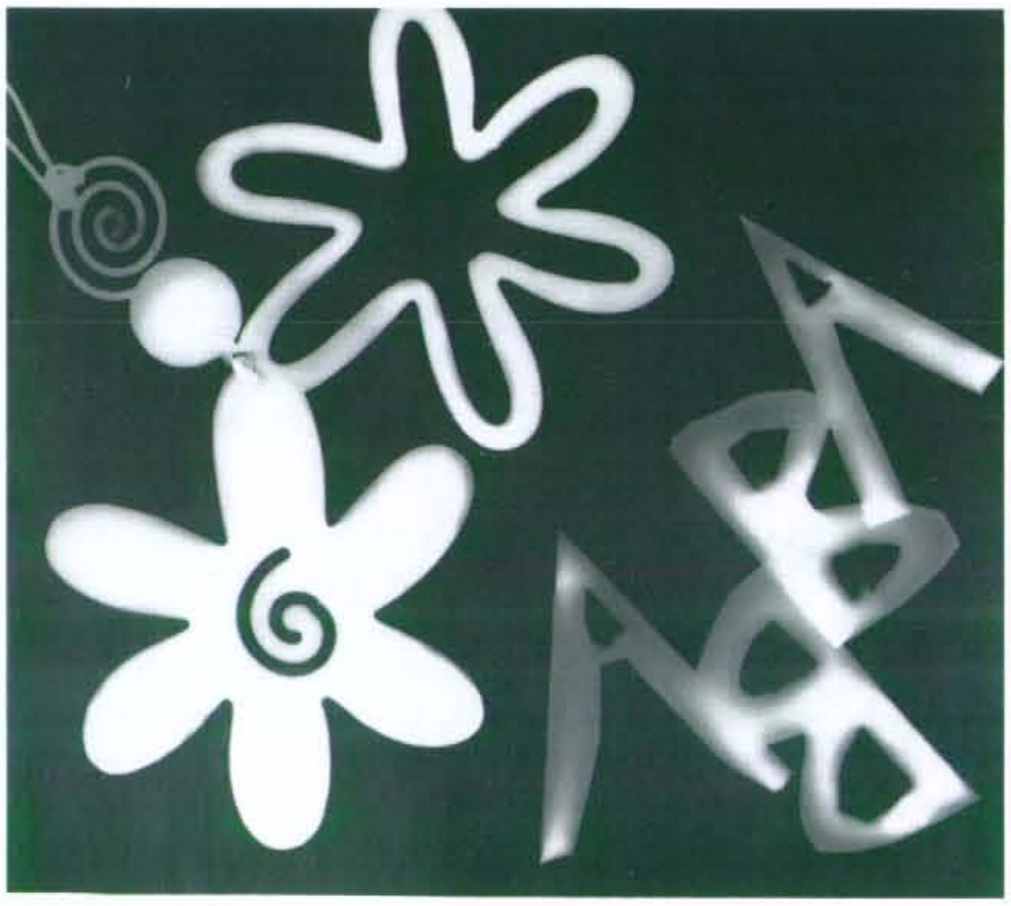
There were outings to the Royal Institution – one for the 4th and 5th forms and one for the 3rd form. The lectures were fascinating and beneficial as some chemistry was learnt out of class. The first outing, which was for the 4th and 5th forms, was titled "Why Eskimos shouldn't build skyscrapers." This seemed weird at first but it was all about the status of matter and strengths of materials, so at the end of the lecture everything was understood. It was very well put together. The second outing, which was for the 3rd form, was about DNA and titled "Genome Adventure". This too was very successful; both outings were very enjoyable.

Our last two meetings were led by SCT, who spoke about basic linguistics and the origin of languages in Europe, and by EST, who spoke about Creative Writing. These were such fun that we are sure they will be coming back soon. We look forward to m?or...e in(te.r) e st ;in !!g (meet) ?i?ngs n (ex) t y, e.a!!r (with apologies to e.e. cummings!)

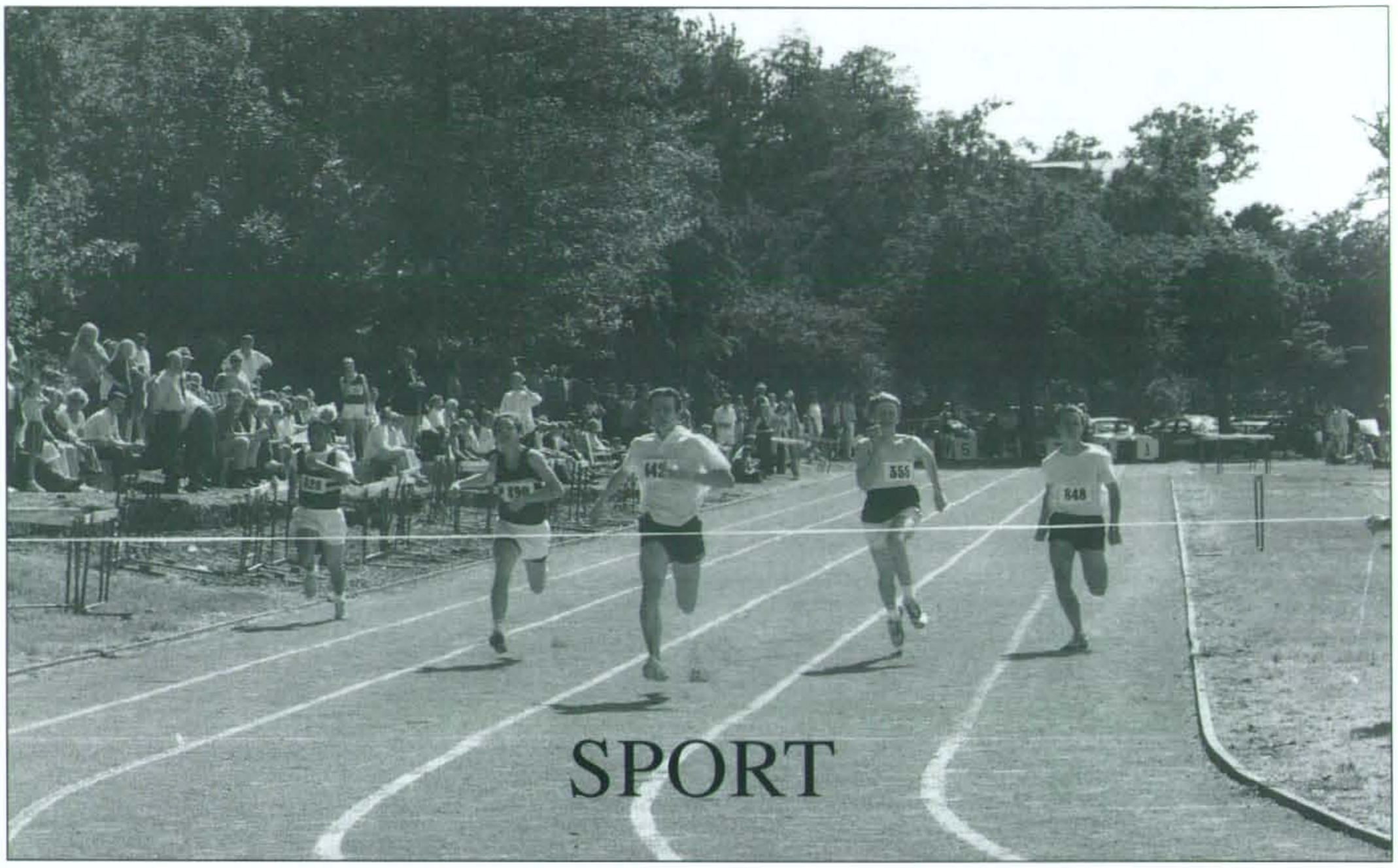
Kingsley Ford
& James Vane-Tempest

CD COVER DESIGN

Rachel Arbuthnott



Charles Bell



Photos: George Eves

Danny Fontaine, James Webster, Richard Dobbin, Serrol Osman and Rafe Hyatt in the 100m final

ATHLETICS

The innovation this year of holding all the athletic heats on the first Sunday of term proved an unmitigated success and is sure to be continued in the future. The results were that the Athletic Club gained an early opportunity to select the best athletes.

Our Third Year team lost one match all season. Joe Maxwell, of whom more later, Henry Gillingham and Adam Cottrell stood out amongst a talented group of athletes. The Intermediate Team was only slightly less successful and, with athletes like Gavin McIntyre, Dominique Dumaresq and Tim Kitney to the fore, they gave good competition to all comers.

The Girls' Team was newly formed this year and, with Lower Sixth girls like Jenny Taylor, Lucy Rogers, Tara Kennedy and more, all showing great enthusiasm, hopes were high. However, despite the valiant attempts of these few, they were often let down, like the boys, by the unavailability of their seniors.

Crispin Marsland-Roberts captained the team very well, and proved remarkably adept at producing people who would run the 1500 or put the shot at very short notice. It did, of course, help that he was in Walpole who, with the likes of Haytham Zahid and Benji Mount amongst others, provided the backbone of the school team and deservedly went on to win the trophy on Sports Day by a distance.

We produced twelve gold medalists at the County Championships this year and pride of place amongst those must go to Gavin McIntyre. Despite what Kris Akabussi says, anyone who has competed in all of the athletic disciplines will know that the toughest event is the steeplechase. No one had thought to tell Gavin this before the gun went off, and he ran himself into the ground in his first ever attempt at the distance, breaking the old record and only just failing to gain selection for the English Schools Championships.

Stowe did, however, manage its usual complement of athletes at this Mecca of school sports, Joe Maxwell competing in the Junior Boys' 80m Hurdles and Tim Kitney, despite being a year younger, in the Intermediate Boys' Javelin. They proved to be our two outstanding athletes of the season and both won their respective events at the Independent Schools Championship, the week before the big one, as well as breaking numerous school records between them during the season.

At Nottingham Tim gained a great result, finishing just outside the medals in 4th place. Joe made the final, despite his rather poor finish in the semis when he walked across the line! But he showed his talent in the final where he was drawn alongside the other two favourites and, despite a poor start, he got back up alongside them to finish 3rd and pick up our first medal at these championships since Tayo Erogbogbo passed into the senior ranks.

AMcD

Lucy Rogers at the winning tape

BADMINTON

Boys

With only one player remaining from our unbeaten Senior VI of last year it would have been unrealistic to expect the team to repeat that success. They may not have been unbeaten but the team, led by the very capable Arvin Datwani, came very close.

The first encounter of the season was against Bradfield who are in the process of building up their badminton; so the 17-1 scoreline in our favour was not at all surprising. This victory probably led to our downfall in the next match against Bloxham where an element of complacency, coupled with some good Bloxham play resulted in a 4-5 defeat. Revenge was sweet, however, as the players were physically and mentally prepared in the return match. After winning 8-1 the players found it difficult to understand how they managed to lose against the same team earlier in the term. It may have had something to do with the introduction of coach John Gurling, who came recommended from the Milton Keynes Centre of Excellence for Badminton.

With all the team of a similar standard, there was much competition for the top pairing combination. In the end Allan Clayton joined his captain to form the 1st pair with Alex Hobbs and new boy Patiyuth Chanprabhap forming the 2nd pairing over Andrew Au and Kanapat Tepalagul.

The team did well to take both matches against Oundle and Cheltenham by a margin of 6-3. They travelled to Uppingham, who were not at their usual strength, and came out easy winners 9-0. The team did not let up as they worked harder and harder in their practice sessions to be rewarded with 7-2 victories against Rugby, Oakham and Mill Hill.

All our opponents had also been beaten by Abingdon and by similar margins to our victories; so it was obvious that the last match of the season was going to be our toughest. Not having home court advantage did not help but in the end we were defeated by a very good Abingdon side 6-3.

The Colts, led by Robert White, had a very encouraging season, only losing to Abingdon, but beating Bradfield, Rugby, Oakham and Mill Hill. Alex Etherington-Smith came back strongly from injury and Mark Bowman, Armand David and Hamish Gordon-Lennox continued to improve their playing ability and tactical awareness of the game. The Senior B VI celebrated two wins against Bloxham, 6-3 and 7-2.

It has been another memorable season and the success and enjoyment gained by pupils has been made possible by a very dedicated staff team who are involved in the matches and coaching (BHO, AD, GSR, AKM and John Gurling).

IM

Girls

The girls have had a very good season, with a number of players making clear progress as the weeks went by, and this was reflected by the results in matches. Early matches against Bradfield and Wellingborough were fairly even affairs, but then the shock of a heavy defeat at Oundle galvanised the two teams into action. An excellent result was achieved at Bloxham, where the As won 7-2, and this momentum was maintained at Rugby, where the final score was in doubt until Charlotte Lee and Karina Friesen won the final game. The next two matches were cancelled, but the season finished on a splendid high note with both the A and B VIs winning at home against Bloxham. The girls in the squad have had a good spirit amongst themselves and have responded well to encouragement and coaching tips - and thanks in that respect are due to John Gurling, who has come in on a number of occasions to emphasise movement, aggression and "bounce". Fenella Hunt has been an excellent captain, playing and organising well. Colours were duly awarded to her and also to Natasha Ivanova, Oksana Kushnirenko, Alexa von Kunsberg, Karina Friesen and Charlotte Lee. It has been a pleasure to have been in charge of the girls badminton this season and I am optimistic about the possibilities of next year's teams.

The following have also been regular squad members: Caroline Smith, Se Hee Kim, Suzy Rasch, Sophie Hicks, Katherine Mallett, Durga Gohel, Christiane Gellert, Amelie Thyssen and Beth Ryden.

AD

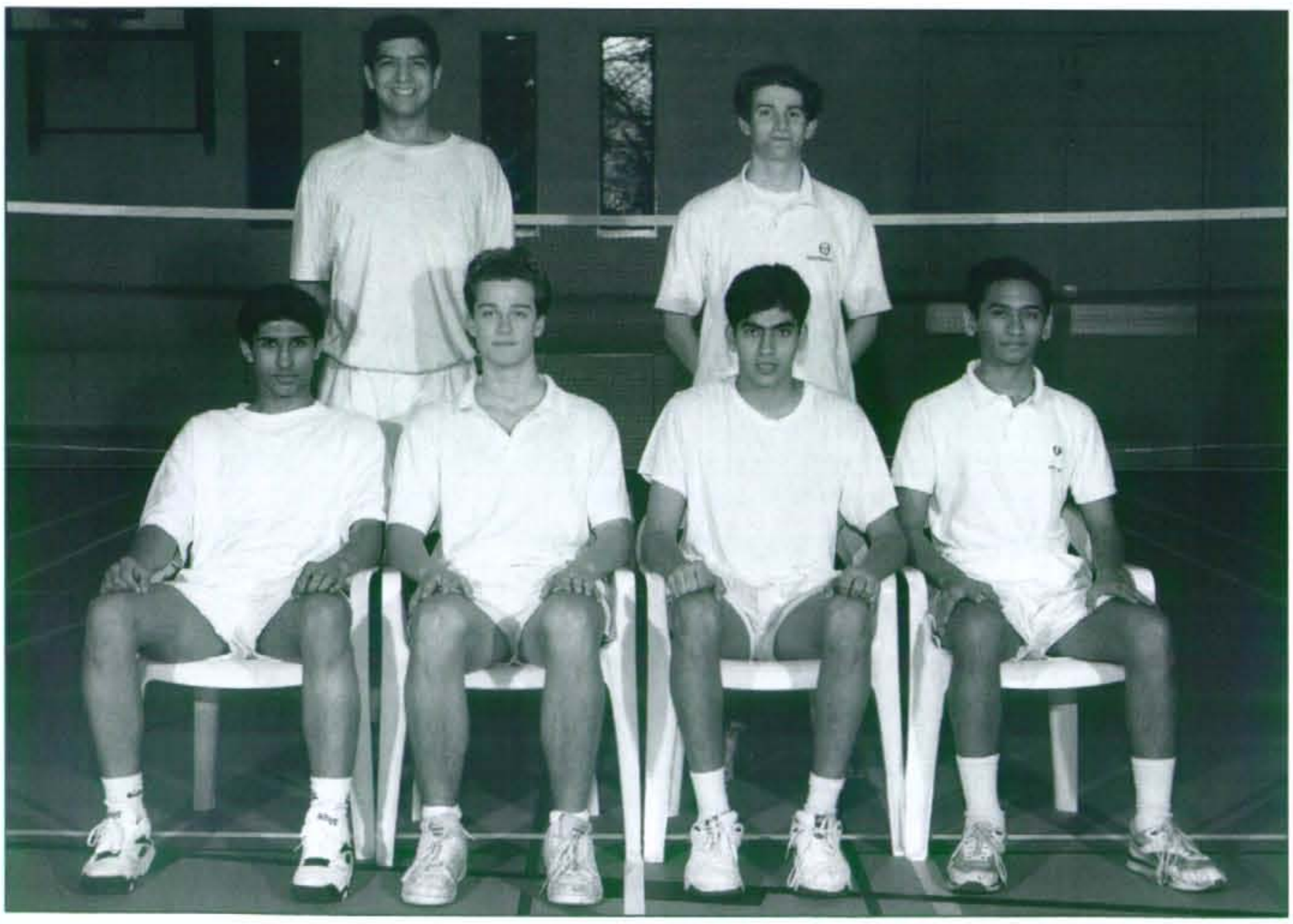


Photo: R & H Chapman ©

SENIOR BADMINTON (94-95). Back row: Nikilesh Dadlani, Tom Winter. Front row: Uraaz Bahl, Wayne Carpendale, Arvin Datwani, Vineet Gupta

BASKETBALL

U19 Team

Stowe has had its best ever season, remaining unbeaten in all eight inter-school matches. The season began against Aylesbury Grammar who came with a very big, athletic side. We were unable to make any impression inside; so it was left to Riley (14 points) and the captain, Carpendale, (16 points) to win us the game 50-41 with their fast break and perimeter shooting. We then entertained Harrow who had no answer to Polonius who scored 16 valuable points. We came out eventual winners 56-38. Mill Hill held us for the majority of the game but, when it mattered most, Webster came good with 14 points and led us to victory 50-38. Although the next game was in the small gymnasium of the Royal Latin School, the game was far from cluttered. The boys were looking forward to playing against old friends and produced one of the best performances of the season to win 63-21. Uppingham failed to cope with our fast break and tight man-to-man defence and were comfortably beaten 58-15. As expected, Winchester proved to be tougher opposition but we still won with an 18-point margin, Giudice top scoring with 15 points. Radley were no match and went down 73-36 but it was the final match of the season against Bradfield which proved the hardest. In an exciting game, Stowe came out eventual winners by 10 points as Polonius (21 points) and Riley (17 points) did just enough to keep the advantage throughout.

U16 Team

This team did not quite fulfil its potential. There were some excellent moments of play however, particularly from Douglas Wong. The season started with a one point defeat at the hands of Buckingham. Gyosei were excellent in our next match and gave us a lesson in clinical basketball. The team hit a good patch and won the next three matches against Harrow, Uppingham and Winchester; the latter by just a single point! Bradfield were just too strong in the last match of the season and eventually went on to win 53-46.

Girls

The game continues to grow in popularity for the girls. More and more girls are doing it as their main spring term sport and practising twice a week with matches. This has obviously meant steady improvement in their performance levels and a desire not just to compete and enjoy themselves but also to win. We had good wins against Bloxham, Buckingham and Bradfield, and lost one match (the first encounter against Bloxham). Encouragingly fourteen players of the squad are back for next season. With the new intake of strong basketball players this autumn, girls' basketball at Stowe is all set to take off!

National U19 Competition

The school entered the National Competition for the first time. The players were thrilled to be involved in such a competition. We knew it was going to be tough as we were new boys against seasoned campaigners, but we were there for the experience and learning process. We were grouped with Winchester, Charters and Tauntons. The Winchester game went according to form and we won by 20 points. Charters were our next opponents and we had to contain their GB International who had scored 51 points in their previous match. Well, we contained him up to a point, but it was our own inability to finish, after creating excellent openings, which led to our downfall. It went right down to the 'wire' and we fell short by two points, 58-60. We went to Tauntons confident of doing well, but some sloppy defending and poor finishing lost us the match 67-76.

Holland Tour

IM, MOJ and JLH-J took a party of 18 boys to Valkenburg, Holland during the autumn half-term holiday. The group was split into two teams. The boys received coaching in the morning from a local Dutch ex-National League player and played matches in the evening against Dutch club sides. Unfortunately, the Dutch underestimated the strength of our side and we ended up winning each official game by a very comfortable margin. We had the opportunity to visit Maastricht and Aachen, which helped combine the sport with a little culture. There is talk of next year's tour being in Frankfurt, Germany.

IM

Photo: R & H Chapman ©

UNDER 16 BASKETBALL. Back row: Felix Sprang, Denis Redzepagic,Kristjan Byfield, Dominique Dumaresq, Simon Gwyn, Charles Bell, Ben Bloomfield, IM. Front row: Oscar Marsland-Roberts, Lebby Anafu, James McDonagh, Alexander Heath, Douglas Wong.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

For those not "in the know", this is a weekly activity, expertly coached by Chris Lockwood and Bob Spademan of Brackley Gunsmiths. School teams, usually five or six to a team, shoot in a variety of competitions, mainly in the spring and summer terms, the School having an excellent record over the years.

Our season began in March with the Warwick School Challenge, where our six-man team of Messrs. Stewart-Richardson (capt.), Gregson, Bathurst, Maxwell-Brown, Ringsby-Burgess and Craik-White kept calm under pressure and came away victorious, having beaten ten other schools (Bloxham, Framlingham, Kimbolton, The Leys, Norwich, Oundle, Rugby, St. Edward's and Warwick), a fine achievement indeed, Ollie Gregson and Will Bathurst being living proof that you don't have to possess a double-barrelled name in order to be good with a double-barrelled shotgun!

A week later we took A and B teams to Kibworth in Leicestershire for the Eastern Area Schools Championship, to shoot against many of the same schools once again. The A team shot well, but this time the heroes of the Warwick Shield were shaded into fourth place, but by only a few clays (two more would have made all the difference!). In the B team competition, however, we stormed away to a fine win, thirteen clays ahead of the nearest competition, everyone showing how well Chris and Bob's lessons in technique had been remembered. May 14th saw us at The Nationals (or, to give the full title, The Eley-Smiths Gore Independent Schools Clay Shooting Championship), where our A team found itself, on this day of all days and for no apparent reason, shooting well below its usual very high standard and managing only fifteenth place out of twenty-nine teams. The B team, once again, partially retrieved the situation, coming joint second, with Nicholas Newall as runner-up in the B team High Gun competition, high praise in such exalted company.

We barely had time to draw breath before the House Matches were upon us; a highly competitive, yet hugely friendly occasion, which ended with the tightest of finishes, victory going to Cobham (Newall, Milbank, Feilden), one clay ahead of Grafton (Gregson, Mahon, Wills), who in their turn beat Chandos (Stewart-Richardson, Ringsby-Burgess, Emerson) by the same margin; it certainly is tough at the top! Fourth to eighth places were taken respectively by Walpole, Grenville, Chatham, Temple and Bruce.

Parental and Old Stoic support for Speech Day clay-shooting has been growing steadily in recent years and 1995 was no exception, with so many enthusiastic guns present that we had great difficulty in keeping within our schedule; perhaps we will have to begin earlier next year! Once again, the School beat the OS in a close, but good-natured contest, which was followed, as ever, by Stoic-plus-parent Pairs Competition. This year Sir Anthony and Toby Milbank, both using good old side-by-sides, held on to the magnificent new trophy, most generously presented last year by Charles Wyvill.

At the end of the summer term Hugh Stewart-Richardson, our admirable captain, handed over to Oliver Gregson; the latter is already showing every sign of being a worthy successor. Our final fixture for 1995 was the Independent Schools Skeet Championship, held at USAF Lakenheath, in Suffolk. "Skeet" is derived from an old Scandinavian word meaning "shoot" and is a formalised American version of the sport, in which the shooter fires at pairs of clays projected from traps, in opposite directions. He shoots in sequence from several equidistant fixed positions along a semi-circle drawn between the two traps and the scores are then added together. In an exact replay of the Eastern Area Championships the A team came 4th and our B team won in fine style!

Our new teams are mixtures of the young, the not-so-young and the positively ancient and, as we rebuild for 1996 and beyond, we have every reason for optimism. In one area, however, we fall short of previous years. Where are the girls? At the moment we have no female team, but we know you're out there! Only a few seasons ago we had a winning ladies team, one of the squad being National High Gun. We look forward to the return of those glorious days. Do come and join us in this great sport!

MW

William Bathurst writes:

Nobody could have foreseen the events that took place at Edgehill! Our single team consisted of six guns, the captain (Hugh Stewart-Richardson) and vice-captain (Ollie Gregson), Rupert Maxwell-Brown, James Craik-White, William Bathurst and Ollie Ringsby-Burgess. The five highest scores went forward to the team total and at the end of the day these scores averaged 39 out of 50 with Rupert's score not counting. We thought the score was not enough to win, so retired to the clubhouse with a respectable score of 195 out of 250. The ever-knowledgeable Chris Lockwood, team coach, said that a score in the two hundreds would win it.

Then the other scores started to roll in and certain team members kept a hopeful eye on proceedings. Already the first score was there, Rugby 192, and, with the scores of Oundle and Framlingham still to come, our ever-present small glimmer of hope was getting smaller and smaller. Then the big surprise of the day came: Oundle 147. By this time I was jumping up and down – my greatest hopes came true! Framlingham scored 158 and we had won the Warwick Challenge by just three clays!

STOWE B TEAM:
Luca Savelli, Peter Mackay-Lewis,
Nick Newall, James Mahon,
Rupert Maxwell-Brown, David Wills.

CRICKET

1st XI

In a summer to be remembered for its brilliant weather, the 1st XI played 13 games – winning 2, losing 5 and drawing 6, with 2 matches still managing to be abandoned. With a very young side, results could be considered satisfactory. The future looks good with Junior Colt White, a Northants player, and Colts Harris, a Nottinghamshire player, and McDonagh playing significant roles. I look forward to their continued progress in the next few seasons. Nine of the squad will be back next year. Let us hope they can benefit from this year's experience and be more successful.

The side, very well captained by Konig, began with a nail-biting win by 2 runs over Winchester, followed the next day by needing 5 runs to win in the last over and failing by one run. Throughout the season runs did not come easily. There were only seven individual scores of over fifty.

The bowling showed a big improvement on last year's performances. Last year only one player took 15 wickets, whereas this season four players took 15 or more. Konig and Milling both took 15, Harris and Branch 16 each. The bowling efforts were backed up by good all round fielding, particularly Inglefield at slip and Searle at cover. The side really benefited when McDonagh was promoted to keep wicket.

The annual pre-season coaching course goes from strength to strength. The courses were fully booked. Boys of all ages have benefited from the coaching of Harold Rhodes (Derbyshire & England), Alan Jones (Somerset & Middlesex), George Sharp (Northamptonshire) and Jack Bond (Lancashire). My grateful thanks must go to all those who help make the season run so smoothly – Clive Cross, Keith Timpson, Peter Gladwin and Mel Smith who umpire our matches; George Eves our scorer; the Caterers and Office Staff; all the teaching colleagues who give up their time to guide our young cricketers in the right direction; and to Steve Curley, our ground superintendent, and his team for preparing some marvellous playing areas for our games on the North and South Fronts.

MJH

SQUAD (* denotes colours)
M. Smith*, R. White*, R. Harris*,
C. Inglefield*, C. Dixey, N. Roberts*,
R. Searle, H. Carling, M. Konig (Capt),*
W. Milling*, S. Branch*, S . McDonagh*,
A. Campbell, C. Saunders.

RESULTS 1995

Winchester:	**Won by 2 runs**
Stowe 116	(White 50)
Winchester 114	(Branch 4-19)
	(Harris 3-20)
Free Foresters:	**Draw**
Free Foresters 199 for 3	
Stowe 197 for 6	(White 66)
	(Smith 54)
Bloxham:	**Draw**
Bloxham 232 for 3	
Stowe 181 for 7	(Harris 79)
MCC:	**Draw**
M.C.C. 212 for 5	
Stowe 107 for 8	
Bradfield:	**Draw**
Stowe 179	
Bradfield 159 for 6	(Milling 3-33)
St. Edward's:	**lost by 7 wickets**
Stowe 109	
St. Edward's 110 for 3	
Old Stoics:	**won by 22 runs**
Stowe 169	(White 98)
Old Stoics 147	(Konig 3-42)
	(Harris 3-36)
	(Milling 3-29)
Radley:	**Cancelled**
Northants Under 19s:	**Draw**
Northants U/19 187 for 9	
Stowe 136 for 6	(Konig 5-65)
Oundle:	**Draw**
Oundle 175 for 7	(Konig 3-44)
Stowe 84 for 7	
Rugby:	**Lost by 79 runs**
Rugby 222 for 7	
Stowe 143	(McDonagh 51)
Melbourne GS:	**Lost by 7 wickets**
Stowe 102	(Harris 40)
Melbourne GS 106 for 3	
Bedford:	**Lost by 7 wickets**
Stowe 118	(McDonagh 40)
Bedford 119 for 3	
Wellington:	**Lost by 4 wickets**
Stowe 169	(McDonagh 63)
Wellington 170 for 6	

2nd XI

The season began and ended with resounding victories against Winchester and Rugby; in between, one more win was recorded against Bradfield, and three defeats were suffered at the hands of Bloxham, St. Edward's and Uppingham. Overall we got the results we deserved, but we could and should have done better. Individually, the side bristled with talent, we batted down to the last man, and our bowling lacked only a wrist-spinner to make it a truly formidable attack. All too often, however, our fielding let us down; wickets were tossed away when we should have been hanging on tenaciously for a draw; and our bowling wilted, losing line and length, when the opposition had weathered the opening storm and had got themselves set. In short, just when things were beginning to look interesting, we frequently lost interest.

In several games we were given a solid start by the opening pair of Consett and Kumar Das. Against Rugby, the latter's beautifully judged and typically wristy 60 against a hostile attack, and an even more hostile running commentary from a close-set field, was both a match winner and a joy to watch. Alas, our middle order rarely capitalised on the platform provided by the openers. Only when Carling was playing could numbers five, six and seven relax: in his two games against Uppingham and Rugby, he demonstrated an ability to play shots on both sides of the wicket, as well as good judgment in picking and punishing the bad ball. A class player, he must surely get lots of runs next year. His attacking flair was balanced by Riley's limpet-like qualities at three or four: after two early failures, he was increasingly difficult to dislodge, but on several occasions, having retreated into his shell, he did not score quite quickly enough. With wickets frequently tumbling around him, Stewart-Richardson was always reliable, the calm centre of the storm: a model of determination and application, his front foot was always planted fearlessly down the wicket and his bat was invariably straight; a genuine and valued team player, he regularly chipped in double figure scores and halted collapses which threatened to become routs. The lower order rarely held up the opposition for long, but Hope-Johnstone's swash-buckling 30 odd against Winchester not only astonished and then demoralised their attack, it also provided the fillip which sent our bowlers running in with a vengeance to notch up the first win of the season.

Bowling wins matches, and against Bradfield, as well as Winchester, it certainly did. Stevenson's pace was telling on both occasions, and his penetration when he deployed himself in short bursts of three or four overs was nicely complemented by Hassan's reliable and more subtle medium pace. Cricket is a side-on game and this dictum was ably demonstrated by Macdonald Lockhart, the team's one genuine all-

Above and below: Speech Day, the Junior Colts v The Parents

Photos: IM

Below: 1st XI action on the North Front, Charles Inglefield batting

Photo: Henry Irving

rounder. Side-on, he bowled a good line and length and as a result he was always difficult to get away: side-on, he was also a good judge of line and length and difficult to get out. Against Rugby, Winter's off-spinners, after a frustrating and wayward season, at last began to turn and bite and his five-wicket haul paved the way for final victory. What we lacked, however, and what in fact induced a lemming-like rush of our own batsmen back to the pavilion in the games against Bloxham and St. Edward's was a wrist-spinner. Coaches of our junior teams, please note!

It is perhaps best not to draw too much attention to the quality of our fielding. Only when Newnham was behind the stumps was there any real sense of energy and enthusiasm in the field, though Dixey and Stewart-Richardson always acquitted themselves well in the covers and at mid-wicket.

Throughout the season, Stevenson did well to captain an unpredictable and ever-changing team, as calls came from on high to plug gaps in the First XI and the demands of A-levels increasingly distracted the senior players. Along with Kumar Das and Stewart-Richardson, he is to be congratulated on winning his Half Colours.

RAC

3rd XI

It was one of those summers when it always seemed to rain just on Saturdays! This cut down a fixture list which had already been trimmed down to the first half of term only by the demands of the public exams. Of the three fixtures played, we beat Winchester and lost to Bradfield and St. Edward's. There was a big, useful squad to choose from and the group would have derived benefit from the greater opportunity for both internal and external match play.

Nick Mason scored a fine fifty against Winchester and always looked threatening with both bat and ball. Indeed, against Bradfield at home, after Stowe had been dismissed for a paltry score, he nearly turned the match with some fearsome bowling down the slope on the South Front. (That wicket was like a trampoline.) Francis Wallis showed class too and James Webster's off-spin probably made him the pick of the bowlers. Kumar Das played one very elegant innings against St. Edward's.

Other stalwart performers included Richard Barber, Hugh Stewart-Richardson, Andrew Black, Jimmy Lane, Jamie Curtis, Henry Titley, Hugh Luttrell, Will Rudge, Tim Hope-Johnstone, James Craik-White and Tom Morley.

What a pity that such a useful squad – and there were others too, who did not play in the matches – had so little cricket!

EST/AGM

Colts

This year's Colts had a good season. Not only were we the only unbeaten cricket team in the school, but also we had some fine wins against Bradfield and Bloxham and the season was peppered with some cracking individual performances. Given that we lost both our captain, wicket-keeper and best bat, James McDonagh, to the First XI early in the season, and last year's Junior Colts star bat and opening bowler to the First XI before the term had even started, we did well to record results of played 6, won 2, drew 4. These departures left serious gaps in our batting line-up which we never really managed to fill. As a result we were forced to bat second whenever we won the toss, but since we only play with the one ball, our bowlers were delighted and made the most of their good fortune.

With James' departure Alasdair Barne tried captaincy, but was, I believe, relieved to pass it on to Edward Wainright-Lee, who also took over and proved to be a very effective wicket-keeper.

On the bowling front our new arrival from Junior Colts, Tom Willis, had some quite good results with his bowling, ending the season with 11 for 99. Scott Elliott and Tom Stables also bowled well on occasions, but were both a bit unpredictable. William Bathurst joined the bowling line-up from Colts B and proved that line, length and swing were often far more effective than sheer pace, ending the season at the top of the bowling averages. My great regret was that our spinners, Simon Part and Tom Honeyman Brown, were not given the chance to show their mettle. Too often we hadn't enough runs on the board for them to bowl at, but equally often Tom seemed to think it "sissy" to bowl spin and wanted to charge in and bowl military medium, which was a pity because he is a very promising slow left-arm spinner.

With our batting line-up seriously depleted, pressure was put on largely untried batsmen and they did us proud. Simon Part invested in a helmet and his batting was transformed. Having started the season batting number 11, he ended as the undisputed opener and was deservedly at the top of the averages, averaging 43. Alexander Heath, Tom Smith Walker, Jonathan Corbishley and Alasdair Barne all played straight, but a trifle cautiously, which is not a criticism that could be levelled at either Buddy Wheatley or Tom Honeyman Brown, who caned the ball around the ground quite successfully on the odd occasion. Tom Willis was undoubtedly the most accomplished batsman, but he lacked consistency.

Despite losing fixtures to the rain and players to post-GCSE work experience, we had a thoroughly enjoyable season, practising frequently and playing hard but civilised cricket – coach Chitty saw to that! Our thanks to the parents who supported us and in particular to James Wright for scoring for us throughout the season.

MOMC

Junior Colts

The side lost two of its best players at the start of the season and thus expected to lose regularly, but discovered that some of those who never had the chance last year were capable of doing well. It eventually won 3 lost 2 and drew 4. Lessons were learned early on from the Bloxham game, which was drawn 1 short of victory because of stupid shots in the final over when singles would have sufficed! The strength of the side lay in the depth of the batting; significant recoveries followed disastrous starts against Northants CA and Rugby.

The most prolific batsman was Saunders whose second worst score was 34 and who usually scored rapidly. Sleater flattered to deceive but will score runs at the senior end. The best support came from Keeler, Denning and Bowman, who eventually filled the problem number 3 position with grit if not fluidity. Both Haywards played useful knocks on occasions, while Arkwright scored a vital fifty in one game. Byfield hit the ball lustily but did not always choose the correct ball to hit!

The bowling proved a problem all term with Bowman bowling a lot of overs and not always getting his just deserts. Keeler and Sleater could bowl well but were also prone to long hops, as was Saunders. Rupert Hayward proved to be

the most consistent of the bowlers, while Merali showed promise towards the end of the season and Austen and Chambers tried hard when called upon.

The field was erratic but Giles Hayward was outstanding all season. Craik-White shared the wicket-keeping duties tidily with Denning, who also showed talent as an off spinner.

Probably the biggest weakness of the side was not lack of talent but lack of concentration, which lost vital wickets and dropped important catches or lazily missed runouts. What was most pleasing was the progress made in stealing singles, most notably by Sleater. The highlights of the season were the run chase to score 115 to beat Oundle by 8 wickets and the 90 scored by Saunders against Bloxham.

DCM

Photo: Classic Snaps

Yearlings

It was never going to be easy for this year's Yearlings to match the outstanding performances of last year's team. They looked quite promising as a group during the winter nets.

The season began with a heavy defeat against Winchester followed by the best performance of the season, against Bloxham. After a solid opening partnership from Defty (28) and Browning (32) it was left to Cottrell (75 not out) and Gillingham (33 not out) to consolidate and then accelerate to a total of 215 for 3 declared. Bloxham were then quickly bowled out for 94 with Girardot and Leo Fenwick taking 3 wickets each. Confidence was high as we faced Chesham in the 1st round of the Lord's Taverners. William Mann took 4 wickets and we restricted Chesham to 110. An inspired Willie Watson (43 not out) saw us home by 8 wickets. The next game against Bradfield again saw Watson dominating proceedings; his excellent opening spell had Bradfield reeling at 60 for 5 but they ended on 176 for 6. Watson (31) had little support as Stowe fell 19 short, in a very exciting match. A batting collapse at St. Edward's led to a 7 wicket defeat. Fortunately there was little sign of the recent poor batting form against John Hampden in the next round of the Lord's Taverners. Feilden was rewarded with 4 good wickets as he bowled straight and kept the ball up to the bat. Chasing 130, Stowe got home comfortably by 6 wickets with Mann in form with a hard-hitting 35. Lack of runs in the remaining school games against Northants CA, Oundle and Rugby made it frustrating for a very determined bowling attack to make much of an impression. Alex Garbe impressed and Harry Girardot was very unlucky not to get more wickets with his leg-spin. Defty, Watson and Cottrell promised much with the bat and with better shot selection and harder concentration will score many runs next season. Although all three matches at the end-of-season Festival ended in defeat, the team can take much heart from this season's performances. There is an abundance of talent just waiting to come out and I am sure it will manifest itself even more next season.

The B team had a lean season as the lack in depth of batting and bowling was exposed. There were a few excellent performances, such as superb knocks from Tim Hook (91 not out) and Charles Robinson (70 not out) against Bradfield. Unfortunately, after amassing 211 for 2 declared, Bradfield held on for a draw with 9 wickets down. Jones and Pitcher also chipped in with a few runs. Alex Garbe took 13 wickets in 4 matches. Both Scholfield and Plyer made useful contributions with the ball.

Cameron Watson, a Sydney Grade cricketer and a member of the Australian Universities' cricket team, came to Stowe to complete his final teaching practice from the Australian College of PE. Our Yearlings benefited very much from his enthusiasm and coaching skills.

IM

CROSS-COUNTRY

Cross-country enjoyed another successful season in 1995. The First VIII lost a very tight "head to head" with Radley, but beat all other opposition in school matches. They also retained the County Cup, the first time this has happened. The Northern and Midland Championships saw a weakened team finish 7th (out of 29) which was a highly creditable performance, especially as Radley were only one point ahead! The Intermediate VIII achieved a 50% success rate, but had to cope with the loss of G. McIntyre to the First VIII for some matches. Thanks go to Benji Mount and Simon 'Rat' Ridley for their committed leadership of a happy squad.

SMcC

Gavin McIntyre, winner of the 1995 Intermediate race of the Inter-House Cross-Country.
Stop Press: Winner of the 1996 Senior race too.

U19 Senior Basketball Back row: IM, James Cracknell, Cornelius Kiethe, Douglas Wong.
Front row: Arvin Datwani, Hak Soo Jung, Wayne Carpendale, Adam Riley, James Webster.

Girls Basketball. Back row: Tim Rofe, Henrietta Fletcher, Henrietta Bolland, Jenny Addison, Davina Brennan, Alexa von Kunsberg, Jenny Ridge, Una Laffan, Alex Finch-Knightley, Sanja Küffer, Anna Kemper.
Front row: Charlotte Jones, Leila Brahimi, Tara Kennedy, Kate Maxted, Natasha Ivanova, Beth Ryden, Alison Marston.

Photos: R & H Chapman ©

CRICKET IST XI. Back row: George Eves (scorer), James McDonagh, Richard Harris, William Milling, MJH, Rupert Searle, Angus Campbell, Robert White, GAC. Front row: Charles Inglefield, Nick Roberts, Max Konig, Simon Branch, Matthew Smith.

LACROSSE 1ST XI. Back row: Henrietta Fletcher, DKOG, Tessa Braithwaite.
Middle row: Olivia Garton, Chieko Furukawa, Emily Pritchard-Gordon, Jasmin Westinghouse, Rachael Jones, Vicky Hodge.
Front row: Mary-Kate Lyell, Kate Copper, Fiona Walker, Louisa Crisp, Georgina Rolt.

Photos: R & H Chapman ©

HOCKEY

The inclement spring term this year was to test our facilities and frustrations to the full! Out of a possible seventy-nine matches arranged for the ten teams normally fielded by the School we lost twenty-seven, only managing three Saturdays with a full complement of fixtures.

This year, for the first time, because of the terrible weather conditions, the Finals of the House Matches were held at Milton Keynes Astroturf pitch.

Senior:	Cobham 3	Chatham 1
Junior:	Grafton 3	Cobham 2 (on penalty strokes)
Girls:	Lyttelton 2	Nugent 0
Yearlings 7s:	Temple 3	Bruce 1

The school 1st XI was coached by RSD who leaves for Sedbergh having had three most successful seasons. All our hockey would not be possible without the exceptional work carried out by our ground staff under the leadership of Steve Curley. I would like to express my thanks – in spite of some very, very wet weather, the playing surfaces were a credit to their efforts.

We are all thrilled at the prospect of having our own astroturf pitch. Its beginning was recorded on camera on Tuesday, 8th August 1995. *DCB*

1st XI

Another season has been enjoyed in which the 1st XI has improved and in which Stowe's reputation as a top level hockey school has been well sustained. We achieved excellent results against Radley (2-1), Haileybury (2-0) and Rugby, Oundle and Bradfield (all 1-1 draws); we were unlucky to lose our first match to St. Edward's (0-1) and measured our progress in the 3-8 defeat by the outstanding Bromsgrove team. A team of which to be proud!

Max Konig led the team magnificently both on and off the field. Moritz Polonius was outstanding and was again top scorer, ably supported by the excellent Roberts and Smith. Margossian was much improved in goal, while the LVI contingent of Alcock, Milling and Bell gave much hope of similar success next season. Final mention must be of Barber and Hope-Johnstone, two great finds in a promising and satisfying season.

It took some time this season to settle on the most effective formation and tactics for the team and we were grateful for pre-season games against Marlborough and MCS Oxford which highlighted weaknesses, especially in our defensive play. Our first competitive match against St. Edward's was deservedly lost, although by only one goal, but that defeat enabled us to build another strong and successful season, as was shown by our 1-1 draw with Bradfield a fortnight later, fielding a team weakened by 'flu but full of the right spirit, correct tactics and no little skill. The draw against Rugby proved just what the team was capable of and the 2-0 defeat of Haileybury saw the team produce hockey of quite the highest standard I have seen in my three years as coach: 2-0 did not do us justice. After Exeat over-confidence lost us a win against Oundle, a mistake which was not repeated in the stirring defeat of Radley by 2-1, a victory that was a real credit to skill, organisation and determination. As always the match against Bromsgrove proved our sternest test but our progress could be measured by the improved result against such high quality opponents.

It was a good and enjoyable season for all concerned with an excellent team spirit. Rob Margossian developed into a fine goalkeeper, ably protected by Will Milling and Richard Barber in defence, the latter a revelation in terms of both fitness and stick-work. George Alcock never let the side down as a tireless and aggressive marker, while the mid-field of Hope-Johnstone, Bell and the exceptional Moritz Polonius was both creative and secure. Up front Matt Smith dazzled on the left and Stephan Karstens grew in maturity as the season progressed, while Nick Roberts' excellent pace and aggression on the right brought him goals and praise and struck fear into the hearts of opposition defences. A final word must go to the captain, Max Konig, a great ambassador for his school and sport both on and off the field and an inspired leader of his team.

I look back on three rewarding and enjoyable years as coach for the 1st XI. I thank all players, supporters and other coaching staff for their commitment to our enjoyment of this great sport and wish the team every success in the future.

RSD

Holland Tour

The hockey season culminated in the Stowe Hockey Tour to Holland. This was our sixth tour to Holland in twelve years and could be said to be the very best yet. Fourteen girls and fourteen boys, including last year's captain Giles Smith Walker, set out to challenge teams from FIT Amsterdam, Haarlem and HC Hisalis.

The first matches were on the Friday evening against FIT Amsterdam and the boys opened brilliantly, drawing 3-3 with FIT who were currently the top of their league division; it was encouraging to hear comments such as "This is the best Stowe team that we have played" and later at HC Hisalis "This surely is not a school 1st XI!" The boys continued with convincing wins over Haarlem (14-1) and Hisalis (10-3), who ended up fielding some of their full-time 1st XI to try and halt the onslaught.

The girls performed very well and seemed to respond to the coaching, losing to FIT on the first evening 0-1 and 1-3 to Haarlem, but drawing their last game 0-0 with HC Hisalis.

It is always exciting to take our hockey teams to Holland, as they give so much to the Tour and are a credit to the school both in their play and behaviour. This was personally my third tour to Holland in six years and I hope that we will go for many more years to come! *DCB*

2nd XI

The 2nd XI faced a thoroughly frustrating season. Bad weather led to the cancellation of four of our ten fixtures and made regular practice very difficult. Illness and injury in the 1st XI and our own side meant that the starting line-up was never the same for any two matches.

On a couple of occasions victory, or at least a draw, was snatched from our grasp in the closing moments of a game – most notably against Rugby and Haileybury.

Results were disappointing, but there were a number of good individual performances. Hoare very often held the team together from the centre-half position – the ball being fed wider to Chambré or Dobbin and from them to Emerson or Webster on the right wing or van der Hagen on the left, who crossed the ball well. Unfortunately we seemed to lack anyone up front with the power, speed and work-rate to drill the ball into the goal with any frequency.

We look forward to training and playing on the new astro – and a fuller fixture list with fewer waterlogged pitches.

The team was selected from:
Dale, Gregson, Riley, McCarey, Chambré, T. Hoare, R. Dobbin, Emerson, Webster, Carling, van der Hagen, Hardwicke, Searle, Marsland-Roberts. *ACNB*

3rd XI

Despite the fact that three of our fixtures were called off due to the exceptional spring rainfall this year, the 3rd XI still managed to have an enjoyable and successful season. Indeed, had we not played poorly in the second half against St. Edward's and been a little unlucky at Radley we might well have finished the season unbeaten. If only...?!

We suffered from a lack of finishing power at the start of the term which was put right in the pouring rain at Haileybury with an impressive collection of goals from Newnham, Goad and Pinkney.

The 3rds benefited from the fine work of groundsman Steve Curley and his team and were able to draw with Pangbourne and beat Oundle comprehensively on pitches that were sandy but excellent in the circumstances.

Away at Radley is never an easy game at the end of the season and the 3rds were asked to transfer their skills to the shale surface. The self-proclaimed "Kings of Grass" struggled to begin with, but did gradually adapt to the quicker conditions and even nearly managed an equaliser through Milbank. The game also included a most nonchalant left-handed save from keeper Adams.

A most encouraging season of matches played in the best of spirits.

Squad: M. Newnham, T. Pearce, T. Stevenson, J. Curtis, T. Milbank, C. Marsland-Roberts, N. Pinkney, G. Emerson, F. Wallis, J. Craik-White, H. Mackay, A. Campbell, O. Goad, T. Adams. *SJBA*

4th XI

Fourth team coaching... all that friendly coercion, jollying along, "you know you want to really", the trawling of Friday night supper looking for a right-half, the bargaining, the desperate search in Saturday break-time for two more full-backs because the 3rd team need both yours having just had theirs taken by the 2nds. Well, NOT THIS LOT! Practices were over-subscribed with keen hockey enthusiasts who wanted to play matches; team selection involved difficult choices and when the 3rd team made players available we didn't know how to fit them in.

Some of our stalwarts of 1994 returned to become the backbone of the 1995 team, ready for anything except, as it turned out, the weather. Waterlogged pitches prevented us having a single proper practice before our first match against St. Edward's which we promptly lost. "At least we won't have the old let's-go-for-an-unbeaten-season problem again!" I said cheerily. Bradfield's pitches were waterlogged, Rugby couldn't raise a team against us. We beat Pangbourne 9-1 but ruined the pitch with only three days to go before the Tuesday fixture against Oundle; so we covered it with sand and played beach hockey instead, at which Oundle, not much nearer any beaches than we are, turned out to be rather good. Radley confused us by having a grass pitch that played properly, and the 1995 season was over. Roll on the astroturf! *SGAH*

Photo: George Eves

Cobham, winners of the senior inter-House hockey

Colts

This year's squad was very committed to training and improving their actual standard of play, though at first they struggled to grasp the need for changing systems of play.

Although the season proved to be so disjointed with bad weather and lack of practice, generally the results were good. We only lost 0-1 to Haileybury and against Radley we had most of the play but just could not find the net, losing 0-1.

When you cannot fulfil a complete fixture list for injury, illness or pitch unavailability it means that the build-up and progress is interrupted; but as we headed to the close of the season and a finish of 1-0 against Bromsgrove we felt that the standard of hockey had greatly improved and the hockey played, especially in the last match, was exciting.

Charlie Floyd guided the team, which changed nearly as much as the weather conditions at first. Trying to establish and discover the best players for the most suitable positions – centre-backs or sweepers, links or midfielders etc. – was fairly difficult. The movement of some positions caused some upset to begin with, but, as each player realised his own limitations, we fielded a hockey team rather than several individuals.

In goal Tom Honeyman Brown had a reasonable season with Rupert Connell helping out and waiting in the wings. The formation out on the pitch changed regularly, mostly to suit the opposition, but also to strengthen the defence, with Ed Wainright-Lee, Buddy Wheatley and Alasdair Barne keeping the defence convincingly tight; Buddy showed the most improvement at left back. The midfield positions were highly contested and probably Alex Hobbs showed the most control and distribution as link. Charlie Floyd worked hard to reach his maximum in centre midfield and was probably the most dangerous out on the wing, although he did not seem to agree! It was good to see players move within the club system and progress. Tom Smith Walker, for example gained strength with every game he played. I was also pleased with players who were asked to step down occasionally to try out different combinations; they took the situation very courteously, especially Chesney Clark, who fell into this category at one time, but came back brilliantly. All this is particularly gratifying to a coach.

As a team we all agreed that we lacked a regular goal-getter, but Richard Harris, Tom Smith Walker, Kasim Lawal, Sunny Moore and Chesney Clark all gave the position a really good shot! Jonathan Elkington and Lorien Pilling were possibly the players who had to adapt the most and they gave the midfield a really steady improvement.

GGJD, BLM and I were very pleased with the overall attitude.

Squad: K. Lawal, R. Harris, B. Wheatley, T. Honeyman Brown, A. Barne, T. Smith Walker, L. Pilling, A. Hobbs, J. Elkington, C. Floyd, E. Wainright-Lee, C. Clark, S. Moore, R. Connell, S. Elliott. *DCB*

Hockey on the North Front: 3rd XI goalkeeper Tommy Adams in action

Photo: B Tree

Colts C

This was a thoroughly pleasant bunch who had plenty of guts if not great skill!

Against St. Edward's it was a really close game, which we nearly won. We were the better team against Pangbourne, but we didn't quite pull it off. Victory against Radley!

Richard De Butts was a loyal and competent captain. He played as a sweeping back with moderate success. Our real star player was, of course, Simon Walker, who seemed to prefer playing at this level where he could shine with not too much effort. He held the whole team together from the back and would turn defence into attack with ease. He was thoughtful and reliable in a match, giving useful advice and suggestions. Our goalie, Ed James, was loyal and dedicated.

The rest, E. Dobbin, S. Maude-Roxby, P. Mackay-Lewis, M. Nicoll, W. Barratt, T. Morley, S. Oldridge, and even (at times) J. Wilsey, would always give of their best in a game and turned up to practices without fail and with enthusiasm. R. Jupp was a very useful addition from the B team.

It was a fun season and one of my most successful! *BLM*

Junior Colts

What fun it was to coach the most successful team of the season (played 5, won 3, lost 2)! Initially dominated by a seemingly unlimited capacity to criticise each other, eventually the players began to concentrate upon their own, rather than everyone else's, game and, by the time we played the last two matches of the season, the support they gave each other was beginning to create considerable team spirit.

In general, our forwards lacked the aggressiveness, directness and fitness of many of our rivals (the Bromsgrove clowns excluded!) and preferred to try to pass around defenders and to dribble the ball incessantly once in the 'D', rather than taking defenders on and shooting the minute they got there. Nevertheless, Charlie Saunders at centre forward was a prolific goal-scorer, netting no fewer than 7 in the short five-match season. He was ably supported by Tom Sleater, whose positional sense and stick skills were magnificent. Outside them Mark Denning and Rupert Hayward made some excellent attacks down the wings, laying back some textbook crosses for them.

In the midfield Henry Craik-White was a wonderfully steadying influence on the team as captain and a great help to me with team selection and warm-ups. He was ably supported by both Giles Hayward and Charlie Bingham. In defence there were two 'finds' of the season. First there was Rob White who rose from the 4th XI to man-of-the-match for the 1st XI in our outstandingly exciting win over Radley, in the space of just three games. He has consummate stick skills, an unstoppable hit and an uncanny knack of being able to read the game, which ensured he was always in the right place at the right time, all of which made him an excellent choice for sweeper. The other 'find' was Tommy Arkwright, who donned a pair of pads for the 3rd XI at short notice and saved almost everything that came anywhere near him. He is fit, athletic, has quick reactions, a wonderful eye for the ball, and is apparently fearless – look out William Austen! William has been a tower of strength in goal all term, where he has made one or two excellent saves and been the most reliable and dedicated of members of the team. The two Dominics played outside Rob as the two defenders, Dumaresq becoming some-thing of a short-corner specialist, being capable of closing down the shot faster even than Linford Christie comes off his blocks! Taylor always gave 110% and proved to be a ferocious and swift defender prepared to break out and lead the attack given half the chance. Mark Bowman, Simon Post and Roy Chambers also represented the team.

As for the matches, the Haileybury game was played in appalling conditions and despite this and the Confirmation weekend weakening our team, we thrashed them 6-1. St. Edward's and Oundle were stronger, fitter and in practice and beat us soundly. The Radley game was the game of the season – end to end stuff and nail-biting to the last. After early pressure we caught their defence square and a lovely through ball was pounced on by Sleater who, unmarked, swept it majestically into the back of the net. Radley were rattled and remained that way for the rest of the match; as such we never let them settle and our teamwork outplayed somewhat better individual skills and resulted in a fine 1-0 win. The Bromsgrove game was a real anti-climax after Radley. Bromsgrove seemed more intent on hurting us and showing off than playing hockey and on a small, muddy pitch we made them pay, winning easily 3-1.

Overall then, this was a successful season and it augurs well for next. My hope is that as Colts they continue where they left off, playing as a team, supporting and encouraging each other, and playing more direct hockey. My thanks to them all for their enthusiasm and in particular to their parents for their loyal support.
MOMC

Yearlings

As in the last two years we travelled to Milton Keynes every Tuesday which gave essential practice on astroturf. The overall enthusiasm and excitement for the matches was outstanding and the parental support added to the commitment, with everyone playing just that little harder if being watched by parents.

From the very first Saturday the hockey coaches worked hard to inspire the boys into winning ways. The first match against Loughborough GS saw the A XI playing a stunning game and ending victorious 7-0, the B XI on the same afternoon winning 1-0. We played a total of 25 matches and achieved 17 wins. The A XI finished the season UNBEATEN playing 9, drawing only one (against Uppingham early in the season) and scoring a record 35 goals with only 4 against. In fact in their last four fixtures the A XI won 6-0 against Mill Hill, 5-0 against Loughborough GS, 3-0 against Oundle and 5-0 against RGS High Wycombe.

Piers Buckworth netted most goals with 12 but was closely followed by the captain Jamie Peel. However six others in the team actually scored more than 2 goals each, which demonstrates how the team played as a team.

The B XI, captained by Edward Webb, won 5 out of 8 matches, scoring 22 goals and only conceding 9. Kaunda Kavindele scored the most.

The C XI under the watchful eye of BLM won 3 out of their 5 matches.

On no less than five occasions all our teams won their fixture. We beat Uppingham, for example, 2-1, 4-1, 3-2 and 3-1, whilst Mill Hill perished 6-0, 5-1 and 5-1. No wonder a Middlesex County Umpire said: "I have not seen such a skilful and mature U14 side for many years."

The budding goalkeepers – Piers Winton, Ben McCarey, William Dean and Sean Harker-Figel – were all able to improve with the help from Rupert Connell and Tom Bell.

The Inter-House Competition Sevens was very exciting and highly competitive with Grenville beating Cobham 1-0 in the Final.

What a season! Thank you coaches.
DCB

1st XI Hockey. Back row: Stephan Karstens, George Alcock, Robert Margossian, Will Milling, Richard Barber, RJD.
Front row: Nick Roberts, Moritz Polonius, Max Konig (capt.), Matt Smith, Tim Hope-Johnstone. Absent: Tom Bell.

Yearlings A XI. Back row: Harry Trotter, Sam Barratt, Angus Elphinstone, Simon Creek, Richard Worrall, Piers Winton.
Front row: Hugo Pilcher, Piers Buckworth, Jamie Peel, William Dudley, Hugo Wilson.

Photos: R & H Chapman ©

COLTS XI. Back row: Kassim Lawal, Richard Harris, Buddy Wheatley, Tom Honeyman Brown, Alasdair Barne, Tom Smith Walker, Lorien Pilling, DCB. Front row: Alex Hobbs, Jonathan Elkington. Charles Floyd, Ed Wainright-Lee, Chesney Clark.

GIRLS 2ND XI HOCKEY. Back row: Sophie Hicks, Patricia Gaffney, GAC, Alex Williams.
Middle row: Rosie Weston, Caroline Smith, Rachel Arbuthnott, Chloe Charlesworth, Emily Going, Jenny Taylor.
Front row: Sarah Farrow, Kate Stephens, Lucy Rogers, Tara Kennedy, Victoria Casewell-Lunn.

Photos: R & H Chapman ©

Girls Hockey

Photo: R & H Chapman ©

GIRLS IST XI HOCKEY. Back row: Kate Chambré, Alice Macfarlane, Hannah James, GAC, Patricia Gaffney, Emily Williams. Middle row: Jennifer Taylor, Charlotte Lee, Sarah Flavell, Kate Pearce, Daisy Brook, Camilla Hicks. Front row: Beth Ryden, Catherine Browning, Charlotte Jones, Fenella Hunt, Becky Post.

Results are not everything, of course, but if those achieved by the girls' lst team are anything to go by, then girls' hockey at Stowe has truly entered a new arena and achieved a previously uncharted dimension, with six wins and two draws from eight matches.

No fewer than forty girls played hockey regularly this term and all both fed off, and contributed to, the success of the lst team. A large number of them would have had reasonable expectations of making the lst team in previous years. Instead they played their supporting part, vied for places in a 2nd team that won two and drew one of its five matches. They were aided by the cheerful presence of KFD and ELW.

Four school matches were played by the lst team in each half of the term and each half started with a goal-less draw. These games, against Tudor Hall and St Edward's, saw Stowe comfortably on top but unable to turn territorial advantage into goals against determined defenders. Close, exciting and highly competitive encounters were fought with Wellingborough and Rugby; Kate Chambré's solo dribble scored the decisive goal in the first and Cathy Browning's opportunist strike that in the second. The remaining games were won with some style and in decisive fashion: nineteen goals were scored, among them two hat-tricks by Charlotte Lee, and it was only in the penultimate game that the defence was breached in a full-length game.

There were few weaknesses in the squad, for everyone was combative and most were fleet of foot as well. Success begins, however, with confidence in defence and the advent of Hannah James, a goalkeeper of county and divisional experience already, provided an inspiration that lent credibility to everyone's aspirations. Her absence for half of the matches through injury might have been disastrous, had it not led to the emergence of the quintessential team person in Patty Gaffney, our American ESU scholar, who became overnight the best goalkeeper, bar Hannah, that Stowe has ever fielded, by simple dint of seeing what needed to be done and doing it to the utmost of her ability. Sometimes we played four defenders, and sometimes only three; on the right Fenella Hunt was both sure in defence and constructive in attack, whilst Emily Williams at sweeper learned both to time her tackles well and to leaven the strength of her hit with accurate push-passing in distribution. Daisy Brook made the left her own preserve by the end of term and Beth Ryden filled the centre berth with unflinching commitment. Some of her reverse-stick tackles were inspirational. Whenever one of these was unable to play, Sarah Flavell proved that former midfielders can also defend, and never gave an inch.

The real power of this team, however, lay up front and in midfield. Here there were skill and speed, commitment and versatility surpassing anything the opposition could muster. On the right wing Camilla Hicks showed the kind of blistering pace that left defenders stranded and provided a stream of hard-hit crosses, while on the left flank Becky Post not only produced a similar supply of centres but also popped up at the right moment to score two useful goals. Charlotte Lee scored seven goals from centre forward: she ran tirelessly throughout, gained match by match in confidence "on the ball" and developed the ability to hit where it hurt the opposition most. Alice Macfarlane played in all three of the above positions and in left midfield as well; she showed versatility, determination and unselfishness, qualities mirrored on the right by Kate Chambré, and both scored useful goals. Kate Pearce made enormous strides during the season, working hard to win the ball and distributing it with speed and vision, while Cathy Browning, the vice-captain, rose above the frustration of injury to make several important and telling contributions.

The qualities displayed by all the members of the team were epitomised by their captain, Charlotte Jones. "CJ" was fitter and ran further than anyone else, was relentless in her drive to subdue the opposition both in attack, where she scored three vital goals, and in defence, and she received the unstinted support of all who played under her. It is to her fine leadership that the major credit for an excellent season both on and off the field must be ascribed.

September 1996 will see a squad of eleven good players returning to Stowe. They will all have their Colours and will all have experienced the joys and rigours of successful lst team hockey. The new season – on astro – is awaited with keen anticipation.

GAC

RUGBY
1st XV

Expectations for the 1995 season were understandably high after a very successful tour to Australia, led by DCM. It was soon to be realised that vice-captain Angus McCarey would be unable to play in any of our matches because of a scaphoid injury sustained in Australia. We were just about coping with that blow when we also lost captain and No.8 Tom Bell with a badly traumatised ankle and Crispin Marsland-Roberts (open-side flanker) with a broken nose. Not bad for the first half of the season to have the whole of your back-row out injured!

Much time and energy was spent on building up team spirit and a determination that this early 'minor' set-back was not going to mar our whole season. Although the players did not appreciate it at the time, the early morning swimming and jogging sessions played a significant part in their mental preparation for the season as well as a physical one. Some of them actually ended up quite proficient at front crawl!

To start the season with two defeats was very disappointing, especially as we had the possession and the ability to beat both Abingdon and Uppingham. We lost the services of forwards coach Richard Kinsey, but swiftly replaced him with 'Budge' Pountney of Northampton RFC. His enthusiasm and expertise were soon paying off as the players developed much more urgency and focus in their game. Nine tries were scored in the next three matches as we notched up victories against the Royal Latin School, Shiplake and John Cleveland.

It was clear that several of the team were beginning to grow as players and were having a major impact in each match. The front row of Wheatley, Barbour and Pearce was as steady as a rock; the line-out jumping of Woods and Barne was amazing and the brilliance of scrum-half Wainright-Lee was clear for all to see as he scored five tries in consecutive matches. Stuart Mun-Gavin at full-back played with composure and flair, and was instrumental in most of the many exciting moments of back play this season.

A mediocre spell of defensive play mid-way through the season saw us lose to Oundle, Northampton GS and Mill Hill. Encouragingly we still continued to play some good rugby. Not many teams come away from Oundle having scored 21 points. With Wainright-Lee unable to play because of illness, it was the ideal opportunity for Chris Harrington to stamp his mark on the remaining games. That he did, as he oozed class, not only with his incredible pass but also his elusive running and clever kicking which brought him five tries in the last four games. He thoroughly deserved being top points scorer for the season. Wins against Bloxham and Pangbourne, and an unlucky defeat against St. Edward's left us with Magdalen College School, Oxford as our last match. Fortunately for us and unluckily for them the frost thawed enough for the game to go ahead. Our biggest win of the season, and for many seasons, of 65 points to 3 was no more than the side deserved. They have been a tremendous group of lads to work with and I hope they enjoyed the season as much as I did!

Andrew Pearce and Luke Woods went on to represent the County U18 side and it is hoped that with most of this team here next year even more Stoics will go on to represent the county and further.

Thanks must go to Richard Kinsey, Ian McGeechan and in particular 'Budge' Pountney for their excellent coaching, which has enabled our pupils to enhance their knowledge, playing ability and enjoyment of the game. *IM*

Photo: Tom Bell

Some members of the 1st XV after the victory over Shiplake.
Left to right: Andrew Pearce, Oliver Gregson, Moritz Haesen, James Webster, Stuart Mun-Gavin, Chris Harrington and Ben Corbishley.

Photo: R & H Chapman ©

Rugby Ist XV. Back row: IM, Chesney Clark, Rafe Hyatt, Buddy Wheatley, Moritz Haesen, Oliver Gregson, Middle row: Luke Woods, Ed Wainright-Lee, Charles Williams, David Knowles, Chris Harrington, Alasdair Barne, Edward Dobbin, Duncan Barbour. Front row: Crispin Marsland-Roberts, Andrew Pearce, Angus McCarey, Tom Bell, George Alcock, James Webster, Stuart Mun-Gavin.

Bangkok: First stop on the Australian Tour

Tom Bell, Crispin Marsland-Roberts, Jeremy Pemberton

Dr Harrington checking for injuries

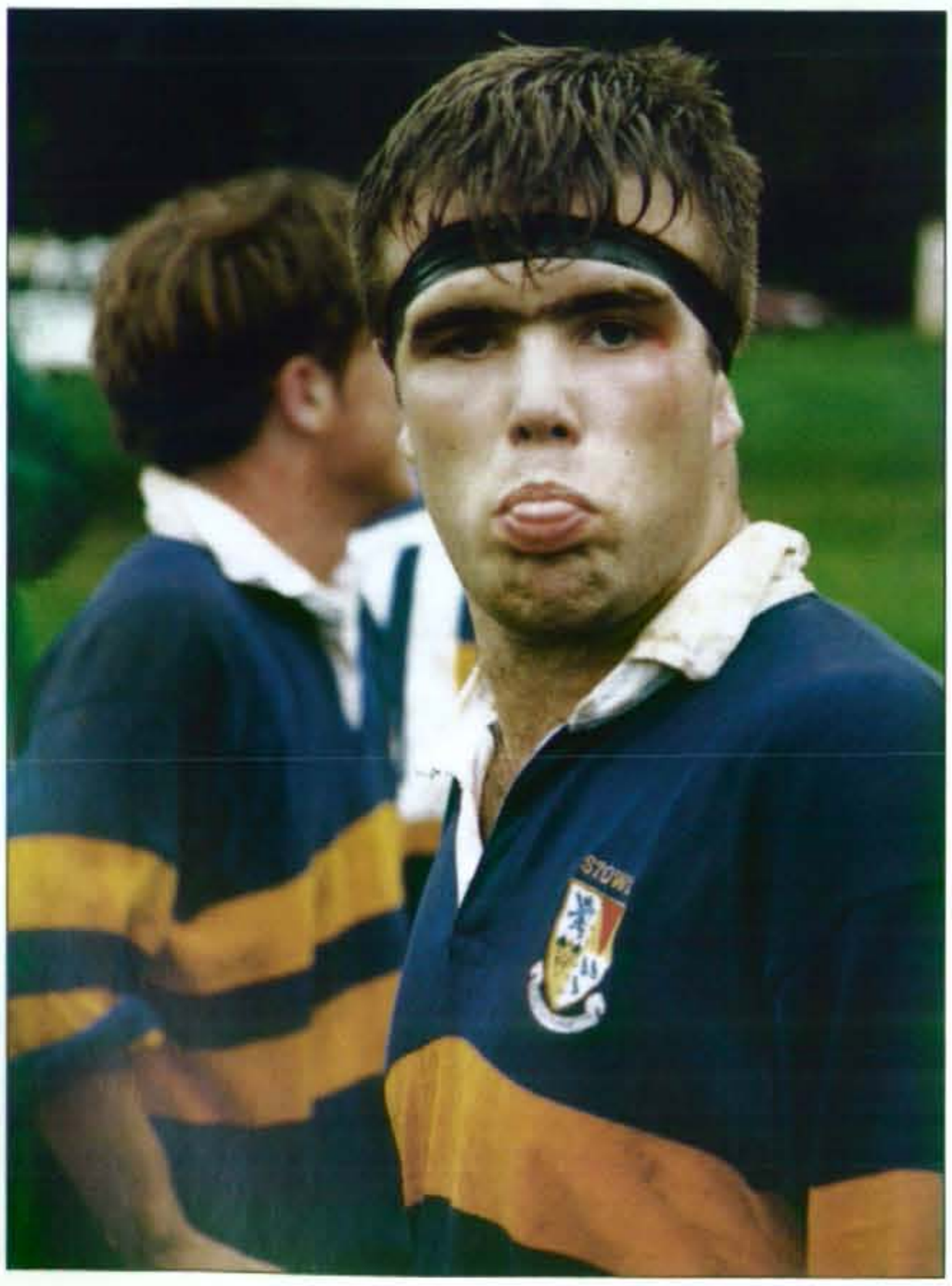
Photos: Tom Bell

Charlie Williams, David Knowles, Buddy Wheatley

Alasdair Barne, Buddy Wheatley

THE 1ST XV PLAYING THE ROYAL LATIN SCHOOL

Andrew Pearce



Stuart Mun-Gavin

Photos: Tom Bell

2nd XV

With many Australian tourists available for selection the 2nd XV started with much optimism and with four wins from their first five games. They just edged a close match with Abingdon, and were much more convincing against Royal Latin, Shiplake and John Cleveland College. The narrow defeat against Uppingham also was a testament to a promising start to the season.

As the 1st XV drew more and more players from the 2nd XV squad including the tenacious De Butts, the in-form McDonagh and Davies, the telegraph pole, the team found themselves needing to change approach and style for the big games of the second half of the season.

A solid away win at Mill Hill was the only light in the gloom of November but it is a testament to the spirit and enthusiasm of the team that they were seldom overwhelmed by superior opposition nor did they ever give in.

Ever-present during the season were: Edwards, Macdonald Lockhart, Milling and Oldridge and they were ably assisted by other regulars: "Stan" Stanton, Osman, the versatile (juggling) Lawal, Heath, "Big Joe" Stewart, Hyatt and the redoubtable Honeyman Brown, who was team captain for the concluding games of the season.

As a squad they deserve congratulations for their spirit and endeavour in a season where I witnessed the best rugby I have seen at this level since joining Stowe.

I would like to extend my thanks to all who represented the 2nd XV in 1995.

SJBA

3rd XV

'Stylish' was the adjective that the Headmaster used to describe the 3rd XV's season and general demeanour in his end-of-term speech and it was a highly appropriate word. Analysing what this style was, however, is slightly more difficult! Won 4, lost 5, drew 2 would imply a fairly mediocre season and yet every game this term was played with grit, determination and unity of effort.

This was surely 'club' rugby at its best. A civilised approach to training, team effort and encouragement on the field, and a similar attitude to both victory and defeat: "Should have done better – but a great game." The team enjoyed their rugby and achieved some excellent results against a number of very strong sides. Victory is obviously sweet but even defeat at the hands of Eton (5-19), Pangbourne (0-3), Northampton RGS (10-12), St. Edward's (0-18) and Oundle (0-27) was far from bitter with close and exciting rugby more important than results.

Chris Dixey and Jamie Biddulph led the team with flair and wisdom with Jeremy Pemberton, James Dewar-Durie, Henry Titley, Richard Smith, Hugh Carling, Alasdair Johnston and Ben Hennessy providing the backbone of the team. Players to watch out for are Lebby Anafu, Tom Stables, James Wilsey, Robin Creek and the accident-prone Josh Lyle. Dan Westwood, Chris Wethered, Jamie Fortescue, Alex (2nd XV) Bodikian and Ivan Pearson made up the rest of the squad.

This was a fun team to manage because they looked after themselves (they had to!). With a mere 103 points scored against them (half the number scored against any other major team) they displayed determination and a love of the game which I am confident will keep many of them playing rugby for years to come.

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If this season has taught them a little more about team work, leadership and taking pleasure in the most British of games, then it will have been a season well spent. It was certainly one that I enjoyed. *TMH-S*

Colts A

What makes a good rugby side? The obvious answer would be one that has won all its games. Yet despite our only winning two matches I would maintain that this team has developed into a side that is not far away from being a good rugby side. Three of the games (against Abingdon, Bloxham and Magdalen College School) could easily have been victories. Lady Luck deserted us on more than one occasion. From a start to the season where early coaching battles were fought, the A team evolved into a side that were a delight to coach. Their progression in team tactics and individual roles became significant towards the end of the short season. The team's mental approach to the game and enjoyment of it, despite the defeats they had to endure, is a testament to their resilience.

Our first fixture against Abingdon was one we should have won, losing by a narrow margin of 18-21. Injuries proved to be a problem as more and more B team players were blooded. Ollie Booth, Ollie Harrison and Tom Willis all played key roles as we progressively took on tougher and tougher opposition in the shape of Uppingham (7-49) and Northampton (0-69). In each of the large defeats progress was being made as we tightened up our midfield defence, developed our lineout possession and worked hard on quick recycling of the ball. Our attacking play became more productive as the forwards slowly started to win more ball. John Cleveland College (0-28) found us tough opposition despite the score. Then came Oundle, a 'big match' on the North Front. A dazzling first-half performance saw us outplay Oundle in all aspects of the game. 8-10 down at half-time, the question was, could we keep it going? The final score of 8-53 tells its own story but that first-half showed what we could really do given commitment, determination and concentration. Following that it came as no surprise that we should take Eton (38-0) by storm away from home and squeeze past Mill Hill (12-7) in another 'big match' on the North Front. Bloxham were next and the team were now firing on all cylinders, training was much more productive and matches were played with greater control. This approach ensured that the Bloxham side were manipulated as we dominated most of the match. Other factors conspired against us as we lost 17-24, a game which would have kept us on a roll. Two further away fixtures against Pangbourne (7-30), whom we held until half-time and St. Edward's, who were the best side we had come across, left us with only Magdalen College to play. A final win in grand style on the South Front, showing off the season's development in our final 'big match', would have been a fairytale ending. This is the real world though and despite our domination of the opposition a heart-rending 5-6 defeat left us feeling deflated.

This has been a difficult season for coaches and the team. However, we stuck with each other right to the bitter end. I feel very pleased with the development of the Colts A from those early beginnings. Therefore I can say that, in ways other than winning, this has been a good season.

My sincere thanks to AMcD and Steve Taylor for their experienced coaching, assistance and persistence, and to Mark Denning for his captaincy and help with selection. *SHM*

Junior Colts

At the end of a long season we look back and wonder what might have been, for so many of our matches have had to be played with an under-strength side. On a tough rugby circuit, with a group that is not blessed with size, strength, speed or skill, to carry as many injured players as we did was hardly a recipe for success. In fact, we only won one game (Shiplake) and it was probably the only really enjoyable game that the boys played, where they were equally matched, but we managed to come out scoring good tries after some excellent handling and running from our three-quarters. Joe Maxwell on our wing is very fleet of foot and on this day we saw him use his speed very effectively indeed. In most of the other games survival was uppermost, especially with sides like Mill Hill, Oundle and Uppingham, where our dogged resistance, quite naturally, was gradually broken down.

For most of the season we had nine of our first-choice A team players missing and this made team-building an impossibility for this season. We hope the boys will reap the benefit of the coaching and practice in the seasons to come, when they will be bigger and stronger to put their learned techniques into practice against the opposition. Forwards like Hugo Douglas and Andrew Pitcher will find the going much easier in the future as they become stronger and more robust. Tim Barker and Adam Cottrell, two of our strongest three-quarters, both broke their noses early on in the term, so we have not been able to utilise their particular talents at all. Henry Gillingham, too, one of the best tacklers in the backs, missed many games as a result of a broken toe. It was players like this that we were going to rely on if we were to have any kind of a season as regards results.

Tactics in the forwards became very clear-cut. We endeavoured not to take the ball into a contact situation because we knew, once we were committed and engulfed by heavier, stronger boys, we would have no chance in recycling the ball to our backs. This proved very successful, as some sides we played were quite bemused by the quick rucking tactics, the shortened line-outs, the quirky 22 drop-outs and the constant counter-attacking rugby that we played. Unfortunately, in many games these tactics only delayed the inevitable because the stronger, heavier sides, once they had the ball, became more difficult to stop, and it was only some heroic tackling from the likes of Robin Jones, Richard Clapham, Nop Riensavapak, James Defty, Charlie Howard, Alfred Bagge, Charlie Duffin, Timothy Hook and Alexander Garbe that kept us in the game at all. All these boys played with extreme courage and determination and I know they will find more success in their rugby as they move up the school.

This season has been one of the best for many years as regards weather and ground conditions and all our matches have been played in conditions conducive to good handling and running rugby. We would also have been more successful if James Ogle and Leo Fenwick had played more matches for the A team, as they are both talented players in attack and defence. All in all we have seen the boys develop during the course of the term as rugby players, even though the results have not been very favourable as regards school matches. The skills of the boys and their knowledge of the game have improved dramatically and I know this will reap its rewards in later seasons for them.

LEW

SAILING

This year we had yet another enjoyable season's sailing. Commodored by Fred Hall, we travelled far and wide to partake in sailing matches. We again went up to Grafham Water to sail in the regional championships! Unfortunately there was absolutely no wind, which, for Grafham, I am told, is quite an achievement. So, after racing once and winning, the day's sailing was called off, to be rescheduled for later during the term. The rest of the matches were raced with the Stowe team performing well. The team consisted of Fred Hall, James Mullineux, Simon Oldridge, Cornelius Keithe, and Hugo Gordon Lennox. The winners of the House sailing trophy this season were Chandos, clinching the cup from Walpole in the final. The Helmsman's Tankard was won by James Mullineux with Simon Oldridge a close second and the Junior Pennant by Camillo Spiegelfeld with Nicholas Mullineux second. Thanks to all the staff for their help and commitment this year. *James Mullineux*

SQUASH

Despite the players' great enthusiasm and efforts, results were disappointing. The Seniors played nine matches and although they won only two, quite a few were lost by scores of 3-2. The strong Colts sides, however, continued to be successful. They won five and lost only one. If they continue their hard work and determination their success should continue in the Senior side. Junior Colts lost all their matches and the Girls won one out of three.

Squads (* denotes colours)
Senior: M. Smith*, M. Konig*, T. Hope-Johnstone*, R. D'Orleans, H. Luttrell, T. Hoare*, U. Bahl*, E. Morgan, J. Cheng
Colts: R. Harris, J. McDonagh,H. Speir, C. Woods, T. Dixon, E. Wainright-Lee, C. Tham
Junior Colts: C. Bingham, W. Keeler, C. Saunders,T. Arkwright, A. Lockhart Smith
Yearlings: W. Watson, B. Scholfield, A. Cottrell, S. Healey, R. Plyer
Girls: A. George, A. Muller, V. Schroder, E. Granderath, S. Luemmen

MJH

SWIMMING

The season began with the House swimming sports held for the first time with the Heats registering as the Finals. The individual trophies went to Alec Cunningham with a time of 27.75 in the 50m Freestyle Sprint and 1.04.68 in the 100m Freestyle, well ahead of any other competitor. The Intermediate Medley trophy went to William Skidmore and the Junior Medley to Matthew Cumani. Una Laffan was the first winner of the Hobbes Cup, presented by CHJ, and Bradley Smith took both the 50m Butterfly and the Individual Medley Open, as well as sharing the Geh-Spencer Individual Achievement with Alec Cunningham.

The House Trophies were as follows:

Junior House Cup:	Grafton
Intermediate House Cup:	Chatham
Girls' House Cup:	Nugent
Inter-House Relay Cup:	Chatham & Bruce
Overall Winner's Cup:	Bruce

Colours were awarded to the following:
J. Addison, G. Albuquerque, O. Bray, T. Coxe, A. Cunningham, T. Dixon, R. Dobbin, A. Downing, D. Hoare, A. Howes, U. Laffan, C. Lee, A. Nicoll, G. Portman,W. Skidmore, B. Smith, M. Turner, M. Nicoll.

In May we entered the Bath Cup and Otter Medley Competition at Crystal Palace. This is a national competition for 64 Boys' Schools and 52 Girls' Schools. The boys, a young senior team, found the competition tough but were not disgraced, being 5th in their Freestyle Heat of the 4 x 100m and 6th in the Medley Relay Heats. The girls were 3rd in the Freestyle Heat out of eight schools and 5th in the Medley Relay Heat. Swimming in a 50 metre pool was a great experience for our swimmers and hopefully next year we will improve our position.

The most successful teams have been the Intermediate boys' team, captained by William Skidmore, and the Girls team, captained by Terezia Coxe. The Intermediates beat St. Edward's, Oakham, Rugby, Cheltenham, Wycliffe and (very convincingly) Uppingham. The Girls beat Haileybury (on two occasions), Bloxham and Rugby. Our swimmers are realising the need for training and swimming throughout the year. Water polo matches are desperately needed to strengthen and improve levels of stamina.

I would like to thank the following for all their support and hard work: the staff in the pool: CHJ, GGJD, JLHJ, KFD and Mrs. J. Skidmore who travelled from Harpenden to help with our training programme. Also GMH and NEB for recording the results. *DCB*

TENNIS

Seniors

Both the 1st VI and the U16s achieved a roughly 50% success rate this season and, as usual, both teams lost some close encounters by erratic play. The 1st VI struggled against day schools, whose players tend to have a club basis, but beat all but one of the boarding schools (including a fine away victory at Harrow). Morgan and Datwani were ever-present and were awarded colours. The 2nd VI won all their matches. Inconsistency cost a promising U16 team dearly on occasions but several players will no doubt represent the 1st VI in due course. My thanks go to DRF, SJBA, ANCB, JS-N and SLA for their unstinting efforts and considerable time commitment over the season. *RRA*

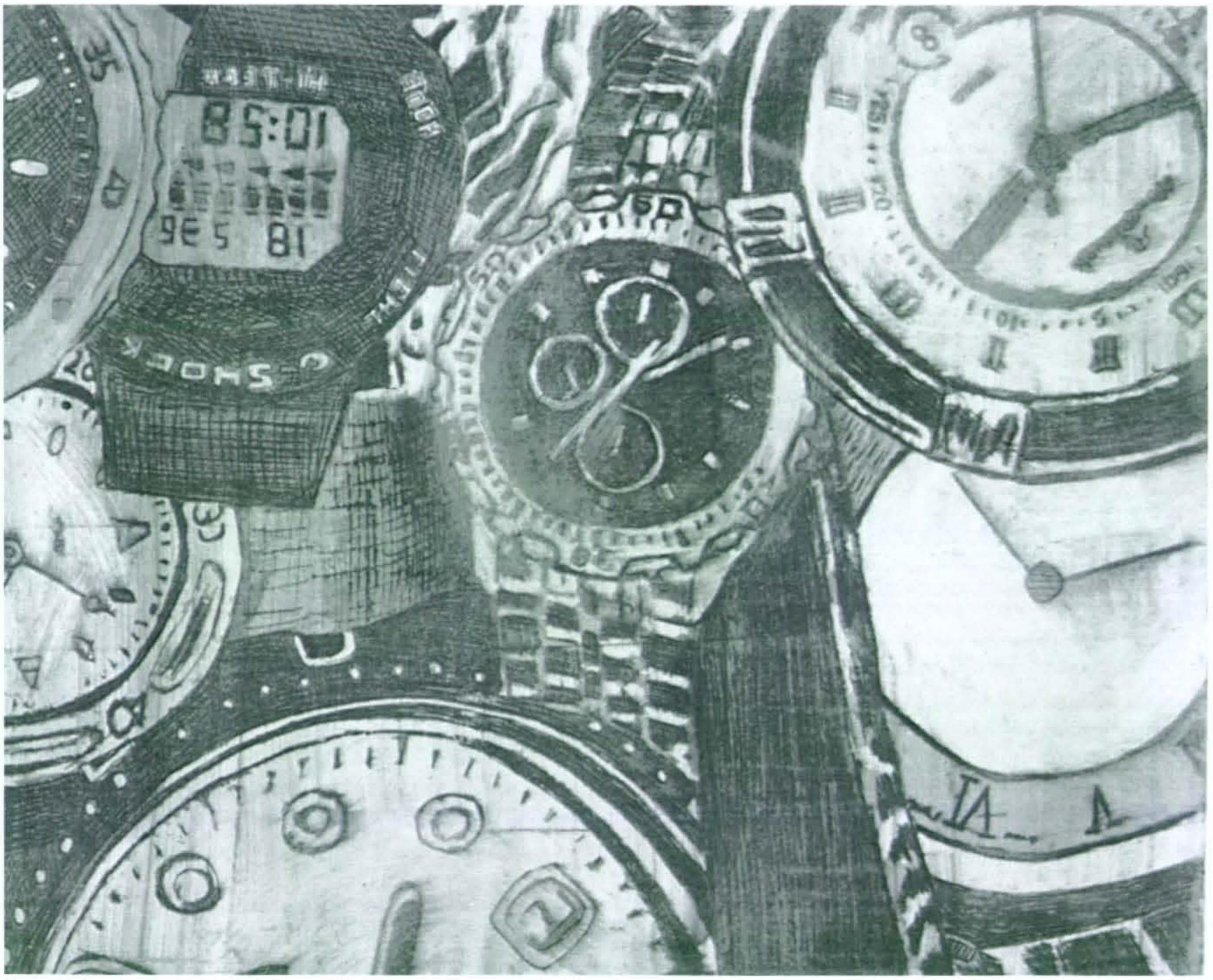
Under 15

The A team played seven matches and won only two this season, those against Uppingham and Merchant Taylor's. However, they did manage to score points in every match. The first pair, Bingham and Smatt, had an excellent season scoring points in every game but occasionally dropping sets against unlikely opponents. Other regular team members, (Kapoor, Legge, Bowring, Gordon-Lennox and Bloomfield) contributed less consistently but with great enthusiasm and effort. The B team was somewhat less glorious, playing only three matches and losing them all. The highlight, other than the team's characteristic good humour, was winning three sets against Uppingham. The Junior House Match final was a wonderful game played in the very best of spirits. Temple and Cobham drew in the original rubber and in a nerve-racking, 45-minute tie-breaker Temple eventually won 3-1, An excellent finale to the season! *SJBA*

Under 14

It was encouraging to see early signs of promise at this level. Frequent revision of pairings for the A and B teams meant the results did not always do justice to the talents of the individuals who were involved. Clapham (Capt) and Adams played well together as first pair and with great experience and strength could make good progress in future years. Bertram, Pudney and Whitaker all played very steady tennis whilst Butler and Webb displayed talent but failed to produce their best form and therefore fluctuated between the A and B teams. The B team notched up impressive wins against Uppingham and Rugby whilst drawing to MCS, Oxford. Harris, Chance and Riensavapak all worked hard through the season and made good progress which was rewarded with match success. In their one outing of the season, the C team beat Rugby. *ACNB*

POETRY



Etching by Mary-Kate Lyell

PROSE & ART

A Creative Writing Evening

The Creative Writing Group under the auspices of the Literary Society convened to read verse they had composed, in the company of other Stoics who had work to hand. Twenty-two pupils, boys and girls, representing the full age range at Stowe, read their works in the Library. The arts of composition, recital and attentive, appreciative listening were all handsomely evident.

The total audience of over fifty – with every seat taken – numbered also Stoics who were there to support the readers and enjoy the creative endeavours of their peers. Staff too provided valuable support and encouragement.

Many of the poems had their origin in the school verse competition (on the theme of 'Water') earlier in the year, but presented a great diversity in focus, form and mood. Many poems were born of the individual experimentation of the members of the Creative Writing Society.

The imagination and verbal ingenuity of the poets were impressive; their recitations compelling. Nervous though one might feel in those circumstances – for most a maiden voyage – they all stood and delivered. One was moved by how they touched their auditors; and indeed the profound and sympathetic attention of the audience (no shuffling was audible) made the occasion what it was.

Afterwards many stayed to talk and share impressions at length, eased into this by the refreshments efficiently provided by Geoff Higgins and the catering team. But the Library itself is very conducive to creating the right atmosphere – intimate and relaxing – for such an event.

We thank Mrs Collins for arranging the Library in such a way that the west end provides a perfect ambience. And at that end too is the magnificent bust of Brian Stephan: how appropriate that he – so long an eminent champion of Stoics' wrestling with words and meanings – should in another way still preside.

Finally, there should be thanks to the Literary Society secretaries (and poets) for their help in making the evening possible.

EST

Eleven poems entered for

THE ROXBURGH PRIZE FOR VERSE

An oriental lantern floated
Near drowning, blood red and bloated
On the nacreous lustre of the spectral air.
Humpback islands basked in a fiery bay;
Purple, peach and pink broke against the grey:
Watery colour exploded everywhere.

The deep blue of the oceanic dome,
Streaked by ripples of white foam,
Was majestic in its spiritual power.
A star, precipitated out of the void,
Watched the fractured orb destroyed
By the eternal grasp of time in an hour.

So came the black chasm of the night
Robed in an ecstasy of light,
And cold as death. The moon appeared above,
Swimming like a candle in a water-filled bowl.
She reflects the dank darkness of my soul,
And, unthinking, chuckles in timeless love.

Platonic doctrine on art then died,
Crushed beneath an awesome tide:
Art is not born of a disparate sphere.
This fragile beauty shimmered on the waves:
More holy and perfect than shadows in caves;
Yet not idol-like, but sharing in our fear.

Jonathan Morrison (LVI)

Winner of the Senior Prize

Fish jumping through the golden sheen
Of the sun-dipped lake,
Air warm and heavily scented,
No hint of stir nor shake.

To the tanned young lady
With her friends and lover,
The lake's a joyous scene,
Not the grave of a mother.

Little do they know,
When they enter the rancid water,
That drunken night she was pushed,
T'was the lake that caught her.

I sit and watch them laugh and cry,
With a hint of knowing in my eye,
What would they think if they were told
That's where mum lay stiff and cold?

For she was chucked onto that icy bank,
Landing with a hollow thud,
Joints all bony and twisted,
Pretty white dress raped by the mud.

I will stop now,
For your unease is apparent.
However before I go,
Think of the days you've spent,
believing you were having fun,
knowing you were doing good:
Swimming in someone's grave,
Paddling in embalming fluid.

Matthew Furse-Roberts (LVI)

WATERLESS

A timid breeze nudges the endless
procession of rolling dunes gently
onwards, onwards.
This rippling red ocean hugs the horizon
all around. The shimmering disc seems
so close, filling a trough in the
wasteland.

Mystic and beautiful?
A vile deception. This is a savage
beast with a thirst for torture:

Relentless, scorching heat tears
back layers of crisp skin.
The air that dribbles in and
out rasps my windpipe raw.

Clouds of black flies synthesise a
maddening murmur as they fight
to bathe in the last drop of
salty sweat that oozes
from my blistered pores.

My heart's desperate pounding battles
and soon crushes my feeble hold on myself.
The earthquake in the mind marries the
haze outside to give birth to a storm:

Each perfect undulation erupts to release
an army of satanic figures in blood
red uniforms.

Absurd you say.
This is not mere imagination,
but a terrifying amalgam:
reality and absurdity so closely
interwoven that they are one.
A dimension of fear where
primeval passions destroy logic.

To the sound of a deafening silence,
a desiccated body crawls forward
dragging withered legs behind.

At last, no longer can
Volleys of shrapnel-like sand
agonise their victim. The nearby
pool seems to sneer as a pulse
quivers across its surface.

Alexander P. de M. W. Hobbs (V)

Winner of the Junior Prize

THE RIVER

Elegant, flowing crystal clear shoot,
Water follows joining with water
And so on
One gentle looking serpent, but ferocious;
With vigorous and frustrated momentum,
Forcing herself upon every space,
She fills them,
And continues her Odyssey
Smothering rocks and tearing banks;
My lady is much misunderstood –
Provoking wonder, when caution should fill
The hearts of those who gaze, awed and starry eyed
Upon her slicing, prismatic reflections.
All dream to wade in and explore
Her seemingly inviting flesh
Populated by gilled creatures,
Not for exploration by unadapted man.
Ill-understanding swims closely with death.
Ignorance persuades his man-friend to discover
The world beyond the kaleidoscope screen.
Submersion.
The fate of Neptune grasps the alien trespasser;
Water slithers into lungs,
Head grows dizzy; body tired.
My lady wins again.
Another intruder disposed of;
Another victim of a bizarre nonconformity,
And her own dark retribution.

David Collier (MVI)

WATER'S LIFE

The clouds burst,
the rain falls,
refreshing the land,
giving life.

The water runs
over the land,
searching for a river
to take it to the sea.

The river flows fast
early in its life –
down the mountain
over waterfalls and rapids.

The river is old,
meandering over plains.
Its momentum is lost.
The sea is in sight.

The river meets the sea.
The waters merge
and are warmed by the sun
high in the sky.

The water evaporates,
rising to the clouds.
The clouds burst.
The rain falls

Kingsley Ford (III)

Photo: Tara Kennedy

The Storm

Howling winds whistle through the trees
Blowing leaves onto the ground
and stirring them round like a cup of tea.
Rain splashes down, thumping onto the leaves,
Soaking the ground and churning up mud.
Thunder rumbles through the air,
Like heavy guns, flashing lightning,
The explosions...

The rain hardens, like small-arms fire,
Assaulting the dark, dark woods,
On the cold, stormy night.

Robert Bell (III)

Down Below

The sandy surface shines,
Shimmering in the sun.
The glaring heat drives
Below the surface.
The creatures do nothing.
The heat slices through.
The dust rises and
Falls. A lizard skitters
Across the sandy surface,
Its skin sizzles in the lazy
Heat. The sky clear –
A perfect blue,
The sun but a silvery disc,
Skating slowly overhead
The sky its rink,
Slowly melting into the
Dark blackness of night.
The throat of the lizard was dry
As the cold set in,
Revenging upon the heat of
The day. A lonely cactus
Sits in the soft sand.
Once again it rests
Feeding upon its magical supply
Of water. The desert thirsts.
Down, below the surface,
There is a stream,
Crystal clear, purified through
Mountains of sand and silt,
Brimming with good things.
Up above, the lizard buries itself
Further in its hole,
Its body turns,
It is quite warm,
But its throat is dry
And the desert night sets in,
The lizard's thirst not quenched
After the sizzling, sunny day.

Because the water's down below.

Armand David (IV)

The Distortionist

Wet cherry trees stand in the rain
like iron rods sticking out of the ground,
their bark clothed all in black,
their trunks, seeming bent and twisted,
loom high above.
The pond in the park
gives everything two lives:
long church steeples gently waver
while chimneys are swaying in the water,
all on top of a fluffy white cloud.
A lone white swan glides
gracefully over the steeple,
shattering the peaceful image.
It looks down at the newly formed picture,
and pecks the water,
as if to give it the kiss of life.

Harry Granville (IV)

Heart of Darkness

The day is hot, the sun is flying high,
A thousand birds carve blurred circles in the sky;
The stifling haze of sweat and heat and fear
Saps our life and faith as our journey's end draws near.

The oven of the jungle is humming, green and live,
A throbbing mesh of colours from which we all derive,
For in this heart of darkness, to which we journey back,
Live forces and ancestral ghosts that shadow us in black.

The vegetation buzzes with all this atavistic lust,
The feeble echoes of a nature that, though unwilling, must.
But from this mental fire, one thing will us deliver:
The safety in the waters of this cool and peaceful river.

The river misses nothing: mirrors effectively ensure
That sanity and reality are reflectively assured.
And on the surface of this saving, silent being,
The world's objects and beauties – not human nature
– can be seen.

The surface of the river, then, suggests that all is well –
Perhaps our nature doesn't lead us to a prehistoric hell.
But for all these hopes of happiness and confident beliefs,
Comes the sickening realisation that this surface has beneaths.

The boat splinters against some invisible wall,
An underwater snare that clutches one and all.
The beauty and serenity of this expanse of water
Are shattered with the darkness of these innocents' slaughter.

But surely they are guilty – all humans have a nature
That tends to savagery and violence despite the powers of our
creator.
Must we disregard our efforts to find in life a purpose?
All our hearts are dark as water if you look beneath the surface.

Angus McCarey (LVI)

Chernobyl

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the heart still beats
In the town, North East
Of Kirpev, late in September.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the sun still shines
And the child seems fine,
Too young, they say, to remember.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the birds still sing.
Yes, her head does ring,
But the doctor has pills, he is hopeful.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the wind still blows,
And it doesn't yet show
Where the hair of the girl drops in handfuls.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the rain still falls
In small silver balls,
And the old see their end in reflexion.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And it's all the same,
They ignore their pain,
Too afraid, still, to make the connection.

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
And the sun slips down
On the brave old town,
And the darkness reveals devastation.

The child mourns for his lost masculinity

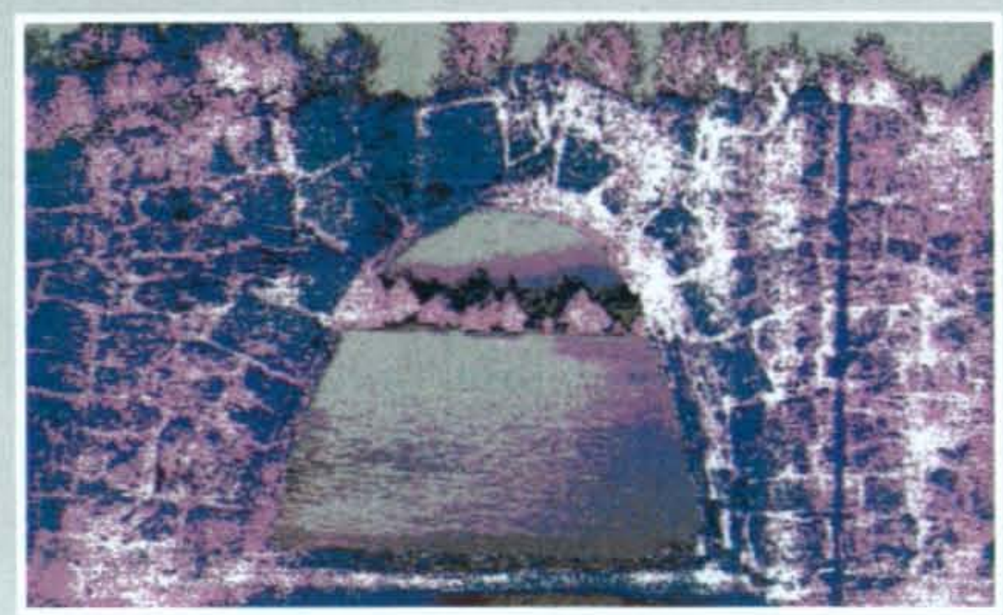
The mother screams in indefinite pain

The girl cries for conviction in vanity

The old writhe in their terminal shame

Fat man, little boy, nineteen eighty six,
...et cetera,
et cetera,
et cetera...

Fenella Hunt (LVI)



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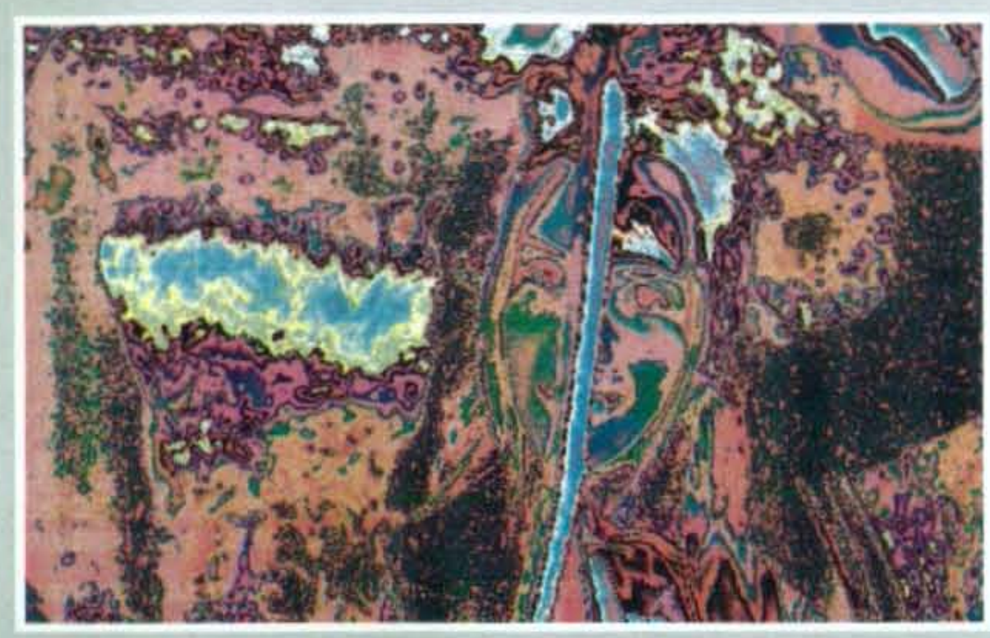

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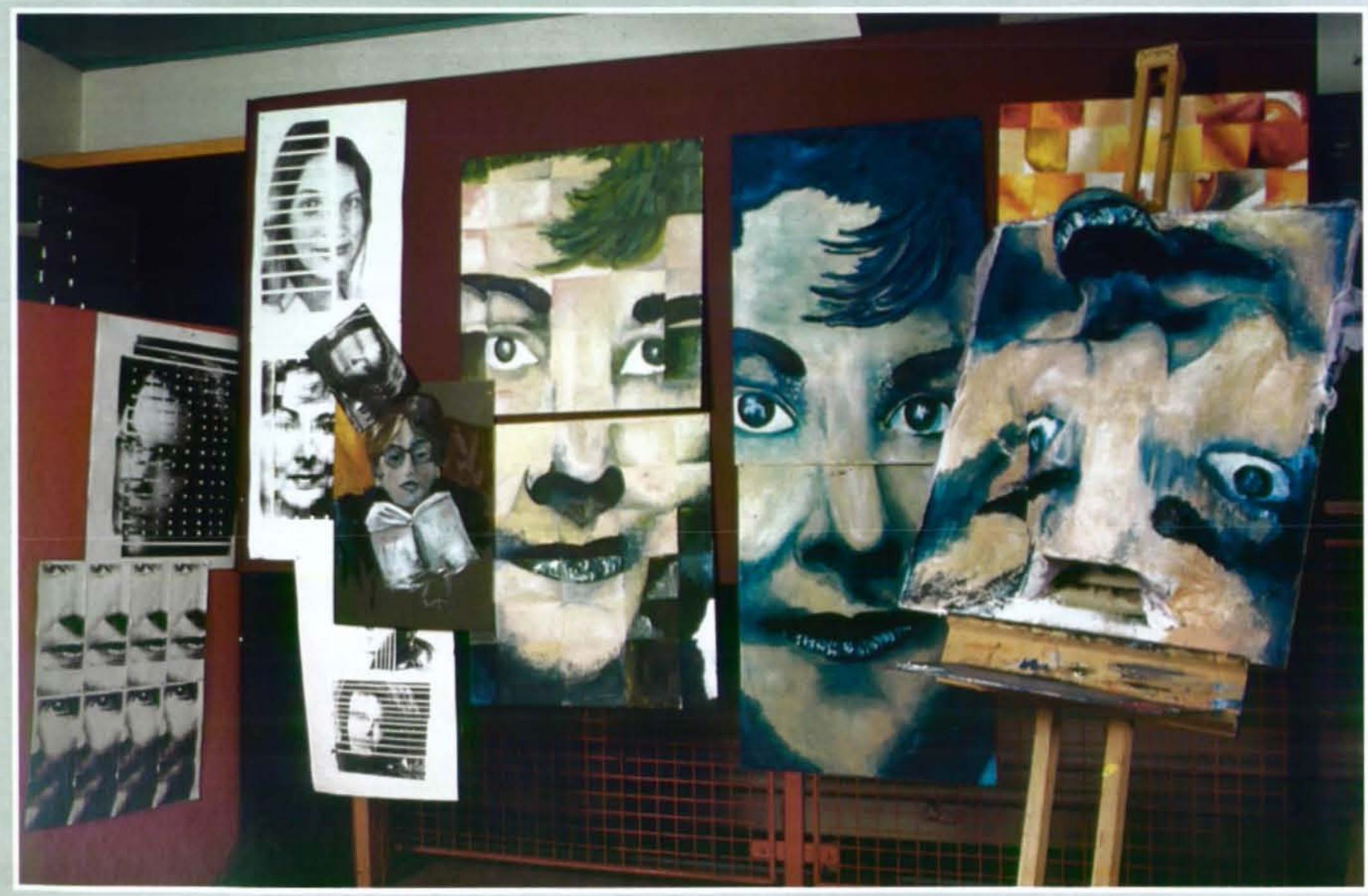

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The rays of the early morning sun,
spread across the river and strike the high-banked
*face of the c**I**ty. The river, Ganga*,*
*flows past Ka**S**hi, the City of Light.*
Echoes of untamed chanting haunt
this gathering place of the spiritual
***W**orld. Temples, Shrines, Ashrams*, Palaces,*
***A**nd pavilions rise majestically*
on the high riverbank, casting deep reflections
into the waters of the Ganga.
The long flight of stone steps, reaching like roots
*in**T**o the river, brings thousands of bathers*
to the river's edge to worship at dawn.
*Th**E** ghats* along the river front surge*
with pilgrims who have come to bathe, and pray
*fo**R** their Nirvana. Death, which elsewhere*
*is polluting, is here **HOLY** and*
Auspicious. Death is liberation.
Elsewhere it is feared, here it is welcomed
as a long, expected guest. Does this mean
the earthly supersedes the spiritual?
The tangible and the intangible
are separated?
Or are they held tenaciously together?
Bronze-cast images of gods are bought and sold
at markets; worn, misshapen stones are daubed
with orange paint by the muttering pious.
What we see is bizarre to our eyes
and foreign to our experience.
The brownish waters of the Ganga,
swirling with the ashes of the dead,
are dipped in, sipped, and carried home
as if it were nectar.

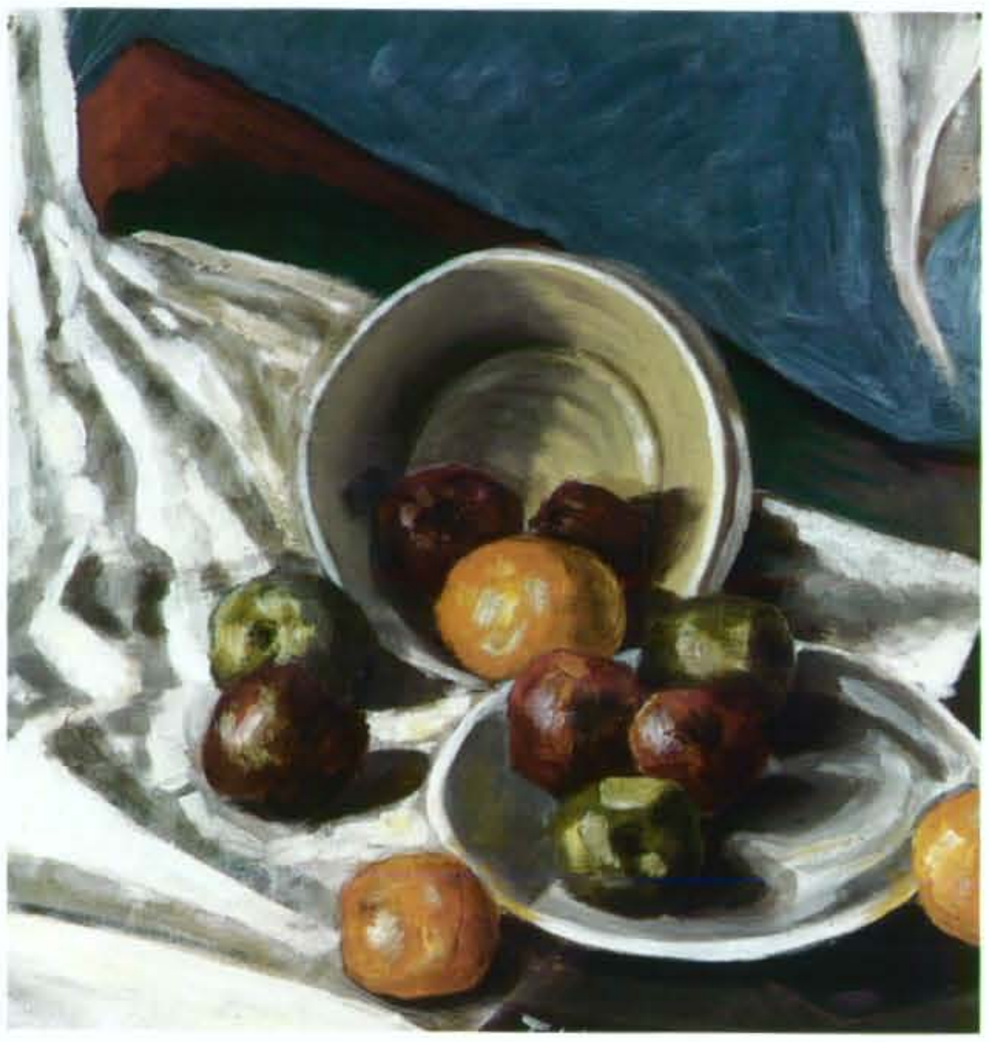
Vikram Tellis-Nayak (LVI)

Ganga: (the Ganges) The holy river for Hindus
Ashram: A home for holy men to meditate and rest
Ghats: Accessible landings on a riverbank

Chris Harrington

Max Mlinaric

Becky Post



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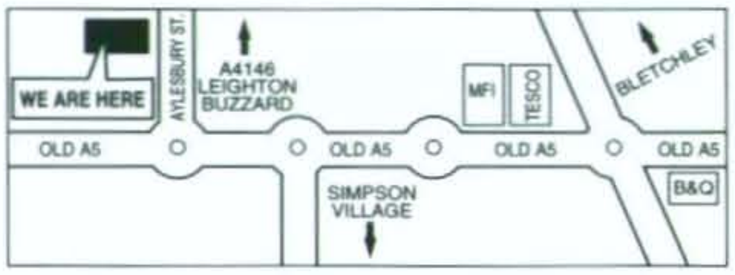

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LEXUS
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Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize

A lonely impulse of delight

Nine essays follow, inspired by the quotation from W.B. Yeats' 'An Irish Airman Foresees His Death'

The Clock Kept Ticking

It was absolutely silent, save the tick of the clock in the hall. Before, I might have found that persistent monotone a source of irritation, but today it calmed my thoughts. And so it kept ticking. My ears occupied, my eyes maintained a steady gaze at the coffee cup positioned on the table in front of me. It was a green, glazed mug, what some might call 'inoffensive'. I didn't like it, but I was forced to use it, because it was his. The green glaze annoyed me, so, frequently, in an act of revenge I would leave the contents of the coffee cup to go cold. Cold coffee. And the clock kept ticking.

A strand of hair fell over my face and momentarily swept my fixation to one side. It was greasy hair. It needed a wash. I needed a wash. I got up.

"Can't mope around," I told myself. "Have a shower; ring work, tell them you'll be coming in. Do something with yourself for Christ's sake."

I arrived at the kitchen door and stopped. "No, not today."

It was the third day that week. The second week that month, that I had been through this little routine. I had no reason for breaking it today. And the clock kept ticking and I thought about making more coffee, but I didn't like the mug and I couldn't be bothered to get up.

I dragged my eyes over the various artifacts which ornamented the room. Silver shapes flashed freeze-framed joy at my face in the morning sunlight: my family, Christmas ninety-four; the office promotion party; a friend's wedding and Greece in late September. We were at a taverna. It was the end of the holiday season, when everyone leaves because they think there's nothing else worth staying for. The sun was setting over the water, crowning the harbour with a deep, throbbing warmth and as it ebbed away at the mercy of the night, we were happy. Now as I looked at the picture, I saw that happiness in him, but more obvious, today, was the part of his face that fell into shadow, the part I could never penetrate.

It was in Greece that he had suggested that we got married. I remember my reaction. It seemed such a stupid question. Of course I would marry him, was my answer, I loved him. We married quickly. He wanted a big wedding. He said he wanted to know I wasn't ashamed of him. I never understood that. How could I be ashamed of my reason for living?

We both returned to work in the autumn. He overworked, of course, and rarely relaxed. Sometimes I used to catch him staring out of the window. As if trying to penetrate an unwilling computer screen, his eyes would take on a masked expression. I might touch him and he would turn around. His face would look concerned and his lips would be poised to speak, seemingly trying to prove something. I feared for him, but I would smile, trying to ease his pain. He killed himself on the 2nd December, last year. A month, two weeks and three days after our wedding. He left no note. He left nothing, just his unborn child.

After his death, I went straight back to work, conning myself that the extinction of his pain was the extinction of mine also. I worked solidly until Christmas. I blocked out his death; I blocked out his life and I blocked out his baby. But one morning, I woke up and all I could see was his face. His stupid, beautiful face. It was then, of course, that I decided I did not want to work any more. I felt the pain now more than ever. It was his voice on the radio and the telephone. It was his face on the television screen and the magazine covers. So I stopped listening to the radio and answering the telephone and I stopped watching the television and reading magazines. I just sat in the kitchen and became immune to the persistent monotone of the clock in the hall, in the hall. A strand of hair fell over my face and broke my stare.

My coffee cup was still there, green and glazed. Then a fleeting thought. I wonder if the baby will like coffee. The amount I drink I shouldn't be surprised if it's addicted. The baby, the baby. The words rang through me, detached and emotionless. I looked down at the swelling beneath my dressing gown. It was horrible, horrible. Under my skin, stretching my stomach into some peculiar, rotund deformity, was a baby, that I had never asked for and never planned and never wanted. I cared very little about that baby and I told it so.

"I hate you, you little bastard. I hate you. Can you hear me?" I shouted. "I said I hate you, I hate you, I ..." I stopped short. From somewhere within the taut, skin satchel that was my stomach, there was a movement, a slight tremble. I froze solid and placed my hand lightly on my stomach. There it was again, a flutter, a timid wary flutter. I looked down in disbelief and then I laughed. So many minutes, so many hours, days, weeks, I had revelled in my own bitter solitude. Believing that myself and myself alone was the victim of the pain and the hurt. Yet I was not alone. It was as if, in one last ditch attempt to remind me of its existence, the baby had flung open the doors of my heart. It wanted to be let in. I wanted to let it in. It was my baby. A lonely impulse of delight slipped through me; for God's sake, it was his baby.

I looked down again. "I should clear the study, he's going to want somewhere to sleep."

Fenella Hunt (LVI)

Winner of the Senior Prize

Serrol Osman

Charlotte Jones

Jasmin Westinghouse

A lonely impulse of delight

Inner Peace

The inhalation of air was like a river of energy running through me as the morning dew still lay slumbering on the lush green blades of grass. Birds were singing happily in the trees and the world appeared to be at ease with itself. As I walked through the garden the soft smell of honeysuckle filled me and, as I went over to the folly, I saw a patch of verdant moss upon which I laid down my head and rested, and as I lay I drew inspiration from the day:–

For oft when on my couch I lie –

The sun was high as my mind was drawn to wander and, as it did, I could see myself lying and time passing me by. Suddenly I found myself smelling Venetian air and instantly I was engulfed in a land far from my own and it was then that I realised that I had left myself behind, my physical self that is, and travelled in my dream, leaving myself behind to rest:–

In vacant or in pensive mood –

I could not see myself and the voice that I used sounded foreign, yet I could respond to all the vibrant colours that I was witnessing, and the wealth of people who surrounded me wrapped me in a velvety ambience of warmth. Then I started to get involved in a conversation with a local, and as he animatedly portrayed scenes from his provincial life, I watched the man intently and his lips formed words which affected me and, strangely, compelled me to look around:–

They flash upon that inward eye –

and then suddenly there she was, the most beautiful thing that I had ever seen, and I was breathless as I stared across the crowded street. Then she was gone. Realising my inattention, I was just about to apologise to the man when I found myself back inside what I knew to be me, back in the garden and feeling warm inside; the world was quiet:–

Which is the bliss of solitude –

I felt around me and realised that the evening was closing in, so I stood in the twilight sky as the orange hue deepened on the horizon. It was cold, but, as my eyes surveyed the landscape I spotted them, and a lonely impulse of delight filled me:–

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

The next thing that I saw was the blue sky that flew overhead like a distant sea with the occasional bird, which swam past on the current of clouds that drifted endlessly on. I walked into the house and it was there, in the central courtyard, that the sun would filter through in the late afternoon and warm the earth that always lay to support the never-ending trail of people who passed.

I walked into the main rooms of the house and continued to write but the muse was not with me on that afternoon and the inspiration that I so desperately needed remained elusive. The page lay blank for what seemed like hours as my mind flitted between scenes of violence and joy, love and hate, and yet I couldn't decide where the script was going. It could not lead itself but I could not lead it, so a point was reached where I could go no further. I threw down my pen in disgust and stormed out of the room.

As I entered the street the world seemed to be uneasy and I could find no peace, only frustration, as the inspiration that I so desperately needed continued to escape me; I wandered into the park and I let the path lead me where it would. It did a better job than I could do as, at that moment, I was not in the best of spirits, finding no solace in the tranquillity of the moment. I walked over several hills and through a leafy copse:–

I wandered lonely as a cloud,
That floats on high o'er vales and hills.

The banks of the river beyond seemed to be glistening in the sunlight and the river itself appeared to house a world all of its own, in which the fish could carelessly move, free of all the constraints that at that moment withheld me from flying carefree away from that time and that place. And then they came to me like a vision and the clarity and wonderment did all for my inner self, and for one lonely moment a smile flitted across my face:–

When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils.

And then the sun shone more brightly and the birds sang louder as the clouds cleared from within and the sense of inner ease was once again with me for the first time in a long while. I recalled the time, the previous day, when I was dreaming in the sun and I saw the daffodils, then shrouded in a veil of amber, now in their full glory and it was as if my inner feelings, freed from the shackles of misery, had emerged to fill me with joy. I remembered that line, *In vacant or in pensive mood*, which so aptly fitted my temperament over the last day, as I was living out of myself, not with myself and as I stood, smiling and contented, I ruminated over the experience and thought to myself that inner peace is, indeed, the bliss of solitude.

Oliver Trethewey (V)
Winner of the Junior Prize

A lonely impulse of delight

Letter from Home

The sound of thunder begins again. The weary warriors begin the monotonous ritual once more. They put on their flimsy, tin hats, the well-worn gas masks and now they can only wait. The packages of death pass overhead and a small cheer goes up from the troops as each bomb fails to find its target. But the cheers fade to a murmur as over to their right a dull, orange glow flares up, highlighting one section of the many miles of muddy trenches.

"Poor sods," is muttered by one soldier but expresses everyone's thoughts. The rest of the night passes as quickly as is possible on a battlefield.

The first wave of sunlight penetrates into the heart of the dingy huts, buried deep in the sides of the trench. The men within stir slowly, putting their feet into their cold, moist boots and stumble aimlessly towards their sentry posts. Two men, Johnson and Shepherd, reach their post and prop their rifles up against the muddy wall. Shepherd turns to face the enemy lines and stares into the distance, Johnson rests on a plank of wood that lies on the floor.

"What's the date today?"

"No idea. The days all seem the same now."

"Well, what month is it?"

"It must be nearly October. Why?"

"They'll be delivering the post soon and I can sense that I'm going to get my leave papers today. If they do arrive, I'll have packed my bags and be back home before the end of the week."

Later in the morning the two friends are returning from their sentry duty when they see a large gathering of men huddled around a table.

"I told you the post would come."

As they reach the table they can hear the names being called out,

"Holmes...Thomas...Ellis...Johnson..."

"There's one for me!" Johnson exclaims joyously and rushes forward to claim his envelope. He returns clutching a slightly crumpled, brown letter and a smile breaks through the dried mud that coats his face.

He does not open it immediately, choosing to save it for a quieter time and so places the letter in his jacket. It sustains his happiness and excitement for the following days, putting the cold and the thought of death to the back of his mind, until he is unable merely to look at it any longer and therefore, as excitement takes over, decides to open it and read its contents. He rips apart the envelope and unfolds the paper that is inside. "Dear John," it begins. Suddenly two shrill squeaks pierce the silence.

"Oh hell, not again!" He curses. The noise comes from the officer's whistle and all the soldiers know its message well. Johnson takes his place behind the others waiting for the signal to climb from the safety of the trenches and out into the quagmire that is the battle zone. Shepherd is on the ladder next to him, fear showing in his eyes. But there is no time to speak as the third blast sounds. Men begin pouring out of the ditches like water overflowing from a gutter; Johnson starts clambering up the wooden ladder, he pokes his head over the edge of the trench and then pushes himself over the edge with all his strength and runs, but his boots slip in the mud and he stumbles. He regains his balance and scrambles towards the nearest crater. He moves slowly, as if all his fear has been turned into a weight on his shoulders, but he reaches the hole unscathed. A second later he is joined by Shepherd who dives onto the ground beside him. As they lie there, men crumple in heaps around them, twitching for a while, but then silence.

The two soldiers crouch in the hole waiting for the officer to initiate the second attack. The whistle sounds; without hesitation the companions storm to their feet and charge forward, firing at random into the distant hills of mud. It turns slowly in the air before them, moving closer, delivering its destructive message. The shout goes up.

"Grenade!" but too late for Johnson and Shepherd, who do not react and the blast catches them both. They are launched high into the sky but land softly on the wet soil, some metres apart. Shepherd controls his panic and crawls to the cover of a fallen tree, but panic conquers Johnson who wanders around in a daze, alone in his fear.

"Get down, you fool!" Shepherd shouts, but all that Johnson can reply is, "My leave papers, my letter."

Then it happens. Shepherd hears it through the wailing of the injured, through the officers giving orders and through the howling wind. Crisp and clear it sounds. He knows what has happened without even looking. Shepherd turns his head to see Johnson's limp outline slumped on the ground. As he slides across to the body, the wind scatters Johnson's precious papers everywhere, the thing that had given him a lonely impulse of delight in a place so devoid of emotion.

Lorien Pilling (V)

A lonely impulse of delight

Calcutta Horror

It was constantly getting worse, the death toll continued to rise each day. No one had any control over anything. How long could I stay here? I had a family to look after; after all, the British had gone.

I trudged home, pushing my cart of vegetables. I had not been able to earn much with this continuous rioting and pillage going on: few, except the mobs, dared to venture out on the streets.

I lived near the Howran Bridge, in what was known to be Calcutta's largest slum areas. While I earned the family's bread selling vegetables and fruit in the city, my wife Devi stayed at home and looked after our five-year-old son, Ramaya. He was our only hope for the future, we had lost three sons earlier through smallpox, so Rama was all we had. He would sit at the door at this time of day knowing his father would be coming home. Where was he today? Maybe indoors, but the door was open: I didn't understand. I always told Devi to keep the door locked from within, especially in times like these.

"Devi, Devi..." I shouted. No answer. Where was everyone? I rushed inside, sensing something sinister. There she was, in the middle of the floor, which was covered in splashes of blood. More blood ran down her face and neck and down her breast, and dry blood clotted her hair. There was an expression of horror on her bruised face, her mouth was wide open. She lay there motionless, clutching Rama's right hand in her own. His face was expressionless, in fact it was battered beyond recognition. My eyes were hurting, swollen by tears impossible to control. I felt fire rising within me.

They were innocent, so was I; *they* were not. I felt anger and hate, the anger of a helpless father, the anger of a husband. The Mussalmans! It was they, no-one else was capable of such an atrocity.

That night I burnt my family's 'chita' and with it all my feelings as well. They would not go unpunished. I stayed until the fire had gone out completely, reducing the members of my family to ashes. It was morning, the light was rising on the bridge. I walked towards the 'Ghats' to scatter the urn of ashes into the Ganja.

On the way a number of thoughts entered my mind: "What did Devi and Rama do to deserve their fate? Why did God punish innocents like us? We were a small and poor, but happy family, we did not deserve this." My throat was choked with emotion. "They did!" I thought, looking at a woman and a child in the distance. I knew they were Muslims, the murderers. The woman wore a burqa, like all her kind. They walked very cautiously. They were walking away from me, into a 'gulee'. I looked at them and the dusty remains of my family simultaneously. I threw the cistern of ashes away, its contents scattering over the streets of Calcutta. I rushed towards the two figures and my hand reached to grab an iron bar lying near a dead body. As anger gave way to satisfaction, I let out a blood-curdling cry. The woman turned her head around to see her attacker, but it was too late. I swung the iron bar and the weapon entered her skull, splitting her head. The veil covered her face, I didn't wish to see it. But I felt no pity – the bastards who had killed Devi had not cared either. The woman lay on the floor, dead, saturated in blood. The child stood motionless, his fingers in his mouth. I didn't think twice. Getting hold of his neck, I flung him against the brick wall of the 'Imperial Talkies'. Blood splattered on the posters advertising films. That did not matter, no one watched films anymore.

I sat down heavily, my bloody hands clutching my forehead. I began to cry, bursting into emotion. The feelings I had burnt away the other night came back with a new feeling of guilt. Moments of torture followed.

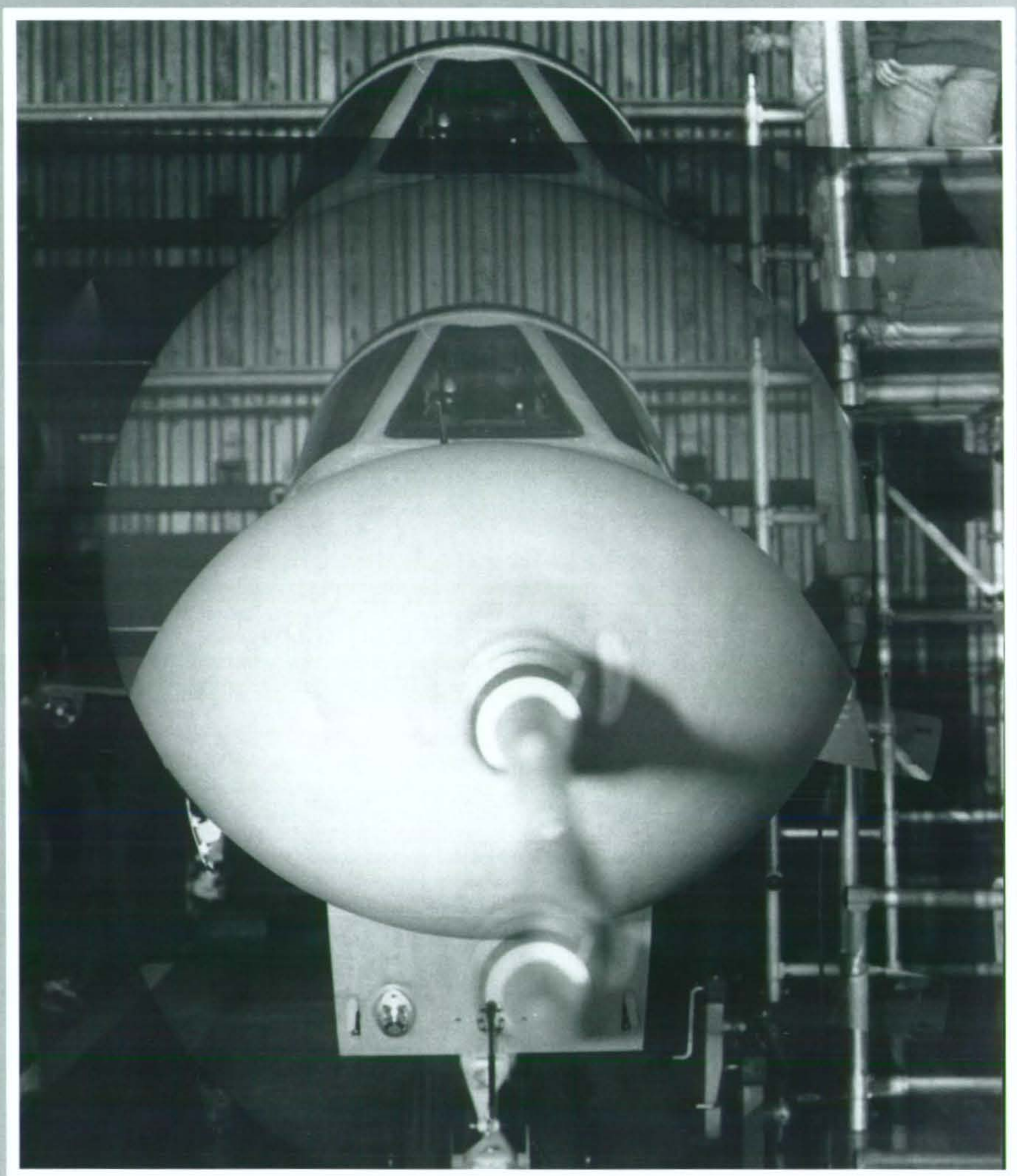
The mauled bodies lay around me; they were innocent too. I saw my Devi and Rama in those two corpses. I was a murderer, no one deserved this. I looked at the palms of my hands, they were red with dry blood. The tears from my eyes made the blood flow again.

I ran to the temple on the Ghats, to the temple of Shiva. "Forgive me God!" I yelled. It was a piercing cry, full of remorse. I was still crying. I began to bang my head on the threshold of the temple, staining the floor with crimson, yelling for mercy. My pleas were answered by the cries of a child. I looked around to see a boy, of about five years. He was naked and all he possessed was himself. He was a Muslim child, probably an orphan. He had a talisman around his neck with the inscription 'Allah he Akbar' on the metallic cube. Had God forgiven me?

I went mad with joy and hugged the boy. He would now be my son, my Ramaya, his upbringing would be my offering to God as repentance for the atrocities I had committed. He would compensate for the dead innocents. I prayed hopefully to the merciful God. I would bring him up as a Muslim, which he was.

I felt a lonely impulse of delight rush through my being. We would bring light into each other's worlds.

Yusuf Ahmad (V)



Photograph by Caroline Shasha

A lonely impulse of delight

Flight from Analysts

"God – it's like ice," she said. She ought to know the symptoms by now since she's held my hand on lots of other flights. My fingers (and toes) turn to ice. My stomach leaps upwards into my rib-cage and for one screaming minute my heart and the engines correspond as we attempt to prove once again that the laws of aerodynamics are not the flimsy superstitions which, in my heart of hearts, I know they are. Never mind the diabolical explanations of air-foil you get in British Airways' multilingual 'Information to passengers', I happen to be convinced that only my own concentration (and that of my grandmother – who always seems to expect her children to die in a plane crash) keeps this bird aloft. I congratulate myself on every successful take-off, but not too enthusiastically because it's also part of my personal religion that the minute you grow overconfident and relax about the flight, the plane crashes instantly. A mood of cautious optimism should prevail. But actually my mood is better described as cautious pessimism. "OK," I tell myself, "we seem to be off the ground and into the clouds but the danger isn't past." This is, in fact, the most perilous patch of air. This is where the plane banks and the 'No Smoking' sign goes off. This may well be where we go screaming down in thousands of flaming pieces.

As soon as the seat-belt sign goes off and people begin moving about the cabin, I glance round nervously to see who's on board. I see the plane is full of analysts. I see Dr Arnold Aaronson pretending to play chess on a magnetic board with his new wife (who was his patient until last year), the singer Diana Rose. Both of them are surreptitiously looking around to see who is looking at them – and for one moment, my eyes and Diana Rose's meet. I watch her squirm under my scrutiny. Stranded in mid-air over the Atlantic with 117 analysts, I realise the ideal beginning of a nightmare trip…

At 6.00 am we landed at Frankfurt and shuffled out into a rubber-floored lounge. We waited an hour there while the 747 refueled. All the analysts sat stiffly on moulded fibreglass chairs arranged in inflexible rows. Grey. Yellow. Grey. Yellow. Grey. Yellow. The joylessness of the colour scheme was matched only by the joylessness of their faces.

Most of them were carrying expensive cameras, and despite their longish hair, tentative beards and wire-rimmed glasses, they exuded respectability. That was, when I thought about it, what I had against most analysts. They were unquestioning acceptors of the social order. Their mildly leftist political views, their signing of peace petitions and their decorating of offices with prints of 'Guernica' were just camouflage. When it came to the crucial issues, the family, the position of women, the flow of cash from patient to doctor, they were reactionaries. As rigidly self-serving as the Social Darwinists of the Victorian era.

Vienna. The very name is like a waltz. But I never could stand the place. It seemed dead to me. Embalmed.

We arrived at 9.00 am – just as the airport was opening up. We shuffled in through customs dragging our suitcases and feeling dopey from the missed night of sleep. The custom officials glanced at our suitcases, and in less than twenty minutes we were boarding a bus. We boarded with the naive hope of making it to our hotel in a few minutes and going to sleep. We didn't know that the bus would snake through the streets of Vienna and stop at seven hotels before coming to ours almost three hours later. Getting to the hotel was like one of those dreams where you have to get somewhere before something terrible happens but, inexplicably, your car keeps breaking down or going backwards.

I looked out of the bus window at an advertising poster which read

SEI GUT ZU DEINEM MAGEN

(Be good to your stomachs), and I hated the Germans for always thinking about their damned stomachs, their Gesundheit – as if they had invented health, hygiene, and hypochondria. I hated their fanatical obsession with the illusion of cleanliness. And their cleanliness is an illusion.

I remembered myself travelling with my parents when I was younger and always trying to pretend they weren't with me. I tried to lose them in the Louvre! To avoid them in the Uffizi! To moon alone over a coke in a Paris café and pretend that those loud people at the next table were not – though clearly they were – my parents. (I was pretending, you see, to be a Lost Generation exile with my parents sitting three feet away.)

Finally, we arrived at the hotel. I looked at it before I entered. And as I did I realised that Austria might pump millions into its housing but it didn't affect the hostile architecture. The hotel looked as uninviting as a prisoner-of-war camp, but that seemed normal in this city.

I entered, to be confronted by a man with longish hair, tentative beard and wire-rimmed glasses. I double-took and I realised I was to be hounded and pursued by men who look like analysts. It seemed to be my fate, whenever I was in this city, to be surrounded by horrid little men who were Freudian clones.

I locked the door to my 'cell'. I needed sleep to recuperate from my fears of flying and being surrounded by Freudian shrinks. As I was engulfed by the warmth of my bed, which then became a womb to me, I was seized by a lonely impulse of delight.

Mark Wates (LVI)

A lonely impulse of delight

Writers' Block

Dave Brody threw back another whisky down his throat, sighed and, leaning back on his chair, held his arms aloft and cried out, "Save me from the forces of darkness!" Quite why he chose these exact words remains to be seen. Some would say this is strange behaviour for a struggling writer, others would say it is perfectly normal. Then there is a third party who would say it is just the alcohol talking. But whatever comments are made about Dave's behavioural disorders (which indeed are few and far between, say commentators) it is fairly obvious that he spoke in this way because he had things on his mind. "Forces of darkness" or more simply "problems" were looming on the not very distant horizon; they were preparing to dock at the harbour and the first place they would be visiting would not be The Jolly Seamen but Dave's flat.

The problems divided themselves into three broad categories. The first was financial. He was behind on the rent on his tiny three-room flat, he couldn't afford the rent and his bank account was not looking at all healthy. The second category could be termed "personal relationships". He hadn't spoken to his parents in weeks and the last time they did come into contact it had not been for very long. His girlfriend was increasingly closer to becoming his ex-girlfriend after several arguments over cooking, personal hygiene, Paul Daniels and living together (She wanted to, he was not ready, needed his space etc.).

Then there was the third and final category. It would be wrong to call it an actual category as it consisted of only one problem. Arkwright & Sons, publishers, had given him a deadline two months ago for the draft copy of his first book. Dave was an aspiring author. He was primarily a journalist writing for *The Controversor*, the magazine which prides itself on having a view on everything no matter how subversive or seditious that view may be. He had enjoyed it at first, what with all the socialising, angry telephone calls and letters, and the court cases which the previous two things made almost inevitable. But after a while he got bored. He realised that by having to be controversial all the time in every article he ever wrote he was in fact ceasing to be controversial, as everybody expected controversy from the magazine. To be different was now the norm and vice versa. However, when he attempted to tell his colleagues at the publication about his theory, they tended to look at him with rather odd expressions and say things like, "You don't get out much, do you, Brody?" or "You should take a few days off, clear your mind," or by the slightly more blunt and less tactful observers, "You're crazy." These responses annoyed Dave, partly because he felt he was, in some respects, right, but mostly because he knew they were right. Back in his flat at the present time he downed another glass of whisky, slightly larger than the last.

He had always enjoyed writing stories and had believed himself to be quite good at them. Confirmation of this came when, owing to there being few pieces of news which could cause furious debate and uproar, one of Dave's short stories was printed in the magazine and was subsequently read by Arkwright & Sons, publishers, who liked it. They liked it so much in fact that they commissioned him to produce two more short stories which they duly published in the best-selling twenty-one short stories by talented, young, unknown authors. And they were even more impressed with these efforts and so gave Dave the chance to enter the big time and write a book.

This had all led back to the current situation. Arkwright & Sons had given him until 16th September to come up with something. This was Dave's chance and he did not want to waste it. Unfortunately, it had reached 1.00 am on the 15th September and for nearly two months now he had had writers' block, that most corrupting of diseases which only very few people are susceptible to, but whose effects can be fatal. He had come up with one idea about an armadillo who discovers he can rule the world just by moving about or eating. Earthquakes occur when he knocks over a stone. Wars are waged when he lies down. Families break up when he eats. But however good or bad this idea was, it held no place in Dave's heart and so he threw it in the bin. This was over five weeks ago and still he had not been given the inspiration he needed. And need it he did, as all the other problems in his life (financial, social) were either caused by the deadline or would be cured by it or, as in many if not all cases here, both. Another glass was poured and another distillery was made happy.

Dave thought back to his schooldays when he was seventeen and writing essays for the school essay prize. The Jethro Stipleton-Steth prize it was called (Stipleton-Steth being a pupil at the school in the 1920s who went and fought in the war, writing about it afterwards and the futility etc.). Dave thought back to the printed sheet which was always handed out with information about the essay. At the top, every year, were eight words which he detested. Eight words which he loathed. Eight words he wanted to destroy:

"For the account of an original, personal experience..."

The words made him cry out in pain even now. He leapt up into the air from his chair and immediately fell to the floor in a heap owing to the now empty bottle of whisky standing before him. Ah, after many years those words still made him shudder. He remembered the endless days and nights he spent trying to get to grips with this task. How constricting it all seemed, all freedom and liberty in story-telling seemed to have been destroyed. "Creative writing" should be replaced with "repressive writing with a hint of creativity but restricted to certain guidelines". He thought he had to write in the first person, that it must be something real which actually happened. It was only towards the

A lonely impulse of delight

end of his school career that he realised what a fool he'd been. An original, personal experience doesn't have to be something you've actually done.

To write a story of an alien life form crashing down to earth and then taking over the whole world, for example, is an original, personal experience as it is something that is personal to the writer and it is an experience as they have created something. The imagination is the key to it all. By creating something in your mind you are creating something original (most probably) and personal as you are the only person who can really see it and experience it.

Then suddenly it came to him. Dave's head spun with wonder and amazement. No, this wasn't the alcohol (although it probably did contribute to proceedings in some way). An impulse of delight struck him. It was lonesome, it seemed to wander endless plains, cross rivers and scale mountains on its own. Its mission was to reach him and reach him it had. A lonely impulse of delight had gone through hell for Dave and Dave was extremely grateful. For now he had an idea for his book. It was such a simple idea, yet it would be so utterly complex that people would be amazed. In fact he didn't care whether people were amazed or not; he cared that he had created something. All this time he had been trying to think of an idea which was outside of any constraints whatsoever. Now he realised that what he needed to do was to revert back to those constraints and use them. For Dave Brody's first book was going to be about a man who's trying to write a book! It was perfect, Dave could use all his experiences, give the man in the book writer's block just like he had, make him drink a lot just like he did. He'd also include a murder plot, like the book this guy's writing is a wild theory on some real life murder which is actually true and the author came up with it by accident. People start dying, his life is threatened by sinister, shadowy figures and then, in the end, he…

Dave stopped. He didn't want to spoil the ending for himself so he checked his creative mind before it was too late. It was now 2.00am and he was still drunk. He picked himself up off the floor and stumbled over to the kettle, switched it on and prepared himself to consume the largest cup of coffee he had ever had. He glanced sideways at the typewriter on the desk. When I'm finished with that, he thought, it probably won't want to live anymore. Dave Brody knew he was going to have to work like the devil but that did not deter him. He sat down with his large coffee and prepared to start thirty-six hours of solid typing. And in Flat 2b of Bucknall Gardens, creativity was in progress.

Adam Riley (LVI)

'Una': photographic study by Vikram Tellis-Nayak

A lonely impulse of delight

Pyromania

The flame danced in sensuous curves, half rotating in the nocturnal breeze. The sharp tip circled like a foil but periodically lashed out like a whip, yet the misty golden halo seemed permanently statuesque. Of all natural creatures this was the most beautiful – an angel trapped between heaven and earth; a glorious vision of blue and yellow destruction. It writhed seductively in immortal pain, always seeking freedom. For despite its magic, the fire was captive. My captive.

I had always loved fire – its life, its majesty and its grace. I would often sit alone watching it consume a pile of logs, feeding it as another child might feed a pet. As I grew, so my passion for fire grew. Few people really appreciate it – most see it as primitive or inconvenient. They do not see the flames around them – the fiery passion of autumnal trees, the burning skies, reflected in suburban windows as if whole cities were ablaze, or the submissive streetlights that cluster like a multitude of orange suns around our conurbations. I shall enlighten them.

That evening, as I snapped shut my cigarette lighter, inspiration struck me. One must realise that society had always rejected me: friends were worried by my atavistic and idolatrous delight in fire, and gradually, I saw them as less welcome. Thus I hit upon the idea of destroying the local youth centre in an orgy of learning.

The night was dark and overcast. Dark clouds, like hungry wolves, loped across the sky. Their ragged edges obscured the stars. There was no moon. I stalked the centre, my face always masked by shadow or undergrowth, a can of petrol in each hand.

I first climbed up onto the roof. The centre was little more than a couple of ugly portacabins and it took me under five minutes to sprinkle one of the cans all over it. Then, dropping down, I entered the centre. The sound of laughter came down the corridor. Adrenalin pumped through my veins making me shiver. I shook the petrol all over the walls and even the ceiling. But then a face appeared at the end of the corridor and I panicked, striking a match.

The most glorious sight of apocalyptic destruction greeted my action. Sheets of rolling orange flame hurtled down the narrow passageway, obliterating the walls. Ripples radiated outward and waves of molten heaven flowed through the building. I ran outside to see the roof erupt in a pool of flickering deadly tongues. I stood motionless in awe of this appalling beauty as people ran screaming from shattered windows. Crystal shards lay, like a crown of thorns, around the blackened building. One man ran mindless in circles as his hair and clothing burned, the very personification of this demonic deity, robed in an aurora of delicate flame. Watching the intricate, many faceted fire climb the walls and eat them, like cancer, sent ripples of arousal up my body as if I too were burning, exquisite and erotic burning – a lonely impulse of delight.

Eventually the blue lights arrived and killed my avatar – but too late to save the residual heap. I would reincarnate it soon enough.

The next day, however, I became afraid. The sight of a policeman awakened such fearful paranoia that I resolved to create one last almighty pyre, the greatest single work of art, embodying all life, all death, all love in one momentous act.

That second night, I set out again, like some phantom of god-like powers, killing and destroying purely at will. A primitive deity seeking pain and death for amusement, for the simple pleasure of seeing society in tatters, like a parchment set alight, and seeing panic, people crazy with fear, running wildly. The image one sees when a grenade is thrown into a far-off, foreign crowd.

The streets were barren, and nebulous rain dropped randomly from above. I crept stealthily between the pockets of light. An orange glow brushed my across my face, leaving dark pockets of shadow in eye sockets and minor depressions and creating the appearance of a skull in passing shop windows. Houses stared vacantly at me. Behind transparent curtains families ate or argued or watched TV, blind to the threat that passed amongst them.

As I approached my target, a policeman stepped from a side street. He was startled. I turned and ran, still instinctively clutching a petrol can. Not, on reflection, a wise move. I took a right turn into a narrow passageway. It was dark and I stumbled, like an abyss.

I could hear the rhythmic beat of feet behind me and I groped onwards. Eventually the passageway ended at a vertical wall. The top was lost against the sky, but I tried frantically to scale it. It was useless. The policeman arrived, panting and deprived of air. His short gasps echoed off the walls unnaturally loud.

I admit, I was very scared, trapped in a metaphorical dark cavern. I threw the petrol out of the can but hadn't quite removed the top, so it sprayed out everywhere. With a flick of my lighter the policeman disappeared in flame, illuminating the alleyway as he flashed around, like a human torch. But my clothes were splashed with liquid also, and quickly began to burn. I could feel the fire creeping up my body, and in my mind I began to see images of pain – the fire burning and peeling the skin, turning flesh to carbon. My legs became logs, rotten and thrown on a bonfire and not yet burning of their own accord... and I could not escape, a sheet of flame blocked the exit, a blasphemous union of light and matter, spinning, tumbling like a vortex. The gates of hell.

I awoke in hospital unable to move. The doctors say I am making an unnaturally fast recovery, but are puzzled when things begin to burn around me: newspapers, dried flowers, small combustible things like that. It makes perfect sense to me: I am the god of fire, its master. It would not hurt me, it cannot hurt me. Nor can society keep us apart, for only I love it as it deserves to be loved. I love it more than life itself.

Jonathan Morrison (LVI)

A lonely impulse of delight

Her Smile

The pressure inside my head was unbearable. The ache racked my entire body, followed by hot flushes of blood. I knew I shouldn't have been out there in the February cold; but there I was, surrounded by black trees, which had been raped by a harsh winter, and leaves lying in rotting, unraked swathes all around the park. I pulled my coat tighter around me, unwarmed by the dazzling but ineffective sun. I realised that wallowing in self-pity was useless and I simply became angrier. This depression was strangely worse than anything I had known before, a completely frustrating experience. I smiled a sickly, ironic grin as I unconsciously and pretentiously recalled my Hamlet: "'Tis bitter cold, and I am sick at heart."

We were four days behind schedule. Even as I sat there I was wasting studio time. The others were putting up with me, but I knew they would do it for only so long.

I hung my head when I fouled up again. When I looked up, the sound engineer said, with barely concealed resignation, "Why not take five?" With the intercom switched off, I saw Rick shake his head and say, "Look at him. He'll need more than five," and he glanced at me impassively. I felt a sudden flash of pure rage, and unstrapped my bass and swung it over my head into the floor as hard as I could. As the strings' terminal twang echoed through the studio, I gazed dully at the window; finally going to the door, and out into the street; trying to forget the looks on their faces.

I stood up from the bench to try and keep warm, and walked over to the gate, out of the park, and towards the studio. But instead of going in, I walked on past the door, along the road with no particular direction or plan in mind. Turning left, I found myself in a busy pedestrianised shopping street, full of moaning children, harassed mothers, chain-smoking youths and beggars with hacking coughs. I walked on, numbed and alone, through slums, waste ground and rich estates with polished Volvos.

I found myself again in a bus shelter on the other side of town, and I saw that continuing with the recordings was futile. I looked around, seeing the grey-brick blocks which served for homes in this part of town, and scruffy kids bullying one another on a concrete playground. I hailed an empty bus which luckily was heading back the way I had come, and sat on the top deck. I must have dozed off, because I woke up when the bus stopped at some traffic lights. Another bus had pulled up alongside, and I looked through the window and saw a beautiful girl sitting alone. She turned and looked at me unwaveringly as I continued to stare at her stupidly. She smiled and waved hesitantly, and just as I unfroze, the lights changed, and my bus pulled away to the left. I turned, straining to keep her in sight, but she was gone. I sat down again slowly, a lonely impulse of delight spreading through my body. I was suddenly awake and alive, as I hadn't been in months.

I got back to the studios at a run, to find the others sitting listlessly. "Are we gonna jam or jack off?" I said, and instantly regretted it, sensing that some kind of apology or explanation would be more appropriate. I took a deep breath, and apologised profusely; they all accepted warily, obviously somewhat bemused by the dramatic mood swing. I didn't explain – I couldn't have; I simply felt like I was riding a wave of euphoria and wasn't about to start asking questions about how or why.

The rest of the recordings were finished at breakneck speed, my enthusiasm obviously infecting the others. We departed in a flurry of goodbyes and promised meetings the next day, and I began to drive home. As I drove, the excitement of the afternoon began to wear off and I was reminded of my nagging cold by the throbbing in my temples, exacerbated by the day's frenetic activity. Craning my neck up, I saw myself staring back, eyes jaundiced and bloodshot. I was aware of being in the watershed of joy and depression as the events of the day moved farther away. Having to remind myself how my mood swing had been brought about, my thoughts moved to the few seconds' encounter with the girl on the bus. Why had she smiled at me? An unshaven, lank-haired, sunken-eyed bum like me... it was possible that she recognised me from a gig, but she didn't have that slightly awed expression typical of the punters. I banged the steering wheel in sudden anger at my inactivity while she had smiled at me. Most women I met were biased one way or another over my involvement with an up-and-coming band... how perfect it would have been, I mused, to know nothing about each other. How could I see her again? This is a big town, I reflected, my brow furrowing, and I don't get out much. It would be fairly impractical to scan the crowd at gigs, even if she was there. These thoughts, and few others, occupied me all the way home until I parked, got out of the car, and saw her by the door of my apartment building.

I nearly fell back into my car, my heart immediately racing and a sweat erupting. "Get a grip," I told myself, "all she did was smile." As calmly and slowly as I dared, I locked the car and walked towards the door, while she spoke to someone over the intercom with her back to me. I drew nearer and reminded myself to let her make the first move, trying to walk normally and steadily. She was partially blocking the doorway, so I stopped and said, "Excuse me," cursing inside as my voice cracked.

"Yes," she answered pleasantly, turning to me and smiling. Immediately my face burned and my stomach turned to stone. The wrong woman, about twenty years too old, with the right blond hair but even the wrong clothes. "Are you all right?" she asked, now probably rather worried by my appearance.

"Just fine," I blurted, and fled for the door.

I hauled myself out of the bath, and wrapping myself in the softest towel I could find, moved into the bedroom. Reaching into the back of the wardrobe, I took out a small wooden box, and carried it to the living room where I laid it on the coffee table, and sat staring at it for a while. In an uninspiring world, Yeats's Irish airman foresaw his death through a lonely impulse of delight, I mused, thinking how strange it was that A-level English never goes away. I picked up the box and withdrew its contents, arranging them carefully on the plate-glass table. I sat back again, shivering and grinning, rictus-like, as I recalled the fiery glow spreading up my arm and through my body.

And then I recalled her smile, and how I had felt on the bus. I carefully replaced the contents of the box, replaced the box in the cupboard, and got a beer from the fridge.

Ross Atherton (VI)

A lonely impulse of delight

Awaiting News

A girl dressed in a blue apron wheeled a trolley down the corridor and turned left to "outpatients". Alan watched her disappear and then turned back to read last month's copy of *Country Living*. He had read almost every article and was getting not only bored but anxious for his fiancée, who at this moment lay in one of the operating theatres.

He was a tall, slender man with wavy, brown hair. His cheekbones, high and wide, gave way to a small mouth and a pointed chin. He got up and walked towards the enquiry desk where a young blond sat, talking on the phone, scrawling something in a diary. She looked up and nodded to Alan and smiled. She put the phone down and looked up at him. "Sir, Miss Freewood is about to enter the theatre, the operation lasts two hours, but I am assured that it is a fairly simple procedure."

"Thanks," muttered Alan and strolled back to the waiting room.

They had been down in Portsmouth participating in the animal rights demonstrations when things had turned nasty. To begin with it had been a peaceful demonstration but when the police showed up people had started to throw bricks and the police fought back with their truncheons. Susie got hit in the stomach, fell down and was subsequently trampled. Apparently she had come off very well, given the circumstances, but had ruptured her stomach and gained three broken ribs.

Alan thought over what had happened again and again, blaming himself for not keeping Susie on her feet. He sat back in his chair and inhaled deeply. The air had the pungent odour of disinfectant, mingled with old cups of coffee. A smell that was so characteristic of the new, low-budget NHS hospitals.

Alan became suddenly worried for Susie and thought of all the potential hazards that might accompany her operation. It was typical of him to do this. Silver globes of perspiration began to form on his forehead. He began to fidget and continually glanced up at the clock. It was eighteen minutes past nine and it was pitch black outside save for the cars and the streetlights.

Alan stood up and walked down the corridor to the drinks vendor and bought himself a cup of tea. He drank it slowly, because the water had just been boiled. With one hand he held the thin polystyrene cup and with his free hand he reached into his pocket and pulled out a packet of Marlboro Lights and a cheap, plastic cigarette lighter. He turned round and placed the cup on top of the vending machine and, cupping his hands, lit a cigarette. He pushed the packet and lighter back into his pocket and inhaled long and hard, blowing out through his nose. He picked up the cup of tea and sipped it thoughtfully, his thoughts returning to Susie's welfare. His trance was broken by a young nurse.

"Sir, I'm afraid it's a no-smoking area in here. Could you please extinguish your cigarette."

"Yeah, uh, sorry," replied Alan, looking around for an ashtray, but to no avail. The nurse, who had walked on down the corridor, saw that Alan was looking for somewhere to put out his cigarette. "Over here, sir," she said, pointing simultaneously to the top of a bin.

Alan had walked from the bin back to the waiting-room. The walls were plain white and showing signs of deterioration with a pin-board in the middle. The posters were predictable; smoking causes cancer, essential facts about epilepsy, diabetes and asthma. Still very anxious, Alan walked over to the enquiries desk where, this time, the girl behind it was reading something. She heard him approaching and looked up.

"Sir, Miss Freewood is out of theatre. The operation was a complete success," she said as he arrived.

"Thank you," Alan replied, a smile relaxing his face. He turned away and shut his eyes and thanked the Almighty even though he was not strictly a believer. At that moment, it was as if God spoke back and he felt slightly isolated and experienced a lonely impulse of delight.

Suddenly the bare walls of the corridor had character and Alan noticed a glorious light emanating from everything around him.

"Sir, you can go and see Miss Freewood now."

Jerome Starkey (III)

STOICS ABROAD

Photo: DWJ

Through the jungle in Ecuador

Art History in Venice

This year the History of Art Special Subject – Venetian Renaissance Painting – took thirteen Stoics together with teachers and nine Tudor Hall girls to Venice. After nearly two hours on our plane we were able to see the swirling lagoon of Venice from above before we landed at the small airport of Marco Polo where, immediately after Customs, we encountered 'sun-glassed' Italians and instantly felt as if we were taking part in a Mafia movie. Surprisingly, a bus took us to the water-bound city and, on the way, we noticed that not everything was as orderly as in Britain. The houses were scattered around, all with different façades and painted in a range of colours. Here and there grew a palm tree, a fig tree or some unknown and exotic Mediterranean vegetation. The bus headed towards and along the causeway and railway bridge that leads to the island, with the afternoon sun on our right, its reflections flickering on the surface of the water as we crossed the shallow lagoon. After arriving at the bus station we caught the Venetian version of the Tube – a ferry-like boat that chugged down the magnificent Grand Canal. Once the battle for the front open-air seats had ended, we set off gloriously, although suddenly stressed by the noise of the strange machine we were on. Between the sighs of the tourists one was able to hear the sound of the water. A gondola passed us, or rather, we passed it.

We glided noisily by famous palazzi, grouped between intervening canals. The palaces are not only aristocratic possessions, museums, casinos and offices but some of them are now turned into hotels. We passed under the Ponte di Rialto, the only old, stone bridge, which arches over the Grand Canal. Music can be heard from above, mingled with the shouts of the market-sellers. At water bus stop No. 10 (S. Toma), we ended our initial journey to enter the maze of the Venetian streets.

Later, in one corner of St. Mark's Square, having been walked around the city by the staff to get our bearings and to be shown the sunset and views of Venice before the light faded, a group of Stoics remained to appreciate the beauty of light and listen to the piano music coming from the flashy restaurants not far from the basilica.

Small breadrolls, jam and hot chocolate await us in the morning in the hotel dining-room. The plan for our first working day is the Accademia gallery. Our hotel, the Ca' Foscari is not far away, but we are soon groping to find our way in the labyrinthine streets. We pass a miniature shop followed by a 'rio', a 'campo', a 'patisseria' emitting a warm and sweet smell of fresh 'biscotti'. At last the Accademia is found, and we are to discover a realm of Venetian paintings; some of them surprisingly appear to be already known by us in detail. We pass through the first room, full of cartoon-like medieval icons and altarpieces, depicting rosy-green-cheeked Virgins and saints – all with an air of innocence and feet size 3. Our next delight is a Bellini 'sacra conversazione'.

A long discussion is dedicated to a hardly visible detail – a snake in the enigmatic painting 'The Tempest' by Giorgione – noticed by the professional art-historian eye of Mr Robinson. This fact is immediately reported in our notebooks which we are filling out diligently, guided by an enthusiasm and with a life-depending seriousness to complete our task set by Mr Melber's work sheets.

A two-hour break followed the hard work. At last we are able to 'wash' our eyes from all the pictures in the sunny autumn Venetian weather, enjoying the lovely October day. The most starving of us headed to the nearest food, while the rest went in search of a decent restaurant or just a sun-lit, warm bench. Naturally, Italian pizza and ice-cream are number one priority and on our way to them we stopped at a square, a couple of blocks from the Palazzo Ducale – our next meeting point. A bunch of schoolboys play football, shouting their score out loudly, a small girl chases a pigeon – probably lost on its way to Piazza San Marco, while one of the shutters on the façades of the buildings opens to reveal a large Italian woman who takes in her dried-in-the-sun washing. Then we headed to the Doge's Palace.

The Palazzo Grassi (left),
near the Ca' Foscari, where the party stayed

Photos: Allegro Bianco

The Palazzo Ducale was the centre of the ruling government of the Serene Republic for centuries. Venetian Gothic architecture inside, gallery after gallery where both classical and religious references magnify the personified figure of Venice, depicted on almost every wall. Gallery after gallery in glorification of the State, so that when at last we reach the Great Council Hall, which engulfs our group with its expansive length, we are all trying to memorise the hundreds of images of doges, battles, heavenly saints and figures. The history of Venice glows around us with the strong sunshine playing through the great windows. The view of the outside from the Doge's balcony revealed an almost mystical haze which was beginning to shroud the buildings and hover over the water rippling with reflections. What we saw from the campanile (bell-tower) of the church of San Giorgio Maggiore that afternoon was incomparable and unforgettable.

We had to take public transport to the isle of San Giorgio whose beautiful Palladian Church is one of the principal adornments of the port of Venice. After studying the cool interior spaces and light, clambering around the High Altar and feeding coins into the light machines to see the dark and dramatic Tintorettos, a small lift took us to the top of the tower, while an ageing monk talked to us in a perfect English-Italian. The admiration of the Venetian sunset left a deep impression on our minds with its specific vibrant air, which for centuries has inspired thousands of artists to celebrate its majesty. Outside the church the cameras are ready to record for ever Alex's posing in front of a curvy Henry Moore sculpture – the subject of his A-level project. Then we run to catch our vaporetto and when we finally got on it, breathless, we realised that we had left Mr Farquhar and Mr Robinson on the isle, still admiring the close of the day and the red-orange clouds in the Italian sky.

The choice for the return journey was either to get off soon and explore the land and possibly the Guinness bar, where wine was cheaper than mineral water, or to stay on board and take a trip round the Grand Canal. Catherine and I chose the latter, not regretting at any time our chance to see the burning Venetian sunset.

The sunny Saturday was planned for the Frari Church, the Scuola di San Rocco and the island of Torcello. However, a misunderstood account of the intentions of the female teachers to shop at the Rialto (at some later time) made almost all the girls head in the direction of the bridge until finally dashing back, having realised their mistake. The author of this record, however, for some unknown reason, could not catch up the others. Hence the following description of Saturday will be a hypothetical record of what I think the group saw as I was some time ahead but on the same itinerary. It started with the Frari where we saw the striking image of the Virgin surrounded by saints and angels, in a kind of religious ecstasy – Titian's famous altarpiece

Vaporetti on the Grand Canal

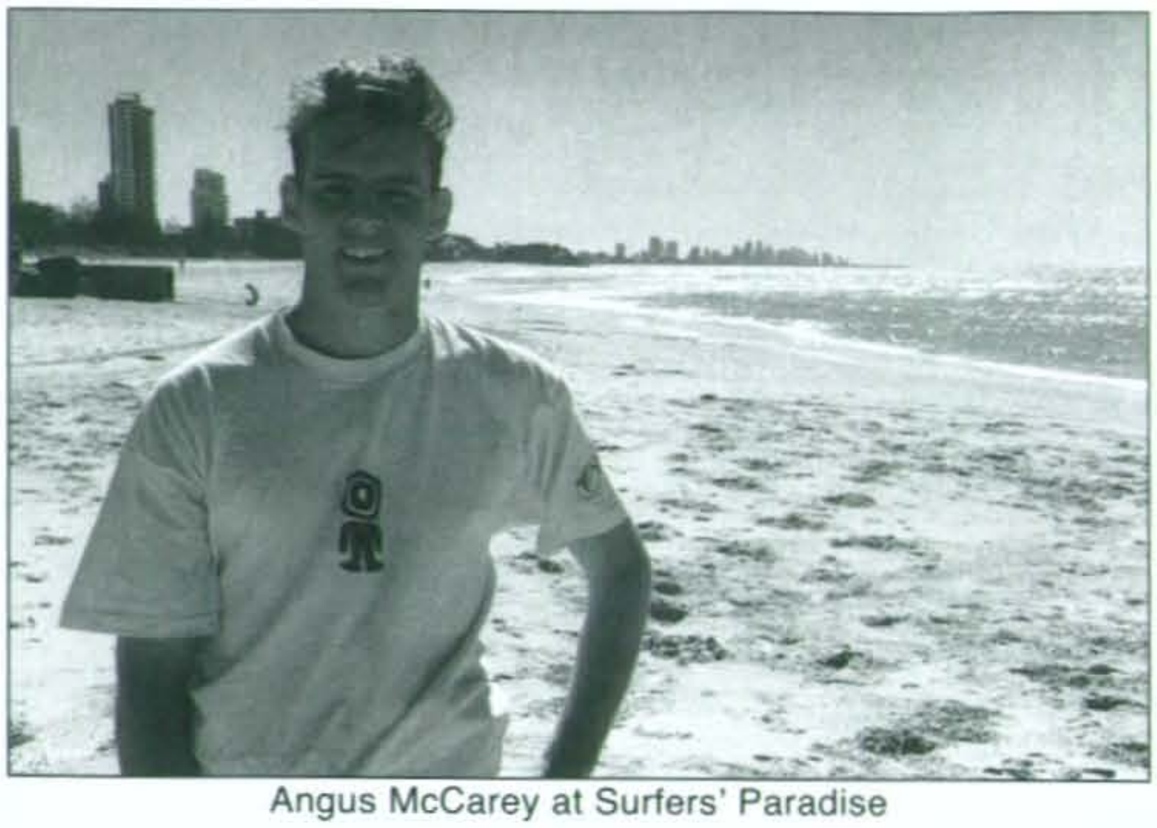
of the Assumption, followed by two floors of the Scuola di San Rocco swamped with large narratives by Tintoretto including the breathtaking Crucifixion. Then the forty-five minute journey to the island of Torcello, the vaporetto leaving behind the Venetian landscape of churches and palaces, lost in the intense sunshine. First we passed the burial ground, then the islands of Burano and Murano, whose houses in bright colours not only reminded me of the scene the previous day of the brilliant plumage of the four male Stoic birds of paradise, but also of cheerful paintings by children with patches of yellow, green, red and blue. The calmness and tranquillity of the uninhabited island was occasionally disturbed by the voices of the tourists, and the Pan pipes of the several Latin-Americans selling their crafts in front of the Byzantine basilica.

The next day we again travelled away from Venice but this time by train to Padua. We spent about an hour admiring the beauty of the works of the founder of western European art – Giotto – in the small Scrovegni Chapel. The amazingly well-preserved frescoes revealed moving gestures and inner emotions. After the chapel we were led by the Italian Stoic, Niccolo, to a palace where his parents had invited us all (twenty-five hungry mouths) for lunch. We were to discover true Italian hospitality and real Italian food. No-one, even Rafe, had much energy after such an afternoon. We departed from Padua by a double-decker train which slid easily towards Venice. For our last evening everyone scattered around the city trying to catch up with what had not been seen or done. I headed towards the magnificent San Marco basilica, glowing inside, its golden mosaics (the subject of my A-level project) reflecting the light of the candles at evening mass. Two old ladies came up behind me, talking loudly and while I was thinking how rude it was to do so, I realised that they knew the prayers better than the priest: "Santa Maria..." The next day we took a water taxi to the airport, a white foam trailing and skipping over the water long behind the motorboat, as though symbolising the deep impression that magical Venice has left in our memories.

Gergana Dinkova

Rugby Tour to Australia

Last summer was notable for Stowe's first rugby tour down under. Led by DCM, ably abetted by BLM, MH and Dr Harrington, it proved a resounding success. Angus McCarey has contributed a full account of this pioneering expedition.



Angus McCarey at Surfers' Paradise

Saturday, June 23rd. Britain was settling into one of its hottest summers on record. Temperatures were soaring, grass dying, ground hardening, rain becoming something that "used to happen", and while the nation lounged back on its sun-bed wearing next to nothing, twenty-four Stoics, perhaps insanely, wrenched their rugby kit out of the bags marked "winter" and prepared for battle, while four members of staff, without a doubt insanely, wrenched their hearts out of their mouths and prepared to undertake coaching the twenty-four through two days of "pre-tour training".

After two years of preparation there was a certain degree of "Is this really going to happen at last?" clearly evident as we collected what was close to an entire new wardrobe from the Bruce TV room: a dubiously thick but reassuringly attractive blue and yellow "tour shirt", a reassuringly thin but nauseatingly unattractive baby blue polo shirt, a pretty respectable royal blue T-shirt, a World Cup cap, two bags, socks, tie (and you wonder where all the money went!). Two days training passed busily away and by the time it came to leave Stowe there were already a few fond farewells to be said to the summer school students...

It wasn't long before the party was timidly blending in among the crowds in the oven of Bangkok airport. DCM, worried about losing us in the big place where you pick up your bags and teddy bears, had forced us all into our blue T-shirts, which meant that we were visible through walls at 200 paces....

Bangkok

Having spent twelve hours recovering from little sleep, jet lag and airline "nourishment", we made the journey to the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, about two hours outside Bangkok, for our first game. Looking pretty flash in our new kit, we ran out onto one of the most amazing pitches I have ever played on – in the distance an amphitheatre of hills covered in thick, green rain forest; close up, two stands, one on each side running the length of the pitch, the near side filled with students from the academy (I guessed about a thousand), all sitting in their "units" and each unit wearing a different tracksuit, and all around a heat which made it hard to bend down to do your boots up, let alone play. Our squad of twenty-four (average age 17) took on their squad of 49 (average age 22) and the 38°C heat, while 1,000 cheered both sides to a 15-26 result in the academy's favour. Tiring was not the word – crippling, killing, maybe – but nevertheless some encouraging moments. Charlie Williams announced himself in typically subdued fashion, bashing one defender out of the way and taking three more over with him as he scored in the corner; Chris Harrington tiptoed down the touchline to score and Stu Mun-Gavin landed a touchline conversion that no one will ever (be allowed to) forget. Simon Forster surprised us all by outstripping the defence and then brought us all back to earth by scoring on the wrong line.

Following a balcony rendition of some tour songs (DCM approved versions!) as the sun set over the hills, we were entertained to nothing less than a banquet of traditional Thai food with the Thai players, who were excellent hosts. The next day gave us a chance to brave the heat, sweat, smells and street traders and see Bangkok by river and also visit the Palace. It was stifling, even in the air-conditioned coach, but quite simply spectacular... And so on to Australia.

Sydney

We arrived at Sydney airport at 5.00 am. Our first sights of the city were increasingly blurred by the haze of fatigue and hunger which was clouding over the coach windows as we set off on a tour of the area. Randwick RFC was our destination for breakfast the McCrea way: two portions of technical drill, assorted personal improvements, a slice of unopposed polishing and all rounded off with a fitness session on a 45 degree slope. In the end, though, all we saw of Randwick was the pitch, about twenty black clad

players and one in particular wearing huge earphones and going by the name of Jonah – despite our reputation, the club management had decided that today they would host the All-Blacks and so we moved to a park near Bondi Beach...

We arrived at Blakehurst High School later that afternoon to a standing female ovation from first floor windows, and soon we were introduced to our first billets, local families and teachers who had offered to feed, house and host varying numbers of us for our stay. Throughout the tour the kindness that was extended to us in this manner was unbelievable. For two of us here the hospitality offered was quite beyond the call of duty...

Saturday was Bledisloe Cup day (Australia v New Zealand in Sydney). Some managed tickets for the game, while the rest of us settled for a sports bar in the suburbs – it was a first chance for genuine recuperation. Sunday featured an exhausting training session on the beach in front of a ten-foot surf and then a free day – many of us visited the city and met up in Darling Harbour. Sydney has a remarkably clean, smart centre, backed by the famous views of Opera House, bridge and harbour, and a very cosmopolitan selection of shops and buildings between the McDonald's and all the other global cornerstones of modern life.

Match Day 2 (against Sutherland Shires Combined Schools) dawned warm and bright and saw us record our first victory on tour. We battled hard to give Charlie the chance to make himself another try in the corner after some good continuous build-up play, and when James McDonagh cleverly hit the post with a drop goal attempt, Ben Corbishley gathered and scored, giving us a 14-7 win. There was a little time for a post-match celebration before it was on the coach and off to the Northern Suburbs and our new hosts.

Tuesday lst July was a rest day and John Kennerly (OS) took the whole party on a cruise around the harbour. His generosity was incredible, treating us all to lunch in the Boat Club and drinks on a luxury boat he had privately hired out because his own was being repainted. Without a doubt the best views we had of Sydney were from the water, and all our thanks to Mr Kennerly for making us feel so welcome.

The 2nd July was no rest day! Our match against Carlingford Area Combined High Schools was our first real induction into rugby the Aussie way. A big physical pack greeted us in what became an absorbing forward battle complemented by the unforgiving defence both teams maintained in the backs. We led thanks to penalties from McDonagh and Mun-Gavin and the inevitable try in the corner from Williams, but with less than a quarter remaining, a wayward kick gifted their winger a try in the corner and eventually we went down 11-15. Our disappointment was enormous after a gutsy performance but the opposition's hospitality in inviting us to drinks and a bonfire that evening put paid to any sulking Englishmen. We left the following morning, most of us asleep on our feet, for Armidale, by express coach (a six-hour "express").

Armidale

It was cold. Armidale was cold. We were cold. The houses were cold. But the Armidale School (or TAS) was as close as we came to an English public school! Despite the cold, we received a warm welcome. Armidale was quite a shock, though, a stark contrast to the busy streets and lifestyle in Sydney, a university and farming community isolated and inland, by no means dissimilar to those low building-ed towns one sees in 1970s American movies. Many of the host families lived on farms away from the town, but quite a few of us met by chance at the cinema to see the now

Thailand. The Stowe tourists line up with the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy.

acclaimed *Braveheart*. Most of those who were out on the farms, though, did get a chance to gape at, or, in many cases, shoot at wild kangaroos (much to Simon Forster's vegetarian disgust).

Match day was an experience, but one most of us will want to forget. We were, as it were, the big feature of the day – all the matches from Under 16 upwards were played on the main pitch, starting at lunchtime. By the time it got to 3.00 pm most of the school was there to make a tunnel from the changing-room door for the opposition to run down. Following this we produced an appalling display of tackling which left us far too behind ever to come back – final score 17-38 (Tries: Williams, Foster, Honeyman Brown). This was by no means the strongest team we faced; it was just a poor performance which, on later evidence, only served to kick us up an extra gear...

Surfers' Paradise

Surfers' Paradise was warm. Monday was a completely free day and we took the opportunity to brave the foreign hordes at Movieworld. There was a certain fuss made about Catwoman, which for some led to a pretty busy day chasing the Batmobile, but many of us preferred the less strenuous rides! Run by Warner Bros, there were an endless selection of 'theme' rides and 'theme' shops and 'theme' food. There was even a 'theme' bar for the most senior members of the party.

Tuesday was a day of opposites. Morning – training. Afternoon – on the beach. Evening – match at Marymount College under floodlights. We were shown a brilliant restaurant by the opposition coach (ten dollars to eat and drink what you wanted), which we later discovered was, in fact, the friendly attempt to leave us all physically incapable of walking that we suspected it might be. Anyway, it didn't work because that night we recorded a 6-5 victory (thanks to two penalties from James McDonagh) in a pretty violent, dusty encounter. We spent Wednesday on the beach again, before catching the coach to Brisbane.

Brisbane

Churchies (or The Anglican Church Grammar School) was very much the Australian version of an English public school. An all-boys school where wide-brimmed hats and uniforms are compulsory, and also one with extensive grounds and facilities. Churchies were also lucky enough to have beaten us on the North Front, in the rain, when they visited Stowe while on tour in England, so we certainly felt we had a score to settle! Inevitably the match was the most absorbing and physical of the tour, and all the more enjoyable because we were deserving 20-5 winners. Dave Knowles made an early exit with concussion, but Stu Mun-Gavin scored early on in the corner before Churchies came straight back to us and scored themselves. I was so absorbed that I didn't really notice the score, except that Simon Forster and Tom Bell added good second half tries to give us the victory. I also failed to notice that my wrist was sore (until afterwards, when I certainly noticed); hence an Australian memento of an arm in plaster. The victory, though, was far more memorable than all the knocks we picked up.

Friday was a day off, spent in the centre of Brisbane – some to the annual show (or Ekka), some to the cinema, some shopping, many writing another postcard, but everybody having fun and looking forward to the climax: Cairns!

Cairns

A blast of icy wind. "Hey, you've been here before, you said it would be warm!" I looked round at the grey clouds and the palm trees bent against the wind. "Well, it... er... it's quite often like this in the morning – you wait till later!"

Later, and the drops are starting to fall from a blackening sky. "Hey, you said it never..." "I didn't say it never rained, I just said it never did when I was here. It's a tropical climate – that means sometimes it's hot and you can lie on the beach wearing very little, and sometimes it rains, as in 'tropical rainforest'. And today it's raining!"

Thankfully, we did see just about enough sun during our stay for the accusations to stop! But Day 1 in the Cairns Colonial Club was spent doing not very much other than shopping in the town for necessities for the fridge, and getting to grips with the in-house entertainment programmes.

Sunday, still in torrential rain, we visited the markets at Kurunda and returned to Cairns on the impressive Kurunda scenic railway. The markets were a sort of scaled-down, clean version of Bangkok, which brought back certain memories.

Monday 14th July was make-or-break day. We arrived in Cairns won-three lost-three and with every intention of making it a winning tour. To our dismay the match was nearly rained off, but in the end we arrived at Innisfail High School and went out to battle for the last time. The game didn't really do the occasion justice, but James McDonagh relished it and landed five penalties, giving us a 15-7 victory that meant the world. Crispin Marsland-Roberts played at centre that day (no, honestly) and did pretty well despite all our laughing from the touchline. Following the match there was a large amount of swimming and diving on the pitch... There was for the final time the traditional barbecue and presentation before it was back to Cairns for a night out in celebration of A WINNING TOUR!

The next two days were chances for genuine holidaying – relaxing and enjoying ourselves whenever possible! We visited Green Island on the Great Barrier

Inside the Royal Palace, Bangkok

DCM & BLM, Sydney harbour

Left: A.J. Heath on the train ride through Cairns rainforest

Below: DCM with his 'Aussie bird' in Cairns bird sanctuary

Photographs by BLM

Reef and thankfully the sun shone; white sands, blue seas and skies and tanned, muscle-bound rugby players lying on the beach – what more could any young lady ask for? But none of them did and we spent all day lounging around and snorkeling, while some took the chance to go scuba diving.

The second day we went white-water rafting on the Tully River. The general idea seemed to be to paddle a bit, capsize as often as possible and push people out if the boat was still floating. Lunch by the river, and a burger has never tasted so good, before it was back to the boats for more aquatic antics. The Harris-Harrington team chose golf for the day, but DCM donned his emerald green skimpies once more to join in the fun with us.

That night we booked one of the private reception rooms in the hotel for our final tour dinner, at which various presentations and summaries were made: Best players: Tom Bell and Charlie Williams. Most improved: Tom Smith Walker. Most consistent: Richard de Butts. Man of the Tour (chief dog's body): Andy Pearce.

Our other (unmentionable) competition awards (first initiated by Dr Harrington in Bangkok with the award of a ludicrous wooden hat) can be summarised:

Bangkok – Simon Forster, for scoring on the wrong line!

Sydney – Tom Honeyman Brown, for falling in a fountain in the city centre and having to wander around in his boxer shorts!

Armidale – Al Barne, for crying in *Braveheart*!

Surfers' – Jeremy Pemberton, for some dubious sleep-walking!

Cairns – DCM, for those skimpies while rafting!

There were also some presentations. For the McCreas, a cuddly kangaroo for the forthcoming addition! For Dr Harrington, a luminous, tasteless cap in revenge for the hat he bought us. For MJH, a stubby holder!

And that was sort of it! Apart from 34 hours of in-flight sleeping. It had been a truly unforgettable experience. The vote of thanks we owe to everybody who made it possible could not be more sincere. The list is endless, but "you know who you are" and thank you all!

MORE ON THE TOUR

Belinda McCrea recalls some highlights

Our time in Bangkok was nothing if not an experience from start to finish. None of us will ever forget the heat, dirt, smells of food cooking (or was it just sweating?) in the streets, the soupy canal water, bright Buddhist temples and plenty more besides. After precious little time to recover from jet lag at our comfortable hotel we were off to face our first opposition – Chulachomklao Military Academy – which was based in a small town some way out of Bangkok. It was a truly impressive complex, set in a backdrop of Thai mountains, and clearly very well organised indeed. This was to say something for the team, who made up for what they lacked in terms of size by sheer fitness and competitiveness. The heat was tremendous and the Stowe boys drank gallons of water but, my, how they did fight! It was a fantastic performance. Afterwards we were entertained in a huge banqueting hall, decorated with a banner made specially to welcome us, and served with some quite exquisite food.

The next day we were up early to take in some of the sights of Bangkok. The glittering Temple of the Dawn, decorated with porcelain and hovering on the banks of the river, is engraved on my memory for ever. The Royal Palace, protected by fearsome-looking demons and covered in mind-boggling amounts of gold, is another. But the heat was relentless and I for one was quite relieved to be on the plane and on our way to our next exciting destination – Sydney.

We arrived at some God-forsaken hour of the morning to be greeted by Guy Harrison-Williams, erst-while Stowe sports coach. He and his mother were to be very kind to us during our time in the city, relaying messages, feeding the staff and even, on one occasion, washing the entire match kit after a game. Guy dashed off to work (appropriately for Tooheys, the Australian beer company) and we saw sunrise over the harbour – photo opportunities all round. Amazingly, on precious little sleep, and after a delicious (?) breakfast at McDonald's on a babe-free Bondi Beach, the boys were out training. We were not far from Randwick Rugby Club, the home of the great Campese, where, at the time, the All-Blacks were putting in a bit of last minute preparation for their soon-to-come match against Australia. The Stowe team were prepared to give them a few helpful hints but, surprisingly, the All-Blacks had asked for privacy and therefore were denied the benefits of our collective wisdom.

My memories of our time in Sydney are dominated by the generosity and kindness of John Kennerley, OS, who hosted all of us for lunch at his yacht club and for a boat trip around the harbour. He and his wife, Kerry-Ann (star of Australian breakfast TV!) went out of their way to make us feel welcome and to point out the sights. Marvellous.

After Sydney we were off to the colds of Armidale. As we drove through miles and miles of empty Australian countryside on the eight-hour coach journey, it felt as if we were going to the back of beyond. And yet there were familiar names – Dominique Dumaresq was pleased to see 'Dumaresq Street' in Armidale and sure

enough Mrs Dumaresq told me later that this was indeed Dumaresq home turf. We met our hosts and some were treated to the delights of early morning 'roo hunting', but some of us were waiting to see our first kangaroo.

Next we travelled over to the Gold Coast (watching Kangaroo videos on the way) where we were to play two matches: one against Marymount College and the second against the redoubtable 'Churchie' in Brisbane. Marymount College was set near a splendid, sun-kissed beach which made relaxing after training that much more attractive. MJH and I were entertained by another Old Stoic, Dr David Read, who took us on a tour of his home patch. It was good to see, at last, my first 'roo' and to feed the fantastically coloured parakeets at the wildlife sanctuary to which he took us. A good day indeed which was topped off nicely by a tight win against Marymount.

Up the coast in Brisbane, the boys played the match of their lives and I for one was so proud of them. It was such a great feeling to have beaten a team that are rated so highly in Australia and abroad.

In triumph we caught our flight to tropical Cairns. We were all staying together in a palatial residence called 'The Cairns Colonial Club' where we ate copious amounts of food and sang Karaoke, very badly, in the evenings. We took a trip to the rainforest, returning on a railway that was spectacular to say the least. We spent a day on what seemed like a paradise island near the Great Barrier Reef. We white-water rafted – well, DCM and his, by now, hardened tourists did. Our final evening was one of an emotional sense of a great achievement, a realisation of just how much we had seen and friendships that had been made. All the hard work had been worth it : the boys had proved themselves worthy of every hope that had been placed in them. It seemed so sad it was now at an end.

THE GERMAN EXCHANGE 1995

Despite the trip cutting through a little of half-term most were eager to venture into the different culture of Germany. We got off to a rather unfortunate start: the airport check-in desk claimed that they had no record of our flight reservations!

Upon arriving in Germany we were split up into our separate family groups; slightly nervous and perhaps a little insecure, we were taken to our new accommodation. Certainly to begin with most found it a touch trying to communicate efficiently with parents, although some spoke a little English anyway. We won't mention that some, (mainly the Graftonites) failed abysmally to impress with their German-speaking abilities.

Starting the day at 5.45, English time, was a slight shock to the system; so were the bread rolls containing ham and cheese. Next came the trip to school, which consisted of a mere ride in the car for some, but there were an unlucky few who had to travel by bike.

By 8.00 am school had begun, and lessons were certainly different from those in England. For starters, attention was sought from the pupils by the clicking of fingers, rather than a patient hand in the air. On top of the vague murmurs of the pupils underneath the teacher's voice, bits of plastic and chocolate frequently flew across the classroom. Lessons proved a little difficult to understand, simply because after the first five minutes of each teacher struggling to introduce himself to us, the lesson continued, spoken in a rushed fashion. Luckily school was over by 1.15 pm, so each day had a different outline from the rest.

There were several outings, including trips to Bielefeld, Detmold and Köln. Detmold was very secluded and quiet, and situated in the middle of it was a very elegant castle, full of priceless artefacts. One such artefact, which astounded us all, was a wooden chest of drawers, which had been made especially for the German Duke at that time to keep his cigars fresh and moist. Yes, this chest of drawers was airtight. Even the modest Harry Granville was taken aback! When opening and closing the doors, one could hear a slight 'whoosh'.

The trip to Köln was a very interesting one: the Cathedral certainly impressed us. Despite not spending much time looking around it, we still had the chance to climb up a little over five hundred steps of its tower, which had views covering a large part of the area. The shops were numerous and extremely pricey.

Our partners were very hospitable and patient in having us to stay in Germany: obviously it must have been difficult for them at times to understand and justify our occasionally strange use of language. Both of our partners, Stefan and Ewald, proved to be no exception.

The atmosphere in Germany, despite being a little slack in class, was very enjoyable; everybody seemed keen to introduce themselves and several evenings were spent in the company of friends in the area. It was very useful to hear the Germans speaking, and I'm sure everybody benefited from that.

Last but not least, the whole group send a huge thank you to Mr Mohler for looking after us over the two weeks: he went to the airport at Heathrow thinking he would be under the command of Mr Delaney, but soon realised he was to cope alone. So, we're all very grateful for his efforts.

Simon Post and James Neary

ECUADOR AND THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

David James' account and photographs of his most recent expedition to South America

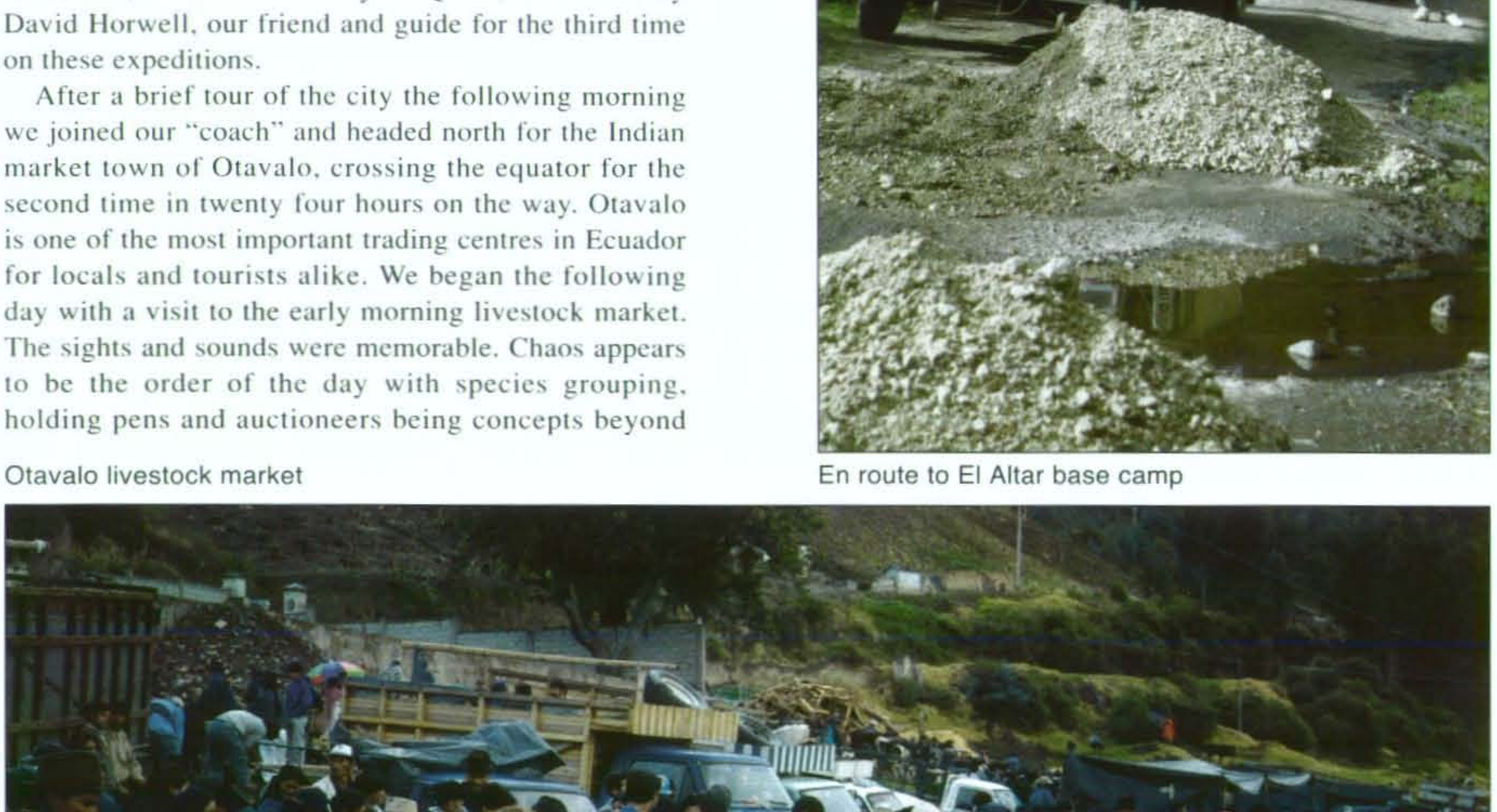
Let me issue a warning to anyone who is tempted to visit South America – its exotic magnetism will draw you back repeatedly and leave you penniless. So it was that loose talk in class, following a previous expedition, resulted in me boarding a flight to Ecuador with nine boys, four girls and Mrs Hamblett-Jahn last July.

Although delayed by heavy rain and thunderstorms in Miami, we arrived safely in Quito, to be met by David Horwell, our friend and guide for the third time on these expeditions.

After a brief tour of the city the following morning we joined our "coach" and headed north for the Indian market town of Otavalo, crossing the equator for the second time in twenty four hours on the way. Otavalo is one of the most important trading centres in Ecuador for locals and tourists alike. We began the following day with a visit to the early morning livestock market. The sights and sounds were memorable. Chaos appears to be the order of the day with species grouping, holding pens and auctioneers being concepts beyond

En route to El Altar base camp

Otavalo livestock market



Vermilion fly-catcher

Blue-footed boobie

Land iguana

Sally light-foot crab

Male Magnificent frigate bird

Tarantula

Giant tortoises

Amazonian toucan

The rainforest of Cuyembo

The crater at El Altar

the imagination or necessity of a community united as much for social reasons as the need to do business. Squealing pigs, suckling calves, sleek ponies and distressed lambs, all on long leashes, intermingled with colourful Indians, whose glazed eyes suggested that bartering was not a high priority.

That afternoon we faced our first physical challenge – an eight mile hike around the edge of the water-filled crater of the extinct volcano Cuicocha. Those of you familiar with volcanic craters will know that their rim is rarely level. This walk, which looked friendly from a distance, proved to be a very considerable test of stamina. High altitude without exercise can be tolerated with ease but the slightest exertion can lead to instant exhaustion. Couple this with a facility for getting lost in thick vegetation and you have the potential for hospitalisation! Fortunately all was well and we conquered our first expedition hurdle. After a steep climb to the summit of the hills surrounding Lago Mojanda at 13,000 feet the following day, we returned to Quito to prepare for our flight to the Galapagos Islands.

The islands lose nothing of their enchantment on a second visit. Although tourism has increased markedly over the last five years most of the individual islands appear to be unaffected. However, to cater for an ever more demanding class of tourist, the quality of the motor yachts cruising the archipelago has steadily improved. Our vessel, the El Dorado, can only be described as luxurious. As we sank into the plush white couches for our welcome talks and first pina colada, I had to wonder whether this trip could justify the title expedition...

Over the next seven days we visited many of the islands whose fauna and flora eventually helped Charles Darwin to formulate his theories of evolution more than a century before. Sailing by night, we spent the days walking amongst, or swimming and sunbathing with, the wildlife in various locations. Our fondest memories will undoubtedly be of noisy (and very smelly) sea lions, brilliantly coloured sally lightfoot crabs, prehistoric-looking marine and land iguanas, red pouched frigate birds, graceful albatrosses and ubiquitous blue-footed boobies. The latter proved to be quite vicious, as Amber discovered when she received lightning quick slashes to her ankles when she strayed too close to their territory.

On numerous occasions we were spellbound when snorkelling a short distance from the shore. Swimming alongside curious sea lions and the graceful strokes of green turtles is an unforgettable experience. Despite constant reassurance it does, however, take courage to jump into the water to join stingrays and white tipped sharks. Only here can this be done with any confidence.

One of the many attractions of a cruise at sea is the wealth of fresh fish available for the dinner table each day. Our nightly passages were usually accompanied by one of our party trailing a fishing line off the stern. This often led to excitement followed by disappointment and stories of the one that got away.

A highlight of any trip to the Galapagos Islands must be a visit to the Charles Darwin Research Foundation on Santa Cruz island. Here resides Lonesome George, the last remaining giant tortoise of his kind, reputedly more than one hundred and fifty years old. Simon became mesmerised by this tragic figure, whose head was apparently the inspiration for the character ET, and was moved to take twenty seven photographs of him. George is indeed a poignant reminder of the need for effective and urgent conservation of endangered species throughout the world.

We left the Galapagos with some reluctance. The luxury we experienced did not prepare us for the hardships to come and we looked back on our week there with some nostalgia many times over the next two weeks.

After a brief stop-over at Quito, the third phase of our expedition took us to the main physical challenge of our tour. We had determined to climb to the rim of the ancient extinct volcano 'El Altar'. This would require us to trek for three days in unpredictable weather conditions at energy-sapping altitudes. We enlisted the help of a local guide, Oswaldo, for this climb. He organised a pack of ponies to help carry our tents, food and equipment up the mountain pass. Our journey to the first camp was in itself eventful. Heavy rain over the previous three days had caused avalanches, partially closing the road to the camp. We were forced to transfer to an open-topped cattle truck to make the last ten miles of the journey. Undeterred by the rubble, rain and his precious cargo, the driver tore at breakneck speed around the hairpin bends perched on the edge of steep ravines.

Our first night at the base camp exposed the inadequacy of our clothing and sleeping bags and quickly taught us the need to sleep fully clothed. As dawn broke on the first morning, we began to realise the magnitude of the task we faced. However, the skies were clear and we were soon attacking the hillside paths with verve – but not for long. The trouble with high altitude is that its challenge is intangible. Normal activities, such as walking, seem to become impossibly difficult for no apparent reason. So it was that after half

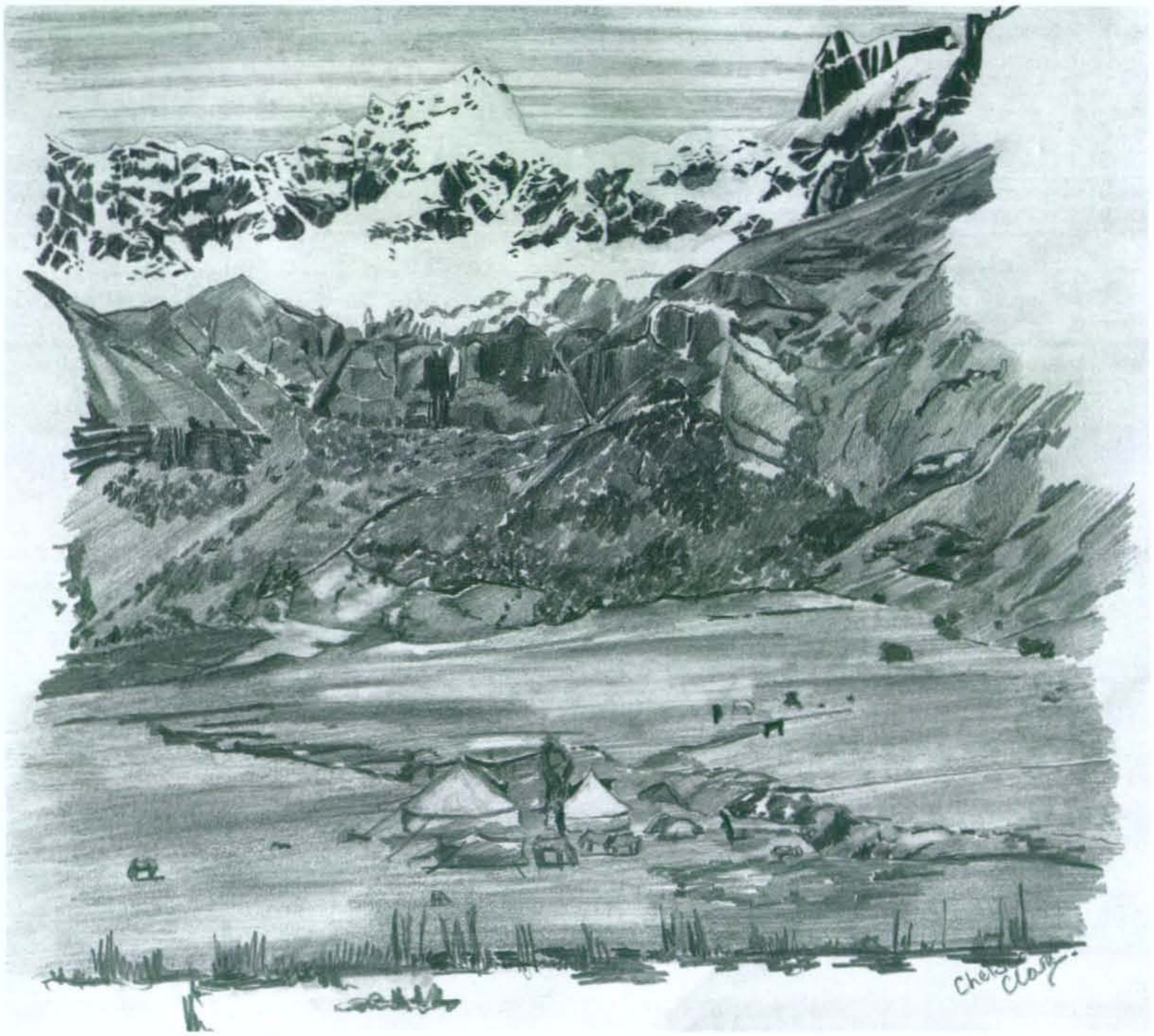
an hour we felt we had walked for miles. The relatively short climb to our lunchtime rendez-vous seemed impossibly distant. It is at such times that you discover the depths of your own determination. Fortunately our party was strong and for the next eight hours we made steady progress towards the base camp chosen for our assault on the crater the following day. As we approached this camp, the clear blue skies gave us a spectacular view of the summit of the volcano. We awoke to a thin coating of snow and thick mist the following morning. This and a nasty drizzle threatened to prevent us from attempting the final assault on the rim. At 11.00 am it brightened enough for us to risk the climb. We crossed wet marshland before climbing steeply through first trees, then thick grass. The final fifty metres nearly defeated us but we forgot about our fatigue as we peeped over the edge of the crater into the deep turquoise lake within.

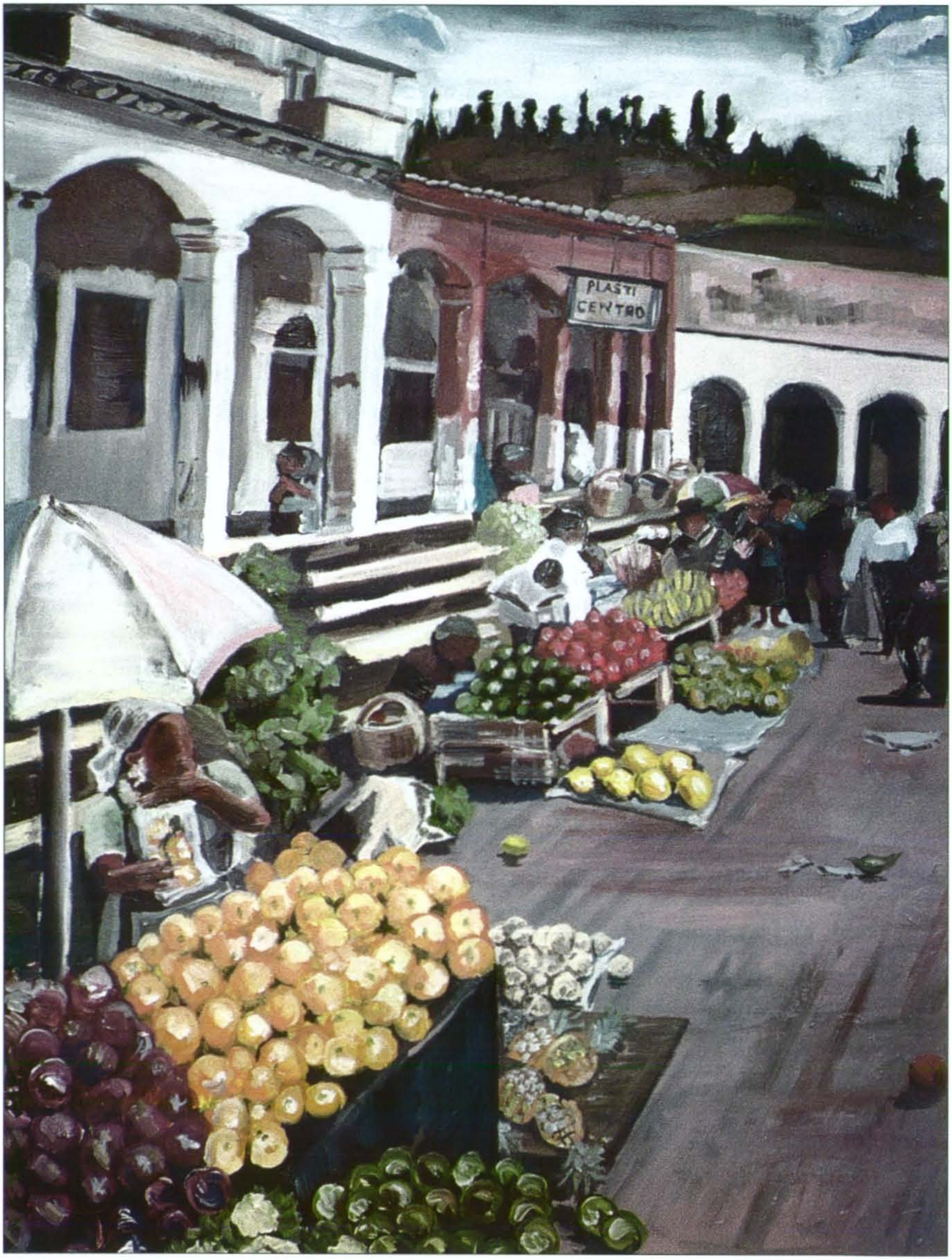
That night, following our return to base camp, we experienced our only serious illness. First Ed, then Tony, Deanne and Mark were violently sick. Concerned about altitude sickness, we considered an immediate evacuation but decided that the risks at night were too high. By morning Robert, James, Jane and Chaerin were also suffering and it became apparent that we had collected an infection from the water we were filtering from the glacier melt water. The long journey back to our first camp, which should have been relaxing, proved to be a real challenge, as frequent bouts of illness sapped the energy of those affected. Later we were to look back on this episode with a sense of greater achievement but at the time it did nothing for our morale!

The following morning we returned to Quito once more to prepare for the final stage of our expedition. We had been looking forward to flying to the rainforest in an antiquated Hercules. Sadly when we arrived at the airport we discovered that Hercules were now considered too uncomfortable for the modern tourist and that they had been replaced by an almost new 727 instead. A short flight took us to the jungle town of Lago Agrio. This booming town owes its prosperity to the oil industry. After a brief stop to buy Wellingtons and rain ponchos we set off in an ancient bus for the three-hour journey to Rio Cuyembo where we were to pick up our dug out. Heavy rain and steamy temperatures gave us an authentic feel for the conditions which make the rainforests of the world unique.

Base Camp El Altar

Drawing by Chelser Clark





Indian Market, Ecuador

Oil painting by Chelser Clark

The somewhat uncomfortable four-hour ride in the canoe took us to our lodge deep in a national park. The party grew increasingly apprehensive as the light faded and our destination seemed remote. The narrow tributaries with overhanging vegetation fed our imagination as the eerie noises of the night time forest started. It appeared impossible for anyone to navigate through such a maze and it was with considerable relief when we saw the faint flicker of candlelight appear. We need not have worried, for the welcome we received at the Cuyembo lodge was warm and reassuring.

We retired to face our first night under thatch. Although cocooned in mosquito netting, nothing seems able to reassure you that you are safe in these open-sided huts. Unfortunately Dan, who suffers from arachnophobia, had a particularly testing time and it was ironic that it was he who found the largest living tarantula I have ever seen. A coincidence too that the only tarantula nest we found was above his bed! We arose each morning at 6.00 am to catch the morning chorus and view the many exotic birds beginning their daily chorus. We quickly learnt that we had been spoilt in the Galapagos. Spotting animals in the rainforest is no easy matter and it is nigh impossible to take good photographs. Nature has perfected the art of camouflage here, though we did catch fleeting glimpses of a range of exotic birds, of which the toucan was our favourite. One highlight was watching a family of howler monkeys feeding in the distant tree tops. Our walks took us past gigantic trees with huge buttresses, through classic swamps the contents of which we dared not contemplate. In Tarzanesque style we swung from long lianas, tasted lemon ants, stalked monkeys and on several evenings went cayman spotting. We celebrated Simon's eighteenth birthday in style by fishing for, then swimming with, piranhas.

Throughout our stay we had noticed that the water level in the lakes and rivers had been falling. As we left the lodge for our return to Quito, we realised the significance of this. In places the river was so low that it seemed unlikely that we would be able to continue. At one point we met a canoe balanced precariously on a huge log, which had fallen into its path. With typical Stoic concern Tony, Dan and Simon dived into the river in a vain attempt to free the stranded vessel.

The remainder of our long trip back to Quito was less eventful. We headed for the airport and the long flight home in the knowledge that each of us had seen enough to draw us back again very soon.

ART SCHOOL IN FLORENCE

Florence 1995 undeniably provided all concerned with the perfect blend of education, experience and jolly super fun.

The moment we stepped off the plane, there began an adventure back in time (to the revolutionary excitements of 15th century Florence). Our party (a select group of VIth form Stoic artists, Mr Stunt, Mr Smith and Alex Finch-Knightley) absorbed and digested all the mind-numbing wonders of this great city within the space of four days, stopping only briefly and occasionally for refreshments.

Introduced and settled in, we started our pilgrimage locally. The church Santa Maria Novella is home to Masaccio's 'Trinity', an important picture in our Art History course. We sketched, gazed and wondered, only mildly irritated when every other minute this work of a genius was plunged into darkness. A 1,000 lira slotted in the 'lights' box soon soothed any grievances and, a mere 10,000 lira later, we were off to the Piazza Michelangelo. Handed a badly photocopied map and departing to Mr Melber's cry of "See you at the top", we wondered if we ever would, Ali Marston's map-reading proving not to be one of her greatest talents. Nevertheless the sight took everybody's breath away, partly as the climb was practically vertical, but the view of Florence was undeniably staggering. As a few tentative rays of sun touched the horizon, thirty art books were swiftly whipped out, with Chris Harrington exclaiming for one and all, "I can but sketch".

A view of similar proportions was from the dome of Florence Cathedral. However, it should be noted that while the cathedral itself makes a fine postcard and its interior is exceptional, ascending that tower of over 600 steps pretty much takes away all of its charm. Next came the Uffizi Gallery, where, accompanied by the informative and chirpy narrative of Mr Melber, we were bombarded with images of wonder. It was incredible to see Botticelli's 'The Birth of Venus', Giotto's 'Madonna Enthroned' and Leonardo da Vinci's 'Adoration of the Magi' within the same four walls.

The next excitement, not including Mr Melber's LOUD Renaissance tie, was the Accademia and Michelangelo's David – Boy, is he Big!! A later visit to the San Marco monastery had our minds buzzing with all we'd seen and heard. Every place held different delight, exciting and vivid ideas- and more postcards to buy!!

On Thursday afternoon we were heading back towards Stowe, with fifteen of us in the back of a minibus, plus our luggage and Mr Stunt's consignment of Italian wine. It was hard to believe that that morning we had been by the Medici Ricardi palace. It was hard to believe that we would no longer wake to the hustle and bustle of the Florentine streets or that we would never again spoon Italian ice cream into our watering mouths.

Our four days of heaven had come to an end and as we boarded our flight home there was many a tear in our educated (if not slightly blurred) eyes.

Charlotte Jones & Matt Furse-Roberts

THOUGHTS ON VIETNAM

Miles Walsworth-Bell
first visited Vietnam in the summer of 1994.
He has since revisited the country twice.

1995 has been a somewhat special year for the Vietnamese, since it has marked two major anniversaries. The one which has received much media hype and soul-searching in America has been the twentieth anniversary of the communist take-over of the south. The Americans have, for those twenty years, found it difficult to accept that they lost a war, one which perhaps the majority would certainly now agree to have been a fray that the Americans should never have entered in the first place. And this was a war in which the United States (and its allies) used all but nuclear weapons.

The second anniversary of 1995 has received very little publicity, but was equally celebrated in Vietnam. This was the fiftieth anniversary of the withdrawal of the French, where the start of this exit was probably the battle of Dien Bien Phu. During this major confrontation the level of loss of French lives in a far away country became politically unacceptable.

The French, in being in the region, had major colonial ambitions and wished to create a multi-national state which they referred to as Indochine. In doing so, they have left behind something of value in the architecture. Much of this has now been pulled down in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) though for the cognoscenti there is still much to see. Hanoi is different. This was chosen to be the capital of Indochine and the official residence of the Governor of the province can still be visited. Ironically, this is situated adjacent to the mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh himself and also his official residence (a small, wooden structure). The Americans, on the other hand, seem to have left only a ghastly eyesore of a building which was their embassy and vast quantities of ordnance and the trappings of war.

Vietnam is now very much an emerging nation. This results from their own hard work (a nation of entrepreneurs), a move towards free-market communism, and the (sadly late) lifting of the US trade embargo.

As a country to visit Vietnam is fun and very accessible to the backpacker. There are the major cities of Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi, beach resorts such as Nha Trang, the hill resort of Dalat and the extraordinary islands of Ha Long Bay. But hold on to your wallets, as pickpockets are, it seems, also part of the free market!

DIVING IN TENERIFE

Two weeks in Tenerife of sun, sea, sand and sub-aqua faced us as we sat at the airport. It still seemed unreal! Then just one plane and car trip later and we were there, at Los Gigantes, where some of us were to complete an open-water diving course and the remainder advanced dives.

First we learnt the basics in the swimming pool under the instruction of IJM. KFD, meanwhile, Freddie, George and Jeremy took on the sea! It was, however, under a week before we had a turn of our own – one boat trip and one safety check and we too were under! The sea was amazingly clear and we explored all the area, watched the fish and concentrated hard on not being speared by one of the 'urchins' – quite a feat as they seemed to be of vast amounts. Gradually we became more confident underwater and found the dives breathtaking. Dives included the exploration of places like The Lost Arches (underwater arches which we did, in fact, lose, but found later) and Crab Island (where we inspected fish and sponges). John, Sheila and Neville of the Dive Centre looked after us well and occasionally dived with us too.

It was a very enjoyable fortnight. Los Gigantes is a brilliant place in which to learn. (Having now experienced English waters, I can say this with extra certainty!) We all returned home with certificates, photographs and tans, to prove that we really had crossed the seas to Tenerife! *Henrietta Bolland*

Photo: Karen Dore

Left to right:
Alison Dore, Katie Mallett, Henrietta Bolland,
Tara Kennedy, Jeremy Thomas, Olivia Millar,
Rachael Jones, Pete Horrell, Freddie Alston & IJM

WITH THE BIOLOGISTS IN THE HEBRIDES

Ranjan Bhalla describes the Biology Field Course

This was the first time Stowe biologists had been to the Isle of Coll in the Hebrides. We left Stowe on the 25th June for a long, much dreaded overnight bus journey to Oban, where we caught an early morning ferry, The Lord of the Isles, to the little island of Coll.

Coll is one of the remoter islands of the Hebrides with a population of about a hundred. (It is quite isolated and far from mainland Scotland, being about three and a half hours by ferry from Oban). It is therefore an ideal site for the study of ecology thanks to the natural environment which is practically untouched by man. There are also a number of different habitats to study on the island, including rocky and sandy sea shores, grassland and sand dunes. In fact, the island has been classed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

We stayed in a Centre owned by Project Trust, a company which organises Gap Years for students and trains them in the Centre before they set off on their adventures on the other side of the island away from any signs of civilisation (not that there really is that much civilisation on the island, which has only two shops!). The Centre is quite modern and has good facilities. The people there were very friendly and the food was very good.

The first day was spent mainly resting, recovering from the long trip and exploring the surroundings. We found a pleasant sandy beach nearby where we spent most of our free time relaxing when we weren't working. Our fieldwork involved the use of certain field techniques used in ecology, to study a specific habitat. We concentrated on marine biology, studying a rocky seashore in groups and studying zonation of organisms in this habitat. We also spent much time gathering data for our main individual A-level Biology projects.

Much to our surprise the weather was not damp and miserable, as we'd expected, but instead we were caught in a heatwave, causing unusually high temperatures for Scotland and even higher than in southern England. Some of us swam a little in the sea to cool off – it was freezing!

We worked hard in the evenings completing write-ups and reports as well as planning A-level projects and beginning to tabulate and process our data.

We were surprised by an impromptu visit from the Prince of Wales while we were there. We were not actually in the Centre at the time but in the surrounding area where we were collecting data for our projects, but were able to look on from the nearby hills.

On the last day some of us went by minibus to a bird sanctuary where a guide spoke to us about the birds on the island, notably the corncrake, which is now very rare in Great Britain, though it used to be very common.

Overall there was a good balance between work and relaxation and the scorching weather made this trip a very enjoyable one.

Top: Steven Davies, William Sheldon, Andrew Smith. Standing: Charles Stevenson, Alasdair Johnston.
Sitting: Chris Wethered, Ben Hennessy, Ben Bateman, Oliver Gregson, Will Milling, Ranjan Bhalla, Serrol Osman, Catherine Browning, Richard Smith, Jo Stewart.
Front: Louisa Crisp, Alison Dore, Ben Corbishley, George Boyd-Gibbins, Jasmin Westinghouse, Victoria Harrison.

A McElwee Journey to Russia

Mark Wates, latest winner (with Oliver Bray, above) of the McElwee History Travel Scholarship, recounts the story of their travels.

Photo: Mark Wates

In the suburbs of Moscow

Our destination was Russia. This fairly ambitious destination required some careful planning and forethought to cope with a bureaucracy-riddled country. We wanted to go to Russia to follow Tsar Nicholas the Second's last footsteps before he was killed by the Bolsheviks.

The journey was to take us to three major cities, involving 5,000 miles of travel inside Russia. The cities visited were St. Petersburg, Moscow and Ekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk). The logistics of the trip involved a return plane trip there, two train trips and an internal flight with Aeroflot.

Having bribed our way out of the country to get to Russia (we had to pay a special supplement for our visa because we weren't staying in hotels), we arrived at St. Petersburg on the 31st July. We arrived in the evening, so we went straight to our youth hostel. It was conveniently situated next door to a prison, where the inmates communicated with their wives by shouting and screaming. Hence little sleep in St. Petersburg! We stayed there a week, visiting a number of interesting places: the Smolny Institute, the Smolny Cathedral (with its white and blue exterior) and the Hermitage, with its astounding, innumerable artefacts. The Hermitage housed the Tsar's last living quarters in St. Petersburg before he was taken away. We visited a symbol of the revolution, the Aurora, the battleship which fired the shot which signalled the start of the revolution. The richly decorated Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul was magnificent and symbolised the greatness of the city. On our last day we visited Peterhof which was 30 km outside the city. The palace there was spectacular. Outside the palace was the famous fountain with Sampson wrestling the lion. Another memorable part of our stay in St. Petersburg was our meeting with 'Jesus', an American, who was claiming to be Christ reincarnated, travelling the world in order to call down the angels!

The next part of our trip was to visit Moscow. Where St. Petersburg symbolised the monarchy of Russia through its architecture and culture, Moscow symbolised the Revolution. The reason we went to Moscow was to see this stark contrast and an austere comparison it was.

We travelled on the overnight train to Moscow, where we were to spend four days. We visited the primary attractions of the Kremlin and the Red Square and were very impressed by the huge buildings which littered Moscow (though the architecture was not as attractive as that of St. Petersburg). We visited the Central Museum of the Revolution, which was very interesting visually, but as neither of us could understand Russian it was difficult to decipher what we were looking at! We also spent many hours wandering the streets of Moscow taking in the sights, as we searched for the elusive office with our train tickets for Ekaterinburg.

The Trans-Siberian train took us to Ekaterinburg. Having left behind our comfortable youth hostel in Moscow, we were to spend the next day and a half sharing a claustrophobic carriage apartment with a Russian woman and her child. The young rapscallion did nothing to improve our journey. We staggered off the train in the middle of the night to look for somewhere to sleep. Eventually we found a hostel with a huge waiting-lounge and slept there with the drunks and street urchins. It was a rough night, with the police beating up the drunks and taking them away whilst they were unconscious. The day dawned very hot. It was a Sunday. So we went for a walk, taking in the amazing architecture and eating delicious Russian ice cream.

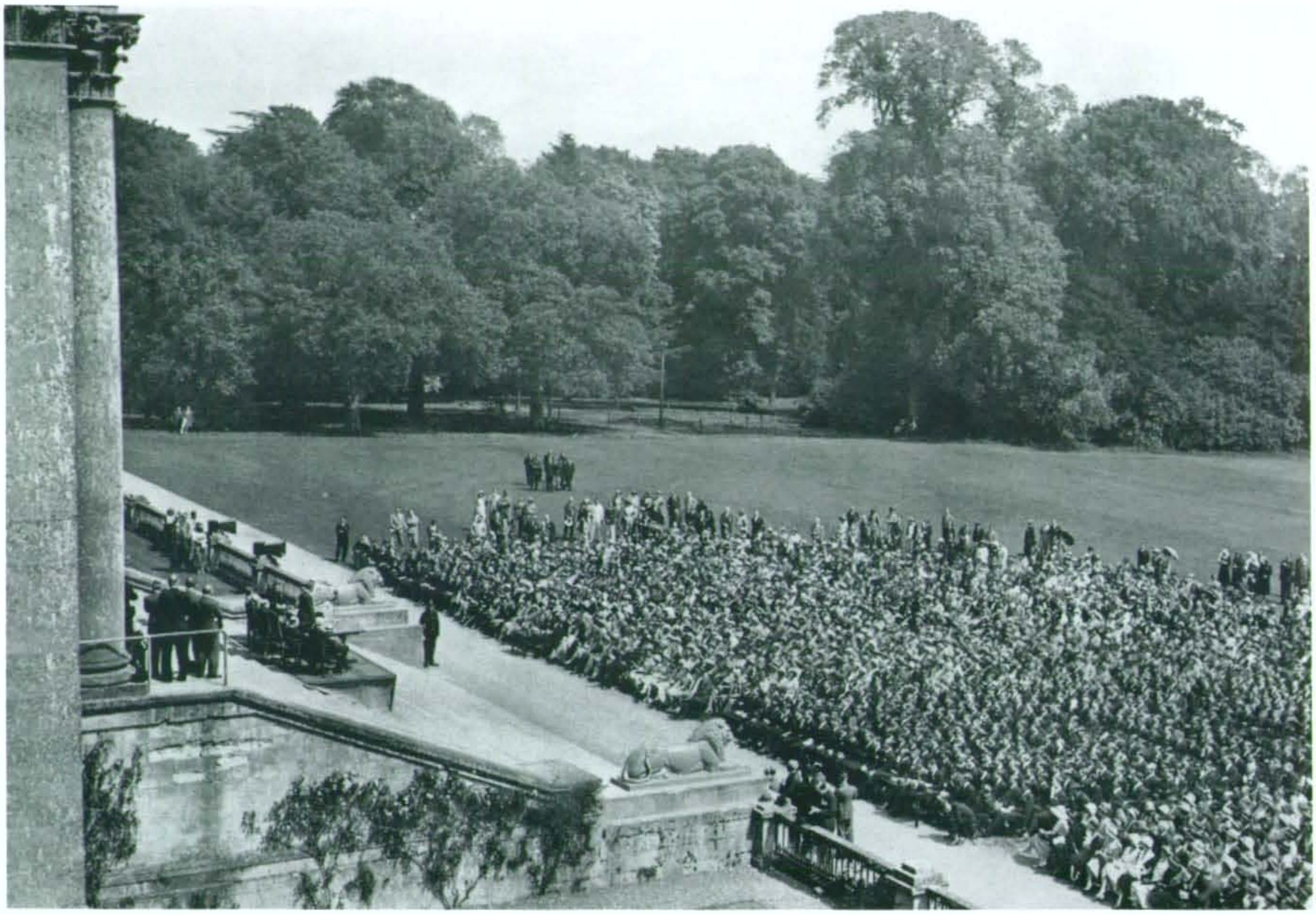
The reason why we wanted to travel 2,500 km to Ekaterinburg was to see, maybe, the house where the Tsar and all his family were shot. Unfortunately the house was knocked down in 1979. Yet we did manage to follow in the footsteps of the Tsar, by taking the trains.

And so, we took an internal Aeroflot flight back to Moscow. Although the plane looked decidedly antiquated, the flight was fine except for a very drunk businessman, sitting next to us, who was so full of alcohol it seemed likely his breath combined with a naked flame might produce explosive results.

We had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and we learned much from our travels. We are very grateful to the McElwee trustees for aiding us in the venture.

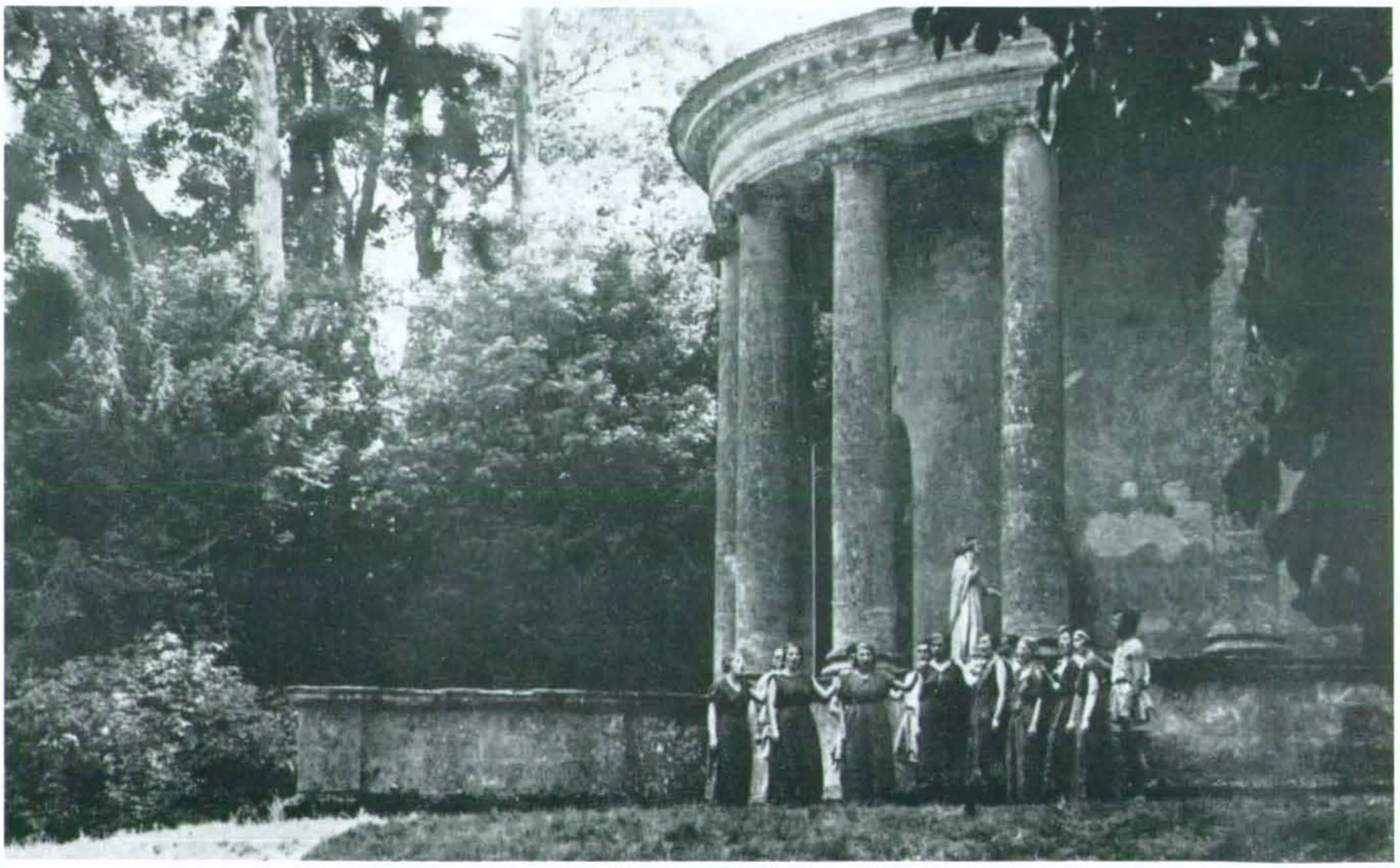
OLD STOICS

The 1930s reunion, September 1995



June Ist 1933: HRH The Prince of Wales speaking on the South Front at the celebration marking the school's first ten years.

1933: Oxford University Opera Club performs Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*
at the Temple of Ancient Virtue on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' visit.



THE THIRTIES

Some Random Reminiscences

1932: JF reading over in Assembly

As part of its T.H. White anniversary feature, *The Stoic* wrote round to Old Boys of the 1934-35 era, inviting reminiscences.

Reminiscences of the 1930s inevitably begin with JF, the charismatic first headmaster. John da Silva writes:

"I still recall with wry amusement JF's final address to the few boys who, like myself, left Stowe at the end of the Easter term, 1934. We assembled in the Aurelian Room, expecting to be told the secrets of the adult world we were about to enter, but JF for once was disappointingly banal, until at the end he said there were three rules to which we must always adhere and we all sat up and took notice. The first was when we wrote to him, as he very much hoped we would, we could address him as 'Dear Mr Roxburgh', 'Dear Headmaster', even 'Dear JF' if we wished, but on no account were we to write 'Dear Sir'; the second was like unto the first – we would sooner or later receive letters from ladies, not all, he hinted darkly, necessarily welcome, but whatever they were they should be answered next day! And the third and most important was that, when we married and had children, they must, if boys, be entered for Stowe at birth. Thus instructed, we set forth on our careers."

Harold Vickers also writes of Roxburgh: "My significant memory is of how JF dominated everything, beginning in his slow and infinitely dignified lone march down the centre of the Chapel and to the right into his stall at every service. At every public occasion you had to be on guard, for he could remember your Christian name and everything about you. You never knew if he would single you out to talk to, and woe betide it if you tried to be too clever in reply!"

For Vickers as for many others, Stowe and JF were synonymous. "I cannot imagine the one without the other. His Olympian dignity and presence were manifest with a sarcasm that sometimes wounded. I recall a fifteen-year-old with a camera being approached by JF (himself, of course, a keen photographer) with 'Hello, what is that?' The trembling boy blurted out 'A camera, sir.' JF: 'Of course it is, you didn't believe I thought it was a grand piano, did you?'"

Working alongside the admired JF were many remarkable characters, some of whom, even sixty years on, are brightly remembered. "The greatest impression of Stowe must always be JF," writes Michael Wilson, "but we certainly had some other first-class masters. My Housemaster was 'Whisky' Clarke who was followed by my old tutor, H.V.G. Kinvig, for whom I also had a great deal of respect and affection, though he was said to like his tipple of whisky. Ian Clarke and 'the Merch' (Major Howarth) had adjoining rooms and were great friends; they usually got together in the evenings when it was understood that IAC provided the Scotch and 'the Merch' the cigars ('the Merch' did not smoke!). Other masters were first-class in their own way; Raymond Walker was a wonderful mathematician and did wonders for other good mathematicians but was less good with the duds as he could not understand their difficulties; Bertie Wace was the exact opposite – great with the Maths duds but not very good with the experts because he was no expert himself." Michael Wilson, who was one of the first Walpudlians, remembers how IAC moved over from Grenville to start the new House: "When IAC decided to get married and Walpole was built to accommodate him and his wife, almost exactly half of Grenville asked to go with him and half did not; that was how Walpole started, with about 30 boys from Grenville and a large bunch of new boys."

1938: The Ist XV beating Oundle 17-11.
The Ist XV later that season beat Radley 67-0 and ended up winning 12 of their 14 matches.

Harold Vickers gives pen-pictures of many masters. Ian Clarke "persistently rammed Latin into my thick head; he had a severe manner, occasionally relieved by appalling puns." 'Bryn' Miles "taught physics with waspish repetition of simple phrases: 'A definition a day keeps detention away.'" Dewing "taught chemistry less confidently. I still see him trying to continue a demonstration of a non-inflammatory gas from the floor, slightly stunned and covered in smuts." Rude was "apt to collapse in giggles and unable to keep his class under control. One extrovert was said to have stood up and protested, 'Sir, you have upset me deeply. I have tried my best to please you, and all you have done is to become RUDER and RUDER and RUDER.' Once again work in adjacent classes had to be suspended for five minutes until the noise subsided."

J.T. Hankinson, Housemaster of Cobham, was "up and coming, ambitious and still young, with a foul temper when Cobham failed him. When his lips were seen to be tight and pursed, we kept out of his way." Harold Vickers remembers the Vicar of Dadford who used to help in the workshops but who was unable to distinguish between machines designed for working wood and those designed for metal. "The result was showers of sparks from both machines and the technician despairing of keeping the machines in working order." Ivor Cross, Housemaster of Chatham, was "considered unworldly. He was said to have driven a new car happily for three weeks until he discovered it had a top gear." Major Howarth, 'the Merch', Housemaster of Chandos and officer in charge of the OTC, was "said to have read the riot act on swearing to his House with the memorable phrase 'anything worse than *damn* is bloody awful'". On one occasion he took the Corps to Newbury Downs where the weather closed in. "He made us march for hours through the rain until he formed us up around him, wet through and very mutinous, to tell us 'I've only brought you here to see the view.'" Leslie Huggins was remembered as "always seen dashing around in a sports car with tympani and other bits of orchestra balanced precariously on the back seat". Bill Snowden, his assistant, taught piano and organ. "He always played for the weekly rehearsals for the Sunday services. (No choir in those days). If Huggins asked him to transpose a hymn tune up or down a tone, I recall a protesting 'help!' escaping over the barrier to the organ loft."

Vickers' memories of Chapel are very strong ones. The form of service, he feels, had been so watered down, because it was compulsory, that it had little meaning, "but communion and confirmation were available and used. A Monday evening voluntary service was introduced and used by sufficient people to occupy the first two front rows of the Chapel. This led to a musical disaster for me. Boys did not usually play the organ for Chapel services, but on one occasion Bill Snowden, who

taught me the organ, told me to do one Monday service as he could not. I was not a stranger to the service, but had never before played to such a small congregation sitting so far away. If only Bill Snowden had run me through beforehand all would have been well, but he didn't – the result: disaster! JF was furious, not to me, but I believe Bill Snowden was well ticked off."

"Life in Chapel was sometimes enlivened by boys catching and releasing therein some of the thousands of froglets that wandered through the School every spring. And then there was a semi-diesel 4 cylinder generator in the Power House that, unlike the two smaller 2-cylinder generators, could take the full load. It had to be pre-heated by blow lamps that we could see glowing on our way to Chapel. We would then anticipate some amusement, for when the generator was switched 'on' after the diesel had warmed up, it would 'hunt' for some time until it had settled down, and so caused the Chapel lights to wax and wane while we imagined JF fuming at the wretched engineer trying to cope with the fractious equipment..."

Peter Choyce has similar memories of things being somewhat primitive in some areas of school life. The dormitories, for example, he remembers as being very cold. Then there was a lack of lavatories: "I do remember when I was in the first year before I got into the Upper School, being in considerable discomfort on a number of occasions when all the available loos appeared to be occupied."

But the compensations, writes Choyce, were many, both in the teaching ("which was at times quite brilliant") and in the facilities. For Peter Choyce this particularly meant golf: "Stowe was the first Public School to build its own little golf course and while I was there, in 1935, somebody presented an inter-house golf cup which Cobham fortunately won. I also recall that when I was seventeen I reached the last eight of the British boys' championship played at what is now Royal Birkdale, and when I got home there was a very nice handwritten letter from JF congratulating me on my performance. Later I did play county golf and for twenty years I was in the Halford Hewitt competition, and I am at the moment President of OSGS. So the golf that I was encouraged to play at Stowe has been of enormous benefit to me for the rest of my life."

Michael Jackson has vivid memories of a "remarkably idiosyncratic" generator – "home-made electricity (200v.d.c) generated (brewed?) by a couple of very ancient semi-diesels". He considers that he was happier at Stowe, "as a fairly non-gregarious type", than several of his contemporaries were at other, more traditional public schools. "It really was a pretty relaxed regime for the period."

Harold Vickers remembers what was possibly the first school expedition abroad. It was to Cairo: "The staff were H.B. Playford (Housemaster of Bruce), David Brown (Housemaster of Cobham) and Crichton-Miller. The boys included Anderson (later to gain the VC), but I forget the others. We reached Istanbul in twelve days, after blinding our way through the Turkish army on manoeuvres, with the two cars much battered. So much so that we dared not risk forcing our way across Anatolia, but took a Turkish coaster to Mersin, then motored down to Beirut so that we could collect mail from Damascus. Thence we took ship to Haifa and, unable to go through Palestine, came home via Trieste..."

Other memories include swimming, the attempt to found a railway club and the morning roll calls in Assembly:

"Swimming was said to have originally taken place in a warmed tank in Power House Yard, but I remember it only in the eleven-acre. Occasionally a distinguished visitor would organise an early morning swim, when we would take to the open lake, suit-less, until this got to the ears of authority, doubtless JF, whereupon it was quite rightly forbidden."

"I remember the school being very law-abiding, but when I revisited briefly during the War, it was obvious that things like Home Guard and fire-watching had been accompanied by a relaxation of standards. My only memory of participation in an infringement was on the way back from a 2nd XV match against Rugby, when we had to stop at a pub to show we were grown-up."

"I attempted to found a Railway Club in the School, but failed to gain the support of a master. But I did organise an excursion to Banbury sorting sidings (now no more), for which, naturally, I had to get JF's permission. 'I'm not keen on the idea, but if you must, you may go ahead on the clear understanding that, if anything goes wrong, you will hold full responsibility.'"

The final word, inevitably, must be of JF and Peter Choyce would seem to be speaking for many in his summary: "All in all, it really was a wonderful place to be in the 1930s. JF saw to it and instructed his Housemasters and Tutors to follow his belief that every boy there must have talent in some direction and it was his and their job to find what it was and to cultivate it."

Duncan Hyslop

NEXT ISSUE we are hoping to run features on WARTIME STOWE and the poet JOHN CORNFORD. We would be most grateful to receive reminiscences and information from Old Stoics on both these topics. Please write to: The Editor, The Stoic, Stowe School, Buckingham, MK18 5EH. Thank you!

Jos Nicholl, Old Stoic and former Chaplain and Housemaster, writes of

TEENAGE STOWE

(1933-1943)

Stowe's "first fond careless rapture" was epitomised by the frequency of royal visits in those first ten years. In 1924 Prince Arthur of Connaught presented Eton's generous gift of the Grand Avenue in perpetuity. In 1927 Queen Mary laid among the ruins of the Temple of Bacchus the Foundation Stone of the Chapel. In 1929 Prince George of Kent read the lesson at the Chapel dedication. Then, in 1933, the Prince of Wales celebrated Stowe's tenth birthday by planting a copper beech on the South Front.

But in the 1930s, as the School moved into its second decade, a new national mood prevailed. It was encapsulated by a brief but brilliant sermon which JF gave on November 11th, 1934. He warned Stoics of more dangerous times ahead. They might reasonably wonder, he suggested, why they were asked by members of a generation to which they did not belong to honour the memory of men they had never seen:

"It is the best who were killed.... War is the supreme folly of civilisation and cannot begin without hatred, nor continue without lies.... Let us resolve then that, as far as we can affect the issue, our country shall work throughout the world for justice, truth and the rule of law..."

The Stowe of this period was flourishing with the advantages of a Waiting List for the seven Houses and an impressive, newly-built Chapel (in place of the over-crowded private Chapel in the Aurelian Room). However, its facilities were by no means unblemished. There was an apology of a Gym, which continued to serve as the Examination Hall, Cinema and Concert Hall, though remarkably (and unacoustically) it provided in a single term for the artistry of Moiseiwitsch, Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra! There were also a number of "temporary" classrooms and labs, an Art School in an upstairs classroom, an Armoury in the Gothic Temple, a Swimming Pool in a fenced-off part of the Eleven Acre Lake and an inappropriate cricket and rugger pavilion.

So, in the year that Hitler came to power in Germany (1933), it was helpful when the Prince of Wales extended the summer holidays by no less than a whole week: the builders got busy and the decaying Queen's Temple was strengthened and redecorated to withstand the demands of a modern music school; and Laddie Lucas, the Head of School, laid the first brick of Walpole House, which was able to house its first fifty-seven boys in December 1934. The various demands of Beauty, Sport and Food were then satisfied by the purpose-built new Art school, the laying of the foundation stone of the Sports pavilion by A.E. de la T.

Stowe 1st XV of 1938. Three members of this XV were killed in action. Myles Henry's name is known to present Stoics through the prize given by his brother in his memory.
Back row: A.B.P. Beeton, P.E. Waugh, A.V. Farnell-Watson, P.J. Diggle, J.M. Henry, I.Mc. Tait, I.R.L. Shaw, J.M. Thompson.
Front row: B.J.G. Kaye, D.A. Yellowlees, B.A. Stewart, P.R-H. Hastings, M.B. Scholfield, J.E.C. Nicholl, A.G. Way.

Mallett (the captain of cricket, rugger and athletics) and by the renewal of the roof of the Garter Room, which was finding it hard to withstand the extra demands of the Bruce dormitories above it.

During these years the League of Nations Union had become the biggest society in the School, outstripping even the Pineapple Club in popularity. The political importance of the speakers (including Lord Lytton, Viscount Cecil, J.R. Clynes, the Marquis of Willingdon, Dr G.P. Gooch and Lord Linlithgow) was shown in 1936, when there were no less than 239 members – or nearly half the School.

Europe was dividing itself into rival camps, but Stowe reacted only slowly. If Mussolini and the Spanish Civil War provided most of the news, the significance of Hitler's moves aroused little suspicion. In fact, the first Old Stoic killed in action was the scholar-poet John Cornford, whose passing might have gone unnoticed, if it had not been for JF. "John believed," he wrote in April 1937, "that only in a new social order would his gifts be used." He died on the Cordoba Front on the 28th December 1936, one day after his twenty-first birthday.

Of more interest to Stoics was the incident (after the Oxford University Union's decision that "this House will not fight for King and Country") of the burning of a Union Jack in Assembly. The mob reaction of the School was the immersion of the culprit in Cobham Pond. (JF's response was the bland comment that "the best antidote for fire is water").

Personalities abounded on the Staff. One Housemaster had been decorated for gallantry, an instructor at Sandhurst and an ADC to the Duke of Gloucester. Another had been President of the Cambridge University Boat Club and rowed for four years in unbeaten boat race crews; a third had played full-back for Scotland. The Director of Music was a Master of Foxhounds and the recipient of the Military Cross, and the Art Master had won his MC serving with the Canadian forces. T.H. White was a charismatic teacher of English, the owner of an eccentric collection of objects (some living) in his cottage in the Black Pit woods. A.V. Ireland had a biting tongue but a brilliant brain. It was doubtless difficult to understand why he reverted to his apparently natural title of "the Baron Velleman von Simunich" during or just before the Munich crisis.

It is even more difficult to understand how (according to a *Stoic* of 1938), immediately before the crisis and a week into the autumn term (when rugger posts would have been firmly planted everywhere) Sid Jones would have marked out a 22-yard-long cricket pitch for a visiting 'Hitler Youth XI' unless he had been personally instructed by David Brown, the master-in-charge of the lst XV. And it is unlikely that even the most insidious Anglo-German friendship organisation would have got anywhere at all, when facing the mighty rock of DIB!

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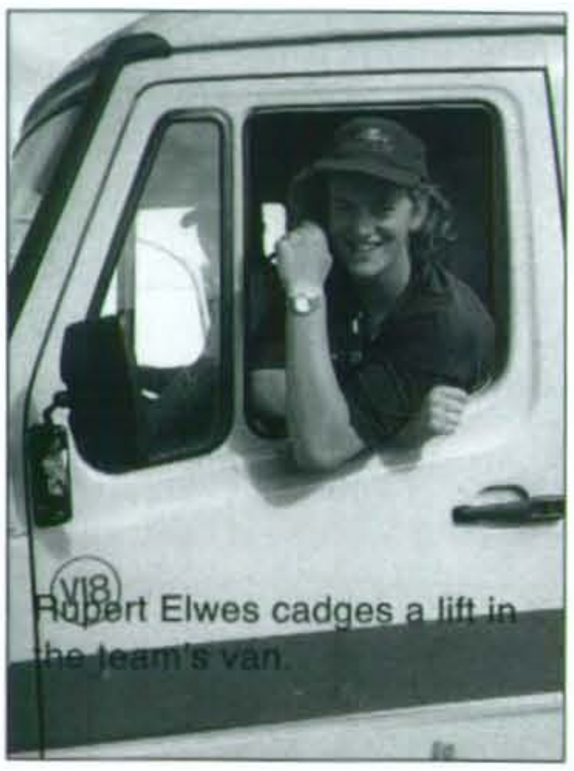
The Tri-Stad Walk

Summer 1995

Pictured in front of the support vehicles are (left to right): Max Konig, Nic Tissot, Rupert Elwes, Tim Doxford, Ed Rogers and Milo Corbett.

Between the 23rd July and the 30th August seven Old Stoics walked from Murrayfield rugby ground in Edinburgh to Twickenham in London, via Cardiff Arms Park. This 677-mile walk was in aid of the Andy Birt Trust, the International Spinal Research Trust and SPIRE (Supporting Paraplegics in Rugby Enterprise). The aim was to raise £50,000. The seven intrepid walkers were Milo Corbett *(Chatham 94)*, Tim Doxford *(Chandos 94)*, Rupert Elwes *(Chatham 94)*, Max Konig *(Chatham 95)*, Ed Rogers *(Chandos 94)*, Giles Smith Walker *(Chatham 94)* and Nic Tissot *(Chatham 94)*, together with support driver Charlie Clare *(Chatham 94)*. Several other Stoics and Old Stoics joined them for stages on the way. We are grateful to several members of the team for the following report.



Robert Elwes cadges a lift in the team's van.

The Birt family had been nervously looking at their watches for at least a quarter of an hour before we all arrived at Murrayfield, and they looked even more shocked to see us arrive under police escort! We had somehow managed to get lost in Edinburgh (but quite where in Edinburgh no-one seems to know) and arrived gloriously late for the start. Luckily, as it turned out, Scotland's Gavin Hastings arrived even later. His participation in our departure ceremony was certainly a boost for morale. We were beginning to realise by this stage that we had really approached the operation a little bit too casually, though it was probably a good thing that a light-hearted atmosphere was to stay with us for the 677 miles.

It was quite a relief for the walkers finally to get on the road. We left behind us a wake of chaos at the office of Nina Campbell in London, who had pulled out all the stops to make sure that all our plans came together, and at Robert Doxford's estate agency, who also helped us sort out our plans in the few weeks before departure.

We had all been looking forward to the 24th July. Our departure from Murrayfield represented an opportunity to leave behind us several months of scribblings, letters and telephone calls which had rather tested our organisational skills. What we hadn't bargained for was a lunchtime start on the first day – so that Gavin Hastings could come and kick us off – which meant that we had to walk 27 miles to Peebles afterwards, which took us well into the evening before the magical "Welcome to Peebles" sign was seen. Widespread collapse of tired limbs followed quickly!

Our daily routine was very dull, to say the least! A wake-up call at eight and a "we're going at nine" always meant a ten o'clock start, and we would have the mouth-watering thought of another lunch of cheese and ham sandwiches served up to spur us on! Generally we finished each day's twenty miles by about four in the afternoon, from when it would be another relaxed supper and early bedtime. We did stay in varying degrees of comfort and were quite amazed by the behaviour of some of our hosts, who may have had no connection with us but had received a letter asking if we could camp on their land on a "friend of a friend" basis and who still managed to feed us and fill us with beer. Space does not permit us to mention each place and each person by name, but we are most grateful to all the Stowe parents, friends, family, Old Stoics and others who fielded us along the way. Particularly, though, we must mention Jack Berry and Simon Plumbly, both of whom had no previous connection with us or Stowe but who really did turn up trumps when we stayed with them. At the other end of the scale it would probably pay to mention the night in the car park outside Ashbourne and the night when the sheep invaded Milo's tent, just in case you are reading this and thinking we all had it a bit too easy!

Quite remarkably, we managed to finish the walk without any serious injuries. Blisters were just par for the course and a minor bout of shin splints could only have been expected, but what seems most peculiar is that Private Plummer (sure you can guess who he is!) managed to avoid any serious violence in the many pubs we seem to have been to! There was a very funny instance when one of the support vehicles decided to blow up, but it turned out (again, very luckily!) not to be too serious or expensive.

What was perhaps the most memorable thing was the kindness of people we met along the way, from the warm receptions we had from complete strangers to the smaller things, such as the dear lady in Carlisle who

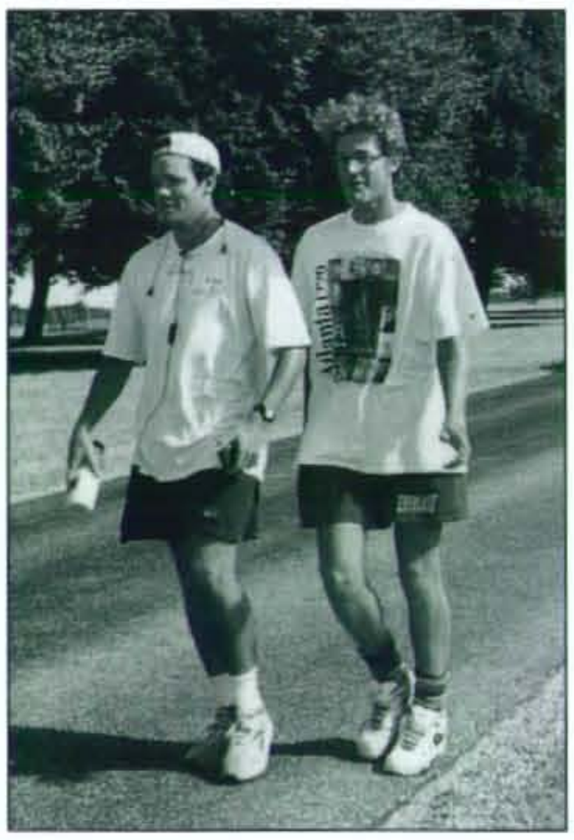
invited us into her house for a cup of tea and a slice of cake which she had just baked. We were lucky enough to see a superb game of ice hockey, courtesy of the Cardiff Devils, who also raised a small fortune for us, and we are most grateful to the Hilton chain, who let us stay for what seemed in our circumstances to be a most luxurious night in their hotel at the East Midlands Airport.

To start with, the idea of the walk was to do something for Andy, since it was his exemplary courage and determination which had inspired us. However, we probably did it for ourselves too, since it is impossible not to feel a slight glow of achievement when looking back on the past five weeks. It certainly proved a fun way of filling up a summer! We won't forget quickly Tim timing the van from 0 to 60 mph in 47 seconds, or the infamous pack of Minger Top Trumps – but these are definitely stories for another time...

Milo Corbett, Charles Clare, Rupert Elwes

If you are interested in giving a donation to The Andy Birt Trust Fund please send a cheque, made payable to "The Andy Birt Trust Fund", to: Lionel Weston, Walpole House, Stowe School, Buckingham, MK18 5EH

Relaxing with Andy in front of the Stowe pavilion: Max Konig, Nic Tissot, Ed Rogers, Rupert Elwes, Tim Doxford, Charlie Clare, Giles Smith Walker, Milo Corbett.



Left: Tim Doxford and Max Konig head down the straight course.
Right: Milo Corbett, Nic Tissot and Lucy Rogers on the road to Water Stratford.
The walk coincided with the summer heatwave.

Last lap: After nearly seven hundred miles, the walkers enter the Twickenham stadium.

Photos: Allegro Bianco

Interviewed for radio:
Tom Foss-Smith and Giles Smith Walker.

Interview

Arvind David: A Stoic at Oxford

The Stoic, pursuing its intended policy of giving expression to the activities of the young as well as the more mature Old Stoics, recently journeyed to Oxford to interview an Old Stoic there. It was Arvind David whom we met first. He had recently been playing Othello at The Old Fire Station and although Matthew Wreford (producing Othello), George Pendle (playing Montano), Mark Chamberlain (playing Ludovico and a Senator) James Goss (taking time off from Radio Oxford to watch them) and Sam Edenborough (similarly supporting) could have all put in strong counter claims to be *The Stoic*'s first Oxonian interviewee, Arvind was already in full flow… He is now in his final year at Oxford, at Lincoln College, reading Law.

"Put out the light – and then put out the light." Appropriate words at the Old Fire Station. Arvind as Othello.

Arvind, can you tell us if Oxford is more or less as you expected?

Perhaps unusually, I didn't go up to Oxford with a trunkful of preconceptions. Apart from a few vague hopes that my Oxford story would include lots of debauched parties, dozens of gorgeous and brilliant women and the odd nice building, I hadn't really thought about it much.

I believe this is partly because of the curious doublethink necessary to remain sane during the period of preparation for the Oxford Entrance exam. On the one hand one has to want to get in more than anything else in the world – otherwise it's impossible to summon the motivation to do the work – but on the other you've got to not give a damn – else you'll turn into a gibbering chimp if it all goes wrong. The net result is that you tend to concentrate more on the most immediate goal i.e. the entrance exam/interview – rather than on what the reality of Oxford might be. That was my experience anyway, but it's possible that I'm just a bit strange.

That said though, I think that I would have been a lot more freaked out by Oxford if not for the uncannily good preparation that my time at Stowe proved to be for university life. That might sound a bit strange to the ears of Stoics who might think that Oxford and Stowe could not be more dissimilar, but I found that being used to life in a boarding house allowed me to settle smoothly into college accommodation; that the college bar was simply a slightly more expensive version of Club; and that even the most eccentric gowned tutors could not begin to compete with an AGM or a TAO. Most importantly, as I was already accustomed to a great deal of freedom on how I divided my time between work and a wide and varied scope of extra-curricular activities, the range of distractions at Oxford didn't absolutely blow my mind (though it took me a while to get used to the concept that I could rehearse during the previously sacrosanct hours of lst Prep)!

What about Old Stoic friendships? Do you keep in touch with many Old Stoics?

'Yes' is the short answer. Two to three years on, I am still in regular touch with the majority of my closest friends from Stowe. The strength of these bonds shows no sign of weakening, and whilst there are plenty of new people in all our social circles, there is something about five years of common experiences that generates a unique fellowship and I am never more relaxed or at ease than with Old Stoic friends.

There is a certain logic to it; after all, we've shared puberty, showers, dormitories and acne; what have we got left to hide?

What is also interesting is how some relationships have actually improved since leaving Stowe. The boundaries between 'lad' and 'spod' seem a lot less real once we've all grown up a little bit. In another context, I know of at least two reasonably serious romances between Old Stoics which began long after leaving.

At Oxford, old-school friendships have been particularly important. I was lucky in that the group with whom I sat Entrance Exams are a singularly exceptional bunch of individuals. In the forging pot of common stresses and celebration we found ourselves banded together, which suited and continues to suit us all fine. In the first six months or so of Oxford, when everyone else was frantically running about trying to make friends and get in with the right crowd, it was incredibly reassuring to have a small group of friends with whom you didn't have to make an effort. Further, having a group of friends already in place makes it twice as easy to meet new people.

Here you are playing Othello at Oxford and playing it, by all accounts, with remarkable success. How involved have you been in drama since you've been at Oxford?

The answer to that would depend very much on whom you asked! My parents would say that I have been far too involved! And certainly I have been reasonably busy. With the exception of exam terms, I've done a play a term, every term since the start of the Lower Sixth. That isn't all that much though, when you consider how incredibly active drama at Oxford is, with an average of three student shows a night, six nights a week, all term, every term. There are an awful lot of people who seem to be at Oxford to do nothing but act (and this in spite of the fact that there is no formal drama course available).

Again, lessons learnt at Stowe have served me well. Both the Dobinson (despite the smell!) and the Roxy are remarkably well-equipped school theatres. House plays are a great training ground because LVI directors are given the opportunity to organise and take responsibility for their own shows. Also, I was very lucky to have the opportunity to work with and learn from some of the incredibly talented directors, writers and actors who inhabit the Stowe common room.

A few Stoics might still remember the Chatham House play of 1992, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* which Matthew Wreford *(Bruce 93)*, James Goss *(Chandos 92)* and I resurrected at Oxford's Old Fire Station Theatre earlier this year. It's a show that I had wanted to put on again ever since we did it in the Dobbo, and it was a tremendously wonderful and strange experience putting it on again, albeit in a much expanded version. It was particularly nice that several members of the original Chatham cast made the journey up to Oxford to see their reincarnations.

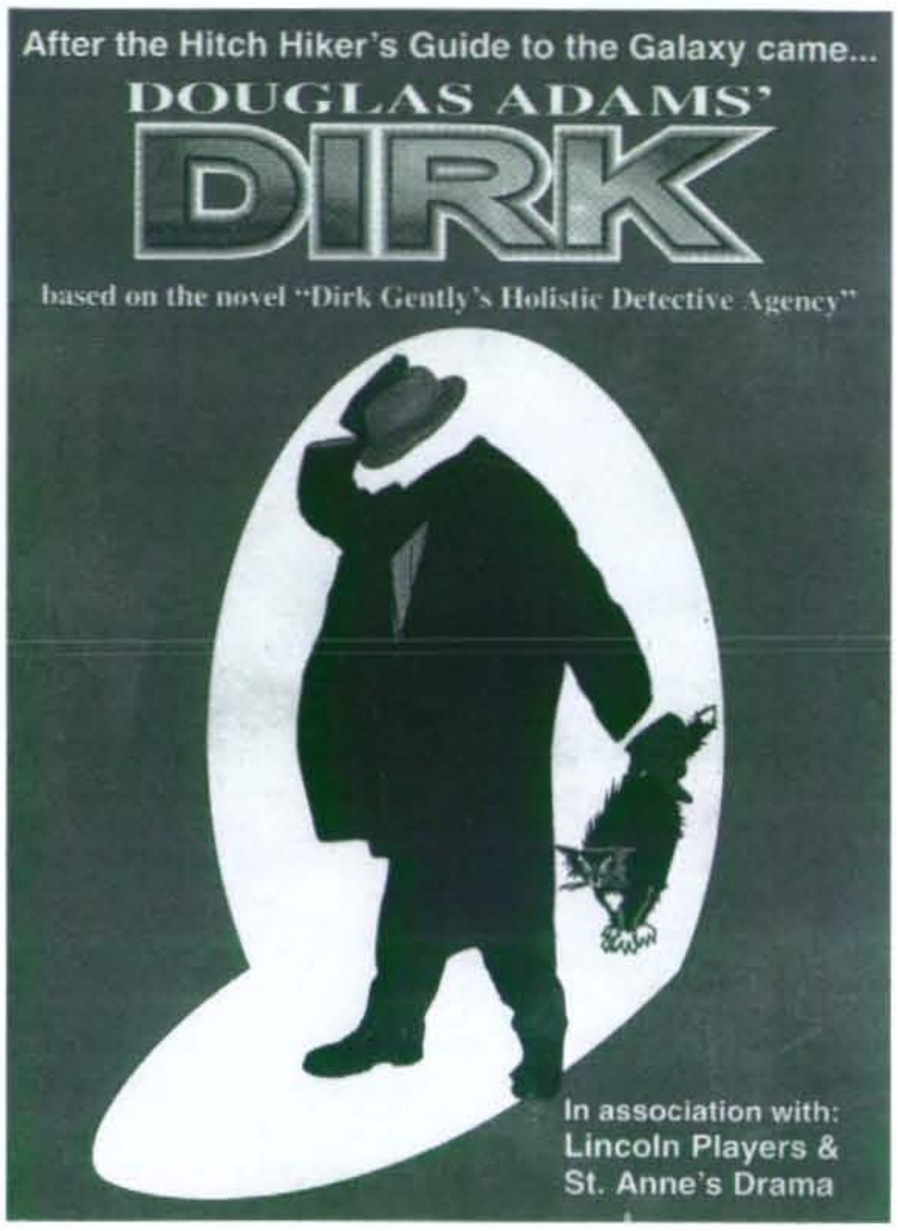
It was also exciting that Douglas Adams (author of the novel from which we culled the play) came down to see it.

What did Douglas Adams say about the play? Is it going any further?

He was tremendously nice about it, actually, and we have discussed all sorts of plans for the show, the intention being that it will go on tour round the country as a professional show and, hopefully, ending up in the West End. The trouble is trying to find the time to follow up on all the possibilities. That sounds awfully "couldn't care less" and it's certainly not meant to, but the problem with trying to manage a professional show is that I'm actually still a student trying rather hard to get a decent degree!

What is happening in the immediate future is that we will be doing a big Charity performance of the play in London in late September, which will launch a new London theatre (in Paddington of all places). And then we'll take it from there. Douglas Adams has just sold the television rights for *Dirk* and it's possible that either James or I will be involved in that. They are talking about Angus Deayton for the title role... But first of all there's *Othello* to think about and then I'm going to have to deal with the little matter of finals...

Poster design for the Arvind David and James Goss dramatisation of *Dirk Gently*



Gap Year: Dan Scott's Thailand Diary

Dan Scott left Stowe in 1994 and is now studying Fine Art at Newcastle University. During his gap year he worked at Sydney Grammar School and also enjoyed six weeks in Thailand. An extract from his Thailand Diary is printed below. The illustrations come from his sketch book.

Ko Samui – a strange kind of paradise

It took thirty hours – door to door – to reach Ko Samui, the famous tourist hot-spot for those looking for intense, action-packed fun and sun. An island designed for those who choose Thailand to be adventurous but actually want the Costa del Sol. On Samui you can do every holiday extra you can ever imagine – jet-skiing, surfing, wind-surfing, diving, go-karting, clay pigeon shooting, have-a-gun-and-kill-what-you-want-shooting – and that's just in the morning.

We arrived at night, hungry, smelly, but happy and found what we thought was a very expensive bungalow, but our tout reassured us that for Samui it was cheap. After showering, we strolled down the lantern-lit beach, which glowed bright from the lights in the palm trees, and soon found a restaurant. Slightly confused by the lack of people, we asked a couple at the bar where the famous Reggae Bar might be. "Go into town and keep going left. You can't miss it. But are you going now?"

"Well soon probably." "Best to go at about 2.00 am." "Oh". It was then about 9.00 pm and we were exhausted. Maybe we would give it a miss!

The next day we woke up refreshed and ready to explore. The hugeness of the island struck us first. We began to imagine coming across previously undiscovered coves, romantic waterfalls, deserted paradise beaches. But the only thing undiscovered on Ko Samui was peace and quiet! Dancing until 7.30 am easily became a habit. The Ko Samui girls were as hard and fast as their propositions. These schoolgirl beauties, who hung off the two hundred or so bars with the elegance of supermodels, were mostly from Bangkok, Chang Mau or small villages in the north, sent off by their families. They would sit in large groups around large drinks, ready to jump up and sing, word perfect, when their favourite tune came on and would run out into the street and dance with whoever was nearest. They would sit around like a slumber party comparing stories. Their stories varied little. Usually they were at Ko Samui in order to send money home to support their brothers and sisters and always in the back of their fantasy-controlled minds was the Prince Charming who would whisk them off to Hollywood, Sydney or Rome, where they could start a bar of their own, their very own. There were a thousand broken hearts in every bar. As much as they may have been hard-headed, hard-hearted they were not. The sadness of the islands

confused me for a long time, and all around Thailand this air of something being out of place, not quite right, confused me. In retrospect I think behind the eyes that sparkled lay an undercoat, an undercoat of broken dreams, unreplied-to letters, broken promises. There were other factors, of course. 'The West is best' theory, which pollutes the TVs and radios, making the younger generation strive for more and more money (money they can never generate, working in bars or restaurants), so they too can live the life of the coca-cola adverts – it all adds to the sadness. And the money, if ever raised, would go not to the little brother or widowed mother, but discos and clothes. We have a lot to answer for.

The sadness was all the more unsettling in that it was juxtaposed to an atmosphere of paradise. It was hard to make sense of the sadness behind the smiles in this so beautiful island.

Thailand is probably notorious for two things, its shaven-headed monks in spotless saffron robes and its scarlet ladies. One morning on the beach I came across two of the young bar girls, dressed in white and reading under a palm tree away from the noise. A little further on was a gang of monks, playing football, robes hitched up over their knees, with a passion and vigour of wild men set free. The paradoxes of Thailand are many.

Ko Pha-Ngan

My ferry docked at the pier of Pha-Ngan, baking in the heat. Soon we were travelling up dirt tracks and steadily but expertly negotiating the boulders, pot-holes, rocks and elephants which lay in our path. We arrived at Haad-Yao beach. It was everything I was looking for after Ko Samui. A village-like atmosphere with a beach to which dreams couldn't compare.

Ko Pha-Ngan is famous for its Full Moon Parties. Word had got round about this tiny little island and soon the Full Moon Parties had become its biggest tourist attraction. The spectacular full moons on a white-sanded, palm-treed paradise were said to provide a Disney glow to everything and make the stars seem more grabbable. T-shirts, caps, sarongs all screamed out "Full Moon Party, 93, 94, 95" etc. Stories were rife of over 2,000 people dancing under the moon. But it has been taken over by lager louts and con-men – half the people dancing are said to be police anyway.

So I was glad to spend my two and a half weeks there on the other side of the island, on a small cove which had elephants walking slowly down the beach once a week – we had cows once a week as well! It was stunningly beautiful, as were the people. It had none of the commercial feel of Samui. It was the remoteness which made it so good.

In the evenings we would sit on the beach in the Eagle Pub bar around the campfire, drinking Thai whisky and watching videos, occasionally playing headlight volleyball – groups would completely intermingle and nobody was excluded...

My time in Thailand was running out. I had seen much of the south by bus and train. I had taken fishing trips to the remote islands. Ko Pha-Ngan was the ideal final stop, before I headed north to Bangkok and the next phase of my travels...

BIRTHS

J.S. Aiken *(Chatham 68)* a son Henry Alexander Stuart on 27th September 95

R.A. Allan *(Chatham 77)* a son Rory Angus Hugo on 18th September 94

S.W. Allport *(Bruce 77)* a son Theodore Bacchus on 6th January 95

E.R.F. Anderson *(Cobham 82)* a daughter Alice Ruby Isobel on 3rd January 96

D.F. Andrews *(Grenville 81)* a son Edward Philip on 18th May 95 in Sydney

N.H. Archer *(Temple 64)* a son James Coleridge Hill on 5th July 95

T.B. Arends *(Walpole 81)* a son Sebastian Valdemar Touche in 92 and two daughters Islah Valerie Touche in 93 and Siri Ouida Elizabeth Touche in 95

T.R.D. Asserson *(Grenville 73)* a daughter Avital on 28th June 95

M.J. Baker *(Grenville 64)* a daughter Katherine Sarah on 18th September 95 in Australia

Sophia Bainbridge [née Mills] *(Stanhope 82)* a daughter Isabelle in 93 and a son Edward in 95

J.R.A. Bamford *(Bruce 77)* a son William James Edward on 10th August 92

N.W.A. Bannister *(Lyttelton 77)* a son Archibald William Rennie on 9th November 95

S.L. Barnard *(Grafton 78)* two sons in 90 and 93

A.D. Barratt *(Walpole 74)* a daughter Nadine Elise in August 87 and a son Charles Samuel in May 90

J.A. Barratt *(Cobham 71)* a daughter Rachel Claire on 12th August 92 and a son Andrew James Hinton on 23rd July 95

A.C.H.M. Beddall *(Lyttelton 78)* a son Edward Max on 26th March 93

Sandi L. Bloomfield [née Edington] *(Stanhope 82)* a son Harry John Douglas on 9th December 95

P.E. Booth-Clibborn *(Grenville 78)* a daughter Anna Rose on 16th February 95

C.A. Boxall *(Lyttelton 82)* two daughters Megan on 2nd September 92 and Beth on 23rd October 94

R.J.A. Bridgwood *(Cobham 83)* a daughter Molly Elizabeth on 25th July 95

G.J.A. Bell *(Grenville 76)* three sons James on 28th October 90, Edward on 4th December 92 and Oliver on 5th February 95

R.S.W. Bell *(Cobham 77)* two sons Philip in 85 and Oliver in 87 and a daughter Rosie in 90

A.H. Berger *(Grafton 82)* a son Fergus Hugo Romilly on 3rd March 95

J.M. Bevan *(Walpole 69)* a son Wyndham on 14th November 92

Sandi L. Bloomfield [née Edington] *(Stanhope 82)* a son Harry John Douglas on 9th December 95

P.E. Booth-Clibborn *(Grenville 78)* a daughter Anna Rose on 16th February 95

C.A. Boxall *(Lyttelton 82)* two daughters Megan on 2nd September 92 and Beth on 23rd October 94

R.J.A. Bridgwood *(Cobham 83)* a daughter Molly Elizabeth on 25th July 95

S.C. Broad *(Temple 71)* a son William Jack on 15th March 94

R.A. Brown *(Walpole 76)* a daughter Eleanor Kate on 15th June 92

W.W. Brown *(Walpole 72)* two sons William Henry in October 91 and David James in April 93 and a daughter Catherine Ann in July 94

Elizabeth J. Browne [née Bird] *(Stanhope 81)* a daughter Katharine Katya Elizabeth on 28th November 95

P.C. Bullock *(Bruce 68)* a son Daniel in November 92 and twin sons Harry & Jed in September 94

J.A.M.B. Campbell *(Walpole 74)* a daughter Catherine on 10th November 94

P.A. Campbell *(Chatham 84)* a son Alexander on 9th November 94

J.J.O'G. Cameron *(Lyttelton 79)* two daughters Ella on 7th March 91 and Catherine on 20th March 93

C.D. Castell *(Grenville 81)* a daughter Megan Claire on 10th July 94

S.M. Carroll *(Temple 80)* a son Jack David on 7th May 95

J.W.H. Cave *(Chatham 77)* a daughter Isobel Rose on 3rd October 89 and a son William Frederick Hastings on 15th June 92

P.D. Campkin *(Cobham 63)* a son Richard Anthony Lea on 11th March 93

P. St J. Chapman *(Lyttelton 76)* a son Maxwell Joseph on 3rd November 94

J.A.W. Cheyne *(Chandos 75)* a daughter Victoria on 12th October 91

J.D.I. Church *(Walpole 80)* a son Jasper John Alfred on 28th August 95

A.T. Clarke *(Bruce 77)* a daughter Clare Alev on 5th January 95

Ann L. Comyn [née Rushton] *(Stanhope 80)* a daughter Harriet Frances on 18th August 94

R.M. Coombs *(Chandos 81)* a son Charles Murray on 13th October 95

W.G. Cubitt *(Temple 76)* a daughter Charlotte in 91 and two sons James in 92 and Edward in 94

E.J.L. Donne *(Lyttelton 80)* a son Alexander David Lucas on 18th November 95

M.D. Eastgate *(Chatham 72)* a daughter Hannah Daisy on 2nd October 93

W.J.N. Edgerley *(Chandos 80)* two daughters Emily Grace in 89 and Katherine Alice in 93 and a son Samuel John in 91

R.T.H. Edridge *(Walpole 78)* a daughter Khalia on 23rd November 95

W.J. Elliott *(Lyttelton 83)* a son Henry Charles on 17th September 95

J.D.H. Fenner *(Grenville 81)* a daughter Victoria Andrea on 20th August 93

G.C.M. Fenwick *(Walpole 74)* two daughters Jenny L.W. in 87, Lucy C.M. in 89 and a son Charles D.A. in 92

M.H. Forsyth-Forrest *(Cobham 74)* a daughter Alicia Katharine on 18th April 95

F.G. Foster *(Grenville 84)* a daughter Rebecca Eve on 16th July 94

D.B. Fransen *(Grenville 75)* a son Barrett David on 19th March 95 in Bermuda

S.H. Gregory *(Walpole 77)* a son Edward Hugh on 24th November 95

D.C. Guest *(Bruce 78)* two daughters Imogen Victoria on 1st April 93 and Jemima Charlotte on 12th March 95

E. St J. Hall *(Walpole 78)* two daughters Phoebe Emma on 18th March 93 and Eliza Charlotte on 20th March 95

Catherine Halliday [née Brown] *(Stanhope 82)* a daughter Sophie Louise on 19th February 95

G.M. Hemsley *(Chatham 81)* two sons Toby Macartney on 28th August 90 and Edward Marcus on 12th February 94

G.P. Hickman *(Cobham 85)* a daughter Anna May on 11th October 94

C.T. Highwood *(Bruce 79)* a daughter Elizabeth on 19th September 95

Fiona D. Hitchcock [née Barnett] *(Stanhope 85)* a son Henry Peter Robert on 6th January 96

MARRIAGES

C.C. Allen *(Lyttelton 77)* to Rozi Jackson on 3rd June 95

I. McA. Anderson *(Temple\Lyttelton 67)* to Lynne Warren in 83

D.F. Andrews *(Grenville 81)* to Rebecca in January 94

T.B. Arends *(Walpole 81)* to Susan Ruth Touche in 92

Georgina C. Arnold *(Stanhope 87)* to Nicholas G. Gibson on 16th September 95 **P.C. Stubbs** *(Bruce 86)* was a Best Man

H.B. Atkinson *(Walpole 82)* to Louise Dawn Aylwin on 6th May 95

Elizabeth M. Ball *(Stanhope 78)* to Michael William Booker on 17th December 94

J.R.A. Bamford *(Bruce 77)* to Angela Jane Hargrave on 18th March 89

S.L. Barnard *(Grafton 78)* to Belinda in 87

A.D. Barratt *(Walpole 74)* to Toni Bennett in May 86

J.A. Barratt *(Cobham 71)* to Pauline Hinton on 18th January 86

P. de S. Barrow *(Chandos 55)* to C.P. De Sousa Barry on 16th June 95

A.C.H.M. Beddall *(Lyttelton 78)* to Caroline Charlton on 25th April 91

Clare J. Benyon *(Stanhope 88)* to John Haynes in July 93

J.E. Bond-Smith *(Bruce 58)* to Thelma Kourellias on 10th August 91

R.G.A. Brooking *(Chandos 69)* to Claire Ellen Matthews on 9th August 95

W.W. Brown *(Walpole 72)* to Ann Myddleton Rickards in January 91

P.C. Bullock *(Bruce 68)* to Joanna Stephenson on 1st August 92

J.A.M.B. Campbell *(Walpole 74)* to Carola J. Denman on 6th February 93

P.A. Campbell *(Chatham 84)* to Helen Black in July 92 in Edinburgh **D.W.S. Roques** *(Chatham 84)* was Best Man

J.W.H. Cave *(Chatham 77)* to Clarissia Ann Missop on 26th September 87

P. St J. Chapman *(Lyttelton 76)* to Sarah-Jane Glaysher on 23rd May 87

A.T. Clarke *(Bruce 77)* to Ece Üstün in 93 in Istanbul

G.E.J. Clarke *(Grenville 67)* to Angelina

P.J. Cooper *(Cobham 70)* to Susanna Stretton in March 95

J.R. Cridland *(Temple 88)* to Harriet J. Allison on 22nd December 95

W.G. Cubitt *(Temple 76)* to Lucy Brooking in February 90

R.O. Davies *(Grenville 84)* to Camilla Wilson on 13th May 95 **J.A.R. Voelcker** *(Temple 84)* was Best Man and **D.H.S.S. Black** *(Grenville 85)* an honorary usher

M.S. Drage *(Chatham 86)* to Emma Lyn Gill in June 93

M.J.C. Dudley *(Lyttelton 83)* to Aude Dupont on 15th July 95 in Niort, France. **P.E. Davies** *(Lyttelton 82)* was Best Man

P.W. Ellemann *(Cobham 82)* to Christina Lyster on 24th July 93 **T.F. Ellemann** *(Cobham 82)* and **A. Lahham** *(Grenville 82)* were Best Men

Vannessa J. Elliot *(Stanhope 85)* to Stephen W. Hamer on 1st July 95

F.J. Elvins *(Bruce 68)* to Sheila Harrison on 12th March 94

N.J.A. Fellowes *(Chandos 82)* to Henrietta Williams on 21st April 95

J.D.H. Fenner *(Grenville 81)* to Katja Andrea Gorr on 18th August 90

S.P. Ferrand *(Cobham 87)* to Bettina B. Paustian on 11th March 95

F.G. Foster *(Grenville 84)* to Lorna Spencer in July 92

T.J. Gibbs *(Cobham 72)* to Suna Mills on 9th September 95

J.P. Gilson *(Walpole 79)* to Sarah Davies in November 94

Diana H. Gluckstein *(Stanhope/Nugent 86)* to Alain Waha on 21st August 92

P.J.T. Graves *(Grafton 82)* to Gail Garside in August 92

D.C. Guest *(Bruce 78)* to Henrietta Coode-Adams on 26th July 86

G.M. Hemsley *(Chatham 81)* to Georgina Taylor on 11th June 88

H.W. Herrington *(Walpole 86)* to Anna Walker on 30th September 95

G.P. Hickman *(Cobham 85)* to Lesley M. Goldsmith on 21st August 93 **S.T. Lloyd** *(Chatham 85)* was Best Man

G.T. Holland-Bosworth *(Bruce 88)* to S.L. Creagh-Coen on 17th June 95 **S. Renwick** *(Chatham 88)* was Best Man and **ChristopherTurner** *(Headmaster 79-89)* officiated

V. Hope *(Cobham 81)* to Anna Forster on 31st December 93 at Gretna Green

J.A. Hopkinson-Woolley *(Temple 84)* to Caroline Jackson on 3rd June 95

BIRTHS

J.N. Holland *(Lyttelton 77)* a daughter Lara on 16th May 91 and a son Oscar on 12th October 95

V. Hope *(Cobham 81)* a son Toby on 16th December 94

M. Hope *(Cobham 79)* a son Sebastian on 17th June 95

P.J. Hosking *(Cobham 77)* two sons Thomas Peter in April 88 and Christian Morgan in October 94

A.H. Hudson *(Grenville 76)* a daughter Antonia on 31st December 93

J.E. Hughes Clarke *(Chandos 79)* a daughter Jessica in 91

M.M. Ivison *(Grenville 82)* a son Dominic David Sebastian on 8th September 94 in Hong Kong

M.N.A. Jackson *(Lyttelton 79)* a son James Max Edwin on 18th March 95

Suzanne Keeble [née Ludlow] *(Stanhope 80)* a son Alexander John on 28th June 95

A.G. Kelly *(Bruce 79)* a son Adam Bryan on 14th August 95

D. de B. Kinahan *(Temple 75)* a daughter Tara Isabel Helen on 18th July 94

D.Q. Kneeshaw *(Cobham 75)* a son William Drummond on 14th March 95

R.L. Law *(Bruce 77)* a daughter Anna Victoria on 8th September 95

A.E. Lloyd *(Bruce 81)* a daughter Bronwyn Alexandra on 18th September 94

J.W.A. Lloyd-Williams *(Temple 71)* three sons Owain in 87, Huw in 89 and Macsen in 91

C.R.S. Manson *(Cobham 67)* two daughters Nicola in February 78, Alexandra in February 81 and a son James in April 83

W.B. Marsden-Smedley *(Walpole 80)* a daughter Rosie on 3rd July 95

R.A. Marston *(Lyttelton 79)* two daughters Pia in 91 and Isabelle in 93

R.G. Melly *(Cobham 71)* two daughters Claire V. in 89 and Alice R. in 91

D.E. Miller *(Grenville 81)* a daughter Jessica Rachael on 14th April 95

J.W. Morton *(Bruce 77)* a son Harry John on 26th May 94

P.M. Mumford *(Chatham 74)* two sons Toby in 90 and Jack in 92

D.W. Muschett *(Cobham 71)* two sons Michael David on 10th February 94 and Maurice on 31st October 95

L.S. Myers *(Grenville 82)* a son Jeremy Alexander on 23rd May 95 in Harare, Zimbabwe

I.C. Naylor *(Bruce 65)* a daughter Olivia Chantal on 26th November 95

E.S. Parker-Jervis *(Lyttelton 75)* a son Edward John on 19th April 95

M.J. Petley *(Grenville 83)* two sons Maximillian Charles on 25th May 91 and Oliver Rupert on 3rd March 93 and a daughter Xenia Ianthe Leila on 19th October 95

S.T.R. Picton-Turbervill *(Grafton 73)* a son Richard in 91

R.H. Pyne *(Bruce 71)* a daughter Katherine Sarah on 6th July 95

G.E.G. Riddick *(Walpole 73)* a daughter Charlotte Louise on 3rd January 96

Deborah S. Roberts [née Cranmer-Brown] *(Stanhope 84)* a daughter Lily Charlotte Astley on 21st February 95

M.A. Rossiter *(Cobham 85)* a son Benjamin Peter on 16th September 95

N.D. Rossiter *(Cobham 81)* a son Sam Henry on 25th October 95

A.C. Roxburgh *(Walpole 77)* a daughter Venetia May on 13th July 95

A.M. Roxburgh *(Walpole 80)* a daughter Genevieve Elizabeth on 2nd September 94

R.P. Royds *(Chatham 78)* and **Emma L. Royds [née Williams]** *(Nugent 79)* a daughter Mollie Isabella Rose on 22nd May 95

J.M. Ryder *(Lyttelton 80)* a daughter Kirstin Jean on 30th April 94

D.M. Sanders *(Chatham 82)* two sons Alexander Benedict on 22nd June 91 and Oliver Sebastian on 4th September 93

Elizabeth M. Saunders Watson [née Brown] *(Stanhope 83)* a daughter Eleanor Liebe Grace on 3rd May 95

C.B. Scott *(Temple 72)* two sons Angus on 19th January 93 and Robin on 16th October 94

M.E.W. Selby-Lowndes *(Grenville 77)* a son Edward William on 11th January 96

A.H. Shekell *(Cobham 77)* a daughter Caris Elisabeth on 17th April 93

A.J. Shepherd-Barron *(Walople 77)* a daughter Emily Charlotte on 26th February 95

C.J. Shepherd-Barron *(Walpole 82)* a son Jake Digby on 13th August 95

J.R. Shingles *(Grenville 74)* twin boys Charles and Louis on 17th October 95

M.E. Shirley-Beavan *(Grenville 70)* a daughter Georgina Mary on 22nd October 95

T.J.G. Sparrow *(Temple 81)* a daughter Emma on 6th May 93 and a son Thomas on 15th July 94

J.A.L. Spicer *(Walpole 81)* two daughters Sophia Madeleine Mary in 92 and Zoë Helena Maria on 18th August 95

S.M. Springer *(Chandos 73)* three daughters Chloe in February 89, Chantal in Sep 91 and Carla in February 95

Christina J. Stallard [née Gould] *(Stanhope 78)* a son Joe Christopher in 92 and a daughter Kim Emily in 94

N.P. Staheyeff *(Cobham 75)* a daughter Alexandra Grace on 27th November 95 in Hong Kong

J.P. Stephenson *(Chandos 81)* two sons George in December 91 and Thomas in May 94

N.R.A. Sutton *(Cobham 80)* two daughters Sophie in 90 and Connie in 92 and a son Dominic in 95

P.W. Talbot *(Grafton 79)* a son George Alastair Heyworth on 17th June 93

D.F.C. Thomas *(Chatham 78)* a daughter Martha Jane on 31st October 94 in Hong Kong

J.R. Wadsworth *(Walpole 76)* a daughter Emily in January 95

M.R. Winsloe *(Bruce 78)* a daughter Lara Beth in August 91

M.J.P. Wright *(Chandos 72)* a son Charles Jonathan Peter on 1st November 95

E.N. Yeats-Brown *(Grenville 81)* a daughter Katie Jemima on 5th July 95

R.R.N. Yeoward *(Chatham 81)* a son Henry on 3rd February 95

T.C.W. Yerburgh *(Bruce 81)* a daughter Isabel Jane on 9th August 95

MARRIAGES

C.J.B. Hornor *(Chatham 83)* to Rebecca Nancy Kinnear on 30th December 95 in Adelaide

P.J. Hosking *(Cobham 77)* to Alexandra Anne Jeffery in 87

M.C. Houghton *(Chatham 58)* to Harriet J. George on 13th May 95

Barbara S. Kopley *(Stanhope 87)* to Duncan Mallace on 21st May 94

G.A. Lakha *(Cobham 80)* to Shamira Fazal on 19th April 92

C.A. LaT. Leatham *(Grafton 32)* to Mrs Audrey Jeffries on 19th September 95

D.J. Lerman *(Bruce 52)* to Christine Elizabeth Cleaves on 15th June 68

J.W.A. Lloyd-Williams *(Temple 71)* to Rebecca Joy Charlesworth in 89

Fiona J. Lockton *(Staff 87-91)* to Richard E.S. Boulton on 23rd July 94 in Westminster Abbey

Suzanne Ludlow *(Stanhope 80)* to Antony Keeble in May 94

A.J.B. Mckay Forbes *(Walpole 71)* to Vanessa Taylor on 17th April 93

B.G.S. Macoun *(Grafton 60)* to Sarah Anne Furlong on 29th October 94, in Kenya

C.R.S. Manson *(Cobham 67)* to Sally Champion in April 75

D.R. Marsden *(Grenville 79)* to Caroline M.E. Hay on 6th May 95

R.A. Marston *(Lyttelton 79)* to Camilla Spenster in 91

Sophia Mills *(Stanhope 82)* to James Bainbridge in 91

Laura L. Moorish *(Stanhope 80)* to Francis E. Greaves on 12th April 86

P.M. Mumford *(Chatham 74)* to Sarah Hicks in 85

L.S. Myers *(Grenville 82)* to Deirdre Stevens on 7th May 93 in Malawi **T.C.M. Farah** *(Chatham 82)* was Best Man

Kate S. Page *(Stanhope 82)* to Mark Keville on 12th June 93

R.M. Page *(Grafton 87)* to Amanda Kate Seaton on 8th April 95

E.M.F. Penrose *(Temple 81)* to Celia Frances Turner on 24th June 95

Rachel E. Renwick *(Stanhope 87)* to Christopher J. Patrick on 26th August 95

J.H. Richards *(Chandos 87)* to Marie-Ange Bernard in January 95

Ann L. Rushton *(Stanhope 80)* to Oliver Comyn on 30th May 92

T. St C. Ruthven *(Grenville 83)* to Georgina A. Stevens on 22nd July 95

F.W.G. Rutter *(Grafton 87)* to Linda Dumenil on 15th July 95 **A.C.E. Rutter** *(Grafton 89)* was Best Man

J.M. Ryder *(Lyttelton 80)* to Toni Jean Darrow on 17th October 92

Brenda Salway *(Grenville Matron 69-85)* to Gordon E. Douglas on 3rd April 95

Katrina L. Samuel *(Stanhope 85)* to C. Rowton-Lee on 24th Apr 93

D.M. Sanders *(Chatham 82)* to Katy Barker in July 88

M.W.P. Seabrook *(Chandos 84)* to Nicola K. Browne on 16th September 95

P.J. Shaw *(Cobham 52)* to Marilyn

C.J. Shepherd-Barron *(Walpole 82)* to Jessica Burges in November 93

M.J. Shurey *(Cobham 51)* to Engela Cilliers in June 92

L.J.M. Skagerlind *(Chatham 77)* to Kathryn Huang on 9th September 95 in New York **D.F.C. Thomas** *(Chatham 78)* and **A.I.S. Swan** *(Grenville 78)* were ushers

C.J. Smith *(Chandos 67)* to Margaret Kuhl in 86 in Buffalo

C.L. Smith *(Bruce 87)* to Victoria Helen Grant Maby on 7th October 95 **R.C. Boulogne** *(Bruce 87)* was Best Man

T.J.G. Sparrow *(Temple 81)* to Susanne Eriksen in 92

J.P.H. Spencer-Cooper *(Temple 73)* to Amanda O'Hegarty on 18th February 95

J.A.L. Spicer *(Walpole 81)* to Rebecca Mary Llewelyn Jones on 27th July 91

H.P. Stevens *(Walpole 80)* to Desiree Alexandra Guerra on 29th June 91

J.P. Stephenson *(Chandos 81)* to Rosemary in May 90

M.H.C. Strakosch *(Bruce 78)* to Ellen Ann Owen on 3rd September 94

R.C. Thorpe *(Walpole 83)* to Louise R. Arden-White on 11th December 93

Lisa C. Tustian *(Stanhope 86)* to Adrian R.J. Maxwell in July 92

D.S. Twining *(Temple 87)* to Lisa Marie Liu on 8th April 95. Also present were **S.H.G. Twining** *(Temple 51)*, **C.D. Mullineux** *(Temple 52)*, **R.J. Hopkinson-Woolley** *(Chandos 87)*, **N. Meade** *(Temple 87)* and **M.E. Manisty** *(Staff 79-88)*.

J.F. Yeats Brown *(Grenville 78)* to Elisabeth Cemlyn-Jones in May 91

Group Captain Sir Hugh Dundas
(Walpole 38)

Ace fighter pilot
An obituary from The Daily Telegraph, *July 12th, 1995*

Group Captain Sir Hugh Dundas, who has died aged 74, was one of the most accomplished fighter pilots of the Second World War; he went on to successful careers in Fleet Street and in business, eventually serving as managing director and then chairman of BET.

Tall, slim and patrician in bearing, Dundas joined No 616 (South Yorkshire), an Auxiliary Air Force Spitfire squadron, as a 19-year-old pilot officer. When he encountered the enemy, over Dunkirk during the evacuation of late May 1940, he was stricken with terror.

"With sudden, sickening, stupid fear", he recalled, "I realised I was being fired on and I pulled my Spitfire round hard so that the blood was forced down from my head...

"Straightening out, I saw a confusion of planes diving and twisting... At some stage in the next few seconds the silhouette of a Messerschmitt passed across my windscreen and I fired my guns in battle for the first time – a full deflection shot which I believe was quite ineffectual... I was close to panic in the bewilderment and hot fear of that dogfight."

When the Battle of Britain began in July, Dundas and his squadron were in the north on convoy patrols, and feeling rather out of it. But on Aug 15, as the Luftwaffe mounted its vaunted "Eagle Offensive", No 616 was scrambled during lunch to meet a wave of Ju-88 bombers coming in over the North Sea. Dundas destroyed one and was credited with half share of another.

The main air battle was being fought in the tiltyard above the Channel and the South, and 616 was ordered to Kenley. On Aug 22 Dundas was shot down by Me109 fighters over Dover.

"White smoke filled the cockpit, thick and hot," he wrote, "and I could see neither the sky above nor the Channel coast 12,000 ft below. Panic and fear consumed me and I thought: 'Christ, this is the end.' Then I thought: 'Get out, you bloody fool, open the hood and get out.'"

After an immense struggle Dundas slithered along the fuselage, the ground now perilously close, and found himself falling. His parachute opened as his Spitfire exploded in a field below.

Dundas' arm and leg wounds kept him out of the cockpit for almost a month, which to his frustration prevented him from fighting in the final and climactic phase of the Battle of Britain.

He rejoined No 616 in September 1940. In the mess one day 'Teddy' St Aubyn, who wanted a drink, pointed at Dundas and barked, "Hey, you, Cocky, press the bell."

The sobriquet stuck: St Aubyn claimed that Dundas, a 6ft 4in redhead, resembled "a bloody great Rhode Island Red". St Aubyn was killed in action in 1944.

In mid-September No 616 formed part of the legless ace Douglas Bader's controversial Big Wing at Duxford, near Cambridge. The squadron wintered in the comparative calm of the North and in the spring flew south to defend Portsmouth. That summer they helped "lean into France" with fighter sweeps over the Channel.

On one sortie Dundas' Spitfire was crippled in a dogfight near Calais. He made a powerless crashlanding near Dover.

Shortly before his 20th birthday he was appointed a flight commander in 616, and sat for the war artist Cuthbert Orde. "I've left room for the DFC," Orde told him. "The people I draw always seem to get it." Four days later Dundas did.

In the autumn he was posted to No 59 Operational Training Unit as a flight commander training Free French pilots. To his relief, his dishevelled appearance at an inspection by General de Gaulle and the unruly behaviour of his dog earned the disfavour of his group commander and he was posted to 610 Squadron.

Shortly afterwards, during a boisterous party in the mess, he broke his left leg. He was promptly promoted to Squadron Leader and, leg in plaster, flew a Spitfire to take command of No 56, the first Typhoon squadron.

At this stage the Typhoon was full of bugs, and many pilots were being lost. But by the time of the Dieppe raid of August 1942 the Duxford Typhoons were sufficiently operational to take part, and on the day Dundas led 56 Squadron on a sweep.

When, that November, the Duxford Typhoons were formed into an operational wing, Dundas was promoted wing commander to lead it. In the New Year he was suddenly posted to Tunisia to lead No 324, a wing of five Spitfire squadrons.

Dundas went on to Malta, transferred the wing to Sicily in July 1943 and, after the invasion of Italy, to an airfield at the Salerno beach-head. In the New Year of 1944 he was switched to staff duties in the Desert Air Force and in June he returned to operations with No 244 Wing.

Dundas' Spitfire was hit by flak over Arezzo. Rather than bale out over rugged terrain he coaxed the aircraft, its fuel running dangerously low, to an emergency landing at Castiglione.

In November he was promoted Group Captain, becoming – at 24 – almost certainly the youngest RAF officer with that rank.

DEATHS

E.R. Avory *(Temple 27)* on 26th October 95

N.C. Baird *(Temple 35)* on 22nd June 95

S. Birch *(Walpole 38)* on 28th May 95

A.J. Blayney *(Chandos 27)* on 9th February 95

E.A. Bonvalot *(Grafton 37)* in 95

J.B. Booth *(Cobham 40)* on 22nd September 95

C.A.C. Bowen *(Chandos 26)* on 1st August 95

K. Box *(Bursar 50-73)* on 23rd November 95

C. Bradley-Williams *(Temple 38)* on 18th August 95

A.C.C. Brodie *(Bruce 29)* on 19th November 95

C.J.V.C. Brooke *(Temple 28)* on 20th June 95

W.A. Brown *(Walpole 36)* on 29th April 95

N.M. Bryant *(Grenville 38)* on 8th November 95

B.C. Carson *(Chatham 26)* on 13th January 96

M.E. Chapman *(Chatham 33)* on 1st August 95

T.H. Clarke *(Chatham 31)* on 5th May 95

G.B. Cobb *(Grenville/Walpole 36)* on 25th November 95

P.K. Collier *(Bruce 42)* in October 94

R.H.M. Cooper *(Grenville 44)* on 4th June 95

L.M. Crookston *(Temple 32)* on 27th July 95

P.R. Cutforth *(Grafton 52)* on 12th May 95

D. Davenport Pearson *(Bruce 38)* on 27th November 95

I.D. Dawson Shepherd *(Temple 30)* on 8th January 96

H.S.L. Dundas *(Walpole 38)* on 10th July 95

R.S. Edridge *(Temple 32)* on 23rd July 95

P.H. Filmer-Sankey *(Chandos 43)* on 14th November 95

D.C. Geddes *(Temple 34)* on 29th November 95

M.H. Goodhart *(Walpole 49)* on 19th December 95

C.G.O. Gould *(Bruce 39)* on 1st August 95

M.L. Graeme *(Temple 38)* on 1st July 95

G.I. Greig *(Chandos 41)* on 12th October 95

V.S. Greig *(Chandos 46)* on 16th August 95

K.E. Hardman *(Chatham 77)* on 5th February 95

G.T.M. Hayes *(Grafton 62)* on 24th March 95

A. Highwood *(Bruce 51)* in January 95

C.A. Hubbard *(Temple 36)* in August 94

A.S. Jeffels *(Temple 89)* on 28th May 95

C.H.G. Kinahan *(Temple 33)* on 11th August 95

J.A. Lake *(Chatham 39)* on 23rd June 95

L.G. Levis *(Temple 31)* on 24th November 95

F.A.H. Ling *(Bruce 33)* on 7th May 95

T.L. Martin *(Grafton 38)* in 1994

R.G.W. Martin *(Cobham 54)* on 5th July 93

D.A.B. Morgan *(Walpole 39)* on 21st October 95

I.C.S. Munro *(Bruce 37)* on 26th October 95

G.C. Neale *(Chandos 44)* on 3rd November 95

H.H.B. Oswell *(Chandos 42)* on 26th August 94

J.R.S. Peploe *(Chandos 36)* on 8th October 95

C.C. Preston *(Bruce 29)* in August 90

J.L. Pring *(Bruce 41)* in October 95

R.M. Pym *(Bruce 37)* on 25th December 95

D.E.V. Read *(Chandos 51)* on 6th March 95

P.F.I. Reid *(Bruce/Grafton 29)* on 9th December 94

N.W. Riley *(Bruce 41)* on 26th April 95

R.M. Sellers *(Walpole 42)* in October 94

R.A. Smith *(Cobham 35)* on 3rd December 95

R.P.P. Smyly *(Bruce/Chatham 25)* on 31st October 95

S.M. Sowerby *(Chandos 32)* on 22nd March 95

R.S. Steavenson *(Grafton 31)* on 22nd March 95

H.A.W. Stormont *(Grenville 27)* on 23rd March 94

L.G. Strauss *(Temple 26)* on 26th November 95

F.K. Te Water *(Grafton 35)* in July 94

L.H. Thwaites *(Temple 27)* on 7th September 95

G.S.C. Trench *(Chandos 31)* on 8th April 95

R.E. Wadsworth *(Walpole 48)* on 30th March 95

J.H.N. Weston *(Chatham 31)* on 11th April 95

N.J. White *(Temple 50)* on 12th February 95

Harry Kemp
(Chatham 31)

An obituary from The Guardian:
The Real Work of a poet's heroic heart

Harry Kemp, who has died aged 82, was a poet of heroic and tragic dimensions, who believed in his muse and nothing else. His purpose in life was to compose poems, and he defined poetry as "the personal account of what it is like to be alive."

Educated at Stowe and Clare College, Cambridge, like most of his contemporaries he was attracted to Communism and supported the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War. But he finally expressed his disillusion with Communism in his 1939 book, *The Last Heresy*. He was originally a conscientious objector, but the Nazi atrocities altered his opinions and he served as radar officer in the Second World War, for some time in Italy.

Postwar until his retirement, he taught mathematics, as he put it, "in my spare time". His heart's work was the composition of poems, "the real work" which he carried out between 4.00 am and 8.00 am. It resulted in

the publication – privately – of seven books.

Kemp's tragic dimension was that he missed public recognition, although by poets' standards he enjoyed more of it than most. He was mildly philomath and wrote a book about vectors. His lifelong friends were poets: Robert Graves (with whom he once shared a home), John Cornford (who was killed in the Spanish Civil War), Norman Cameron and James Reeves, his slightly older Stowe contemporary, whom he commemorated by his gift to the school of my sculpture Lord of the Dance (Exuberance), which stands in the Headmaster's garden.

Kemp was fond of cricket: "the only game with a reputable literature". As a romantic he celebrated women in his poems – in 'Danuta', in *Poems For Mnemosyne*, he transcends a single woman and illuminates woman's archetypal essence:

Provided I may dream of you
I'll not regret the hours of sleep;
Your kind alone can save a world
Of promises men fail to keep.
Like every saint of earthly hope
Betrayed by greed and violence,
By war, by crime, by civil strife
You have held fast to common sense.
So long as men pursue vile ends
Live happiness is but a dream,
A fitful listening in the dark,
You give to sleep its major theme.

Kemp was twice married and divorced. He is survived by his daughter Lindsay, a professor at Bari University, Italy, his son Hugh – a Menuhin student at seven and later bassist in the Electric Light Orchestra – and three grandchildren.

Witold Gracjan Kawalec

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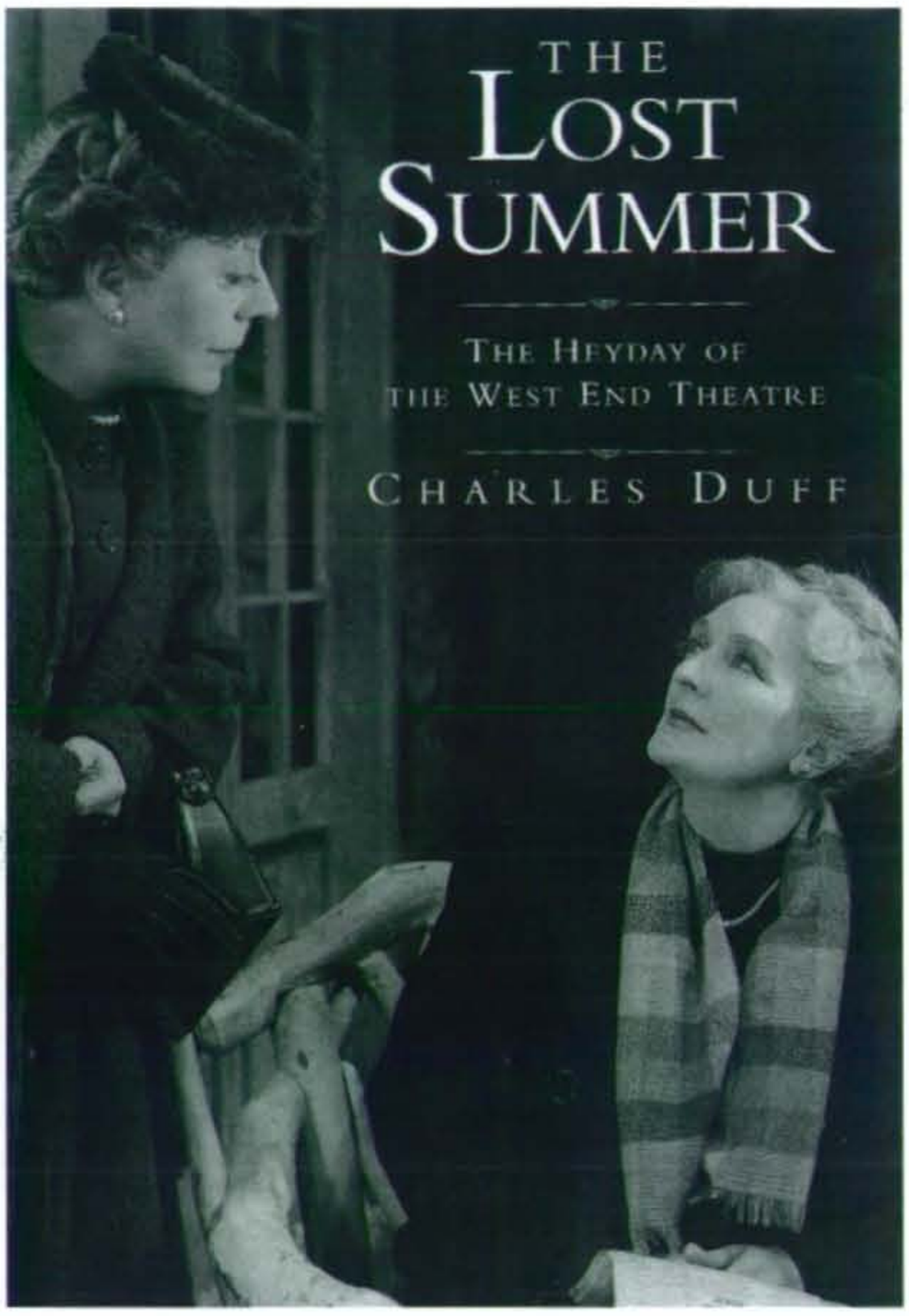
BOOK REVIEW

The Lost Summer

The Heyday of the West End Theatre

by Charles Duff (Nick Hern Books, 1995)



The Lost Summer is centred on the career of Frith Banbury *(Cobham 29)*, who has been active in the theatre for more than fifty years, at first as an actor and then as a director of much distinction. It was Frith Banbury who directed many of the West End's biggest commercial successes in the 1950s and 1960s, sometimes under his own management but often under that of H.M. Tennent. It was a period when star actors and actresses were all-important and the play almost a secondary consideration. Frith Banbury directed many of the big names of the period: Michael and Vanessa Redgrave, for example, in Robert Bolt's *The Tiger and the Horse*, Ralph Richardson and Celia Johnson in Bolt's *Flowering Cherry*, Paul Scofield and Gladys Cooper in Wynyard Browne's *A Question of Fact*, Sybil Thorndike, Edith Evans and Wendy Hiller in N.C. Hunter's *Waters of the Moon*, Peggy Ashcroft and Kenneth More in Terence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea* and Diana Wynyard and the Redgraves in Hunter's *A Touch of the Sun*. Always the plays were presented with a generous budget and in great style.

Audiences loved them, but they aroused considerable derision from the devotees of the new 'kitchen sink' drama. Frith Banbury's beautifully crafted productions were at odds with the new ideas of people like John Osborne and Arnold Wesker. Critics like Tynan championed Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop and the English Stage Company at the Royal Court and castigated the "commercial theatre" for being cosily middle-class and not reflecting real issues.

Charles Duff's book seeks to redress the balance. As he points out, many of H.M. Tennent's plays were far from negligible in their themes and addressed genuinely important issues. Frith Banbury, moreover, was very much alert to new talent. He pioneered the work of John Whiting and Wynyard Browne and enthusiastically championed Rodney Ackland, whose plays the National Theatre has recently rediscovered. *The Lost Summer*, therefore, not only tells Frith Banbury's life story but also reassesses the post-war London theatrical scene. There are also a few fascinating insights into Stowe in the late 1920s!

However progressive Stowe may have seemed in its early days, it was still prescriptive in outlook and Frith Banbury reacted strongly against the expected conformity. He was at his happiest acting in plays – he once played Lady Bracknell in cloche hat and short skirt – and talking theatre to a small group of friends; Patrick Beech, for example, introduced him to his grandmother, the formidable Mrs Patrick Campbell.

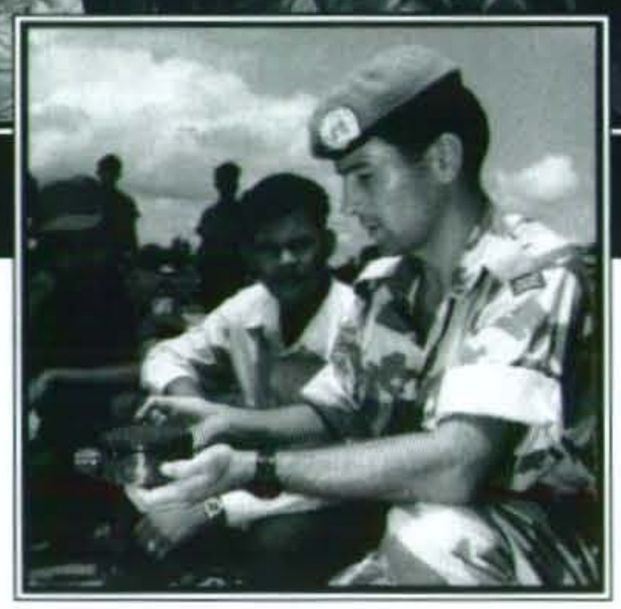
The Lost Summer, then, is the story of Frith Banbury. It chronicles too a most interesting period of London theatre history and does so with much gossip and good humour.

Duncan Hyslop

This autumn will see the publication of the second instalment of John Richardson's four-part biography of Picasso. Richardson *(Chatham 39)* came to know Picasso whilst living in the south of France in the 1950s. The new volume will cover the cubist years from 1907 to 1917. In a recent interview John Richardson declared that his early interest in modern art had been fostered by Robin and Dodie Watt at Stowe.

"...a different world where disorder is spreading"

" An effort comparable to the years after 1945 is needed ...and Britain will be expected to play a worthy part"



Those quotes are from a speech by the Foreign Secretary at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in January 1993. They highlight the importance of the role to be played by the Army. The variety involved in fulfilling this is indicated by the map below and the fact that the Army exercises overseas in some 60 different countries.

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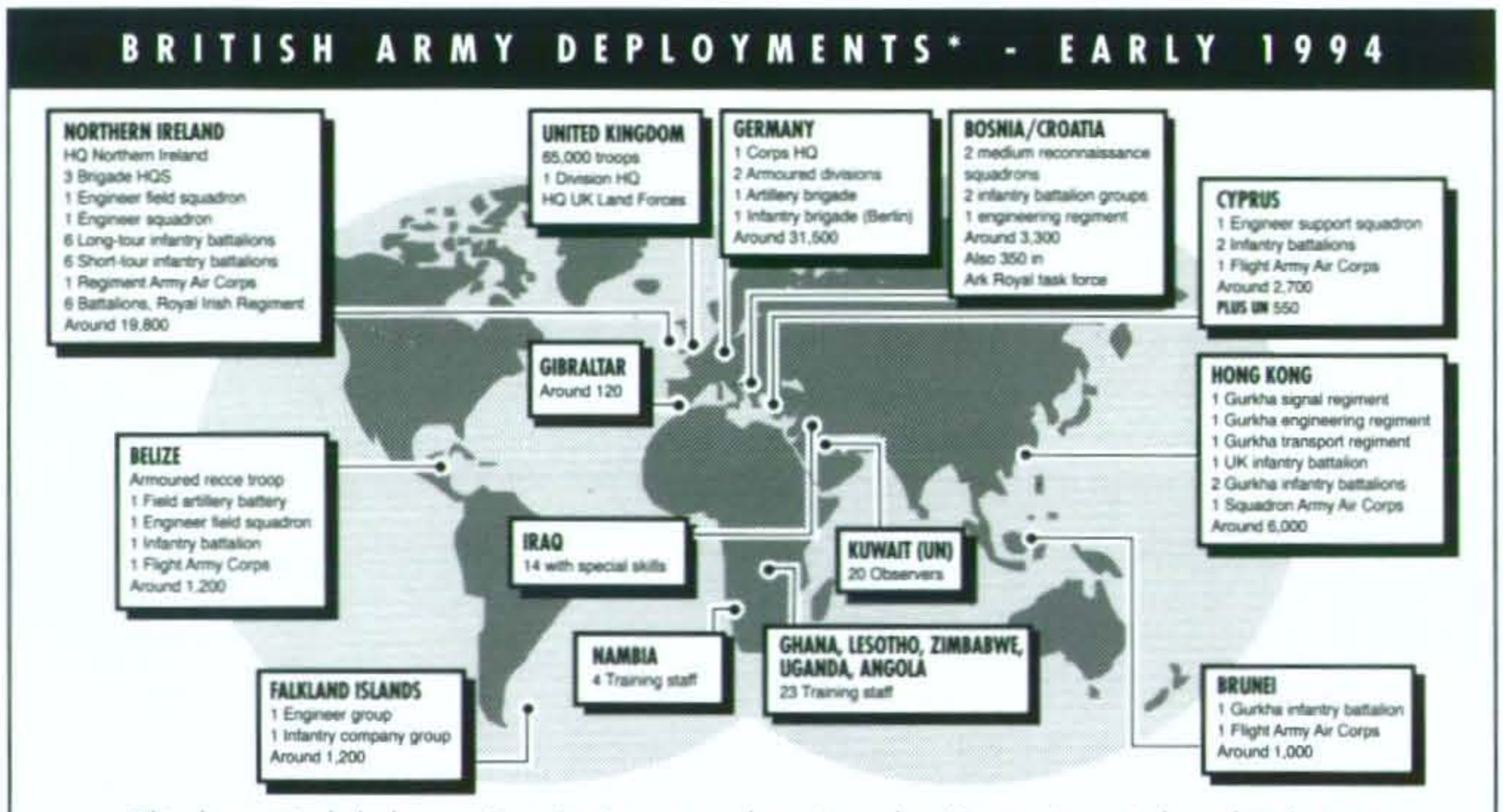

*This does not include those on Loan Service or secondment in another 16 countries not indicated on the map.

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