

THE STOIC



THE STOIC

MARCH 1997



This issue of *The Stoic* is dedicated to the memory of
Melissa Chase (Nugent)
and
Michael Clarke (Grenville 93)

THE STOIC

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EDITORIAL AND CONTENTS

This year's magazine continues the format of the past three years with five distinct sections: STOICA, general things to do with the School, THE YEAR, a record of our activities in 1996, original contributions in POETRY, PROSE AND ART, stories of travel in STOICS ABROAD and, finally, the section on OLD STOICS.

STOICA this year subdivides into three distinct sections. First there are several articles on the theme of HOUSE AND GARDENS. Several things encourage us to give them pride of place: the unveiling of the Temple of Concord and Victory, wonderfully restored by the National Trust to its former 18th century splendour; the notices on the colonnades, telling of plans for the latter's restoration through English Heritage and the Getty Grant Fund; the removal of the scaffolding in Grenville Court, where the renovated northern face of the mansion's east pavilion now sheds a pinkish-ochre glow, redolent of bright Italian villas; the introduction of Visual Education into the curriculum, reminding us that our buildings and landscapes can teach and inspire as well as simply please the eye.



Visual Education acts as a link to the second section, that of STOWE TODAY. Included in this is the world of computing. The spread of computer literacy and technology within the School in the past twelve months has been nothing short of revolutionary. Even those time-honoured guardians of our academic progress, the Three Weekly Order grades, are now computerised! The final section AROUND AND ABOUT, brings together various strands of internal news.

Small changes have been made this year to the section relating to OLD STOICS. We have tried to complement rather than duplicate the new, twice-

yearly *Bulletin*. Thus we have left to the latter the lists of births, deaths and marriages, which has allowed us space for other features.

We see OLD STOICS not as an addendum, divorced from what has gone before, but rather as the culmination of the magazine. Considerations of space preclude it from being more than just a glimpse of all that our former pupils are now doing. But however imperfect and incomplete, it gives a hint to those at Stowe of where the years of study could be leading. It is also a reminder that being a Stoic is not for five years or two but for life.

This sense of the continuity of things is particularly strong as we look forward to future issues. 1998 will see the School's Jubilee! Two years beyond comes the Millennium! These are times when it is fitting to be looking, Janus-like, in two directions: to the past, for its inspiration, and to the future, for what we may contribute. As regards the past, we would welcome the offers of reminiscences and the loan of photographs covering all periods of the School's history. Please take this as an Open Invitation to contribute to our Jubilee issue!

STOICA:

The Advent of the Astro...3,
The Mysterious Busts of the Temple of Venus... 6,
Concord Unveiled...8,
The Chinese House...10,
Clough Williams-Ellis at Stowe...12,
The Great Stowe Lion Competition...14,
Queen Victoria at Stowe...16, Visual Education...25,
World of Computers...33, Crystal Ball Gazing...37,
International Pages...39, Common Room Matters...44,
Valet...46, Melissa Chase...49, Appreciations...50,
Around & About: a year in photographs...51

THE YEAR:

Speech Day...56, The Senior Tutor...58, Chapel...59,
Drama...63, Music...72, Societies...75, Sport...78

POETRY, PROSE AND ART:

Creative writing, art, design and photography... 95

STOICS ABROAD:

Model European Parliaments in Paris & Dublin...118,
Kamuzu Academy...119, Arizona...123, The Ramblings of a
Pom in Oz...125, Nepal...128, Florence...131

OLD STOICS:

Wartime Stowe...133, Kate Reardon Interview...138,
The Gentle Steam Hammer G Wilson Knight ...141,
Henry Stanton's Motor Racing...146, George Monbiot at
Wandsworth...147, George Re-seated...148, OS Book
Review: John Richardson's Picasso...149, The Racing
Whiteheads...150, Rory Knight Bruce Interview...153,
Grafton House Log 1926-28: The David Niven Years...154



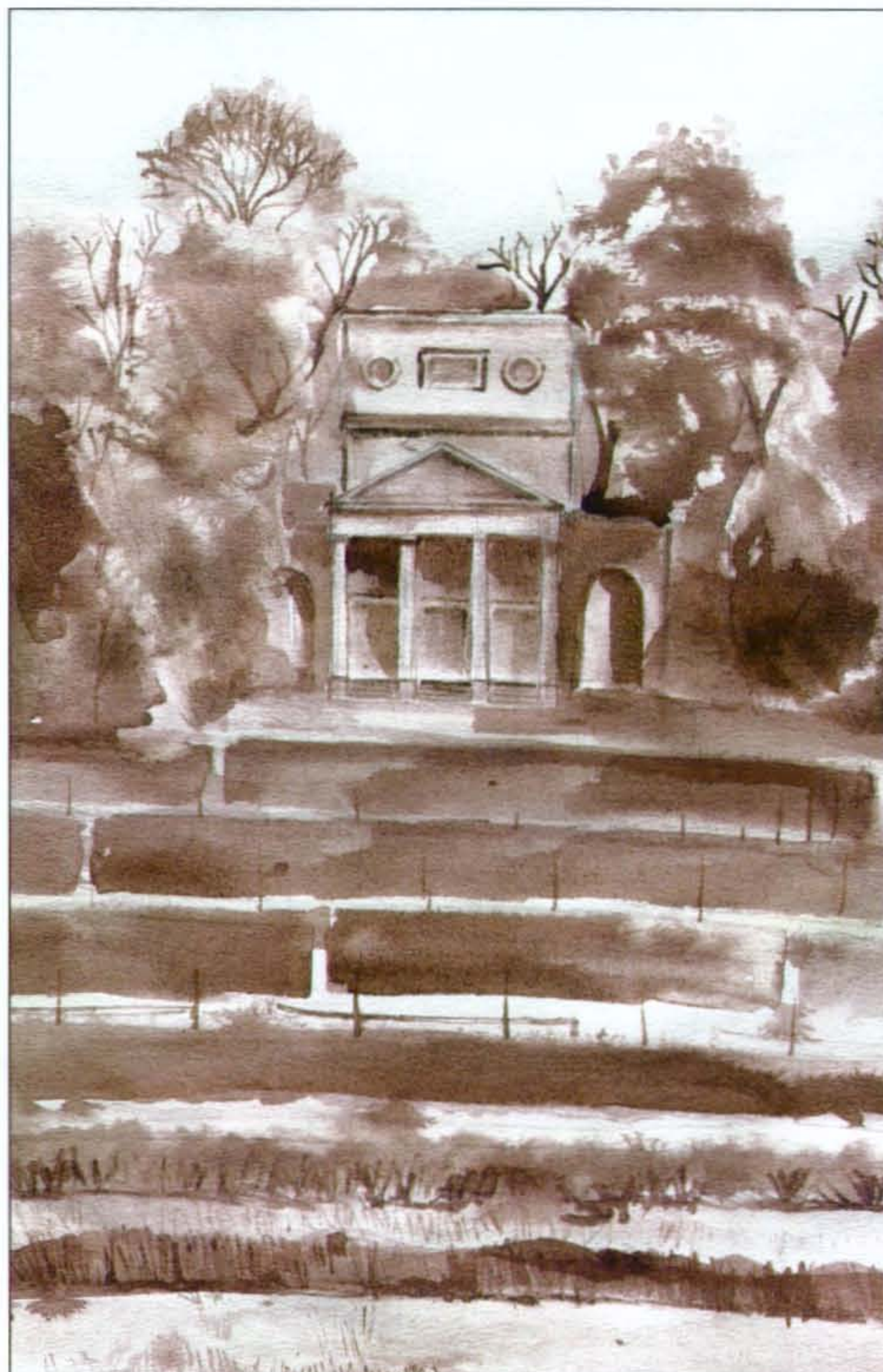
The 1st XI v St Edward's, the first school fixture on the astroturf.
Above: Before the match. Back row: C. Floyd, A. Riley, T. Bell, T. Honeyman Brown, A. McCarey, B. Wheatley, C. Williams. Front row: A. Hobbs, K. Lawal, H. Carling, W. Milling, G. Alcock, T. Smith Walker, E. Wainright-Lee, L. Pilling.
Right: Angus McCarey, Charlie Williams and Buddy Wheatley
Below: Will Milling, Charlie Williams, Buddy Wheatley and Angus McCarey



Photos: Henry Irving

“It soon became apparent,” he writes, “that the skill level required on the astroturf would be far greater than before because of its fast playing surface. Our inexperience was apparent in the pre-season matches! But it did not take long before a visible improvement could be seen in skill levels. The astroturf is an invaluable asset and but for our season on it those of us on the hockey tour would not have been able to match so successfully the enormously high standards of the Dutch teams with which we were confronted. Over the next few years the astroturf will surely be helpful in the reaching of even higher levels by the Stowe hockey teams.”

The new astroturf is one part of a larger overall plan to rationalise and improve the School’s sporting facilities. “The advantage of the astroturf pitch,” writes IM, “is the hockey provision in the autumn and spring terms and the tennis in the summer. Yet despite its twelve tennis courts, provision still had to be made for netball and this was effected when the Shop Courts received a facelift and two netball courts were provided. A third court, indoors in the Drayson Hall, is used for school matches. Since the Athletics hard surface is no longer suitable for team hockey, it has been converted into a recreational area for use during extra-curricular activities and free time, especially weekends. Eight tennis courts and three basketball pitches have been provided. The School is keen to create a second astro in due course so that the centre of the athletics track can be returned to turf to provide sports pitches in the winter and a field event area for throws in the summer.”



Hugo Roell’s painting (1978) of the Temple of Friendship with the tennis courts in front



Photo: Classic Snaps

The unimpeded view from the Temple of Friendship towards the lake, the Palladian Bridge, the Queen’s Temple, the Gothic Temple and the Cobham Pillar

So there are benefits to be gained all round from the removal of the Palladian Courts and developments on the Bourbon Field and at the athletics track. Those nostalgic for the past, however, may shed a brief tear that “Palladian Tennis” will feature no more on the summer activity lists! “Palladian Tennis” (as distinct from the more serious “Shop Courts Tennis”) hinted by its very name at gentle games, appropriate to the sixteenth-century architect, games of lobs rather than smashes, laughing faces rather than pursed lips, with all the time in the world for discussion between points.

But the new surfaces, hard and soft, will be more appropriate for games of the twenty-first century and a landscape of the eighteenth.

THE MYSTERIOUS BUSTS

Last year the Temple of Venus was unveiled after its long restoration by the National Trust. This year has witnessed the exciting appearance of copies of four long-vanished busts which embellished the temple. In this article Alex Hobbs and Lorien Pilling delve into the background of the busts and uncover a great mystery...

The Temple of Venus stands in a prominent position on the far side of the eleven acre lake facing the golf course. It was built in about 1731 for Viscount Cobham by William Kent.

Venus was the Roman goddess of love. She is referred to in the Latin dedication on the temple: VENERI HORTENSI: to Venus, goddess of the gardens. The connection between Venus and the Stowe gardens is not very clear but the underlying message seems to be that love may flourish in them! Originally there were some very lurid paintings on the theme of love inside the temple (but destroyed or in too poor a condition to be able to be restored). The four busts were added to the temple by 1738 and clearly must have some relevance to the theme of Venus. Just as the Temple of Ancient Virtue has statues of virtuous ancients, so the Temple of Venus must have busts related to love. But the four ancient figures whose busts are represented seem a very odd group indeed: Cleopatra, Faustina, Vespasian and Nero. Why did Viscount Cobham choose these four? Is there any common denominator?

Of the four Cleopatra has the strongest connections with love. Her relationship with Mark Antony is possibly one of the most famous of all romances and has been immortalised by Shakespeare. Plutarch wrote of her: "Her own beauty, so we are told, was not of that incomparable kind which instantly captivates the beholder. But the charm of her presence was irresistible and there was an attraction in her person and her talk, together with a peculiar force of character, which pervaded her every word and action and laid all who associated with her under her spell." Cleopatra used all this sex appeal to enslave Antony, a married man. Antony forgot his wife Fulvia whilst he "partied" with Cleopatra in Alexandria. Some illegitimate children resulted. It was a sordid, adulterous affair and makes one surprised that she should have been picked out by Viscount Cobham for his Temple!

There is a similar question mark about Faustina! Or rather, two question marks, because there were two Faustinas. Neither Faustina the Elder nor Faustina the Younger was a great example of faithful, honourable love! Faustina the Elder was the wife of the Roman Emperor Antoninus and she was more known for her debaucheries than for her love of her husband. According to Lemprière Faustina the Younger was even more infamous than her mother! She was the wife of Marcus Aurelius, the archetypal Stoic.



Faustina



Cleopatra



OF THE TEMPLE OF VENUS



Nero



Vespasian

Although she was very beautiful and witty she was, says Lemprière, “the most abandoned of her sex”. It is hard to see such a sensuous lady in the somewhat severe statue of her. Obviously still waters run deep! Again, like Cleopatra, Faustina seems to have been chosen not as a representative of pure love, but that of a somewhat baser kind.

The third bust shows the Emperor Vespasian. He was a whole-hearted patriot and he represents a different kind of love: devotion. Vespasian was devoted to serving his country as best he could. Indeed he was so concerned for the general public in the Roman Empire that fantastic tales resulted about his healing the needy; the story went around that on his visit to Egypt he had cured the blind and invalids of Alexandria! His tolerance for Christians meant that he was also an example of compassion. According to Suetonius Vespasian lived happily enough with his wife. Suetonius “dishes the dirt” on all the emperors but is reasonably restrained about Vespasian. A professional soldier, the son of a banker and himself a keen financial administrator, Vespasian seems an odd representative in the Temple of Love for all his devotion and compassion.

So too Nero! After the murder of his mother Nero was free to do what he liked, which was to enjoy himself. He instituted two big annual parties, the Iuvenalia and the Neronia, and he so ignored his duties as emperor that he even went on an “artistic” tour of Greece, singing in competitions and generally being very dissolute. Suetonius makes it clear that Nero had a great appetite for women, as he exhausted one mistress after another. His first wife Octavia he discarded; she was forced to commit suicide. His next he kicked to death. He was undoubtedly the playboy of the ancient world, shattering the Roman tradition of *gravitas* – serious conservatism – and dancing and music became the flavour of his reign. He seems a very odd choice to be in the Temple of Venus.

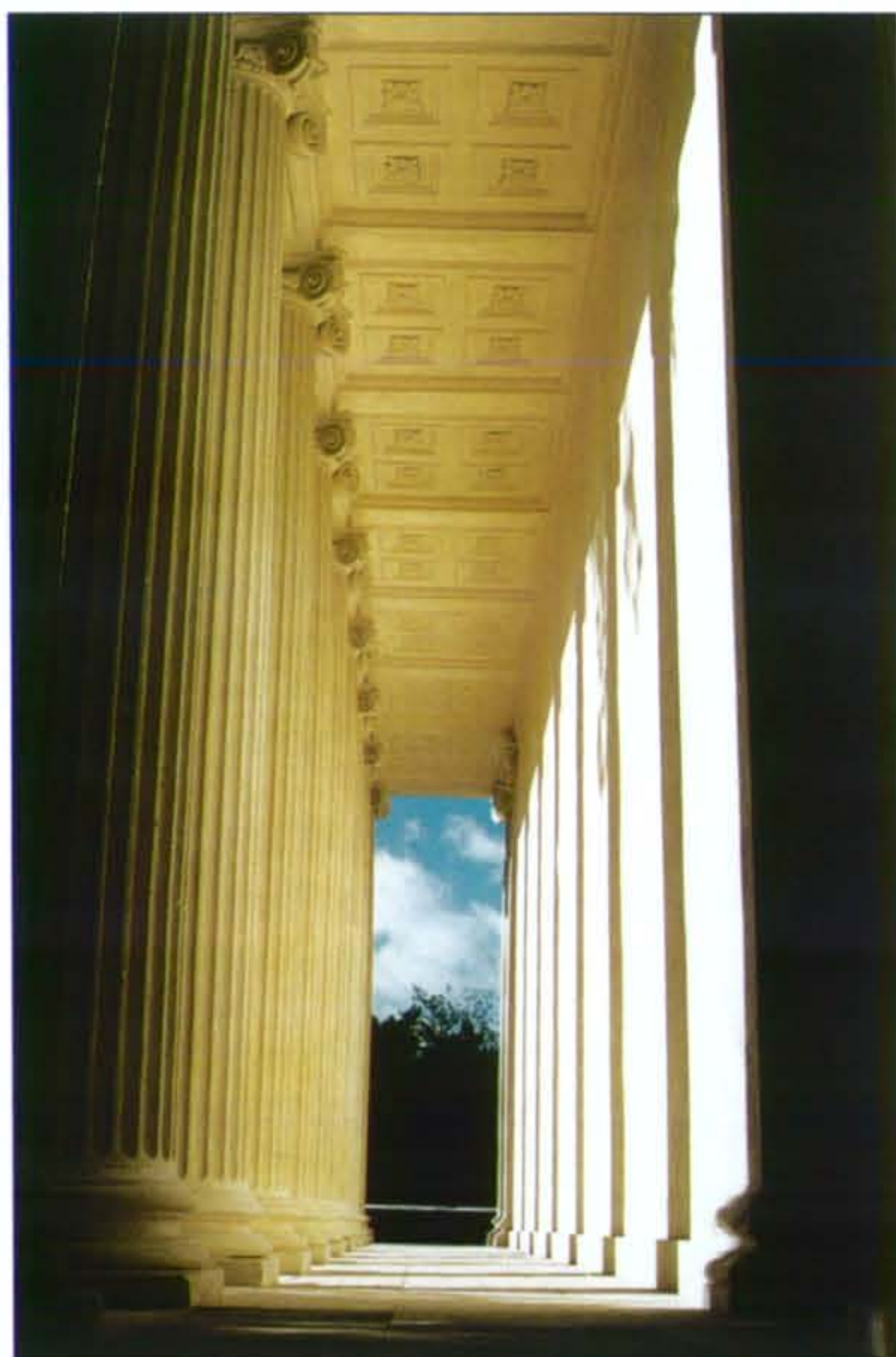
Nero, Cleopatra and Faustina, therefore, represent love in its wildest and least responsible form. Vespasian, in great contrast, represents a purer form of love. Overall, therefore, we were puzzled. Was Viscount Cobham really endorsing adultery and lasciviousness? Was that his “Venus of the Gardens”? It seemed somewhat shocking and not very likely. We were confronting a seemingly insoluble mystery. But then came a chance remark about the political background of all the garden buildings of Stowe. We found that we had been misled in looking for a morally upright interpretation.

Instead, Mr Bevington suggests, we should see the Temple in the context of Lord Cobham’s strong political views of the 1730s. Then the interior paintings, originally showing adultery by a woman “before” and “after”, could be interpreted as a comment on Queen Caroline and her supposed adultery with the Prime Minister of the day, Sir Robert Walpole, whom Lord Cobham so disliked. Such pointed satire matches much else in Stowe’s garden during this decade and would fit with the most obvious significance of three of the busts, as explained above. The full explanation of how other features of the Temple of Venus and the role of the Vespasian fit in will be revealed in Mr Bevington’s next edition in the *Templa Quam Dilecta* series.





Painting



Sculpture



Photos: MJB

CONCORD UNVEILED

Soon after the School opened it was decided there was need of a new Chapel. Several different designs were submitted, including a most striking one from the School's first architect, Clough Williams-Ellis. However, it was the more overtly neo-classical design of Robert Lorimer which won the Governors' approval. One of its most important elements was the internal use of columns to be taken from the peristyle of the Temple of Concord and Victory, then a somewhat derelict building.

In announcing this new Chapel, *The Stoic* of April 1927 was quite unabashed about the damage to be done to Concord. The new Chapel, it declared, was to resemble an Italian Basilica and Sir Robert Lorimer's use of Concord's columns would create two fine and dignified arcades at a very small cost. "In making this suggestion he is only following ancient usage, for most of the Italian Basilicas have pillars in their arcades taken from earlier structures." Lorimer, claimed *The Stoic*, was brimful with good ideas: "He has also prepared an ingenious plan showing how the portico of the temple, with its columns and characteristic sculptured pediment, can be preserved, and the building behind adapted for use as an Armoury and Fencing School, screen walls being substituted for the columns that will be removed..."

In 1927 sixteen columns were duly removed and the sides and back of the temple were blocked up with brick.

For nearly seventy years generations of Stoics have known the temple in this sorry state. No more! At the cost of over a million pounds the National Trust has now achieved a most remarkable restoration. The distressing red brick has gone! The temple has been given wonderful copies of the missing Ionic columns, whilst those which are original have been so finely restored that they can scarcely be discerned from the new arrivals. The statue of Victory on the apex of the pediment has been reinstated.

Other statues, copies of those sold in 1921, embellish the roof. The magnificent coffered ceiling has been restored. So too the lime render on the inner walls. The steps have been relaid. The wing walls have been reconstructed and foundations provided. The interior has similarly been brought back to pristine condition.

The Temple of Concord and Victory is now very much as it must have been after the alterations made to it in the 1760s. Its restoration is a magnificent achievement, allowing it to be seen again with all the visual impact it must have possessed back in the eighteenth century. Lord Cobham and Earl Temple, down in the Elysian Fields (or wherever else they may now be cavorting) must be raising many a glass in salute of those with the vision and courage to effect such a remarkable transformation of their lovely building.

Duncan Hyslop



Photo: MJB

THE CHINESE HOUSE

Frank Thomson, the National Trust's Property Manager, introduces an article by Gervase Jackson-Stops on the garden building which is shortly to return to Stowe.

By its inclusion in the anonymous 1738 description of Stowe, this "house built on piles, after the manner of the Chinese" may claim to be the earliest garden building in England designed in the Chinese style. It stood originally in the Elysian Fields "in the middle of an old Pond", which is shown on Sarah Bridgeman's 1739 plan as a formal, coffin-shaped pool breaking the line of the ha-ha in an eastward direction from the Temple of Contemplation.

It was made of wood and painted both inside and out with chinoiserie, apparently by Francesco Sleter. Afloat on the pond were "the Figures of two Chinese

Birds about the Size of a Duck, which move with the Wind as if alive", and inside the building "the figure of a Chinese lady, as if asleep". The Chinese House was moved to Wotton in late 1748 and remained there for two hundred years. It has recently been acquired by the National Trust and because the pond in the Elysian Fields has long since vanished, it will in due course be re-erected on the one in the Japanese Garden. Its conservation and reinstatement form the National Trust's project in memory of Gervase Jackson-Stops, the author of the following article published by *Apollo* Magazine in 1993:



Painted details of the east side

The east side of the Chinese House, painted in the Chinese taste by Francesco Sleter, the earliest surviving example of the oriental style in Europe. © The National Trust Photographic Library



Pictures and furniture from country houses often disappear from view only to resurface on the market generations later. But it is rare that a whole building should do so – and even rarer when that building turns out to be the earliest structure in the oriental taste known to survive anywhere in Europe.

The Chinese House in the Elysian Fields at Stowe was first recorded in 1738, predating the one at Shugborough by ten years and Chambers' famous pagoda at Kew by nearly twenty. Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham, for whom it was built, had already completed a series of garden buildings to designs by Vanbrugh and Gibbs. These included a pyramid, described in 1724 as 'a copy in miniature of the most famous one in Egypt'.

Lord Cobham's interest in the still more exotic civilisation of China may have been stimulated by his older cousin Sir William Temple, whose 1685 essay *Upon the Gardens of Epicurus* was one of the first to praise Chinese gardening. The serpentine walks in Sir William's own garden at Moor Park also prefigured the work of the young William Kent, who began to lay out the Elysian Fields at Stowe in the 1730s, in a more naturalistic style than had been attempted almost anywhere else in Britain.

Kent's engraved design for a garden building in the oriental style suggests that he could also have designed the Chinese House at Stowe, just as he did the grotto and the more conventional classical temples further down the valley. The building originally stood in the middle of a pond within one of the 'bastions' of Charles Bridgeman's ha-ha, at the northern end of the Elysian Fields, near the grotto.

Samuel Boyse, who visited Stowe in 1742, has left us the best description of it. 'You enter it,' he writes, 'by a bridge adorn'd with Chinese vases with flow'rs in them. It is a square building with 4 Lettices [ie lattice windows], and covered with sail cloth to preserve the lustre of the paintings; in it is a Chinese lady as if asleep, her hands covered by her gown. In the pond are the figures of two Chinese birds about the size of a duck, which move with the wind as if living. The outside of the house is painted in the taste of that nation by Mr Sletea [ie the Italian artist, Francesco Sletter]; the inside in India jappann'd work.'

Lord Cobham died in 1749, and his nephew Earl Temple set about 'naturalising' the Elysian Fields along more



Inside the Chinese House.

© The National Trust Photographic Library

advanced picturesque lines. The Chinese House and its straight-sided pond must by then have seemed too artificial and frivolous for this part of the gardens, and in 1751 he had it dismantled and removed to his other family seat, Wotton, near Aylesbury.

Changes may well have been made to the building at the time of its move: in particular the roof, shown as concave rather than convex in early engravings; and the interior lacquer or coromandel panels (probably already damaged by damp), which were evidently replaced by chinoiserie paintings to match those on the exterior.

By the 19th century no one remembered that the pavilion had ever been at Stowe, and in 1957 it was bought by an erstwhile owner of Wotton, Major Michael Beaumont, who moved it to his Irish estate in County Kildare. The rediscovery of the Chinese House was due to the comparatively recent researches of Dr Patrick Conner. But by this time the building was in a parlous state, and following the acquisition of the landscape gardens at Stowe by the National Trust, the present owner generously agreed to sell it to the Trust so that it could return to its place of origin.

Today, it would obviously be wrong to

re-erect the Chinese House in the Elysian Fields, an area that became so much purer in its classical architecture in Lord Temple's lifetime. On the other hand, a near-ideal situation for the building exists in the extension to the gardens, to the east of the Palladian Bridge, made by the 1st Duke of Buckingham in the early 19th century. This was later known as the Japanese Garden and planted with many oriental species.

In recent months the whole area has been cleared of dense scrub, revealing a complex system of sunken paths, rock-work, streams, cascades, and a now-refilled upper lake. The Chinese House, erected on a platform in the upper lake with a stepped bridge to the shore (as described by early visitors), would greatly enhance this part of the garden, as well as preserving one of Stowe's most precious historical relics.

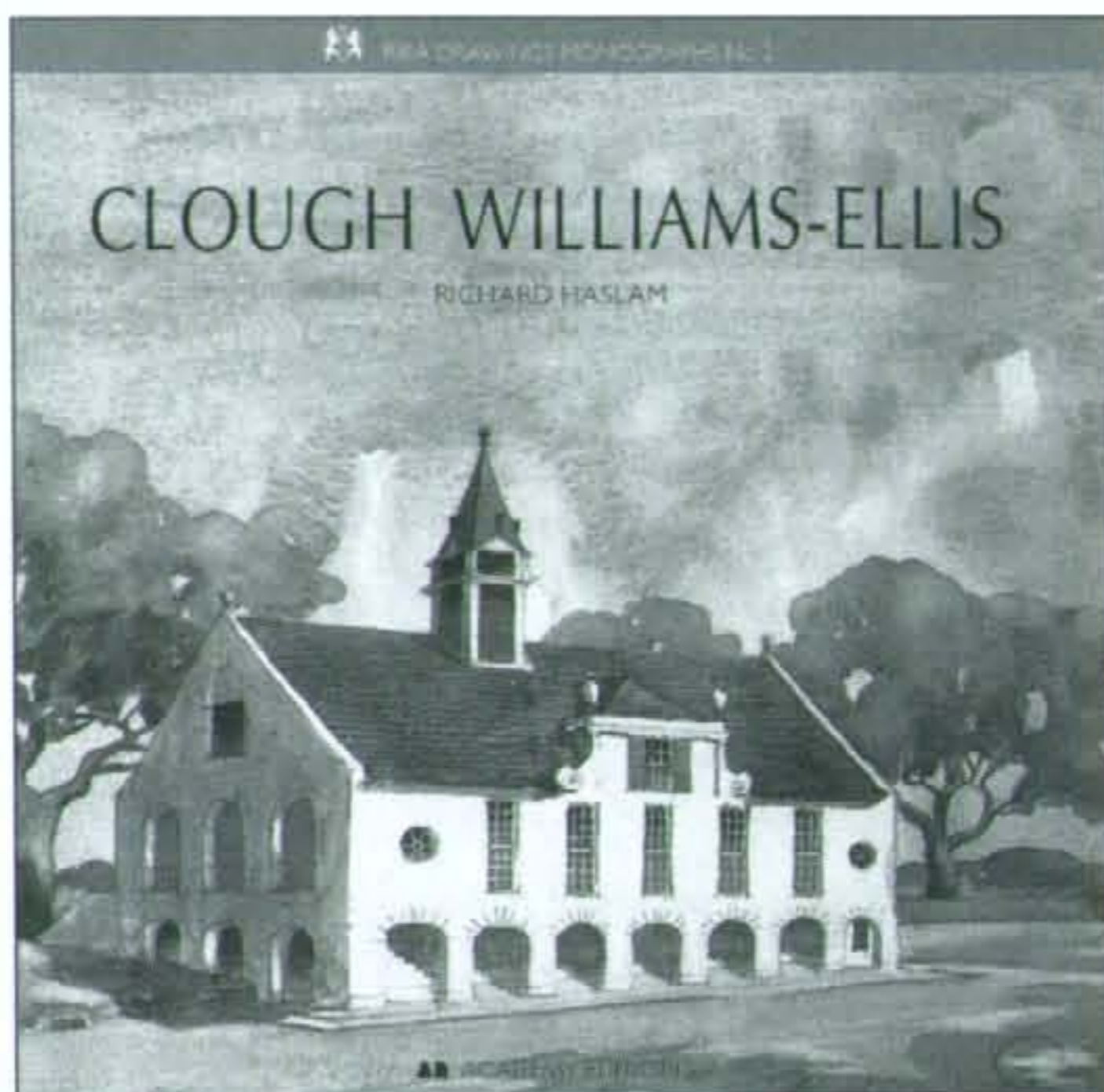
With thirty-eight surviving temples at Stowe to repair, and a vast programme of clearing, dredging and replanting under way, it might seem foolhardy to take on this extra burden. But such an opportunity may never arise again, and the Trust has therefore shipped the Chinese House back from Ireland and is keeping it in a safe location near Stowe until it can be restored.

CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS AT STOWE

Michael Bevington discusses the work of the School's first architect in the wake of a new book, *Clough Williams-Ellis by Richard Haslam (Academy Editions)*.

Stowe School owes much more than might be expected to one of this century's most engaging architects, Sir Clough Williams-Ellis. In many ways he has changed the face of Stowe as much as the famous eighteenth-century architects such as Sir John Vanbrugh, William Kent, James Gibbs or Robert Adam. Without his involvement Stowe House and its immediate surroundings could have been very different physically from the foundation of the School in 1923 and for the next two years.

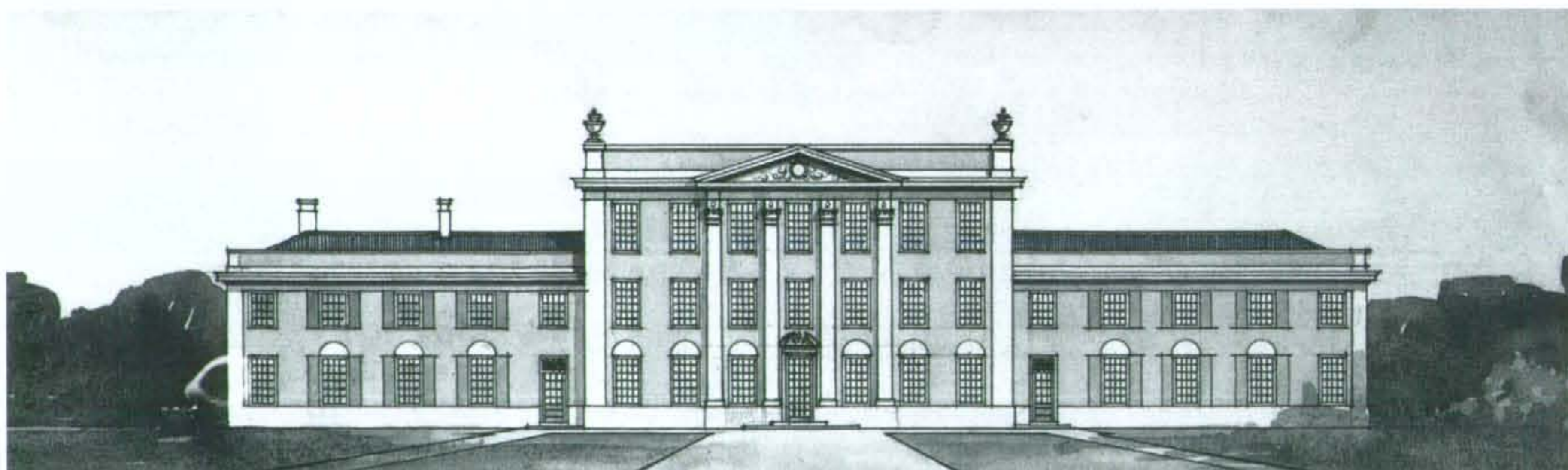
Without his personal expenditure, the grand Stowe Avenue rolling into Buckingham would have fallen prey to speculative builders and developers. Moreover in late 1922 he was responsible for suggesting JF Roxburgh as the founding headmaster of the new School. He first met JF at a lunch given by his wife, Amabel Strachey, the literary editor of *The Spectator*, just after he had been appointed as architect for Stowe School. In fact Clough in turn owed this appointment to his father-in-law, the



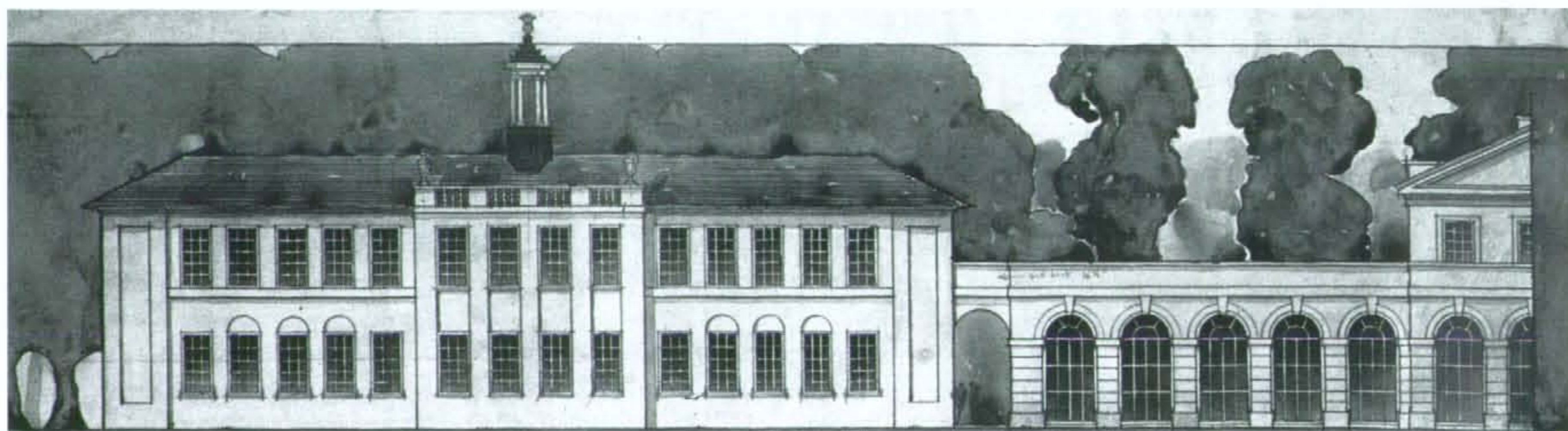
editor of *The Spectator*, in which he had published an article on Stowe.

Clough's work as an architect has not always been treated as sympathetically as his work for conservation and the "green" movement. His merits were eventually recognised in the award of his knighthood in 1972, but he was the oldest knight ever created at the time: he was born in 1883 and died in 1978. One reason for his lack of status was his inclination towards playful compositions rather than heavy monumentalism; another factor may have been his brief time spent in training as an architect. The

main cause, however, was probably that he cannot be easily categorised as a straightforward member of any single movement, whether Arts and Crafts or Modernist; he became increasingly drawn towards re-interpreting the Classical traditions in a new vernacular and individualistic style. In addition he tended to work as a painter, to whom colour and shape are of primary importance, at the expense of the manipulation of space and depth.



Chatham House, as Williams-Ellis intended, with wings of only two storeys and without a portico. The decorative window-shutters and urns no longer survive.

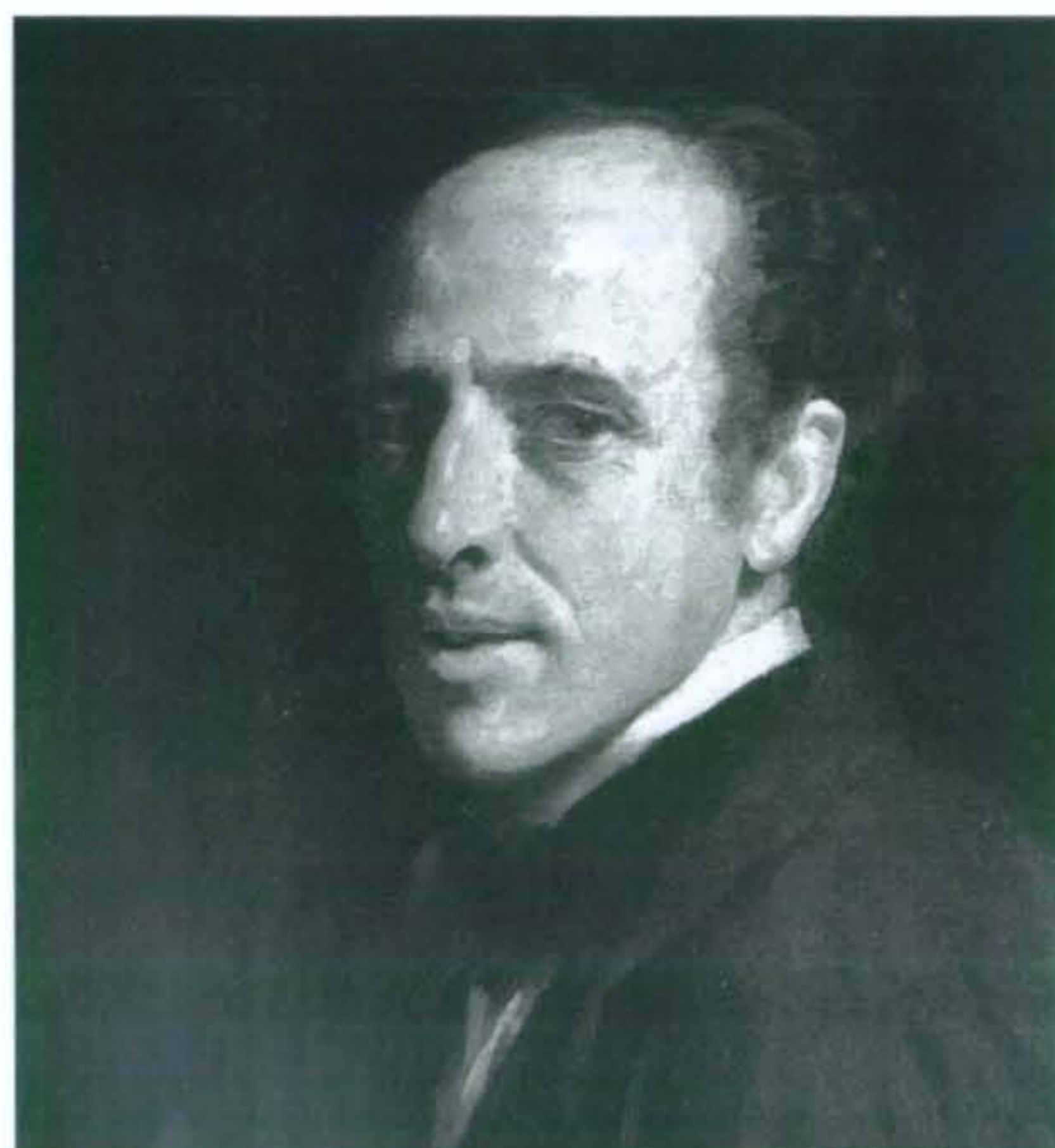


The Maths Classroom Block, looking much as it does today, with the exception of the trees behind it.

His character certainly comes through strongly in his work at Stowe. Anyone who has struggled up the steep and daunting flights of concrete stairs in the Pineapple Classroom Block or Cobham or Grenville Houses will have soon realised that Clough was a tall man with a veritable bounce in his stride. The height of many of his windows is another trait, as is the use of diagonal glazing bars, still to be found frequently around Stowe. His inclusion of refined detail to create the illusion of perspective and size is apparent in his external decoration on Chatham House and the cupola of the Pineapple Block. Some of the colour originally evident in the plasterwork, the window-shutters, the cupolas and the doors is now missing.

It is appropriate that Clough has just been honoured with the publication of a beautifully illustrated monograph on his architectural work, including a number of schemes for his most famous project, Portmeirion in north Wales. This was written last year by Richard Haslam, a leading authority on Clough's work, who is also preparing an exhibition of his drawings for the Heinz Gallery at the RIBA; he also knows Stowe well as a member of Stowe's National Trust Advisory Committee. The RIBA holds 28 of Clough's drawings of Stowe; Stowe School has over 50 drawings which have just been conserved by an Old Stoic, Andrew Fane, under the auspices of the Hall Bequest Trustees.

Clough's work at Stowe shows him in a strong light, since he was at the height of his career and could combine at Stowe his interests in both conservation and classical design. His straightforward approach, which usually allows a building to be read with ease, also suited the often simple demands of institutional use. Only a couple of examples of his work can be illustrated here. Chatham House is perhaps the best known, although his



Clough Williams-Ellis
Portrait by Oswald Birley 1926

original design with only two-storey wings looks much more effective than what was actually built. It now commemorates its architect in the form of Hans Feibusch's vigorous bust over the south door and the elegant inscription carved by Jonah Jones, another of Clough's close associates.

The following is a brief catalogue of Clough's main works known at Stowe. Several buildings, such as Chatham House and the Hostel, underwent a number of changes from the first plans.

Extant new projects:

Chatham House;
Cobham House: "Kent" and "Gibbs" Blocks;
Grenville "Soane" Block
[now the Housemaster's House];
the Hostel;
the Pineapple Classroom and Laboratory Block
[now the Maths Block];
the Sanatorium
[and now the Careers and European Centre];
Vanbrugh Classroom Block (northern side).

Conversions and additions:

The main building, including:
Grafton House;
the original Grenville Study Block;
the Kitchen Block (top floors);
Nugent House;
the former Temple Upper Quadrant Dormitory
[now the Sixth-Form Centre];
West Boycott Pavilion.

Buildings no longer extant:

The old Assembly Hall/Gymnasium;
gates for Stowe Avenue,
between the Buckingham Lodges.

Proposals not executed:

An Assembly Hall in Cobham Court;
a pair of semi-detached Boarding Houses;
a new Chapel
[Sir Robert Lorimer's design was chosen instead];
a Classroom Block [for the site of the present New/
Modern Languages Block];
a new Dining Hall etc in Power House Yard;
semi-detached Masters' Houses;
the conversion of the Queen's Temple
into a dwelling house;
a Servants' Block [for the site of the Dobinson Theatre];
a Swimming Bath (100' x 33');
a Temple of Music;
the southern side of the Vanbrugh Classroom Block
[which was executed later].

In addition his Plan of Stowe marks future additions, such as a Boarding House near the later Lyttelton House, Classrooms on the southern side of Chapel Court, and a Head Master's House near later Kinloss, as well as a future Chapel on the present site.

THE GREAT STOWE

There are lions all over Stowe. Some fierce, some tame, some couchant, some rampant, all wearing their manes defiantly long, as if it was still the 1960s.

But how well do you know your Stowe lions?

Leo Brown and his fellow lion-hearted *Stoic* editors invite you to test your knowledge in the Great Stowe Lion Competition, the answers to which will be found on page 91.



Photo: B Tree



Photo: Hilary Masey

1 The South Front lions are the work of the sculptor John Bickerdike. They replaced lions which were sold a year before the School was founded. When did the Bickerdike lions appear?

- (a) 1907 (b) 1927 (c) 1957

2 One of the South Front lions, sold a year before the School was founded. The two lions stood, facing inwards, with their inner front paws on a ball. They were made of lead and had stood on the Stowe South Front since the 1770s. This lion now stands with its partner, as photographed, in a public park. In which public park does this Stowe lion now stand?

- (a) Stanley Park, Blackpool (b) Preston Park, Brighton
(c) Upton Park, East London

3 A rampant lion, carved in oak between two martlets, with an ancient bell beneath. The wooden beam with its decoration was designed by Clough Williams-Ellis for the hanging of the bell, the latter being a gift to the school in the 1920s. Where is the oak lion to be found?

- (a) South Front (b) The Queen's Temple (c) North Front

4 This is one of the original lions, on which the lion in Picture 2 was modelled. This original was made of marble. It was made in the 1590s (though its pair dates back to classical times). The pair once lived in the Villa Medici, Rome (and so are known as "the Medici lions"). However, they have both now moved from Rome and stand, as photographed, in the Loggia dei Lanzi in another Italian city. Which one?

- (a) Naples (b) Florence (c) Sorrento



Photo: Al Bianco



Photo: Henry Irving

LION COMPETITION



Photo: Classic Snaps

- 5 Another Stowe lion. Which monument does he guard?
 (a) The Temple of Venus (b) The Cobham Pillar
 (c) The Lions' Lair



Photo: Classic Snaps

- 6 Yes, the lion in the centre comes from the pediment of the Temple of Concord and Victory. And he has been there since the 18th century. But he spent a few years on another Stowe building before reaching his present site. Which building did he first adorn?
 (a) The Lions' Lair (b) The Temple of the Animals
 (c) The Palladian Bridge



Photo: B Tree



Photo: Al Bianco

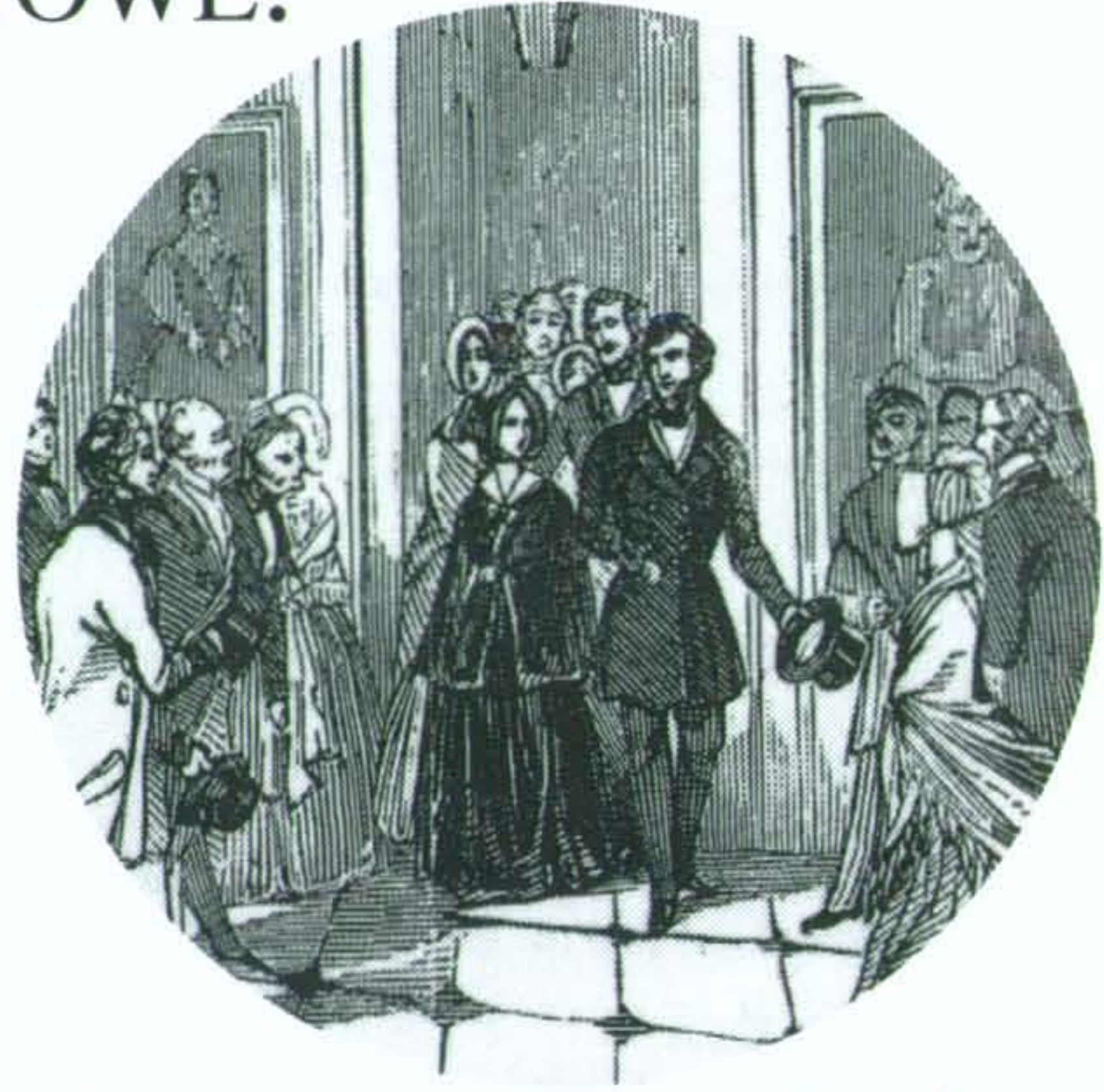
- 7 A distinctly cheeky lion. Where does he live?
 (a) Temple of Concord and Victory
 (b) South Front
 (c) North Hall
- 8 A lion from the North Front. He is made in a special stone called coade stone and dates to 1777. He has just returned (with his twin) after spending a fifty-six year holiday on another building. Where did he spend those fifty-six years?
 (a) The Pavilion
 (b) The Temple of Concord and Victory
 (c) The Lions' Lair
- 9 A musing Stowe lion. What is he musing about?
 (a) A swim in the lake
 (b) The rules of cricket
 (c) A visit to the barber



Photo: Al Bianco

QUEEN VICTORIA AT STOWE: THE VISIT OF 1845

Whilst this issue of *The Stoic* was under preparation some old newscuttings of Queen Victoria's visit to Stowe came to hand. Reports of the visit in *The Pictorial Times* were accompanied by several fine illustrations, whilst *The Morning Herald* gave some more details. Together they seemed to offer *The Stoic* an appealing feature. The visit, of course, is very much part of Stowe folklore. The Second Duke of Buckingham, on the point of bankruptcy, spent a fortune in entertaining his royal visitors, when at last, after many invitations, they came to stay for three nights. The Queen was twenty-five at the time, had been married four years and on the throne for six.



A detail from a print showing the Queen and Prince Albert taking their leave in the North Hall.

DAY 1: Wednesday January 15th

The Morning Herald:

"The announcement that her Majesty and Prince Albert would travel by the London and Birmingham Railway en route to Stowe had the effect of bringing together a large number of persons in the neighbourhood of the terminus at Euston-square...

About twenty minutes before twelve o'clock her Majesty and suite arrived at the station and on alighting from her carriage they were received by the chairman and several of the directors... Her Majesty wore a black velvet dress and tunic, and a white silk bonnet with lilac

flowers. Prince Albert was dressed in plain black clothes. At 25 minutes past 12 o'clock, the Queen and Prince Albert entered the state carriage, which was placed in the centre of the train, consisting of six carriages, which left the station amidst the cheers of the numerous persons assembled. The engine by which the train was propelled was conducted by Mr Burry, the chief engineer of the company, and it performed the distance to Wolverton, 52 and a half miles, in one hour and 22 minutes, arriving there at 13 minutes before two o'clock.



Wolverton Railway Station. Rail travel was still in its infancy, Stephenson's Rocket pre-dating Victoria's visit by only sixteen years. The line to London was managed by the London and Birmingham Railway Company.

At Wolverton every preparation suitable to such an important event had been made. A large body of the Bucks Yeomanry and a company of militia, under the command of Captain Grove, lined the platform; and when the Queen alighted the Yeomanry band played the National Anthem... The Queen and the Prince remained at the station nearly a quarter of an hour, during which time they partook of refreshments, and they then entered a travelling chariot, drawn by four horses, to proceed on their journey. Her Majesty's suite occupied another two carriages..."

[The Queen was expected to arrive in Buckingham at 3 pm, but preparations had been taking place much earlier.]

The Pictorial Times:

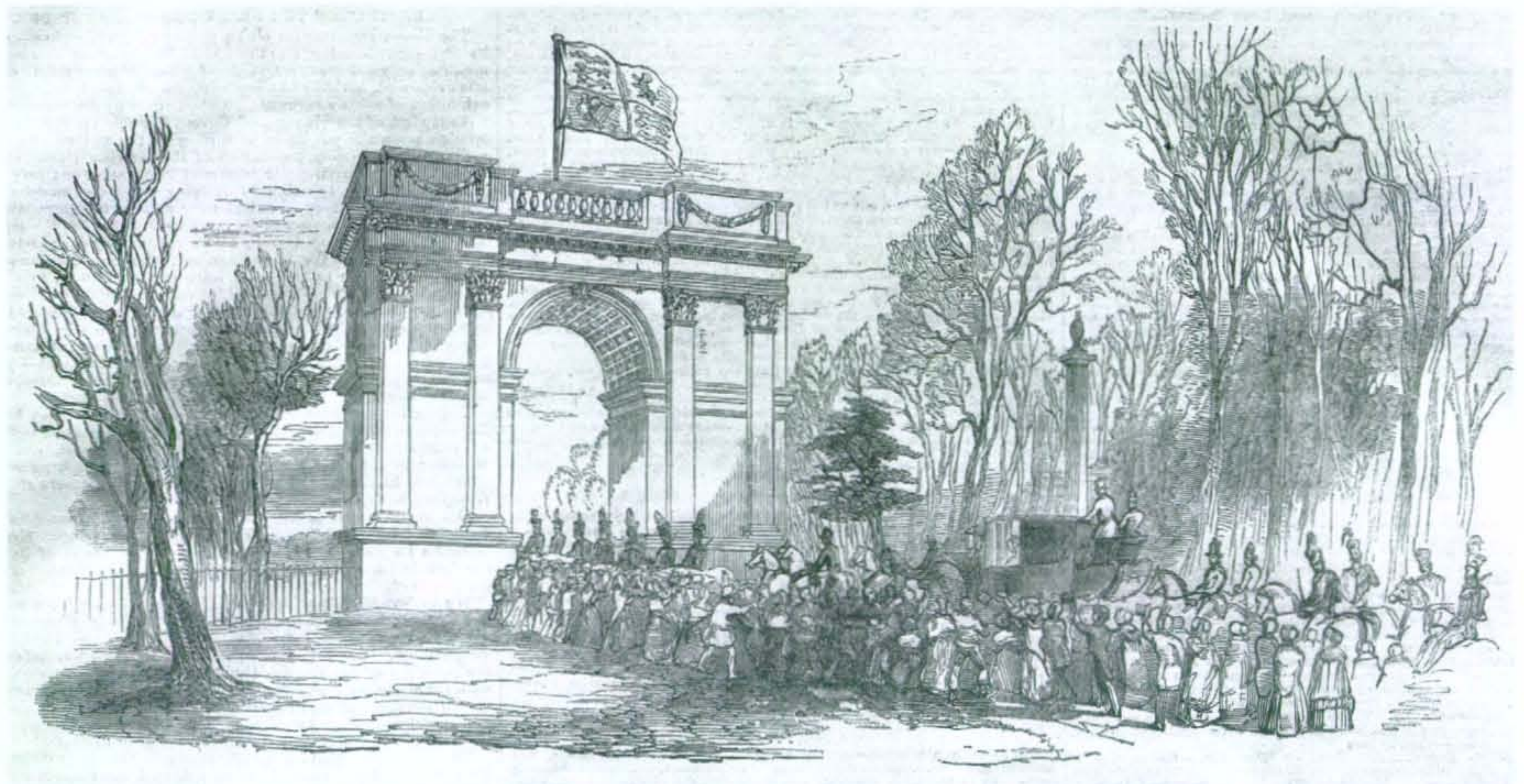
"The day was ushered in with the most tumultuous bell ringing and the stirring notes of the yeomanry trumpets. The preparations were complete in good time, the town presenting, on the whole, a very fair appearance, notwithstanding the almost unavoidable sameness of the arrangements. Hardly a house but boasted of a motto, a flag or a forest of evergreens..."

In the centre of the market-place was constructed a large stand for the accommodation of the charity children... The gaol, a large piece of unwindowed ugliness, tried to look its best, with flags floating over its heavy roof; but I am afraid that not all the flags and triumphant arches in creation could make the monstrosity appear decent. All down the street called the North End, to the boundaries of the borough, the houses were dressed with evergreens and rude symbols of welcome and here and there a small stand and at the boundary itself another arch reared its not ungraceful form..."



Buckingham Town Hall: "Over the Town Hall floated the royal standard, and upon its ample walls the legend of "God Save the Queen and the Prince" was traced in huge coloured letters."

Arch at Buckingham: "Over the market-place was constructed a very handsome arch, of large dimensions and great apparent solidity, displaying the motto "Britain's Pride". Close to this where Meat Street leads away from the Market Place another arch was erected glittering with flags." [Perhaps Castle Street, visible on the drawing above]



The Queen's carriage approaches the Corinthian Arch. The royal standard flies on top of the arch. A troop of the Bucks Huzzar Yeomanry Cavalry acts as the Queen's guard of honour.

At a comparatively early hour the streets began to be crowded. Carts and gigs and vehicles of every kind came pouring in from the country, conveying jolly, top-booted farmers, their comfortable-looking wives and pretty daughters, to the scene of the action. The labourers and peasantry, for miles and miles around, gathered in the centre of Buckingham; the townspeople too, determined to have a complete holiday, forsook work-bench and counter, and betook themselves to sauntering about. About noon the procession which was to conduct her Majesty through the town began to form at the Town Hall. It had no great pretensions to splendour, but was quiet and respectable. The inhabitants joined in, ribbons

and favours – the civic authorities were, of course, in their robes of office – flags and banners, with various devices, were carried here and there, and the cortege moved down the principal street towards the arch at the borough boundary, there to await and honour the arrival of her Majesty. The windows then began to get crowded; the people had all donned their best attire; the street soon became a compact maze of expectant men and women; the flags flew, and the gazers admired, and the boys huzzaed, and the band played, and all Buckingham stood on tiptoe expectation.

About three o'clock the royal party were seen approaching, and hailed by a tremendous burst of cheering."



One of the three great banquets during the visit. The view is from the State Drawing Room [Temple Room]. The Queen and the Duke would appear to be at this end of the table. Prince Albert and the Duchess, presumably, were at the far end.

[A vast procession then proceeded through the town, accompanying the royal party, as far as the second triumphal arch.]

“The mayor came up to the royal carriage and presented the mace to her Majesty, addressing her as follows: “May it please your Majesty to accept this mace, which as mayor of this ancient and loyal borough, I humbly present in dutiful submission to your royal prerogative and authority.” Her Majesty replied: “Mr Mayor, I beg you will keep it, and I am much gratified by this reception.” The procession then moved on in the direction of Stowe...

Along the avenue which extends nearly from the town to Stowe, special constables were placed. Two or three triumphal arches, with their usual loyal mottoes, had also been constructed. Here and there parties of peasantry had assembled, some of them mounted on waggons, decked with evergreens and drawn to the roadside.

Near the lodge a party of the artillery troop of the Bucks yeomanry was drawn up to fire a royal salute. The tenantry of the Duke mounted, and wearing green bands round their hats inscribed “God save the Queen”, were stationed in the park – a good array of burly yeomen – stout fellows with jovial faces and broad shoulders, and bestriding, in most instances, strong serviceable steeds. But besides these, there were drawn up in a large hollow square, opposite the north entrance of the mansion, a great body of the labourers employed upon the duke’s estate, to the amount of 500, each man wearing a clean smock frock, and the whole forming, in fact, a sort of agricultural guard of honour. It was a curious and not uninteresting muster this of the agricultural labourers, clad, as it were, in the peculiar costume of their order; and certainly they appeared a set of strong-limbed sturdy fellows. In the inside of the hollow square thus formed was stationed a guard of honour of the yeomanry, accompanied by the band. About a quarter before four, the report of a gun stationed at the lodge gate gave warning of the approach of the royal party. His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and the Duchess proceeded down the steps of the portico to be in readiness to receive their royal visitors. The remaining portion of the party who had already arrived took up their position in the lofty vestibule. Presently the royal outriders dashed up followed by the leading men of the yeomanry escort, and in a moment afterwards her Majesty’s carriage drove to the door. A loud burst of cheering, and the notes of the National Anthem from the band, marked the moment when the Queen and her Royal Consort alighted. They were received by the duke and the duchess, and her Majesty ascended the grand staircase leaning upon the arm of the noble duke. Prince Albert conducted the duchess.

The royal party proceeded into the great vestibule [Marble Hall] where the guests were assembled. At that moment her Majesty expressed her wish to appear upon one of the colonnades before the assembled tenantry and yeomanry. She was immediately conducted thither, still leaning upon the arm of her noble host. The appearance

of her Majesty was a signal for a tremendous burst of cheering. At this moment the scene was striking. Upon the lawn before the mansion were ranged in regular ranks the huge square of labourers, all looking neat and uniform in their white array. The yeomanry were clustered in the centre. At a little distance were disposed in irregular groups the mounted tenantry, and all eyes were turned towards the colonnade. Her Majesty came forward between two pillars and bowed repeatedly. The cheering again and again burst forth. She was retiring when the Duchess of Buckingham presented herself, and waved a white handkerchief as a signal, giving the time, in fact, to the reiterated bursts of enthusiasm which again broke forth. Her Majesty then retired to her private apartments. The tenantry and labourers then began to disperse; the latter proceeding to their hamlets and parishes to be regaled at the duke’s expense. A handsome present in money was also made to each man.”

[Neither newspaper had details of what Victoria and Albert did immediately after arrival. Only scanty references too were made to the evening concert and dinner.]

The Pictorial Times:

“Stowe House was brilliantly illuminated in front of the north wing, on the portico over the grand entrance, with the words “God save the Queen” on a large tableau, encircled with crimson lamps. On the right and left wing the initials of her Majesty and Prince Albert, “V.R. and P.A.” encircled with laurels, and headed with a large regal crown – an extensive and splendid design – one large tableau.

A select party and concert was given to the Queen last evening...”

The Morning Herald:

“In the evening the Mayor and Corporation of Buckingham, with the county and borough members and officers of the Yeomanry and the inhabitants of the town, dined together at the Cobham Arms, to commemorate the happy event of her Majesty’s visit. Here her Majesty’s health was drunk with extraordinary enthusiasm, and the evening was spent in the greatest hilarity. The town was also brilliantly illuminated, and the variegated lamps and devices appeared to the best possible advantage.

I subjoin a list, I have reason to believe correct, of the distinguished personages who had the honour of dining in the evening with her Majesty and her Royal Consort: The Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, Lord and Lady Delawarr, Lady Mary West, the Marchioness Douro (lady-in-waiting), Lord and Lady Jersey, Lady Clementina Villiers, Miss Kerr (maid-of-honour), Sir Robert and Lady Peel, Lord and Lady Nugent, Lord and Lady Orkney, Lord Aberdeen, Marquis of Chandos [the Duke’s son and the future 3rd and last Duke of Buckingham], Lady Anna Grenville, Marquis of Breadalbane, Sir J Graham, General Wemyss (the Queen’s Equerry), Colonel Bouverie (Prince Albert’s Equerry), Hon. Mr Anson (Prince Albert’s secretary),

Lord and Lady Southampton, Mr and Mrs Robarts, Sir Thos. Aubrey, Captain Carrington, Rev. Mr Andrews (his grace's chaplain) and Mr Smith (his grace's librarian).

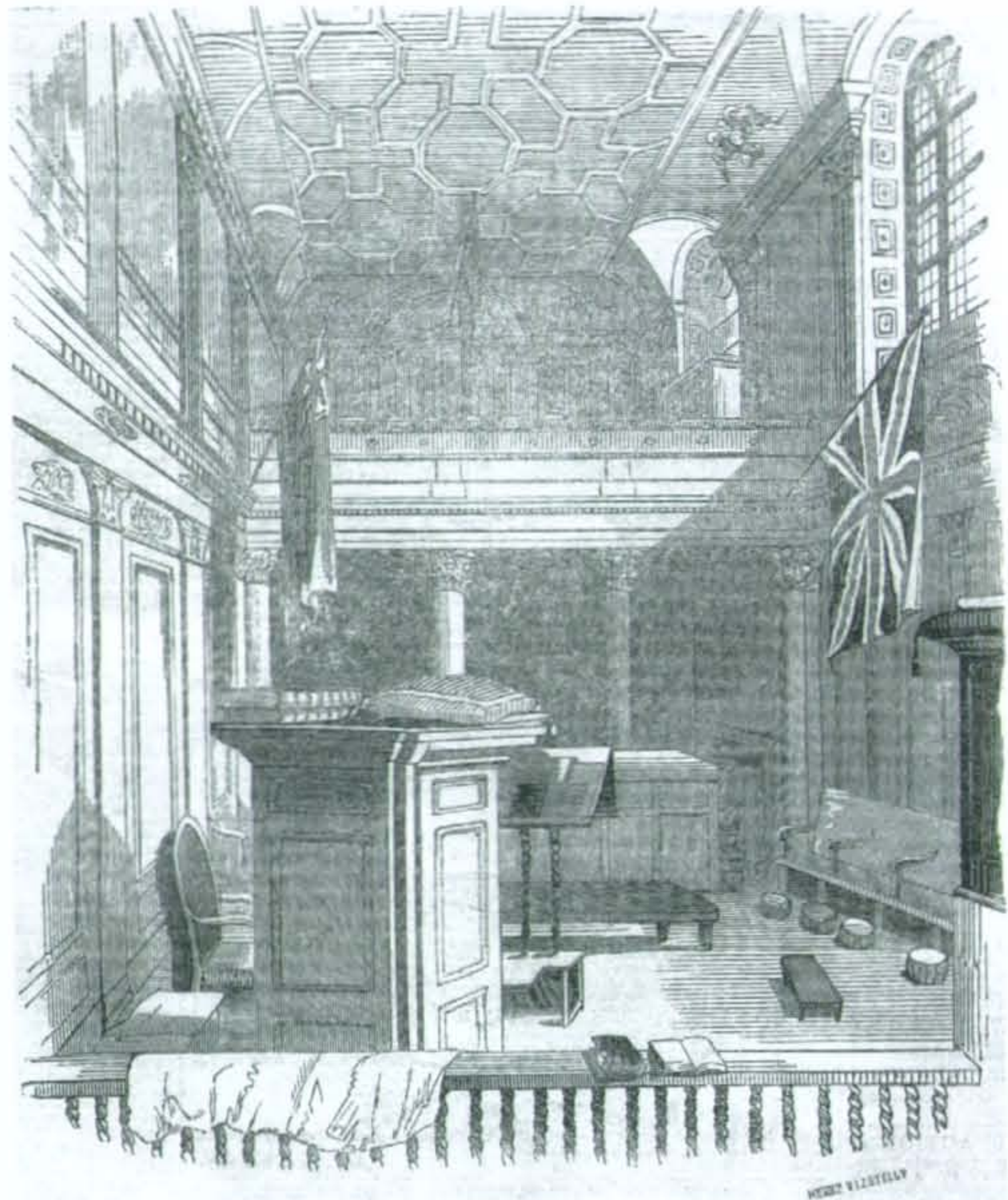
In the state dining-room the walls are hung with tapestry of Brussels manufacture. The subjects consist of the triumphs of Ceres, Bacchus, Venus, Mars and Diana. The two chimney-pieces are of Sienna and white marble, and over each is a piece of carving. The subject of one is a goddess conducting Learning to Truth; of the other, Mercury conducting the tragic and comic muses to Mount Parnassus. The chairs are of mahogany, carved and partly gilt, and covered with Gobelin tapestry, the subjects of which are taken from Aesop's fables. At each end of the room is a finely carved mahogany sideboard, on which there is now arranged a collection of gold and silver plate of unsurpassed value and magnificence. On the dining table are also placed many beautiful candelabra, but here the centre and chief ornament is the gorgeous piece of plate presented to his grace some time ago by the agriculturalists of the county, in testimony of their sense of his grace's exertions in promoting the welfare of their interest."

DAY 2: Thursday January 16th

The Morning Herald:

"I last night supplied you with a full account of her Majesty's safe arrival at "the grand retreat of Stowe", and as it is intended that her Majesty should find the mansion essentially such, I have, of course, little to communicate respecting the Royal movements. I am, however, enabled to state that her Majesty retired to rest last night about eleven o'clock and rose at eight this morning. Her Majesty and Prince Albert breakfasted together in their private apartments, and at nine o'clock attended prayers in the family chapel. The Rev. Mr Andrews, one of his grace's chaplains, officiated. After divine service, her Majesty and Prince Albert walked for a short time in the grounds, but, the weather at this time of the day not being very favourable, soon returned to the mansion. About eleven o'clock, his Royal Highness Prince Albert proceeded to shoot in the preserves, called Guernsey Hill and Paper Mill Spinney.

The shooting party consisted of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, the Duke of Buckingham, Sir R Peel, Earl of Jersey, Marquis of Chandos, Earl Delawarr, Sir J Graham, Mr D Anson, and Col. Bouverie. Prince Albert, the Duke of Buckingham and Sir R Peel proceeded to the preserves in an open carriage, the rest of the distinguished party walked. The sport (although, I understand, the preserves shot in today are small) was of the best description. The produce in about two hours only, during which it



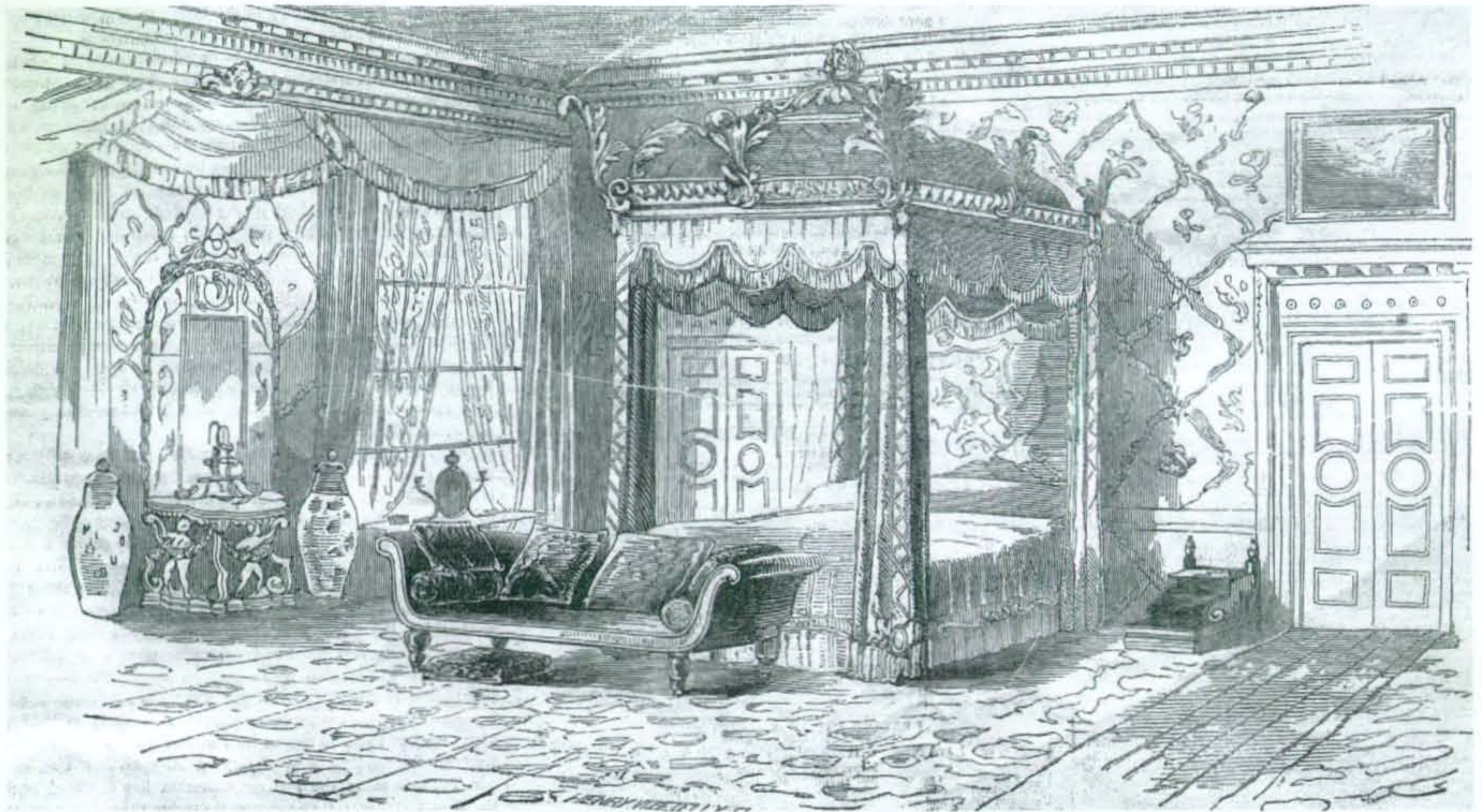
Above: The chapel [looking up at the gallery, where the Queen would have worshipped, now the Aurelian Room].

Right: Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister of the day, who with his wife stayed the three days at Stowe. A year later he was toppled from power by Disraeli.



Below: Queen Victoria is led to the Elysian Fields by the Duke of Buckingham.





The Royal Bedroom [Chandos House's Delta Dormitory]: "The state bedroom where the royal visitors will repose is a noble room, of great height, and solemn yet not sombre hue. The state bed was built for Frederick Prince of Wales in 1737 and George IV reposed on it in 1805. It is a truly splendid couch, rich with burnished and gilded pillars, and satin hangings and drapery."

lasted, was upwards of 200 hares and 100 pheasants. Of these, it was stated, his Royal Highness Prince Albert shot 114 hares, 29 pheasants, and also 1 snipe. His grace has ordered the game to be liberally distributed.

Towards noon, the day, which had been gloomy in the morning, became much finer, and soon afterwards the sun shone cheerfully. Her Majesty accordingly availed herself, after lunch, of the opportunity thus afforded of visiting the gardens near the mansion, and the various grottoes and temples which are contained in them. Among these may be mentioned the celebrated Temple of British Worthies...

Her Majesty proceeded through the grounds on foot, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, and a party of nearly 20 of their graces' distinguished visitors.

The dinner party today will consist of 35, and will be nearly the same as that of yesterday. Lord and Lady Southampton, Sir Thomas and Lady Aubrey, and Captain and Mrs Robarts have, however, left the mansion, but their places will be supplied tonight at the Royal table by James Barnes Esq., High Sheriff of the county; Henry Smith Esq., Mayor of Buckingham; Sir Thomas Fremantle, MP; Sir J. Chetwode, MP; and Sir Harry and Lady Verney.

Immediately before dinner the following addresses will be presented to her Majesty and Prince Albert by the High Sheriff of the county...

During and after dinner the band of the 1st Regiment of Life Guards will perform in an adjoining chamber.

I understand the department of cuisine is under the superintendence of Messrs. Gunter and Rawlings, of London.

The town of Buckingham still continues to display all the tokens of festivity which I described in detail to you yesterday. Tonight the town will again be illuminated, and in addition there will be a grand display of fireworks under the direction of M. Gyngell. It is intended that six fire balloons shall ascend in the course of the evening. I should add that a copy of the Morning Herald of this day, containing an account of the reported death of the Emperor of Russia arrived at Stowe by express soon after nine o'clock this morning. It is unnecessary to add the intelligence created the deepest sensation."

The Morning Herald:

"At the close of the banquet last evening, the Royal party were entertained by an instrumental concert, which took place in the Marble Saloon, under the direction of M Jullien. I am informed that her Majesty repeatedly expressed her gratification during the progress of the concert; and Prince Albert, in the course of the evening, came into the saloon, and expressed to M. Jullien and his band his approbation of their performance. Her Majesty retired at half past eleven, but the concert continued for nearly an hour afterwards.

The north side was again brilliantly illuminated. The public were freely admitted to the park, but order was admirably preserved by Inspectors Otway and Stead, assisted by 12 of the A division of the police from London."

DAY 3: Friday January 17th*The Pictorial Times:*

"Her Majesty rose at seven o'clock and soon afterwards breakfasted with her Royal Consort in their private apartments. At ten o'clock his Royal Highness Prince Albert left the mansion, and proceeded to shoot at Stratford Hill Wood, one of the Duke of Buckingham's preserves, about two miles distant from Stowe, on the road to Banbury."

The Morning Herald:

"Her Majesty did not attend prayers in the family chapel this morning, but remained in her own room, and during the rest of the morning amused herself by examining the library and the state apartments..."

"The shooting party today consisted of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, the Duke of Buckingham, Marquis of Chandos, Earl Delawarr, Earl of Jersey, Col. Bouverie, Mr G. Anson, Captain Carrington and Captain Robarts. The slaughter of game was much more considerable than on the previous day. Prince Albert shot no less than 80 pheasants, 66 hares, and 2 rabbits. The party returned to Stowe at one o'clock."

The Pictorial Times:

"In the course of the morning, Sir Robert Peel, the Earl of Aberdeen, Lord Delawarr, the Marchioness of Douro, Lady Jersey, Lady Clementina Villiers, Dr Buckland and several others of the distinguished visitors at Stowe, visited the manuscript library, of which the most rare and valuable contents were produced and described to them by Mr Smith, the librarian. Among those objects which particularly attracted attention were several ancient and most curious historical state papers and other similar documents."

The Morning Herald:

[Some of the objects in the Gothic Library which were admired]

"A Prayer-book given by Henry the Eighth to Anne Boleyn, and a very singular volume containing calendars and tables, written by the Protector Somerset, and dated "frome the Towarr the day before my deth, 1551 – E. Somerset." Mr Smith also exhibited to his distinguished visitors the Psalter of King Alfred, the Hyde Abbey Register, the valuable collection of manuscripts which consist of about 2000 volumes, and are classed according to their subject, and the other historical and literary treasures of which he has the custody."

The Pictorial Times:

"On the return of the shooting party, and soon after luncheon, Her Majesty and Prince Albert proceeded to the "Temple of Concord" on the north-west side of the mansion, to plant some trees in commemoration of their visit to Stowe. Her Majesty walked to the spot leaning on the arm of the Duke of Buckingham, and they were immediately followed by Prince Albert and the Duchess.

Her Majesty, after throwing a few spadefuls of earth against the trees, delivered the spade to the Duke of Buckingham, but continued holding them while His Grace completed the ceremony. Immediately his Royal Highness Prince Albert had planted the last tree, the Duke of Buckingham, waving his hat, cried aloud, "God bless her Majesty the Queen," and immediately the "welkin rang" with the shouts of spectators, great numbers of whom had come from Buckingham to witness the interesting ceremony. The royal party then returned to the mansion to dinner."

The Morning Herald:

"The trees selected were oaks and cedars, and one of each was planted by her Majesty and Prince Albert on each side of the temple. The spades provided were manufactured especially for the occasion, and I understand were of silver, the handles being covered with crimson velvet.

At the Royal dinner party this evening covers will be laid for 36. Mr Dupre, Mrs Dupre, Hon. Captain Fitzmaurice, Mrs Fitzmaurice, Mr Rice Clayton, and Mrs Clayton, and Mr Scott Murray will this evening have the honour of joining it.

During dinner, as on the former day, the band of the First Life Guards, under the direction of Mr Waddell, will be in attendance.

In the evening there will be a grand concert, to which nearly all the nobility and gentry of the county of Buckingham have been invited. The concert will be performed in the Marble Hall, under the direction of the Distin family, who will attend with their celebrated Sax-horn band. It will commence at six o'clock."

[A list of over 250 people attending followed]

During the concert ices and refreshments of every kind will be supplied in the banquet-room by Messrs Gunter and Rawlings.

The proceedings in the town of Buckingham have so much resembled those which I have described as taking place on the previous days that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them. I may state, however, that on the day of her Majesty's arrival she was accompanied, besides her official suite, by a large number of the swell mob from London, eight of whom were soon detected and escorted out of the borough by the metropolitan police, who are on duty here under the direction of Inspector Otway."

The Morning Herald:

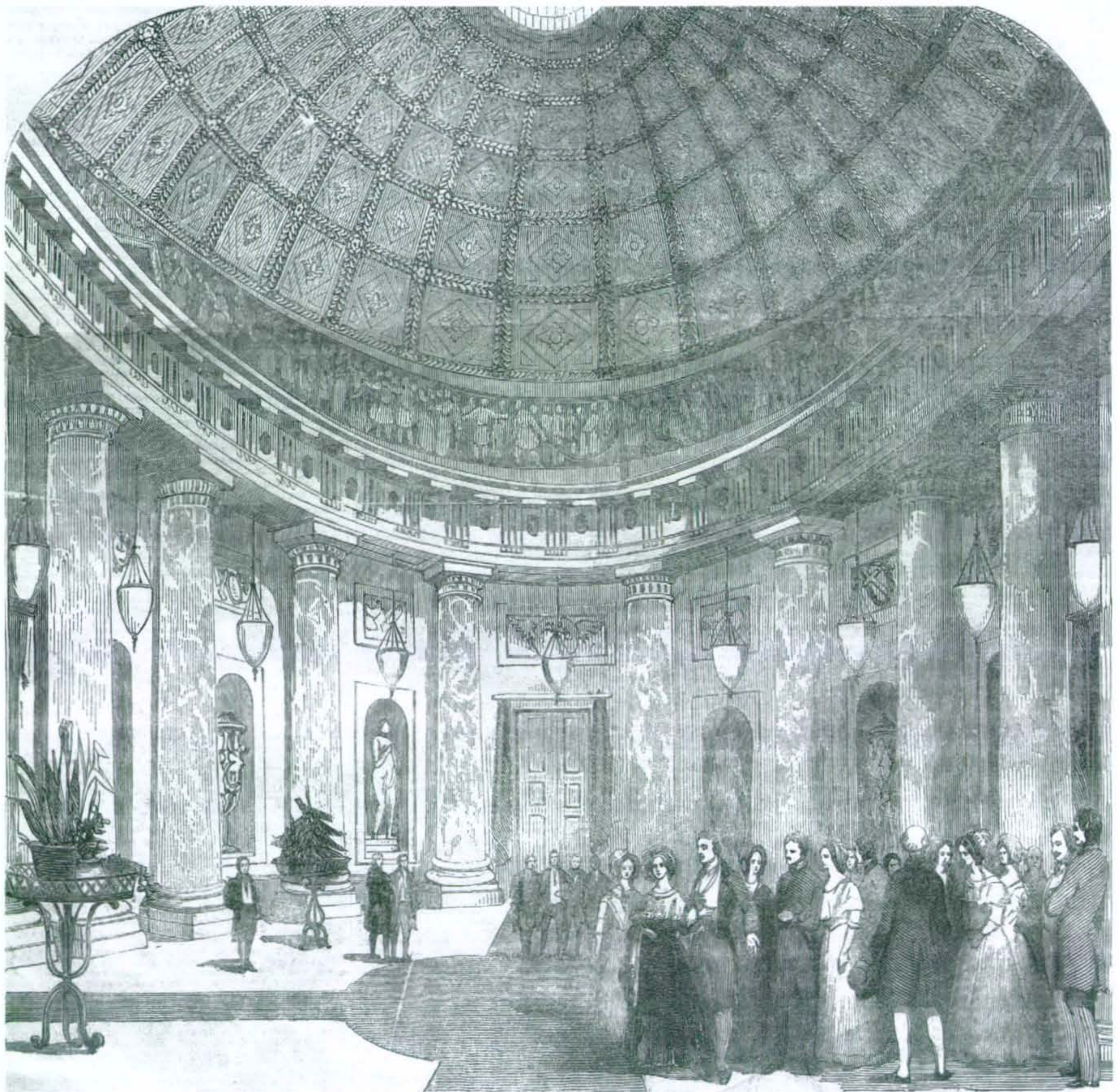
"The concert went off with the greatest possible éclat. The company, whose names I have already communicated to you, began to arrive soon after nine o'clock. During their arrival her Majesty sat in a chair of state in the drawing-room [the Temple Room], having Earl Delawarr standing on her right hand and the Duke of Buckingham on her left. A body of the Bucks Yeomanry was also stationed in the room and officiated as a guard of honour. As the visitors passed by her Majesty into another room they were severally announced by the Duke

of Buckingham, and paid the customary homage, which her Majesty acknowledged with her accustomed grace and condescension. Indeed, so condescending was her Majesty that, it being found the chair of state was inconveniently situated for the passage of the company through the room, it was at her Majesty's command removed to a more convenient situation. His Royal Highness Prince Albert stood near the Queen during the reception, and afterwards walked about the rooms conversing with the officers of the yeomanry and other guests assembled there.

When the company had arrived, her Majesty left the chair of state and sat for some time on an ottoman conversing with the Duchess of Buckingham and the Duchess of Gordon. Meanwhile the concert took place in

the Marble Hall. The performance of the Distin family on the Saxhorn band afforded such satisfaction that, in the course of it, her Majesty sent for them and commanded them to continue it in the drawing-room, and subsequently they were sent for and played by her Majesty's command in another apartment.

Soon after eleven her Majesty and Prince Albert, attended by the Duke of Buckingham, proceeded to the banqueting-room, where a splendid supper was prepared for them and their company. After partaking of some refreshment her Majesty returned to the drawing-room, and also visited the Marble Hall, and then, about twelve o'clock, retired to her private apartments. The company separated about an hour afterwards."



The Marble Hall (or "grand entrance"). Queen Victoria is escorted by the Duke; Prince Albert follows with two ladies (the Duchess and, possibly, her daughter, Lady Ann Grenville).

DAY 4: Saturday January 18th*The Morning Herald:*

"On Saturday morning her Majesty rose at an early hour and breakfasted as usual in her private room, with Prince Albert. At nine o'clock the royal carriages were in attendance, and all the troops of the Bucks Yeomanry, save those appointed to be her Majesty's escort, were drawn up in the garden front of the mansion.

At ten o'clock her Majesty and Prince Albert took leave of the Duchess of Buckingham and family, and, with her suite, left Stowe for London, escorted by a body of the Bucks Yeomanry under the command of the Marquis of Chandos. As her Majesty entered her carriage the corps of yeomanry paid her the usual military honours, which her Majesty acknowledged very graciously.

At the entrance of the borough of Buckingham her Majesty was received by the mayor and other civic authorities, who formed a procession, and conducted her Majesty through the town in the same manner as upon her arrival. His Grace the Duke of Buckingham, in his

full uniform as Colonel of the Bucks Yeomanry, rode beside the royal carriage on horseback to Pap Hill, where the first escort was changed, and then took leave of her Majesty and returned to Stowe. The Marquis of Chandos accompanied her Majesty to Wolverton, where her Majesty arrived a few minutes before twelve, and was received by Mr Glyn, chairman of the railway company... Her Majesty, Prince Albert and suite left Wolverton exactly at twelve o'clock in a special train, consisting of six carriages, and arrived at the Euston-square station at half-past one. Here all the men employed by the company in London, to the number of 300, were assembled, besides a great number of ladies who were admitted to the platform by tickets...

Sir Robert and Lady Peel left Stowe in their private carriage for Wolverton, and came to London by mail train a little before the Queen.

We cannot close our account of the Queen's visit to Stowe without expressing our warmest acknowledgments to its noble proprietor for the liberal facilities which were afforded to the press generally in obtaining all proper information relative to the visit of her Majesty."

A PRIZE ESSAY

"The Second Duke of Buckingham: hero or villain?"

After the Queen's visit, the Duke's financial bubble burst and he was forced to sell up and live elsewhere. His marriage broke up too. In the recently published *The Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles* John Beckett presents a highly critical portrait of a spendthrift and profligate waster. Michael Gibbon too, in the Gibbon-Clarke history of Stowe published in *The Stoic*, was highly critical. Victoria, he said, disapproved of the Duke not so much for his extravagance as his rumoured infidelities. As a result "the Queen and the Prince behaved throughout the visit in a cold, disagreeable manner."

A different view was given in Wilson Knight's *The Dynasty of Stowe*. Here the Duke inherited insoluble financial problems initiated by his grandfather and approached them in a romantic, Byronic spirit. Knight wrote indulgently of the Duke in exile, as he devoted himself to the writing of ten volumes of memoirs before dying in a Paddington hotel. "Though in him Stowe had met a tragic reversal, he strove to memorise what he could not perpetuate."

*What was the Second Duke really like?
Beckett's villain or Knight's romantic hero?*

The Stoic invites essays on the subject.
A top prize of £50 is on offer!

Essays should be handed in to PVC or other members of the History Department before the end of the summer term. The sources are well set out at the back of *The Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles*. The History Department is happy to give advice on how best to handle them.



VISUAL EDUCATION

Last September the Stowe Project On Visual Education commenced with the start of a Third Form Course. In the following pages the first term's programme is outlined, some third-formers express their own views, one session is described in some detail and finally comments are made on the wider implications of Visual Education.

Visual Education is about understanding buildings and their landscapes. Stowe provides ideal subject matter for this, but the intention is that everything which is learnt on the course can be applied just as well in the world outside. The course is not just a means of appreciating Stowe more fully but of being able to make a more considered approach to the vital question of the built environment.

All the Third forms are engaged in Visual Education for one double period a week. Much of the work consists of group projects. Each form, therefore, has four or five teams, all named after a famous Stowe architect, artist or gardener. Team Vanbrugh, for example, vies for honours with Team Williams-Ellis!

The sun was shining propitiously in September as we began things by walking down to the Elysian Fields, finding our way round with the map specially drawn by architect-in-residence Adam Scott, and then individually working on an Elysian Fields Quiz. The quiz encouraged us to use our eyes. "What can you see on Captain Grenville's column which commemorates the fact he was a sea captain? When you stand looking out from the Temple of Ancient Virtue, which building can you see reflected in water?"

The second week was also one of general introduction, but this time it involved a different outdoor trail. Each team was given a Polaroid camera with the brief to take just five photographs. The photographs were to be of three kinds: interesting architectural details, views of a building in its landscape and views of one building from another. The teams were also asked to fill in some written explanations of their photographs, explaining WHAT they had taken and WHY.

In the third week we began to explore the classical tradition, upon which so much of Stowe is based. We started by looking at some Greek and Roman buildings from the Encarta CDROM in the IT room. We then moved out to the North Front, in search of features which were specifically Roman in inspiration. Polaroids were again issued to teams. On return to the classroom photographs were pasted onto large sheets which identified broad categories: arches, pediments, columns...

The classical tradition continued the next week at the incomparable Temple of Concord and Victory. Explanatory posters were displayed around the building. By looking at these and by looking at the building itself individuals could fill in their twenty-question Quiz. It was here that we identified for the first time the various classical orders and learnt for ever the ubiquitous decorative device known as egg and dart! On returning to the

classroom the teams were given sets of ten different slides of the temple and its environs and asked to prepare a slide lecture. The lectures were given, by forms, in second prep later that week, each team member having to talk about at least one slide.

In the third week of the classical tradition we turned to the classical landscape. The Rigaud drawings of the South Front in the 1730s, with the formal parterre, poplar





Week 5
2 of 2

South Front - The Classical Landscape

CREATING A CLASSICAL LANDSCAPE FROM A KIT OF PARTS

In your teams produce two of these monuments on each of the Landscapes provided. There will be House points for any teams who replace any of these Classical monuments with an alternative drawn by themselves!

The Temple of Venus
To avoid some of the confusion of the landscape and to be best seen raised up on a small hill. It could be set on the side of a valley or even in the middle of the sky and light could be used to make it seem to float through the air.

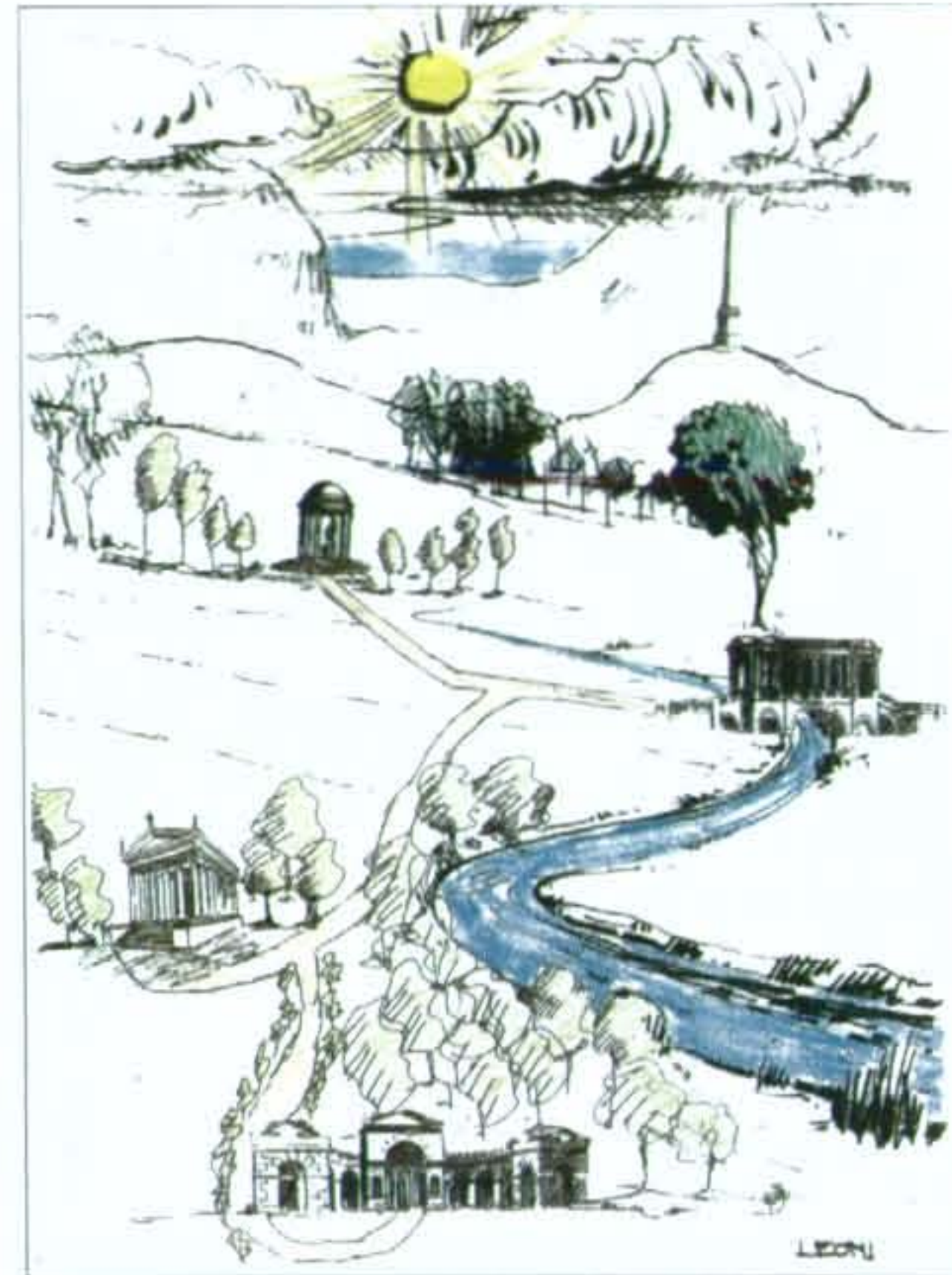
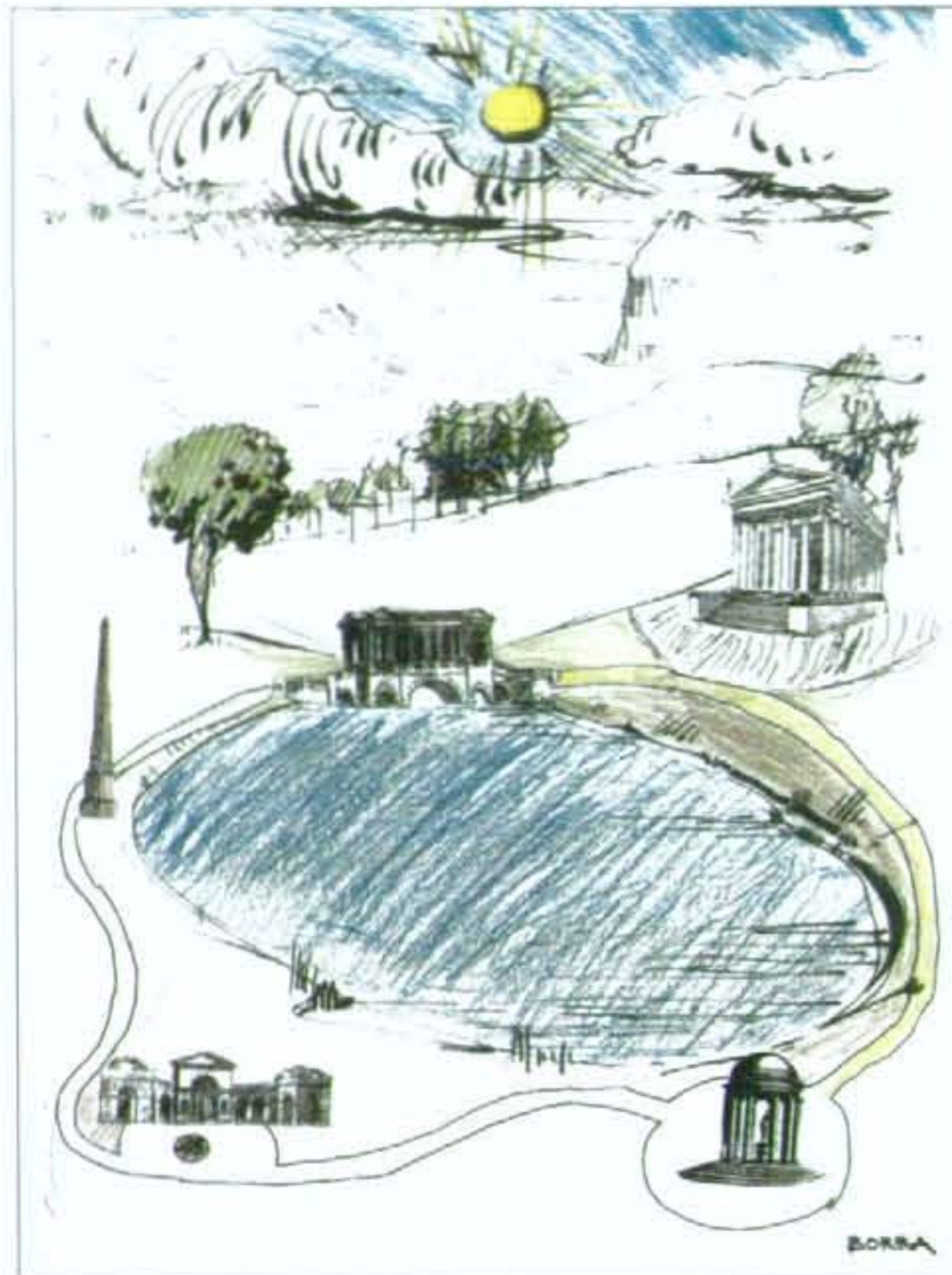
The Obelisk
It is a simple obelisk stone monument which is best seen in isolation against the sky, at the end of a long avenue or perhaps in front of a reflection in the water to make it seem to rise from the surface of the Temple of British Monarchy.

The Palladian Bridge
It is a bridge across water linking the two banks with a roof, and often down the valley. In a result of the design it is best used in a formal garden surrounding the river along the valley.

The Temple of Concord and Victory
It is a large imposing building best seen from a distance or that is better situated and positioned to be seen from a distance.

When you are producing your monuments or layout ensure that they can be seen through groups of trees and other buildings in the landscape. Consider also those which might need the reflection in water to improve their appearance. Some monuments may also improve if seen from a distance rather than close to, so that the whole group is very impressive.

The Stone Project on Visual Education



walk and symmetrical octagon lake, were compared with the vista of today. Comparisons were made between formal and landscape gardens. Information sheets, as ever, accompanied the week's work, giving background details of the rise of the English landscaped garden in the eighteenth century. Back in the classroom, the teams were given some empty landscapes – rivers, hills, lakes – and a set of buildings of various sizes. With this kit of parts each team debated and constructed at least two of its very own classical landscapes.

Field Day allowed the entire Third Form to visit Buckingham. There were three different trails to be followed, one centred on the church, one leading to Hunter Street and one in Castle Street. The emphasis was on evidence of the classical tradition and worksheets were filled in by House teams. It was a Chandos team which ultimately achieved the top score, whilst Chatham won the overall award for the aggregate of its three teams.

We were now approaching Exeat. Our files were getting full with the blue information sheets and yellow project sheets (all attractively set out by the architect-in-residence)! It seemed time for some consolidation of the ground covered. An Exeat Exam followed, therefore, in which files were able to be consulted. It proved an admirable opportunity for everyone to check that everything was properly in place!

Back from Exeat the weather turned sour, but fortunately we had decided that as an introduction to two weeks on Gothic style we would approach the Gothic Temple not on foot but via a slide projector. Drawings were made

individually of small details of a non-classical nature. Afterwards the teams got together and designed and drew their own Gothic building, every member of each team contributing to one area, using wherever possible details which had been noted from the Temple slides. Pointed windows, battlements, pinnacles and crockets abounded! For prep some dramatic Gothic railway carriages and Gothic buses were designed! That weekend some twenty third-formers were able to visit Oxford and walk a trail of architectural interest.

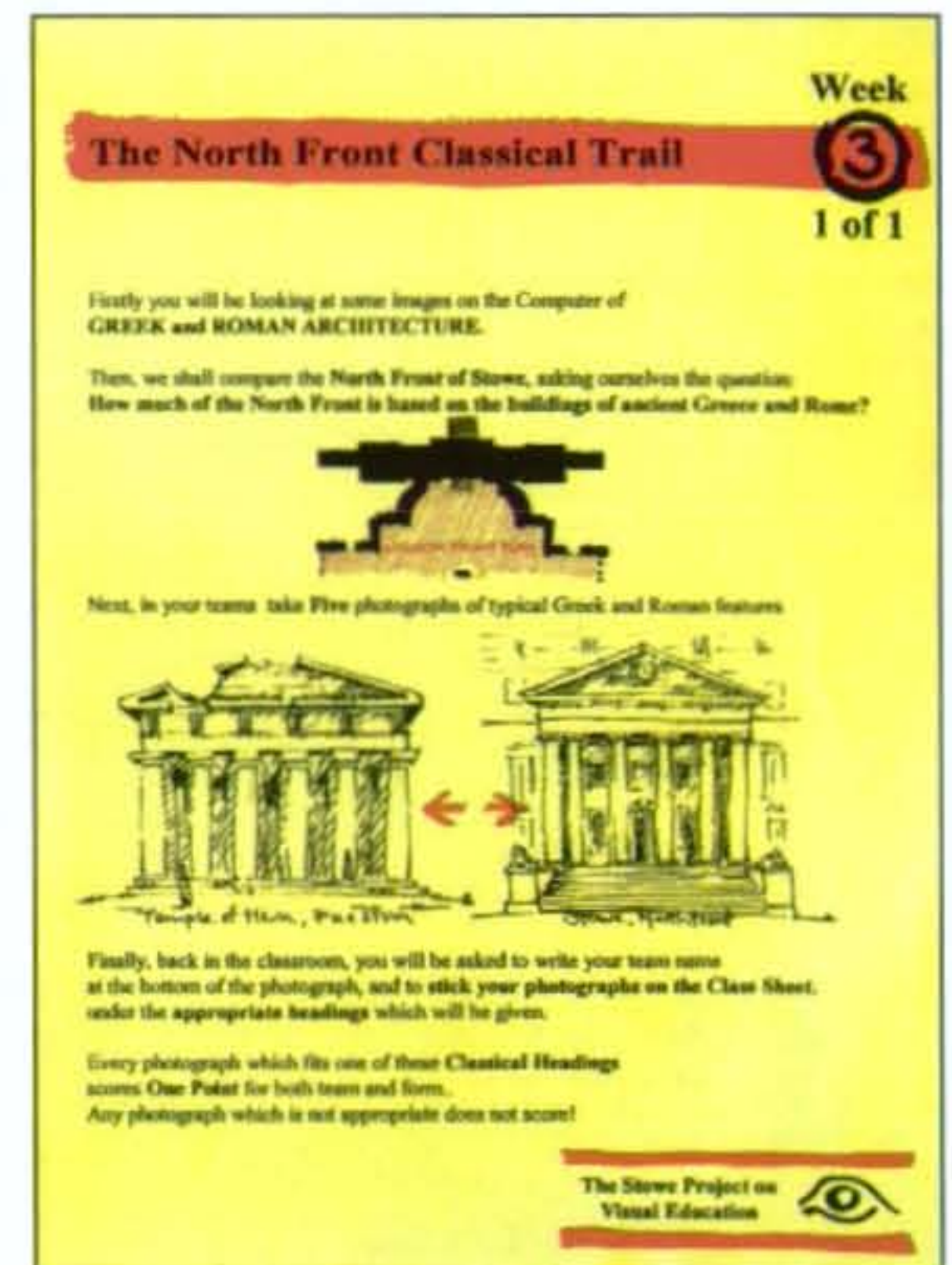
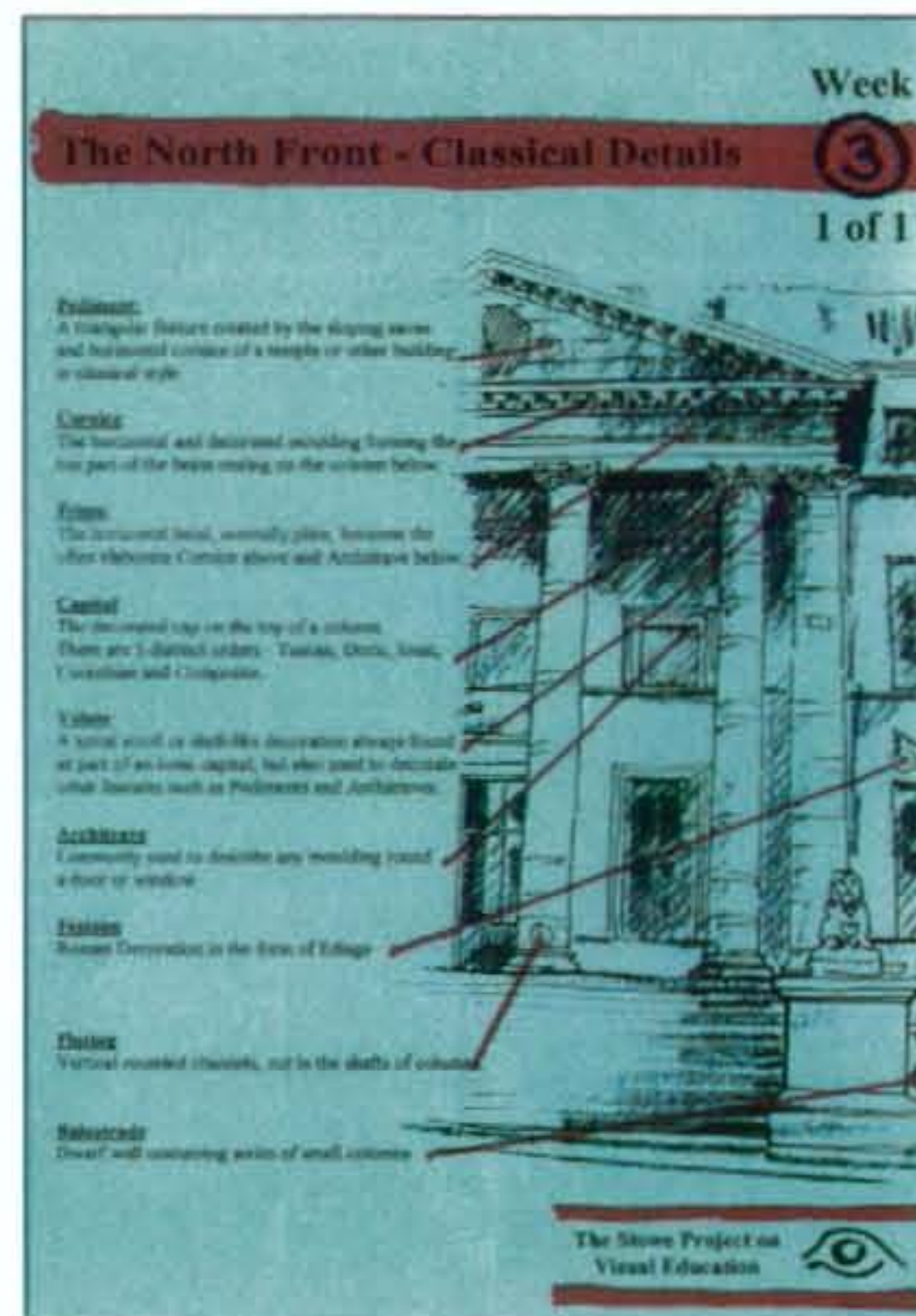
The second week in the Gothic tradition saw us in the area of the Gothic Library, thanks to the kindly forbearance of the Headmaster. Details were sketched. The door to the Gothic Library outside the masters' mess was given, on paper, the addition of some appropriately elaborate stained glass with Gothic motifs. Sketches were made of new, more appropriate light fittings to replace the somewhat stark modern one!

The term ended with a look at some modern buildings and their surroundings. Four boarding houses were chosen, Chatham (from the 1920s), Walpole (from the 1930s), Lyttelton (from the 1960s) and Bruce (from the 1980s). Project Arizona postulated a millionaire wishing to recreate in America one of the four buildings as an Ideal English Public School Boarding House. Teams were invited to make a presentation extolling the virtues of "their" House and emphasising the weak points of the others.

The next week we moved on to the wider context of England in the twentieth century. After discussion and handouts on materials and techniques which have revolutionised things in the latter part of this century, we repaired to the IT room and a CDROM featuring modern architecture. Teams were asked to choose one example of specific types of building and explain why they had made their choice.

In the last week of term a party of thirty visited London, saw the Living Bridges Exhibition at the Royal Academy and then went on a trail which led across the Thames and ended with earnest discussion about the concrete of the South Bank.

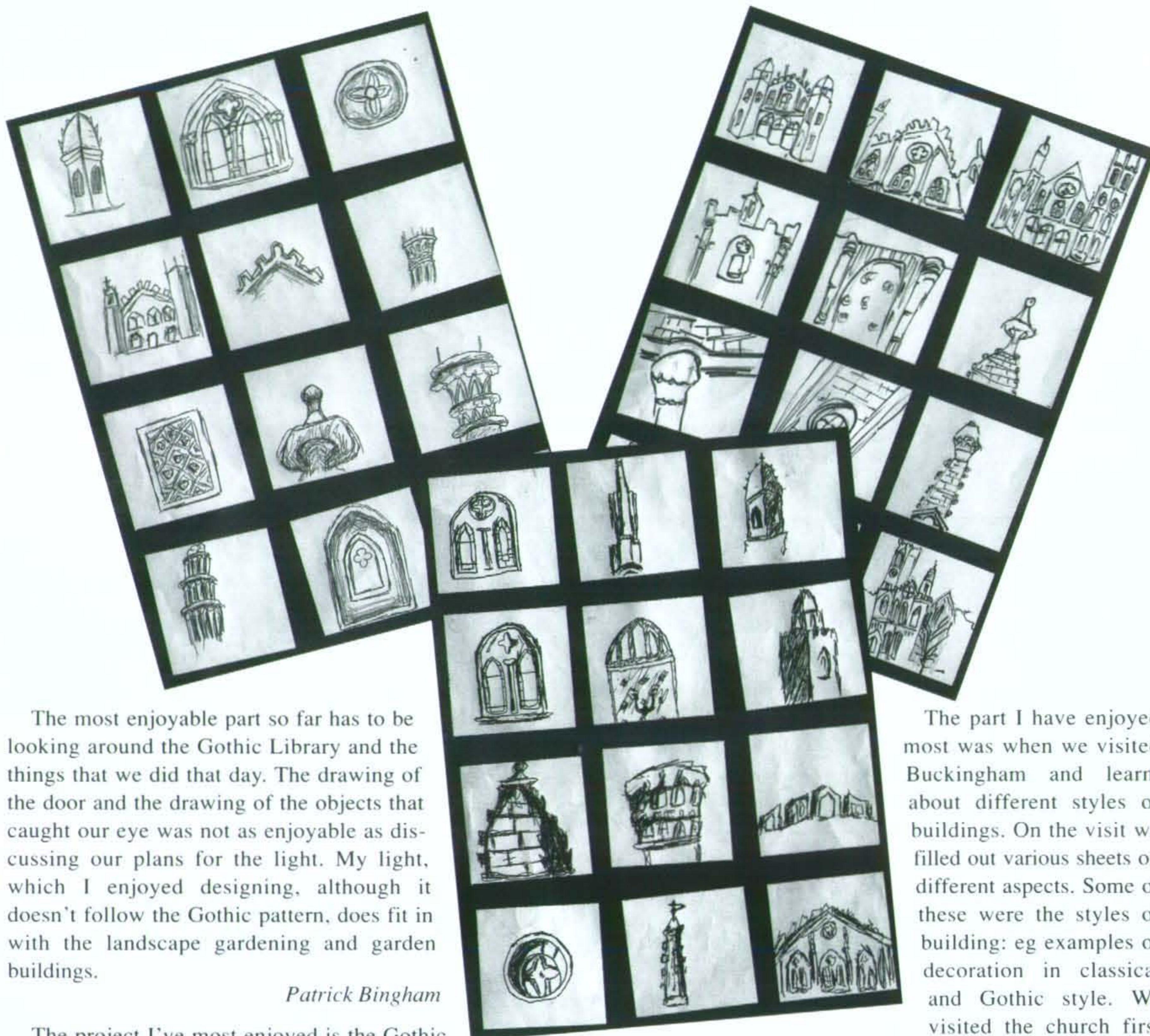
Next term we shall begin with some work on the interior of Stowe, as well as a graphic design programme on the Workshop computers. This will lead to some short projects as preparation for the choice of the major Speech Day Projects to be done by teams of two or three from a very wide choice of Visual Education topics. These – and much more besides! – should be on display next Speech Day.



Photos: AJS

THIRD FORM VIEWS

Towards the end of the autumn term the third-formers were asked to write about particular aspects in the course which they had enjoyed. Below are a few of the responses.



The most enjoyable part so far has to be looking around the Gothic Library and the things that we did that day. The drawing of the door and the drawing of the objects that caught our eye was not as enjoyable as discussing our plans for the light. My light, which I enjoyed designing, although it doesn't follow the Gothic pattern, does fit in with the landscape gardening and garden buildings.

Patrick Bingham

The project I've most enjoyed is the Gothic Temple. I like the Gothic style because it is very different and more elaborate than the classical style. The Gothic Temple is very interesting. It has lots of designs on it such as pineapple finials, quatrefoils, thin columns and pointed arches. I also like the fact that the temple isn't symmetrical from a certain place yet is symmetrical from another place; this makes the temple very interesting.

James Elwes

Probably the best time was studying the Gothic architecture. It was very interesting learning about the dark side of classical architecture. It was as well a lot of fun designing and drawing a Gothic temple.

Another time I liked was designing a landscape. We had to design a landscape using cut-out temples. We then stuck these on backgrounds.

Edward Kaye

The part I have enjoyed most was when we visited Buckingham and learnt about different styles of buildings. On the visit we filled out various sheets on different aspects. Some of these were the styles of building: eg examples of decoration in classical and Gothic style. We visited the church first

and filled out a sheet with sketches of special features, eg windows, door-arches.

Duncan Pearce

At Oxford we went into a courtyard of one of the colleges and looked around at the columns and noted what styles the window frames were. We looked at the elaborate decorations above the drain pipes and noticed the statues and gargoyles. The overall style of the courtyard was very Gothic. Then we moved through into another college. This college had a 70s style boarding house, right in the middle of the courtyard, which I don't think fitted in with the other buildings at all. The last college we looked at in detail was only built a few years ago and has a very modern courtyard with lighted chains hanging down at each corner and a circle containing pebbles in the centre.

Ben Smith

We saw many different colleges of Oxford University, including Keble College, New College and the Bridge of Sighs, part of Hertford College. We went inside Keble and New College and looked at the Gothic architecture of the original buildings and how many of the new structures that had been built fitted, or didn't, into the Gothic theme.

Christopher Turner

When we started the "classical tradition" I thought "Oh! Here we go. We're going to sit down and learn off all the terms for every piece of decoration and architecture", but I was wrong. I enjoyed looking at the buildings and learning what things were. This also helped me to identify some of the decoration in the house at home, which before had just been a mass of pretty carvings and odd shapes. I learnt what was the egg and dart motif, what was the cornice, the entablature and much more; I could go on for ever!

Nick Verney

The course has been very competitive between teams. In some places that has been good but other ways it has been bad. The Polaroid Trail was especially good because it gave the teams a chance to go out and create some photos, which was good fun. The course mixes education with fun. It has taught me a lot about the grounds, temples and history which many of the fourth-formers possibly haven't a clue about. The Elysian Fields I especially liked. The Shell Bridge was interesting because from one side it looks like any normal bridge and from the other side you can't see it. The Temple of Ancient Virtue is also good, because it is a very Roman design, beautiful from the outside and interesting inside with all the statues. It has been very enjoyable walking round all the sections of the grounds. It also tied in very well with the first part of history lessons about Stowe.

Oliver Weston

I think the Elysian Fields were the best part so far. All the temples are perfect in the places they have been put. I especially like the Temple of British Worthies. This is because the reflection of it in the lake makes it look quite beautiful. I also like the Temple of Ancient Virtue for its circular dome and the columns all round and the statues inside. From this temple you can see both the Temple of British Worthies and the Grenville Column.

Jonathan Witt

What I liked most was the trip to see around colleges, chapels and monuments at Oxford. The monuments that most impressed me were the gargoyles on the walls at St John's College. They looked fierce and outstanding compared to all the other faces carved around the courts. In the corridor's ceiling you could see a fan-shaped design which also impressed me. One of the things I loved was the temple which looked like Concord and Victory with the three statues of some different kinds of gods and goddesses standing on each corner of a pediment. The last thing that struck me from the Gothic style was the chapel of the second college we saw. The colours that struck me from the stained glass were very good. Also the Gothic shapes that stood out on even the bookstand. The modern buildings in the colleges I liked as well, because of the cleverness of the way they put the windows so they got more daylight. Not only that, it was excellent the way they tried to soften the edges of buildings.

Beltran Zarraluqui

The Corinthian Arch is most fascinating because they have situated it in the most beautiful part of Stowe, just above the lake, and also they have lined it up with the South Front perfectly so when you walk out of the building you see straight through the arch and so it frames a picture. I also enjoyed designing lights and buildings. Many of the Gothic designs we did were most interesting. I enjoyed designing the lightshade for the Headmaster and I really would be pleased if it was the one he liked and was made, so in many years to come I could come back to the School and say that I made that!

Roddy McLauchlan

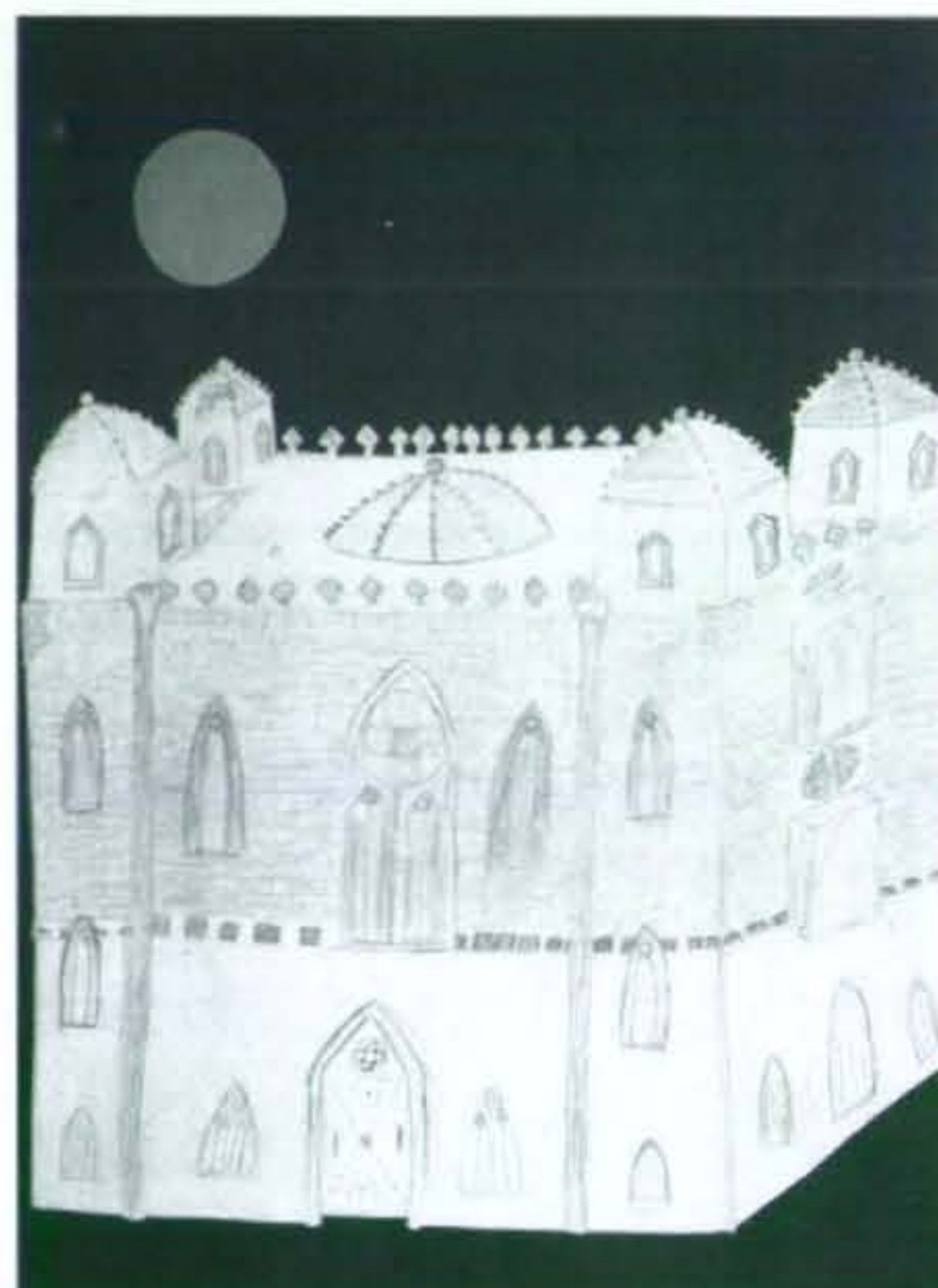
I have appreciated all the information sheets that have been made. Also all the trips we have gone on. I have liked working in groups on projects because you are enjoying yourself at the same time. I liked doing the

Polaroid Trail. Even though I didn't win, I got to go out and study and take photographs of buildings, landscapes and small details like rustication. It was a good idea to make it into a competition so we would really try.

Jeremy Bodian

At first when I heard about Vis Ed I thought it was going to be boring, but it wasn't because we walk up and down the grounds and don't stay in the classroom all the time.

Richard Kazandjian

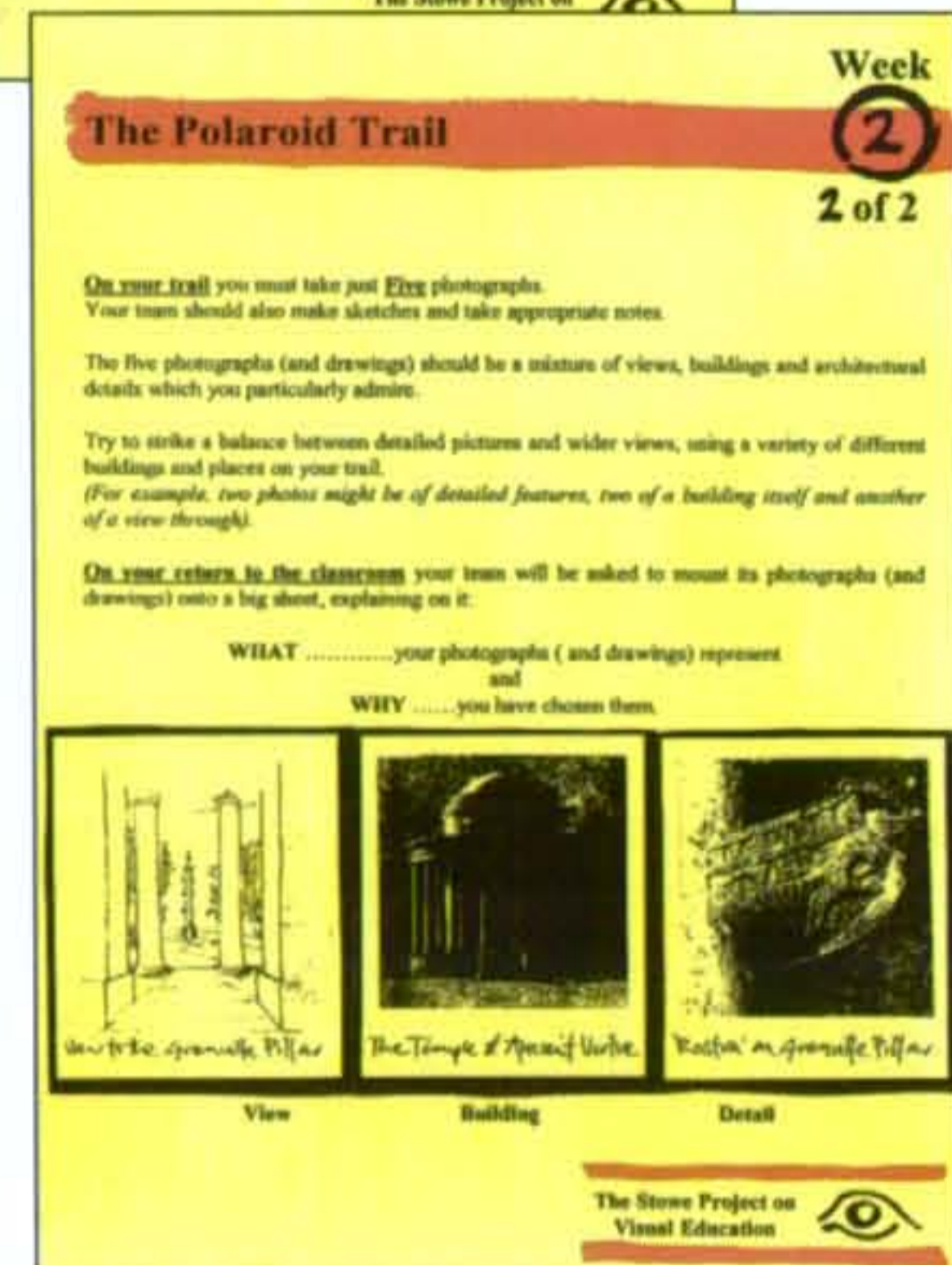
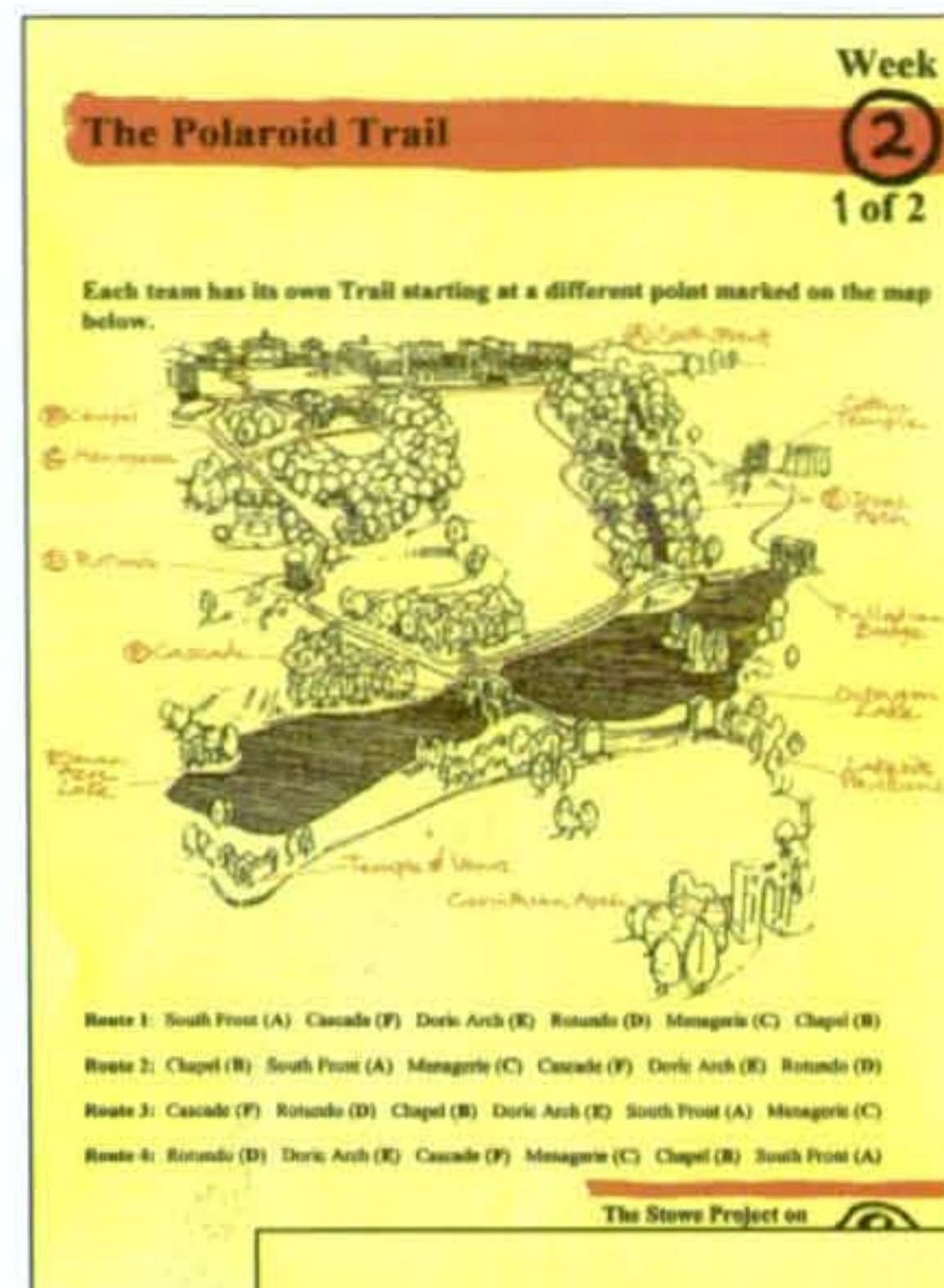


A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A VIS ED LESSON

Things began with a mass of questions as some of the third-formers had already been tipped off about the new Polaroid Cameras which we would be using in this lesson. With great expectancy everyone moved into their new teams, eager to begin and get their hands on those cameras. During the introduction to that day's lesson we spelled out for what we would be looking. It was to be a Polaroid Trail, where each team would take five varied photographs and make notes along a particular route. The themes to be looked at were those of a View, a Building and a Detail. In this way a feeling would be introduced for the building's relationship to its context, its shape and proportion and its component parts and decoration. That, at least, was the underlying theory, but there was no telling what would happen and how successful it might be! This is the remarkable thing about Stowe's Project on Visual Education; it has no direct precedents and as a result all is new and there is everything for us all to learn; the third-formers themselves are playing a crucial part in the growth of the course.

With bright yellow worksheets in hand, giving clues to what they should be looking for and the routes to take, they all went off into the grounds hotly pursued by two members of staff. In terms of our subject the grounds are a magnificent resource but to the pupils they are a mine of peculiarities and surprises, demanding a series of questions: What is a rotunda? Does the Doric Arch have a purpose? Why have you called the Tuck Shop the Menagerie? Are we really allowed to be out here?

It was an extremely enthusiastic and hectic time and within fifty minutes of the introduction we were back in our classroom. There, waiting for the teams, were large sheets, specifically designed to encourage the pupils to order their research in a clear and analytical way. In addition to their photographs and drawings, sheets containing the words "What?" and "Why?" were handed out to each team member, demanding the answers to the questions "What do your photographs and drawings represent?" and, more problematically, "Why have you chosen them?"





During this last twenty minutes the sheets became full as everyone contributed to the group effort and, as this happened, they all became surprised by the amount and quality of the work they had produced. We had asked an awful lot from them, as we have continued to do all term, not only demands from a subject so different from anything they have seen before, but demands for them to work together as a team. The exhibition of all their work, and the awards of prizes by the Headmaster at the end of the week, proved how well they had taken on the various challenges.

The illustrations of the work done on this and other projects may give an idea of the enthusiasm of all concerned, something which will help enormously in ensuring that the course continues to grow better and further.

AJS

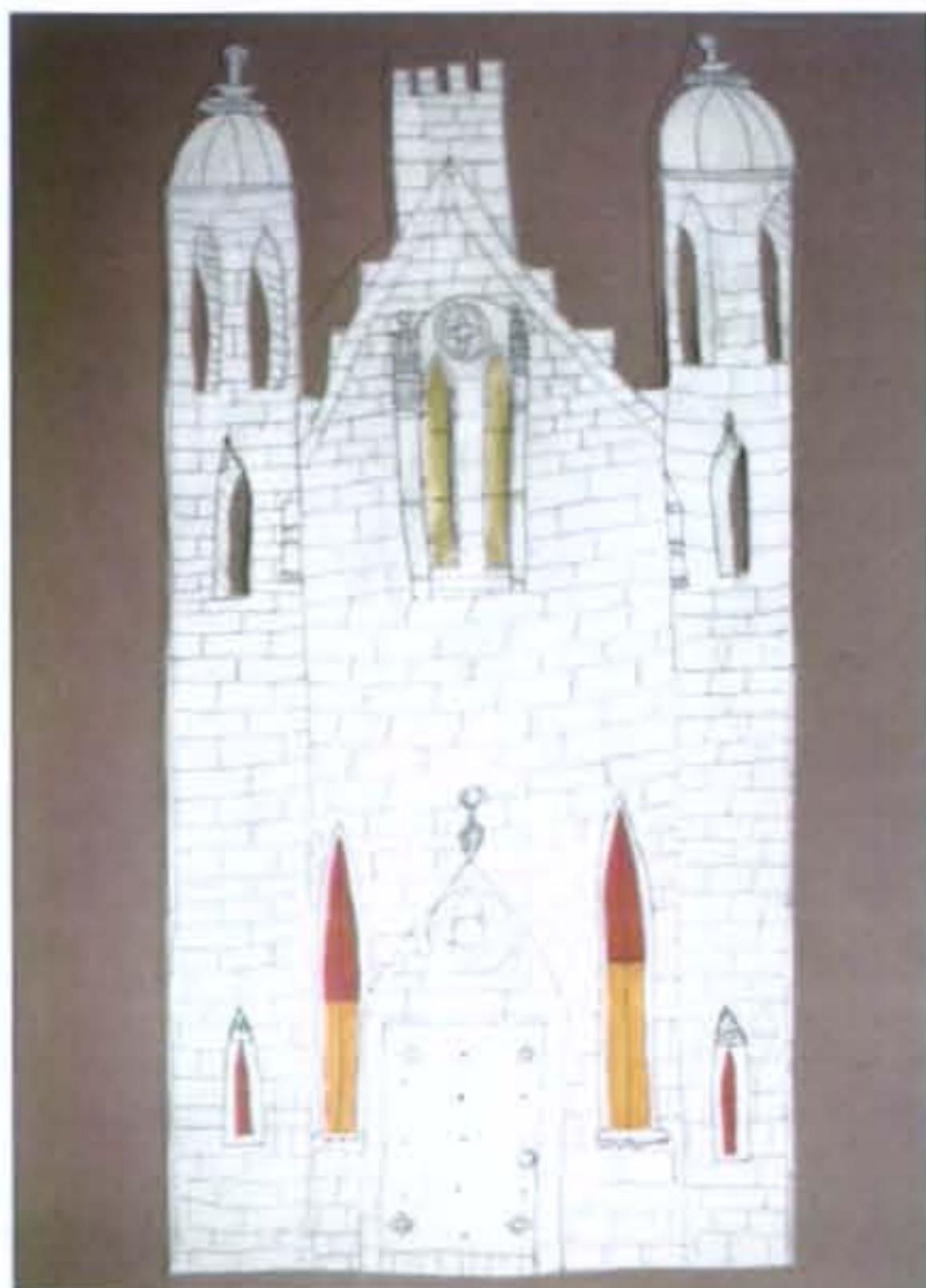


Photo: Classic Snaps

VISUAL EDUCATION: SOME REASONS WHY

Stowe makes an obvious starting-place for a course of Visual Education. The mansion and the grounds are an ideal (and probably unique) teaching resource!

Of course it has from time to time been utilised within the educational context: historians have long delved into it, classicists found comparisons, artists taken inspiration, actors and musicians found remarkable backdrops. To some extent too the beauty of the place automatically rubs off on one, as JF Roxburgh's famous dictum suggested it would. But never before, in all probability, has so concerted a programme utilising mansion and grounds been essayed. The present pilot Third Form course will be followed by other courses at other levels, so that in the not too distant future all Stoics will have the opportunity of this fuller interplay with their surroundings, with Visual Education becoming a very distinctive part of the School's overall educational provision.

It is important that we learn to respond to buildings and landscapes constructively. If education is a preparation for life, then we surely should foster our understanding of the built environment? How else can we contribute usefully to the important and inevitable debates between those who wish to "develop" and those who wish to "conserve"? As uproar involving Prince Charles has shown, the present climate of opinion decrees that the world in which we live should be provided for us by a small handful of "experts"! And woe betide any well-intentioned "amateur" who rushes in with a viewpoint of his own! So all too often complaints only begin very late, when bricks and mortar, concrete and glass are firmly in place, when the last spadeful of earth has been thrown, and the last excavator moved out. Moreover, so many decisions are taken at a local level by

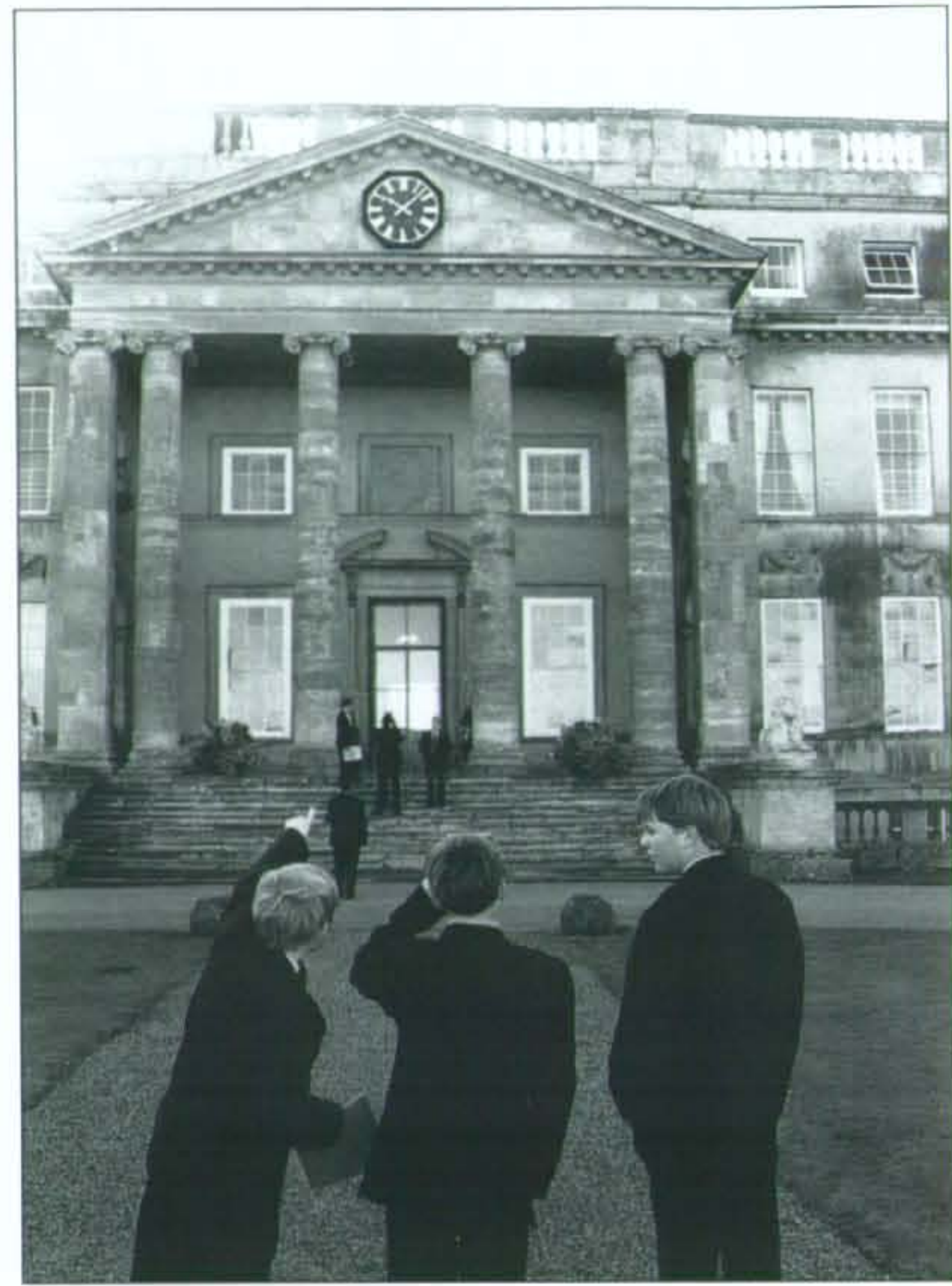


Photo: AJS

people who may not know much about an area's character, idiosyncrasies, atmosphere and identity. Yet, on the other hand, if we were all visually educated, we would understand more readily all the issues at an early stage and thus be able to make important, informed contributions.

Visual Education, therefore, will give us the vocabulary and the grammar to speak a language we hear others speaking and which interests us but in which we feel inadequate to express ourselves. That is one worthwhile advance. Another one is on a more personal level: Visual Education will, quite simply, enhance our pleasure in the world around us. We will see things with fresh eyes. We will better understand them. Further, through this enhanced perception we will be more at one with those who have gone before and take more care, perhaps, in what we are to bequeath. These are surely all worthy educational aims, good targets at the time of the millennium!

Few would deny that the world at the moment is in a state of considerable flux. Remarkable technological advances promise to change our way of life dramatically. The media, meanwhile, ever more insistently endeavour to do our thinking for us! The educational process must adapt to meet such challenges. The development of Visual Education is part of our response. Eye and brain, it seems, need to be working in greater harmony than ever before.

AGM/AJS



THE IT BACKGROUND

Michael Edwards gives an up-to-date account of the state of Information Technology at Stowe

In 1985 Stowe made its first big investment in IT by buying a Novell network of twelve IBM PCs at an astronomical price by today's standards. As we were probably the first major school to adopt the PC standard, IBM's European boss, Sir Edwin Nixon, came to open the new facility and you can see the commemorative plaque in the lobby of the present large computer room. The room that he opened, however, was Room 7 in the Maths Block which had to double as an ordinary classroom when necessary. It was 1989 before the School could justify dedicating a classroom solely to IT. This involved constructing a mezzanine floor in Room 11 of the Vanbrugh Block to provide a computer room below and a studio and office above. This was the second big expenditure.

The original IBM XTs continued to give good service but every year we added a few 'up-to-the-minute' computers in line with our long-standing policy of always providing Stoics with access to industry-standard hardware and software. Before long there were enough of the newer machines (ATs) to justify joining these in a network. In 1995 Stowe's Education Plan identified IT as a major 'thrust' and, with this impetus, spending has increased dramatically in the past two years.

The creation of a network in the Careers and European Studies building (Stanhope) led on to much climbing around the roofs of the classroom blocks, notably in the frost and snow of Christmas 1995. Stowe's massive walls do not lend themselves to having cables run through them; so for the first time we found something to cheer about in the prevalence of flat roofs, though being on the ice-covered roof of the Vanbrugh block with a contractor suffering from vertigo is not one of my happier experiences! Anyway, we succeeded in creating an academic network linking the Stanhope and computer room networks which also took in existing machines in History, Art, English, Geography and Maths and Classics and four new ones in Business Studies.

This year we extended the network at both ends by installing an optical fibre from Stanhope to the new science IT room (see separate article) and adding extra outlets in Theology. The Design Department's network (which has always been separate because of its great distance from the rest of the teaching area) has just been increased to fourteen machines. Another separate network in the Bursary and Marketing departments was also installed recently and this will be extended to Admissions, the General Office and the staff common room this year. Next year we plan to create a Modern Languages IT room, add extra machines in History and Geography and individual science labs, all linked to the

academic network. Our intention is for all school machines to be on a single network by the end of 1998, which will necessitate many more hours investigating where cables can be run in our amazing buildings!

New machines have been added, notably in the boarding houses, and old ones upgraded or replaced at a great rate, so now all non-Windows PCs have gone and there are virtually no machines left in use that are not 486s or Pentiums. We also plan to strengthen encouragement to students to bring their own machines to school (about 25% do so at present).

Our policy since we first adopted the PC as standard has been to expose our students to industry-standard software. This has increasingly come to mean Microsoft software and for the past seven years we have used Microsoft Works in its developing versions as the principal word processing and spreadsheet package for student instruction and use. Version 3.0 for Windows provides excellent facilities in an integrated package, is compact enough to run on older machines and has extensive filters which allow the importing of files from other packages. As it is pre-loaded on many machines, our students may well have used it on machines at home. In order to cater for other home packages, however, we ensure we have at least one copy of other popular packages like WordPerfect, Ami Pro and Lotus 123.

Increasingly, however, students and staff are expecting to use parts of the Office package (Word, Excel, etc.). In 1996 Word displaced WordStar as the word processing tool used by all secretarial staff and Office is gradually being introduced on the computers available to students. Its use will grow but it is not expected to displace Works in the near future because it does not confer enough advantages to justify the expense of buying Office for most existing machines.

Information retrieval from CD-ROMs, large hard disks and the Internet is of rapidly increasing importance and access is provided on the academic network and on machines in the School Library and individual departments. Internet access is only allowed under supervision. Each boarding house has its own e-mail address and mail can be sent and received via the network. The next exciting development is a Stowe Intranet, an Internet style system but based on our own computers. This will allow staff and students to access academic and administrative material which may have been downloaded from the Internet or prepared by staff or Stoics. Before long, lesson notes will not be dictated – they will be on the school network for consultation at any time!

STOWE SURF CLUB

Brian Orger on Internet developments at Stowe

It is hard to believe that it was only about 18 months ago now that a few members of the Stowe staff started to climb gingerly onto their newly acquired surfboards to experiment with e-mail and surf the Net. Dial-up links via modems started to appear in a few departments, as well as in several homes, and a happy band of novice surfers formed a sub-committee of the School's IT Standing Committee to share expertise, monitor and encourage developments and develop policy. This group has met almost weekly ever since – Tuesday Surfin' Lunches being the week's most looked-forward-to meeting!

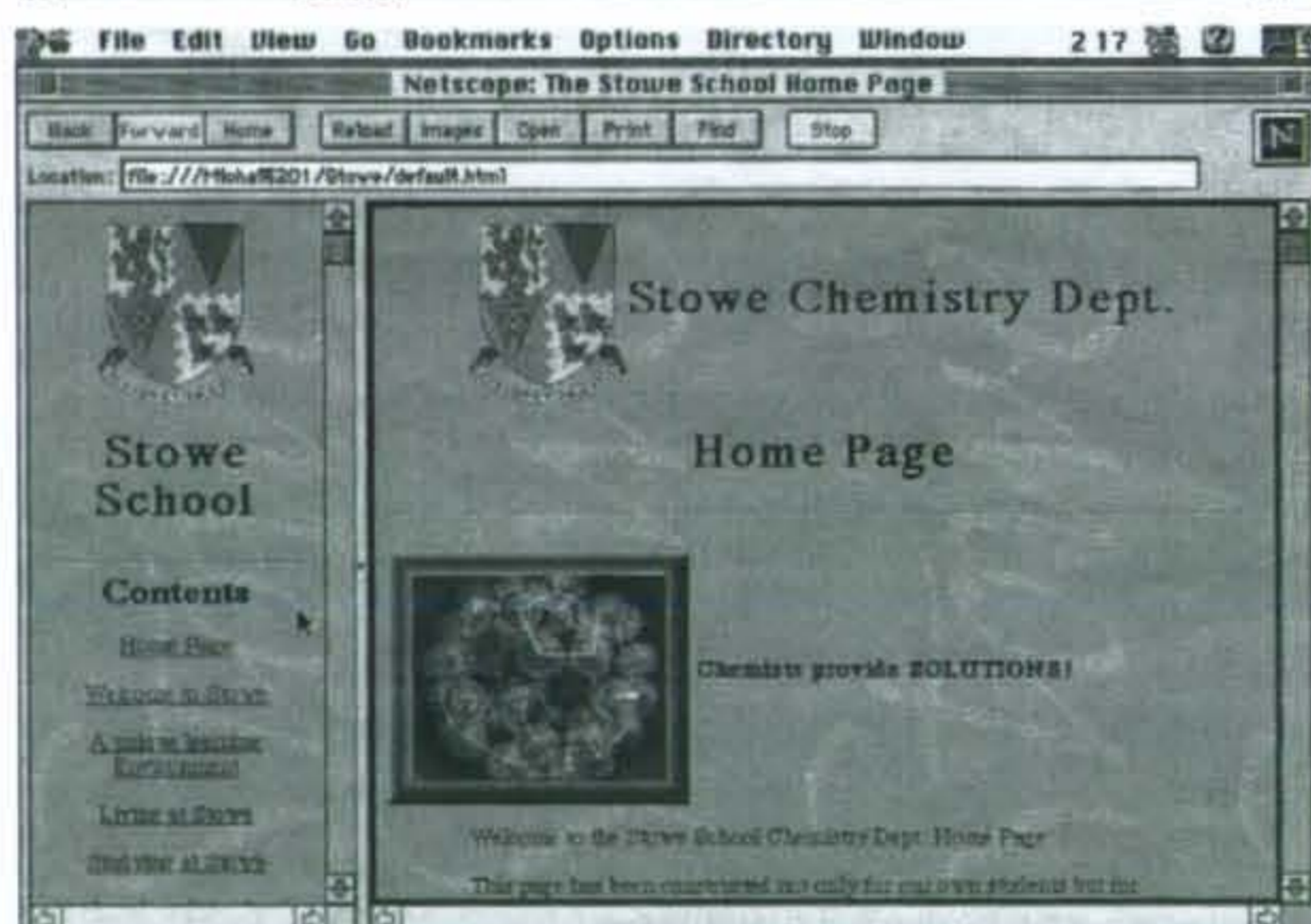
These were exciting days, as the educational world braced itself for the revolution the Information Superhighway was to bring. Within weeks of the last academic year starting, A-level pupils in Physics were doing research for their Physics Projects on the Internet, others downloading images from the Hubble Space telescope 'live' in class. In Modern Languages classroom resource material was being downloaded for copying and use in class and in Chemistry GCSE pupils obtained secondary data off the Internet to supplement their Practical Investigations.

Speech Day saw Stowe's very own 'Cyber Cafe' in the Science Building giving Stoics and visitors an opportunity to go on-line and surf the Net. An experimental e-mail service with addresses on a House or Department basis was put in place once Stowe's Internet domain name (_____@stowe.co.uk) was registered after strenuous efforts by the IT Department.

Next a start was made on Stowe's World Wide Web presence as three of the Surfclub members (MOJ, JMT

and SHM) burnt the midnight oil (or should the up-to-date metaphor be 'oiled their boards into the early hours' ?!) to teach themselves the HTML language of Web page editing. By the end of the summer term the first prototype pages were complete, a staff preview was held and Stowe was ready to launch images of the South Front and various Stowe personalities across the world! Stowe's presence on the World Wide Web finally became a reality at the start of the autumn term this year at:

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



It had soon become apparent that, if the Internet was to have an impact as a resource on teaching at Stowe, a faster connection to the Internet and wider availability of access on the developing School networks was essential. Security was also an issue as the School's policy remains that Stoics would only be allowed supervised access to the Internet – to control phone bills as much as to avoid the 'nasty' areas. With Stowe's remote location ruling out any chance of a superfast optical fibre 'cable' connection, from which some lucky schools in urban areas were benefiting, it was decided to push for a 128K digital (ISDN) phoneline in the 1996/7 IT budget. This duly received priority and was installed at the same time as the new Science IT Laboratory Network during the last summer holiday.

In the meantime the School's computer network has expanded to include nearly 60 machines in the two main areas (Main Computer Room and Science IT Laboratory) and most academic departments. No IT leaps forward come without their 'bugs' and after many more hours' toil, the combined expertise of the IT and Science Departments finally overcame the problems caused by the vagaries of BT, and the goal of fast Internet access on the School computer network became a practical reality as the autumn term ended. In a short time all the



machines on the network will be able to access the Net, those available to Stoics requiring the intervention of the supervising member of staff to facilitate on-line access.

And what about e-mail? The above developments have also meant that the School could install a system giving each pupil or member of staff his or her own private e-mail address. An e-mail management system would download or send the accumulated mail on a daily basis, and everyone could gain access to his or her mail from any of the computers on the network at any time of day.

So, after not so many months but many, many hours' work, some frustrating, but most exciting and rewarding, Stowe now has in place an up-to-date (for the moment, one must say!) Internet access and e-mail system that puts it at the forefront of developments in this area. Now we can "Hang Ten on the Big Wave"!

Attention will now turn to researching the educational potential of the Net and assisting the rest of the staff to clamber up on their surfboards. It looks like Surfin' Lunches are here to stay for a while yet – we could not survive without them!

Members of the 'Surf Club' have been BHO (Chairman), ME, SHM, NEB, AGE, MOJ (Stowe's 'Webmaster'), JMT and Ray Mitchell, who got there on the Net before most of us!

LEG-LESS RAM

With a keen interest in Physics at Stowe and with an offer of our own laboratory, Rajit Singh, Louis Aslett and I decided to undertake a project during our 'free' time. We decided on a conservation project that would involve recycling. This would make use of my 1970s computer which would otherwise have been thrown out.

Rajit and I ordered three output interface cards which we managed to put together with a soldering iron. This was linked up to the computer through the parallel port. Wires came out of every direction from the interface which carried a boosted current. This current was strong enough to run some electric rams connected to a model arm. It worked on the same principle as muscles in a person's arm; the ram would extend, if we wanted the arm to reach out, and contract, if we wanted the arm to return. This was achieved by changing the current coming from the interface. We succeeded in writing software for the robotic arm by using Quick Basic.

Help was given freely by the Physics Department to solve the odd problems we had. At one stage the computer was giving out the wrong signals. With the aid of the department's highly sophisticated Cathode Ray Oscilloscope we were able to deduce the problem of back EMF. We were getting over 100 volts where it wasn't wanted.

Because we had a very tight schedule to keep to, the actual arm itself was built in one day out of chloro-flute.



James Cara-Southey, Louis Aslett and Rajit Singh

It was strong enough to pick up our sweets and move them around the laboratory.

It was a fine and highly rewarding project. I would like at some time to extend this project by giving the arm sensors, so that it would be able to detect what environment it was actually in and then complete tasks that I would set it.

James Cara-Southey

A PAGE IN THE LIFE OF *THE VOICE*

For a number of years the editors of the School's newspaper *The Voice* have been using computer technology to set up the page layout. Two of the current editorial team, Roy Chambers and Armand David, explain the background to Volume 8, Issue 1.

Volume 8 Issue 1 has an interesting story behind its front page in more ways than one! Our initial front page, "A Day in the Life of an Alien" by Joanna de Mille, was one of the first articles handed in to the congregated mass of the editorial board and was instantly spotted for the front page (by her fellow editors). Jo, new to the Lower Sixth, had written an article showing a different perspective of Stowe and we thought it sufficiently interesting and provocative for the front page of our first issue. The substantial article was therefore handed to one of our three highly competent high-speed typists. We then typeset the article on *The Voice* computer, using an extremely advanced program, Adobe Pagemaker 6.0. This is located on the upper floor of the Computer Room, behind the door with the opprobrious sign "Media Studio". The article was then provisionally placed on the front page of the paper, before being read by the chief censor SGAH. He rightly pointed out that we should consider moving it deeper into the publication, to avoiding confronting such contentious issues so early in our editorship.

At this stage we had an article, a frame for a picture and not much else. After a fortuitous trip to WH Smith in Buckingham we chanced upon a suitably grotesque picture of an Alien in a console magazine. It wouldn't have looked good on the front cover anyway. (We eventually changed the front page topic to such an extent that it featured a more comforting photograph of a Stowe beagle.)

Our next stumbling block we discovered when, upon relocating the article and picture, we had too much space on the page, owing to the fact that our front page has a masthead. The cunningly text-wrapped photo did not cover sufficient space to make up for the lack of a masthead; thus SGAH enthusiastically consented, on the night of our deadline, to write an appropriate response to Jo's article.

One page had been prepared...

Extracts From The Diary Of An Alien...

Day 1: In my continuous quest to study the tribal habits of various creatures I finally arrived today from a desolate, flat, open landscape at a crudely built shelter. The natives appear somewhat nervous, yet they show the outward signs of friendliness. For instance, I am invited to a tribal gathering where the big chief addresses the assembled company on the theme of silent communication. Later, I am led into a large chamber which turns out to be an event to become better acquainted with the natives. Food is shared and so are stories. I find that I am not the only stranger but that just under half the assembled company is also here for the first time.

Day 3: Today we are divided into small groups for instruction. I also discover the various activities the natives like to pursue during their free time. There are a number of organised games played with a ball which can be either round or oval. Another activity I have particularly noticed is for small social groups to huddle together and share drinks from a variety of metal or glass containers which they keep concealed in a variety of ingenious places. These drinks are plainly frowned upon by the chiefs since there is always a furtive look on the faces of those participating. Such containers have been disposed of by being placed in chief's letter boxes, third formers games bags, etc.

Day 8: Today I notice there is an underclass of natives who seem to exist mainly to serve the dominant class. The underclass seem to be selected for their lack of size, which is ironic since they have to carry truck loads of canisters, bottles and other burdens. Whether this is a process of natural selection or there is some more sinister force at work I have not yet discovered, but one thing is clear - that the dominant class tend to be taller, heavier

and generally more assertive than the serving sub-class. Perhaps there are dietary problems amongst the serving class, although I have noticed that they eat the same food as the rest of the community. An interesting example of

their shoulders. As the seven or eight go scampering off for the food he shouts after them, "You've got thirty seconds."

Day 11: Interesting community ritual today - entire community gathers round a field to watch its fifteen male champions compete for the oval leather ball against a neighbouring community. I cannot begin to describe all the different attitudes and positions of the participants get themselves into. In one part of the field there is a huge pile of writhing bodies, then the ball comes bounding and hopping out of the jumble, to be caught by one of our males. The crowd around the field cheers and shouts, and he with the ball runs as fast as the wind, only to be flattened by a huge member of the opposition. For outside this new pile stand thinner, lighter members of the team and again the ball emerges to be picked up by one of the lightweights whose chicken-legs propel him proud, diving and dodging, until he falls over at the edge of the field. The sidelines are full of cheers from our whole community. It is a bonding experience plainly designed to bring us together. The visitors brought in for this purpose look suitably depressed and dejected, to assist in our moment of glory, reminding us of the chief's talk about silent communication on my first day here.

Day 14: This afternoon I made the most amazing discovery. I found out that this domineering, top class were actually part of the serving sub-class once themselves - as recently as three or four years ago, and that selection is by age! The serving class are just waiting to become the domineering class themselves. No wonder they put up with so much. Before going to bed I lie, musing about how fortunate I am to have missed out on years of servitude.

Jo de Mille



the treatment of the underclass today - Dominant male calls: "Third former!" and within seconds seven or eight of the diminutive specimens enthusiastically appear. "Bring the food from my study, on the second shelf on the left - biscuits, crisps, bread, butter, jam, knife.... Whatever you see, bring it down." And said with such authority that I could quite imagine him saying, "I'm tired, bring me my bed," or "I need a lift to London" and commandeering four of the little individuals to carry him all the way to London on

THE VOICE

SAVE OUR BEAGLES!



If any Stoic were asked what the most successful thing about our School was, he or she would be hard pressed to give an answer, or, if an answer was given, it would most likely be wrong, because few of us have any experience or, indeed, know anything about the sport in which Stowe excels and in which we regularly trounce the likes of Eton and Radley and Marlborough, who, for some reason, consider themselves better than us.

The sport of beagling, despite popular opinion, is not an easy thing to do. It's very easy for someone to say, as people often do, "Go away, you stupid beagle," but, rearing, breaking and training top-quality beagles such as the ones which reside in the kennels (near the left pepper pot coming into Stowe) is no easy task. John Pirewell, Stowe's beagle-in-residence, has done a superb job in breeding beagles which win many major shows and competitions come Summer.

The wintertime is when the sport as a sport happens, however, and it is neither as bloody or as boring as I thought it might have been. The sport of beagling begins at a meet, where everything begins with a small glass of port (very civilized sport, beagling) and a sausage roll. After this little aperitif, the master of beagles will show a cover, meaning, roughly translated, that he chooses the 'field' (anything from a ploughed field to a rugby pitch, but usually a stubby sort of field) where the business and the beagles begin searching for their quarry, usually a hare.

At this stage, the hunters and the so-called whippers-in,

who would all be Stoics, beagles ('beagles' off now) and they scour the field for a while, I occasionally put up: it is not in much danger except that it tends to bogs circle which is pursued vaguely in chance. Should they be allowed who goes to it? Instinctively break it giving it a poisonous deal do not catch a hare, then to the next field.

Now Stowe's beagles do not go out. Grudgingly admit that Eton is a school as Stowe, and something of an acreage for us to thank them so

Our rugby teams, good though they are, try though the Rugby budget is about £1000 a year and the beag just been told to pay their own bills. I fail to see the fun...

Why out the funding one of the most successful in our school? It is even of considerable practical use. We carry with them a close-knit community, and our reputation is good for attracting new Stoves and for look old ones. Five Old Stoves are practicing masters of his experience with the Stowe beagles is an effective resource to those who serve in these circles.

It is the strength of the beagles that is in its own school looks to save money where it can, and it is thus the beagles should be able to raise enough money to themselves so they're being asked to get on with it...

We may have pretty mixed feelings about beagles: sports and all, but in a school where we try to be so different, the beagles have clearly earned our respect as they seek to finance themselves.

SAVE OUR BEAGLES!!!



Interesting that newcomers to the school are struck by the way seniors boss new little third formers about: we tend to think we fall over backwards mollycoddling the new ones. Similarly, despite our apparent emphasis on individuality, this term in particular there has been evident a strong desire on behalf of many to prove themselves at least as stupidly unimaginative and uninteresting as they suppose other sad sods to be. Perhaps some of the lower sixth boys feel that this will impress the girls, who feel that this is the way to respond, like some ghastly courtship ritual of a lower species, involving an admiring comparison of vomiting techniques.

Image obsession often involves hiding all your best qualities and assuming some deeply unattractive ones instead. The posturing that looks good on stage or screen or at a distance is pretty unappealing when you get close: it's a pity that for many this fact takes so long to come into focus.

SGAH

CRYSTAL BALL GAZING

How do present-day Stoics imagine things are going to change in their life-times? For what is their education preparing them? Leo Brown, tape-recorder in hand, did the rounds of Sixth-form studies searching for an answer. He found that TV and films influenced much of people's thinking!



James Wright was the first to proffer some views. "I believe that the issue of whether we should integrate into Europe is a crucial one and will affect the coming years," he said. He was anxious about the possibility of giving up national identity. "Personally, I'm against going into Europe. I feel that this country could never cope with such a radical change." He took the somewhat gloomy view that there had always been dissensions within Europe, and always would be, but did not offer a fuller picture of the future. Instead there was a tantalising throw-away line that "the next fifty years will also be important in the nuclear sense".

Moritz Haesen was worried about increasing pollution and diminution of the world's resources. But he hoped, above all, that the future would explore the answer to the abolition of world poverty. Will Bathurst saw the divide between the "have"s and "have not"s increasing with "poor countries becoming poorer and richer ones richer". He thought there might be new forms of power and "the technology for nuclear fusion". Will is strongly European and believes Europe will have a big role to play in the future.

Strong views were then expressed by someone who wished to remain anonymous! He thought that China's future would be crucial and saw its emergence as a new superpower as a potential big challenge. He was gloomy about the prospects of world peace, although he was optimistic that world war, on the scale of the past, might be avoided.

Many expressed the view that the advance of industrial technology would be a dominating factor. "You will never need to get up to do anything," said Ali Sennett, "as modernisation will take care of everything. Curtains which close as a result of people clapping their hands already exist. So, in a few years, you'll probably be able to say what you want for lunch and a computer will produce it for you." She also was optimistic about the conquest of pollution and saw health as a big issue. "Everyone may be wearing anti-toxic suits so that pollution cannot be harmful. Smoking will be banned and everything else which is a health risk will be made illegal." She hoped to see floating "hover-cars" run by solar power. The temperature would be hotter, she thought, and the role of women in the world much stronger than at present!

Tom Sleater also reckoned that improvements in technology would change our world. It was through

technology that solutions to major world problems could come. He hazarded the idea of space exploitation: "Millions live in slums, millions are starving and millions don't have anywhere to live and yet there is all this space in the galaxy! There is an endless shore of space and undefined possibilities!" Finally, from Mark Wates, came a vivid view of things to come: "The year is 2010. Tony Blair has fallen tantalisingly short in his attempt to win an unprecedented fourth term for the Labour Party. Though his party has won more votes than the Modernised Tories, the Neotised Tories have won more seats. Neither party, however, has an overall majority and all may hang on which leader is given the monarch's permission to try to form a government first. King William, now twenty-eight and newly ascended to the throne, faces his greatest constitutional test. Charles ascended to the throne, but did so against the tide of public opinion. He abdicated in favour of his elder son because the referendum which was held said that Charles should not have the throne."

Mark Wates foresaw a European future for Britain: "The sceptics have now accepted that independence is not an absolute good that should be protected and cherished at all costs. They have realised that a single European currency has brought economic benefits even though it has reduced independence. The relationship between Britain and America is excellent and equal to that of the Reagan-Thatcher era. However, it is now Britain and the first female President, Christine White, a Republican."

On the whole, it was not easy to get Stoics to commit themselves about how the future might turn out. Many were simply preoccupied with their own future (with marriage and a family high on their list of priorities!). Some seemed suspicious because the editors of *The Stoic* were searching out points of view instead of sports reports!

Next year's Stoic promises to be an important issue with the School's Jubilee coming up. Perhaps Stoics might care to ponder further for what challenges their present education is preparing them? How they see the main issues in their life-times? The current editors would be delighted to receive contributions and can guarantee that the most interesting versions will be published in the next issue!

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INTERNATIONAL VIEWS

One of the features of the 1990s is the growing international flavour of the Public Schools. They are no longer as parochial as once might have been the case! In this article, begun by Angus McCarey and completed by Leo Brown, Stowe's international nature is given some expression, with views from Germany, Thailand, Russia, India and the USA.

India

I have been studying at Stowe for five years and I am enjoying every minute of it. I arrived at Stowe in January 1991 at the tender age of thirteen and was immediately welcomed. Once I had settled in with the help of all the boys, I soon found out, after a few brain teasing problems, that I was one or two notches below everyone else academically. There was a perfectly valid reason for this, since I had spent my entire life living in Africa and their academic goals were not entirely parallel to those here. Nonetheless, my parents insisted that I pursued my secondary education at Stowe which was by no means unfamiliar to my family; at least to my mother it was not. My uncle completed his A-levels here and my mother was his guardian. So, with my mother's familiarity with the School, she decided to enrol my name here at birth. Anyway, because of my dislocated academic capabilities, it was decided by both myself and my parents, with the support of my teachers, that I was to repeat the Third Form. By doing this, I was to be assured of allowing myself to reach my full potential and, most of all, sink back into my correct age group, as before I was a year too young.

I am now in my final year at Stowe, having gained eleven GCSEs, and I am currently studying A-level English, Economic & Political Studies and Art. Aside from the academic scene, I have tried to make much use of the facilities on offer and have developed a broad field of interests ranging from sports to politics. I have represented the School in athletics, rugby, hockey and dancing. The latter, of course, was not much of a competition! Nonetheless, we had an away dancing fixture at Tudor Hall. In the Lower Sixth I developed an avid interest in photography and have been lucky enough to study it for an extra GCSE. I particularly enjoy printing my own black and white photographs of portraits or scenes of busy life concentrating on the people. This has also become a very popular course and is taken up by a number of Stoics, each with their own areas of interest. I also enjoy oil painting tremendously and have recently experimented with sculpture in the Art School.

Vikram Tellis-Nayak

Germany

Why did I come to Stowe? This is a question that many people have asked me. I wanted to experience something different and live in another country and therefore get to know the people and customs and, of course, the language. Annette Müller, a friend of mine who passed her A-levels at Stowe last year, advised me to come to Stowe and I did... At first, I only wanted to stay at Stowe for one or two terms, but I recently decided to stay for a year. The first six weeks of my time here were quite hard for me and probably would be for any foreigner and perhaps even for English people. The school system here is totally different from that in Germany. Germans are not used to having school in the afternoon and most German schools do not even have school on Saturdays. Also, German school-children require one more year to complete their version of the British A-levels.

As I attended a day school before coming to Stowe, this was the first time that I had been away from my family for a prolonged period of time. At first, it was very difficult for me to make friends with the English students and everything was so different here from what I was used to. For example, I had never played lacrosse before. However, I am now glad that I chose to come here and even like to play lacrosse sometimes... I enjoyed Stowe a lot more following my first half-term break here because everything seemed a lot easier for me.

Karina Friesen

Thailand

Since I was very young, I have always had a dream of studying in an English-speaking country. English is a subject on Thailand's educational curriculum. Like other Thai children I found the language both difficult and tedious. Since English is the most recognised language in the world, I thought that it would be so easy for me to travel around the world if I spoke English perfectly. In 1993, my father felt that the traffic congestion and pollution in Bangkok had become unbearable and since I had problems with breathing as I am allergic to such bad fumes, he decided to send me to England. We found out about Stowe from the Thai government office. It was an exciting experience to see such beautiful architecture in the School. I was also impressed by the students especially the Sixth form. I would like to thank Nic Tissot who gave me great support and Benji Janson who was particularly helpful to me at the beginning. School in England is very different from that in Thailand. In Thailand, I was in a day school when I started the day at half past six in the morning. As the traffic was so bad, I had to have breakfast in the car! Lessons started at eight o'clock and ended at four o'clock with an hour's break at noon for lunch. After a hard day, friends and I would go shopping and then have tea at a restaurant. I would be

home by about half past five when I would have special tuition for the subjects that I found difficult. In my opinion, Thai society spoils teenagers more than anyone else in the world. Most parents are very busy every day and therefore have very little time to see their children. In order to compensate for this, parents give their children lots of money which the children spend on luxury and unnecessary goods such as mobile phones and designer clothes. It is quite worrying that Thai teenagers have become so materialistic.

Pongsiri Tejavibulya

Russia

As a patriot of my country, I will try to tell you only the good things about it! As you know, Russia is the largest country in the world in terms of area. So, we have plenty of space. We also have a lot of resources such as coal and oil. We do not have a very large population. We do not have a lot of cities, but the few that we do have are usually very big with polluted air and bad roads. Our country's road network is probably our biggest problem. So, if you ever go to Russia, make the Jeep your rent-a-car choice as these are the best cars for Russia. Russia's education system is a lot more demanding than those of the US and the UK. The system's only weakness is its foreign language tuition but everything else is very strong indeed.

Although we have a lot of dirty factories, we also have beautiful countryside. There is peace and quiet and if you want to have a picnic, there are lots of places to choose from. There is a beautiful place to have a picnic near the village which I live in. It is on the banks of the River Value which, at this location, is deep, slow and beautiful. There are lots of trees around so that you have enough shadows to sit in if you feel hot. Russia has a lot of historical places that would be interesting to visit. Russia is an interesting country and I love it!

Max Rochkovan

Russia

It's now been three months since I came to Stowe and it's a strange thought as it seems as though I came yesterday! It also seems like I have known Stowe and been here for a very long time. To be honest, I do not like to think about my first days at Stowe. At that time I did not know anybody and everything was so unfamiliar for me. I remember my first night at Stowe when I was very tired and just wanted to get to sleep whilst everyone in the dormitory was noisily jumping up and down. It seemed to go on forever. I was thinking, "Guys, please get to sleep." Whilst lying in my bed that night, I was nervous and scared when I tried to imagine what my life at Stowe would be like, how well I would get along with everybody, how difficult my lessons would be and whether I would fail most of them. When I look back on my first term at Stowe now, I feel that the most important aspect

of it was that it gave me a lot of optimism. I now feel very confident about returning to Stowe after the Christmas holidays. Everything has been a success for me this term. Although getting to know people was slightly difficult for me at the start, it was not a problem as most of the boys were very friendly to me and always ready to help. Therefore, I did not feel lost or lonely in the School which I thought was so huge when I first saw it. The fact that I am usually busy doing something in the form of studying or participating in activities also makes being away from home easier for me. This is due to me being so tired at the end of the day that there is no time for me to be homesick or bored!

Alexei Sorokin

USA

Stowe v. Mercersburg

"Why?" "What are you, nuts?"

Such comments were the words inspired in my friends at school at home when I told them that I was going to study at an English Public School for a year before university. These comments were clearly founded on the American belief that British boarding schools are archaic, monastic, wicked institutions – a tremendous contrast to the easy-flowing, comfortable school which I attended in America. I must admit that this bleak image of school in Britain scared me a little, but the brilliant depictions of school in England given to me by predecessors in the program helped banish these fears along with the glossy photos of bright, happy people which dominated the Stowe Prospectus.



Matt Rader

When I finally arrived in England, destination number one was the home of a couple in Milton Keynes. You must imagine a happy, excited, jet-lagged little American bopping into the home of a very reserved older English couple – not a match made in heaven. Yet, we managed to get along except for one thing – both seemed very biased against British Public Schools and made them sound even worse than the American stereotype. Thus, they being my only English exposure, my fears rapidly returned and solidified. Besides their unpleasant descriptions of the daily life which I would face, they assured me that in order to have any hope of success, I must be sure to say "SIR" at least every other word I spoke. This practice was entirely alien to me coming from a school where half of the faculty preferred their first names rather than any title.

So, it was with great trepidation that I trod the North Front steps on my first visit to Stowe. However, rather than the dowdy old slug I expected to greet me, I was welcomed by my buoyant housemaster – I still tried to call him "Sir", but somehow I couldn't make it fit into my sentences – whose energy helped bolster my courage

a bit. This first visit was a short one and there was enough time intervening between it and the start of school for my beloved elderly couple to attempt to instill the fear of God in me again.

Four days later, I came to Stowe to stay for the year for better or for worse, praying for the former. The first few days were awkward to say the least as I rapidly attempted to adjust to a community not so much worse, but rather phenomenally different than the one I had left just a few months before. It constantly struck me that it was absolutely amazing that two boarding schools, both attempting to accomplish the same goal, had found such incredibly different methods. Such things as the uniform, mandatory chapel, required study periods, mandatory activities, and organised, mandatory evening preparation were, for the most part, unheard of at my school in America. Yet Stowe, much to my surprise, is less formal in ways that schools in America would never dream of being. For instance, meals at Stowe are incredibly relaxed in comparison to the system of meals at Mercersburg, my former school. There, all three meals, every school day, were sit-down, served, family-style meals where ten students sat at a large table with a faculty member and his or her family. In America, we think of such a meal system as a bastion of tradition regardless of how "liberal" the school may become. Yet, as I have said, at Stowe, a school still very much of the traditional nature, such a system does not exist.

One thing which I hadn't even considered and was surprised to find, is that Stoics, though certainly not always content with their school, are very reluctant to attempt to take any measures to change it. Yet, this lethargy (for want of a better word) isn't necessarily self-induced. For, at Stowe, there is very little opportunity for the majority of the student body to express their opinions in a way which might instigate change. It is the select and small group of prefects with whom the power lies to effect any change in the school or policies. This is a great contrast to the all-inclusive systems of school government we had at my school in America. Nearly all areas of school life from the dress code to the menu to decisions on expul-



Commencement Processional, Mercersburg

sion were governed by committees for the most part composed of half students and half faculty. Such decisions, I have discovered, at Stowe are made by Housemasters or the Headmaster single-handedly. By spreading the power throughout the school community at home, we somehow managed to foster a spirit of great responsibility, worth and unity throughout the entire community. But, I must admit that, because of the traditional stereotype which I expected to find, I was not surprised to discover that masters hold the power here, but what I was surprised to discover is that Stoics do not work harder to gain power or just to spread their ideas to the places where they can be used to bring about change.

One of the most interesting things I have noticed at Stowe is the way in which Stoics are orientated more to their Houses and year groups than to the School. Now, this way of doing things certainly does have some very good benefits as it tends to foster close unity in a class and, in the case of the House, a very strong bond between a reasonably small group of people. At Mercersburg, all activities and social functions were generally geared for the School. We had a school social centre, much like the Sixth Form Centre but with mailboxes, bookshop, television room, pizza shop, ping pong tables, pool tables and arcade games. Here, the entire School could socialise during breaks and just generally meet.

Moreover, we had full school assemblies twice a week which were kind of like House meetings only for the whole School. If a trip was offered, it was offered to everyone, not just a House or a year group. Now, just as Stowe's system has benefits and detriments, Mercersburg's system also certainly has an up and a down side. Although our system encouraged strong friendships between all years and all members of the community, the individual year-groups tended not to be as closely knit. This caused problems when the government of a particular year group chose to do something just for that class, and several people were left out because their companions were in other grades. Yet, I feel that a healthy balance between the two systems would be a great alternative to either one of the two.

In conclusion, it is only fair to admit that Stowe is a very different community from the one I left at Mercersburg last June. Although not the cloistered monastic institution I had been led to expect, Stowe is by far more traditional, structured and ordered than Mercersburg. But, it has been fun, and certainly at times difficult, to adapt to an entirely new way of doing things and to discover that indeed there are two incredibly different ways of running a boarding school. Despite the frustration I have experienced at times, I must admit, sincerely, that I am glad that I have come to Stowe. Now, a third of the way through my year at Stowe, I would have to tell my friends "No, I am not nuts!" I have found my time here, thus far, very rewarding and have been enthralled and enlightened by the many changes, similarities, and unexpected discoveries I have made along the way.

Matt Rader



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INTERNATIONAL PUPILS AND GUARDIANSHIP

The Headmaster on BBC Radio last November

The radio programme *Education Matters* recently highlighted an initiative undertaken by the Headmaster to ensure effective "guardianship" for international pupils who come to schools and universities in Britain. This initiative is leading to the formation of a body known as AEGIS, the Association of Education Guardians for International Students.

BBC's Nicky Barringer, introducing the programme, explained that unscrupulous international agencies were cashing in on the desire of many parents for an English education for their children. Such agencies ignored appropriate consultative procedures and once they had secured a place for their client might take no further interest in, or concern for, the pupil. They disregarded the importance of finding the right school for each child. Schools which were not alert to this alarming brand of educational sharp practice could find themselves involved in trying to solve complex academic and emotional problems.

At Stowe the well-being of the 10% or so of international pupils was, said the Headmaster, one of his most important priorities. His interest in proper "guardianship" had been fostered by a visit abroad. Acting as educational representative in a Department of Trade and Industry mission to South America, he had learnt of the perception that not enough was being done in the UK for the academic and social integration of international students. "Certainly in Brazil it was thought that British education didn't necessarily look after its international people. And so I came back from that trip with a clear view that we ought to try to do something to establish guardianship agencies, so that we were looking after more than just the academic possibilities. Guardianship would mean some sort of accreditation procedures and not just for the students' university and school work, but for what they were doing in the time that they spent in this country in general."

Andrew Sutherland, a highly respected expert on matters relating to international students, was then introduced. He and the Headmaster have together joined forces in their determination to establish AEGIS as a proper regulatory organisation. It had an inspired acronym, commented Nicky Barringer, conjuring up

images of the protective breast-shield of Zeus, king of the gods, and Athena, goddess of learning! DTI support, she said, was being actively canvassed and there was considerable optimism that AEGIS would soon be in action. "It will establish," said the Headmaster, "a forum for the exchange of good practice and information about contracts between the pupils, on the one hand, and the schools and universities, on the other. This forum will be for the host families as well as the parent families. It will make sure that we are all singing from the same song sheet, that all the accredited organisations and agencies have a code of good practice based on a proper awareness of all the implications of looking after children from abroad."

The programme had begun with Nicky Barringer taking Stowe's own Yuki Soga as an example of just one from the many thousands of international students. Yuki explained what were the driving forces which led to her own decision to come to Britain from Japan at the age of seventeen:

"I want to read medicine at university. I want to be a doctor and to work in other countries, like Africa; so I needed to learn English and to experience other cultures. That is the reason I came here."

Such motivation to settle abroad to further one's education must, if given the kind of substructure which AEGIS seeks to provide, lead to an enriching experience for all concerned.

DH



The Headmaster with Yuki Soga

COMMON ROOM MATTERS

Charles Macdonald has retired after thirty two years at Stowe. There is a *Vale* tribute to him on the following two pages. The coming summer sees the retirement of another long-serving master, David Foster, Senior Master and former Head of Geography. This will mean changes in September. Stephen Hirst, Housemaster of Chandos, will be taking over as Senior Master and Andrew Dalton, Head of RS, will move into Chandos. With the departure of Emma Taylor last summer Jane Hamblett-Jahn became Housemistress of Lyttelton. Karen Dore, who ran the House during Emma's maternity leave, continues to look after the Lyttelton annexe, the former Housemaster's house. Nugent, meanwhile, has also acquired an annexe in the form of the Hostel, with Leah Hamblett at its helm.

There have been other departures. Anthony Bewes

(OS), for two years the Chaplain's assistant, has left to take up Holy Orders. Fred Armitage has returned to Australia after his year's exchange with Simon Collins. The latter, back as Head of Science, writes of his Antipodean experiences on page 125. French mistress Eleanor Walmesley was another summer departure, whilst last Christmas Graeme Delaney, Head of Modern Languages for the past three years, whose many activities included the hockey 1st XI, also left. Michael Ghirelli, the Geography Department's *fidus Achates*, after coming back from one retirement, retires again this Easter. We also wish *Bon Voyage* to Stowe-Harvard Fellow Vanya Desai, language assistants Ofelia Antolin, Perrine Lordon and Patrick Mohler and Australians Igor Lemech, Simon Lobelson, Kate Townsend and Luke Carnegie.



PVC, Elizabeth Marlantes and CJAT



LJG, EGJ and REM



Elizabeth Marlantes, Barbara Burns and AD



TMH-S



MW and Paula Bello

Photo: Richard Thomson-Moore

Photos: John Burns

The production of *Sweet Charity* will be reviewed in the next issue, but here, by way of a preview, are some notable stars.

There are several new faces and one notable return. Anthony Shillington has known Stowe as both pupil and parent. He has now returned from a career in the City in his third role, that of Development Director. Last year we also welcomed Ray Dexter (Chemistry), Tracey Hooker (Modern Languages), Emma James (Modern Languages), Tim Knight (Maths), Budge Pountney (1st XV coach), Simon Scott (Geography), Craig Sutton (PE), Chris Terry (Economics) and Rupert Demery (Chaplain's assistant). Paula Bello is the new Assistant in Spanish, Claire Gonzalez in French and Andreas Gross in German; Elizabeth Marlantes is the latest Stowe-Harvard Fellow; Adam Scott has come as Architect-in-residence and James Pile to teach Classics.

The Headmaster's activities this year included a visit to Jordan as the educational representative in a Department of Trade and Industry mission. His initiative in the founding of AEGIS, a body safeguarding the best interests of international pupils in Britain, is detailed on page 43. Michael Waldman's Lecture and Field work in Arizona is chronicled on page 123.

Paul Harris' book on improving sight reading has quickly become a standard work and he has been preparing the definitive guide for all music teachers, *The Instrumental and Singing Teacher's Handbook*. Michael Bevington's *Stowe: the Garden and the Park* has swiftly moved into its third edition. Tony Meredith has been a regular contributor to *The Cricketer* during 1996 and featured in a recent anthology of cricket writing, *Through The Covers* (OUP). James Henderson, meanwhile, has recorded a new CD (*Twentieth Century Music for Evensong*) of music by Paul Drayton and others – including some of his own music – with the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church, Oxford.

Last year was another very busy one for babies. We are pleased to record some notable arrivals, welcoming to the Stowe family Harry McCrea, Hannah McCabe, Miles and Toby Michael, Lizzie Vernon, Alistair Akam and Polly Higgins. Whilst Sally Akam was on maternity leave David Foster resumed his former mantle as Head of Geography, whilst Julie Wolseley came in to teach classics for Belinda McCrea.



PICTURE QUIZ

Yes, it's Patrick Mohler, last year's German assistant, at Silverstone by a Formula Ford racing car, but who is the driver? Answer on page 136



RGD



RERD



CJAT and TFK



TLH and EGJ



SMBS and RCS

Photographs (by JMT) of the dinner last May when Science staff past and present honoured CPM



Gill, Charlie, Joan Ridge, David & Yvonne Lennard



Behind: BHO, Patrick & Jacquie Macdonald, Malcolm Grimston, John & Jill Dobinson. In front: Jean Lloyd, Frank & Gina Hudson and Tony Selby



Betty Rhee, Chris Mullineux, MW, Hazel Waldman, SLA and the Aldridges



BHO, John Dobinson, Patrick & Jacquie Macdonald and Jill Dobinson



Clive Hambly, Frances Orger, Fred & Dorothy Armitage, Rosemary Shahani and GSR



Malcolm Grimston, Antony Lloyd, GMH, Chris Mullineux and Clive Hambly



CPM at the Music Room Dinner with (left to right): Patrick Macdonald, Jean Lloyd, Iuan David and Gill Macdonald

VALETE

CPM

The bare statistics in themselves are impressive. Charlie Macdonald taught at Stowe for thirty-two years, six of them as Head of Science, fifteen as Housemaster of Lyttelton and another seven as Second Master. He was, in addition, here for five years as a boy in Chatham (whilst a bonus of ten years can be added for the time spent by his sons Patrick and Alastair in the same House)!

This in itself represents a massive commitment, but statistics cannot do justice to the manner of the commitment. In the exercise of his many, varied responsibilities one question would always be of paramount importance to him: What is in Stowe's best interest? This resulted in his being the most caring of teachers, most conscientious of housemasters and wisest of counsellors. One thinks of him, inevitably, in terms of those fine Republican heroes of Ancient Rome with their highly developed sense of "fides" and "pietas".

But unlike Cato the Elder or Pompey the Great, CPM also knew (and, indeed, knows) how to enjoy himself!

His devotion to the trombone in particular and music in general bears this out. So too his sporting knowledge and expertise, which went much deeper than many a third-former may have realised. He was an outstanding schoolmaster not so much because of his academic prowess and Scottish canniness (helpful though these were!) as his sense of fun, breadth of interests, wide humanity and culture. And there was always Gill beside him, supportive, smiling and equally loyal. There are so many people over the years who have cause to be very grateful to them. They have given to Stowe unstintingly.

Last summer, in the Common Room, BHO as Head of Chemistry spoke of Charlie's contribution to the School. Such private valedictory utterances traditionally go unpublished. But this was something of a *tour de force* of its genre and it also serves to show, better than more formal words, the deep affection in which Charlie is held. A few extracts follow below! AGM

I have an important announcement to make to the chemical world – via Stowe's WWW pages perhaps! Whilst scouting around Charlie Macdonald's laboratory the other day to see if I could find out why 3D were producing posters for holidays on Mars, I came across a strange new compound which Bloggs mi had made during his Investigation Project. Considering its formula $CP_2(Mc)_3$, I have temporarily named it CPMium until it has been fully characterised. I have done some preliminary investigations, with the help of my colleagues at the Wheatsheaf Analytical Laboratories in Maids Moreton, and found the following:

- this is a rare and remarkable compound; it exists naturally as a professional schoolmaster gemstone of the very highest quality.
- it is a high energy compound, able to prepare and mark more prep, while also functioning as a Head of Chemistry, Head of Science, or a Housemaster, Senior Housemaster, or as Second Master, or as Acting Headmaster, than any other compound composed of these elements.
- although a very versatile compound, its preferred function is a delivery of chemical information – teaching chemistry. When it interacts with other staff

compounds in the School or pupil elements in the classroom, it is very demanding and only the highest academic or administrative standards will suffice.

- because of this, CPMium is the most sought-after and respected member of the chemical family at Stowe.
- investigating its catalytic qualities, I found CPMium to be superbly efficient in every reaction I tried; indeed its level of efficiency converting teaching ideas into notes or worksheets, Housemasters' discussions into minutes, prep and practical assignments into marks is so much greater than conventional compounds that it may only need replacing every 32 years, and even then would still have more useful chemical life than most other compounds.

One of the joys of working in the Chemistry Department is the happy and relaxed atmosphere that exists thanks in no small way to Charlie's sense of humour. Although a BBC computer can do most things Charlie wants as well as, sometimes better, than a PC, Charlie is not one to ignore new technology when it appears and finding a Clipart picture of a large foot trampling a frightened youth, Charlie embraced the new technology with enthusiasm to

"paste" this picture on a Sixth Former's prep sheet for the next week!

We have all valued Charlie enormously as a colleague, and an example of the esteem and affection in which he and Gillian are held was demonstrated by the fact that over 50 science staff, past and present, and their spouses, spanning several Stowe generations came from far and wide to a dinner in honour of Charlie and Gill on the evening of Speech Day last year. On that evening we presented Charlie with a chemical balance of the old type from the Department. This can and has been replaced by more modern, easier-to-use electronic balances. Charlie is one part of the Chemistry Department we shall never be able to replace.

Beside Charlie, also pursuing her own very successful career in teaching as a primary school Headmistress, has been the gentle and supportive figure of Gill. Many of us have got to know her through her hospitality, her support of musical and other events at Stowe and through her active role in Stowe Church. Leaving Stowe will be as much a wrench for her as it will be for Charlie, but we are glad that they won't be far away and wish them all the very best for their retirement to Tudor Meadows in Buckingham! BHO

ELCT and SCT

I first met Simon Taylor in 1986, when as new staff we both stood clutching our glasses rather nervously while assorted linguists gathered for a pre-term drink at the house of John and Françoise Bennetts. In the intervening years, we raised many glasses – and many classes – together, hoping to persuade our pupils to absorb French and Spanish, and trying out bilingual jokes on one another when the going got rough.

Simon's real love was Spanish, ('None of that silly, French stuff'), and his lessons were famous on two counts: first the length of his vocabulary tests, and secondly his delight in gruesome or bloodthirsty stories. It was by no means unusual for me to find one of my Sixth-formers desperately trying to learn for one of SCT's tests during my lesson, while translations involving mystery, murder and mayhem were his stock in trade.

Outside the quaintly named New Classroom Block, Simon expended his boundless energy in a host of different directions – the second rugby XV, the athletics programme, both bronze and gold D of E expeditions and of course the Himalayan trek. It was perhaps fitting that he should also encourage others to get up and go through his administration of the Myles Henry Award. Added to all this was his role as Underhousemaster in Grenville and as a tutor in Temple, not to mention as a dancing cowboy in the staff production of *Oklahoma!* and, in the fullness of time, as master in charge of the new Sixth Form Centre.

In the circumstances, Simon might have been forgiven for being too busy to notice the arrival of Emma Cowling in the Common Room in 1990, were it not for the fact that she was not exactly the sort of person whom one overlooked. When Emma came to Stowe to take up a post in the Economics Department, I gained an invaluable Underhousemistress in Nugent, Simon gained a friend who was later to become his wife, and Stowe gained a force to be reckoned with.

Emma took to the boarding house like a duck to water, gaining the girls' confidence and enjoying their company. It was no surprise to anyone when, only a year later and in spite of her youth, she was appointed to take over from Fiona Lockton as Housemistress of Stanhope. She was equally at home in other areas, however, organising sculling, setting up the Caledonian Society, helping with D of E, taking a main part in another of the staff musicals, *Half a Sixpence*, and taking on the teaching of Theology and PSHE as well as Economics.

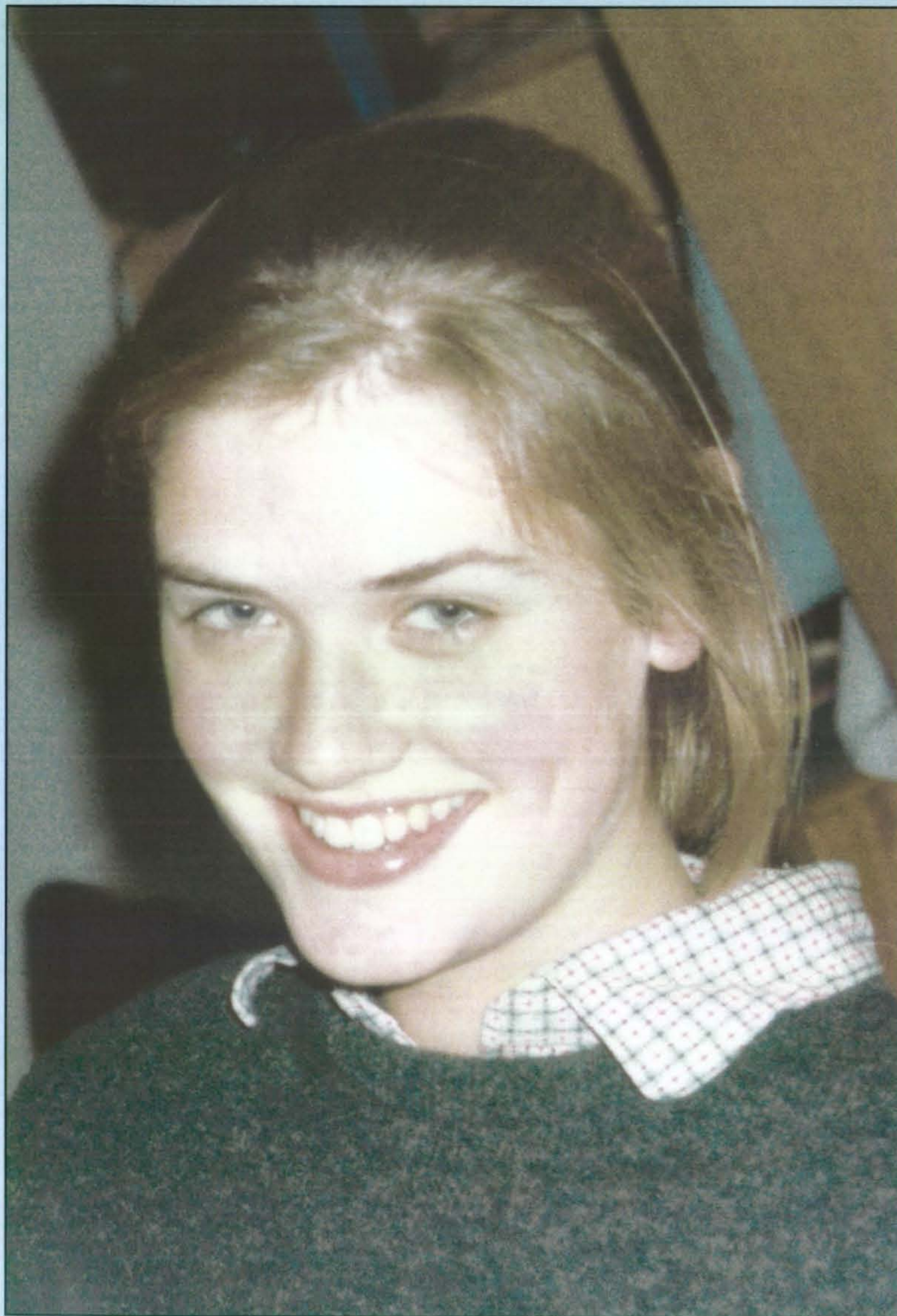
Emma contributed above all, however, to the Christian life of the school. She initiated a girls' Bible Study and a Sixth Form Enquirers' group, worked with Tim Hastie-Smith to bring fresh ideas and energy to Crossfire and was firmly outspoken in her beliefs both in Chapel and outside it. She championed the girls at all times and having spent her Sixth Form years at a boys' boarding school herself (more recently, in fact than either she or I cared to recall!) was always sensitive to their needs. Although we were arch-rivals on the touch-line, Emma and I worked very closely together during her time as a Housemistress. I often had cause to be grateful for her help and advice, although thankfully her wisdom was leavened with a teasing sense of humour which punctured pomposity and ensured that even Housemasters' meetings remained relatively sane affairs.

It was probably their shared sense of the ridiculous which brought Emma and Simon together, and as time went by their interests and their lives overlapped. Simon was confirmed in Stowe Chapel, Emma joined my Spanish class and earned herself a grade A GCSE in less than a year. They were married at Stowe at the end of 1992. Joint enterprises included a Himalayan expedition, a Spanish exchange to Barcelona and of course the girls' move from Stanhope to Lyttelton which the two of them oversaw.

The establishment of Lyttelton as a fully-fledged girls' boarding house was a major part of Emma's and Simon's impact on Stowe, and as a joint enterprise was perhaps only topped by the birth of their daughter Holly, born just before Christmas, 1995. It was very much Stowe's loss when the Taylor family moved away in the summer of 1996 when Emma took up the post of Housemistress at Canford, her alma mater. We wish them every happiness in their new life, and I look forward to registering Holly for a place at Stowe... in Nugent?

REM





Melissa Chase (1980-96)

APPRECIATIONS

Patrick Hunter

A.J. Clarke's address from the Memorial Service in Stowe Chapel, April 1996.

Oratio mea est divisa in partes tres. The Latin is a bit elementary for Patrick but I would like to speak of him in three ways: what he symbolised, what he did and what he was.

Patrick Hunter's death removes the final link with that devoted band of young men who joined JF in the mid-1920s within three or four years of Stowe's foundation and carried the liberal torch into the 1950s and 60s. JF's very first lieutenants were older men, 'Pop' Earle, Ivor Cross, my father Ian Clarke and Major Haworth. Many of us remember vividly the next wave, the housemasters Clifford, Capel Cure, Playford and Kinvig and the tutors Hart Dyke, Archer and Patrick Hunter. This varied band, united in their devotion to Stowe and the inspiration of JF, provided the backbone of the staff in those difficult post-war years, and now with Patrick's passing only their good deeds and characters remain.

Patrick's good deeds were legion even if largely unsung. For 31 years Classics Tutor he presided, latterly with Brian Stephan's support, over a flourishing and successful Side I. He was diligent in his preparations, painstaking and generous in his criticism, a true educator whose reward was in the enthusiasm and success of his pupils in an era when the classics were generally giving ground to the pressures of modern life and the growing emphasis on vocational and practical subjects.

He coupled this nurture of the classics for 28 years with the onerous duties of Senior Tutor. In effect he was responsible for the development and running of the academic machine at Stowe, and this accorded well with his grasp of detail and his constructive mind. He appeared to carry the entire school timetable in his head. Certainly I remember distraught junior masters rushing into the Side I room on the first day of term to ask where they were supposed to be teaching. Patrick always knew.

It was fitting that he should have ended his career as Second Master for four years up to his retirement in 1962. What is surprising is that much of his contribution to Stowe was still ahead of him at the end of his 37 years on the staff. He had already composed the elegant Latin inscription to JF in the Roxburgh Hall; he now undertook the entire preparation of Noel Annan's *Roxburgh of Stowe*. He was particularly qualified for this task, and the book's comprehensive and vivid portrayal of JF owes an enormous amount to his diligence and skill. His last major service to Stowe was the original 1967 *Old Stoic Register* – again a tribute to his tireless research and devotion. Fittingly the 1990 edition is dedicated to him.

But beyond the loyal servant and dutiful tutor there was an endearing man, of varied talents: a Cambridge athletics blue, who still bounded up the stairs in the Pineapple Block in his fifties, a pre-war stalwart of the Choral Society, a long-term editor of *The Stoic*, and a

witty speaker, as evidenced by a well-turned speech at an Old Stoic House of Commons dinner in the late 1950s.

No account of Patrick should omit his happy marriage to Mary, a fellow classicist. They had welcoming homes in Akeley and Adderbury, and Patrick cared for her devotedly until her death in 1980.

Patrick himself retained his physical and mental vigour into old age. In his flats in Oxford, adorned by the splendid Laurence Whistler goblet of the Temple of Ancient Virtue, he received visitors, always eager for news and views of Stowe and the wider world. His eye for detail brought him proof-reading work from the Oxford University Press until well into his eighties. Patrick's impact on Stoics in general, beyond his devoted classicists, might have been greater but for his hesitancy of manner, reinforced by his characteristic nervous tic. It is a pity that he was not more widely appreciated, but his diffidence sprang from genuine humility, and his modesty was, to quote a recent *Times* obituary of another scholar, "a candle to his merit". Patrick Hunter was in every sense a gentleman and a Christian, tempered by the twin Delphic sayings "nothing in excess" and "know thyself". A dear friend and loyal contributor to Stowe's development, his own translation of the conclusion of the Roxburgh Hall inscription sums him up in the eyes of his pupils:

So courteously he fashioned us, so kindly fed
And so devotedly to knowledge led.

May light perpetual shine upon him.

Mary Patricia Wharton

Former Matron of Bruce

Pat Wharton became Matron of Bruce in 1982, recommended for the post by Louis Strauss, one of Stowe's first 99. From our very first meeting with Pat, Hazel and I knew that she would be a great success and so it proved.

Soon after her arrival Bruce moved from its old quarters in the main building into its new house, Pat coping with the upheaval in her usual competent and unflappable fashion. Her kind and sympathetic approach to those in her care soon became a byword in both house and school, although any malingerers would soon discover they were no match for her innate Antipodean ability to see through the spurious! Pat's life had been divided between her homeland, Australia, and England, her adopted country, and many a boy had his mood cheered by her marvellous stories of years gone by, whether of cricket at Sydney, of flying in the outback or of her Australian childhood. Her return to Australia in 1986 was a great loss.

Pat has been and will continue to be mourned by everyone who knew her, but will live on in our memories as the best of loyal friends and the kindest and most loving of matrons. Any life which she touched was influenced for the better and many members of Bruce have had reason to be grateful to her for showing them the true meaning of "humanity". She was a very great lady and the world is poorer for her passing. MW

AROUND AND ABOUT

A miscellany of photographs, 1996



James Wright, Will Bathurst, Vanya Desai, Chesney Clark, Emily Williams and Leo Brown at the MEP in Paris. Report on page 118



Photo: TMH-S

The boys from St. Hugh's School, Faringdon who spent a weekend at Stowe in June



Photo: Stuart Isaac

The Headmaster with Sir Leon Brittan at the opening of the European Centre, February 1996



Photo: David Woodnutt

Rachel and Bob Drayson at CPM's farewell party



Photo: B Tree

View from Cobham Court during last summer



Photo: WEHV

A reminder of 1996 as an Olympic Year.

Gold medalists Matthew Pinsent and Steve Redgrave get some training hints from James Sleater and Alex McMicking



Photo: TMH-S

The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley MP (with JLHJ, Chesney Clark and Mary-Kate Lyell), one of last year's guest speakers in Chapel



Left: Lady Bracknell (Daisy Brook), her daughter Gwendoline (Jane Collingwood) and Jack (Ben Bloomfield) in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest*. (A review is on page 63)



Photo: Al Bianco

The Stoic editors 1997:

Simon Post, Matt Rader, Hilary Masey, Will Bathurst, Kate Chambré, Leo Brown and Oliver Trehawey



Tally Kettler, Chatham's intrepid matron, parachuting for the Charity Weekend



FUN AND FUND-RAISING

Above: Housemasters get everywhere! CHJ bungee jumping above the Thames for the Charity Weekend

Below and left: Inter-House Raft Competition

Right: Damian Hoare adrift

Bottom left: Harry Speir adrift



In Charity Weekend mode, four of the organisers Will Bloomfield, Rupert Jupp, Tom Honeyman Brown and Toby Dixon

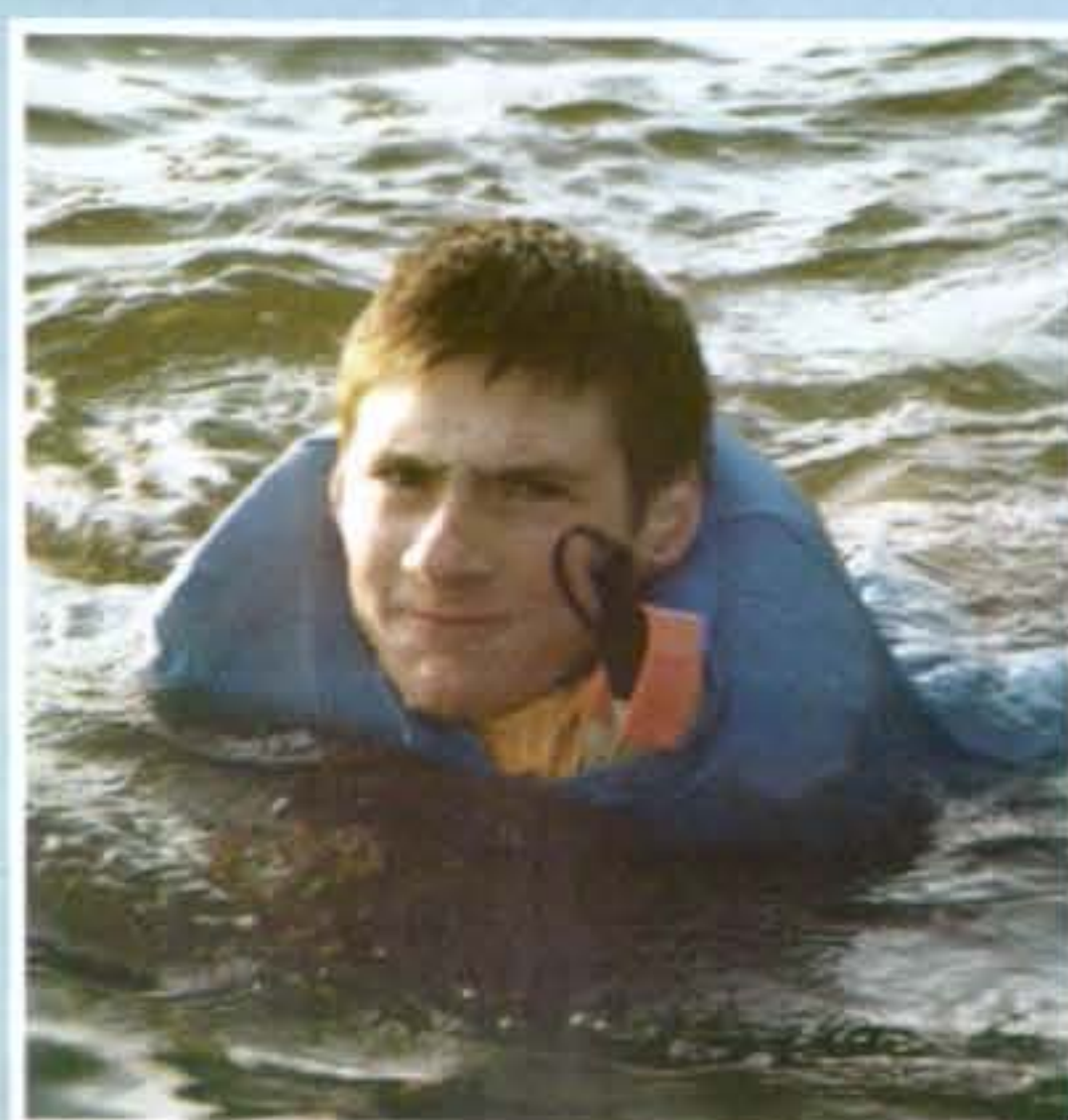
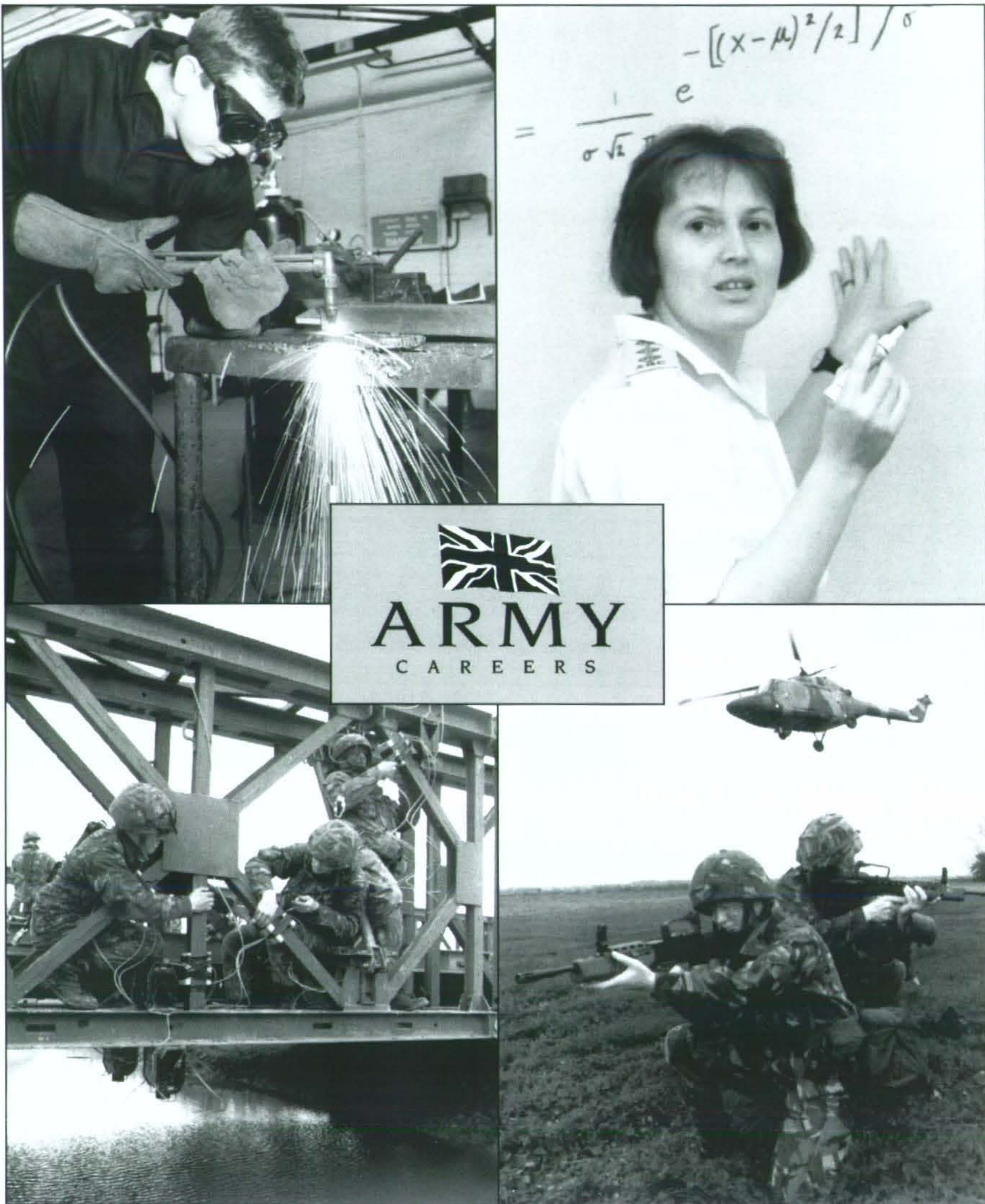


Photo: TMH-S

Photos: TMH-S




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.....The Headmaster... "Brian Aldridge".....



.....Gary Lineker...HRH Prince Edward...David Shepherd.....



.....the ubiquitous clarinet quartet.....



.....David Wynne.....



.....and very many others at the Mall Gallery, London where Stowe Art was exhibited last year.
(Details on page 105)

Photo: Design on Camera

THE YEAR

SPEECH DAY



Speeches were again held in Chapel Court. Sir Peter Leslie, Chairman of the Governors, began proceedings by commenting on the pleasing increase in the numbers of applicants, both boys and girls. "That is all the more remarkable," he said, "since it is against the continuing downward trend in boarding across the country." After alluding to various scaffolded areas, Sir Peter commented on the great improvements which the partnership with the National Trust had wrought to the grounds and temples. "And we are very grateful indeed to English Heritage and other donors, some of them private, who have enabled us to get on with restoring and repairing parts of the mansion."



The Headmaster's theme was the value of boarding education. The boarding schools, he said, were educational fortresses in an age which was becoming increasingly nihilistic. They inculcated important habits of community. As such they resisted the modern trends of deconstructionalism.

"We promote and live in an environment of acquiring habits of community to stand our children in good stead against the anarchy of choice, choice without responsibility, which is today's great malady and malaise."



After detailing specific advances and achievements made in the past year, the Headmaster returned to his theme of the school as a fortress in society. How best, he asked, did one strike out for Utopia? He offered five aspirations for Stowe. First, "a campaign for sodality or friendship, for sympathy and community." To achieve such sympathetic collaboration a school needed a proper pattern of authority, his second aspiration. This was being achieved by the management structure, the systems of review and appraisal, the handbooks, the committees and project teams. "All should lead to convergence of ownership, knowledge and purpose." Thirdly there was the aspiration to a higher quality of relationships between everyone involved, of all ages. "Education and wisdom are as much caught as taught." Fourthly, there was the management of change. "Not change for change's sake, but the necessary and organic change, of



Photo: Al Bianco

incorporation, of synthesis, of solidifying." In this way an institution's capabilities could be expanded and its boundaries extended. Such an institution admired and embraced "the creative tension between what might be and what is." The final aspiration was for team work. He applauded the notion that "there is no limit to what we can accomplish if it matters not who gets the credit." League Tables signally failed to measure the important ability to work in teams and thereby prepare for the collaborative adventure of life.

The Headmaster offered his reasons why the best boarding schools should be a source of strength and pride: "It is in institutions like Stowe whose people are dedicated to the wonderful, daunting, exciting, privileged, challenging, all-consuming joy and job of preparing its young people not just for nationally certificated exams, not just for further education entry, not just for survival in a sometimes cruel and competitive world, and not just for competence in earning a crust – but for a full and successful and happy life of work and leisure, of pain and pleasure, of the wings of idealism and the wrecks of reality, the ups and downs, ins and outs, rhythms and stillnesses of life and, indeed, for the realisation of life afterwards. It is, I say, in institutions such as Stowe that we must promote the sure shores of morals, of integrity and service."

In conclusion the Headmaster exhorted all parents to proclaim widely their belief in boarding: "You too have a great part to play in combating the media distrust of boarding by bruiting it abroad, being confident in Stowe's embrace of you that it is no divorce from your children. I want you, as I do, to challenge the disbelievers and discreditors by saying, at whatever cost, 'Why don't you want the best for your child too?'"

The Guest Speaker was Baroness Warnock of Weeke, DBE, whose wide experience of academic life includes being variously a Tutor of Philosophy at St Hugh's, Headmistress of Oxford High School and Mistress of Girton. She attacked the dangers of cynicism in today's world, taking care to distinguish it from scepticism. Scepticism meant thinking for oneself, saying "What is the evidence for that?" and not taking things on trust. But cynicism was, by contrast, something very dangerous and very much encouraged in the media. "I think my least favourite expression in the entire world is 'She would say that, wouldn't she' with its implication that things were only said for personal advantage and never in a disinterested way for the common good." She appealed to the School's leavers to fight cynicism in general and in particular its ridicule of politicians, judges and the police. "If society becomes cynical about the law," she concluded, "the country becomes ungovernable."

IB

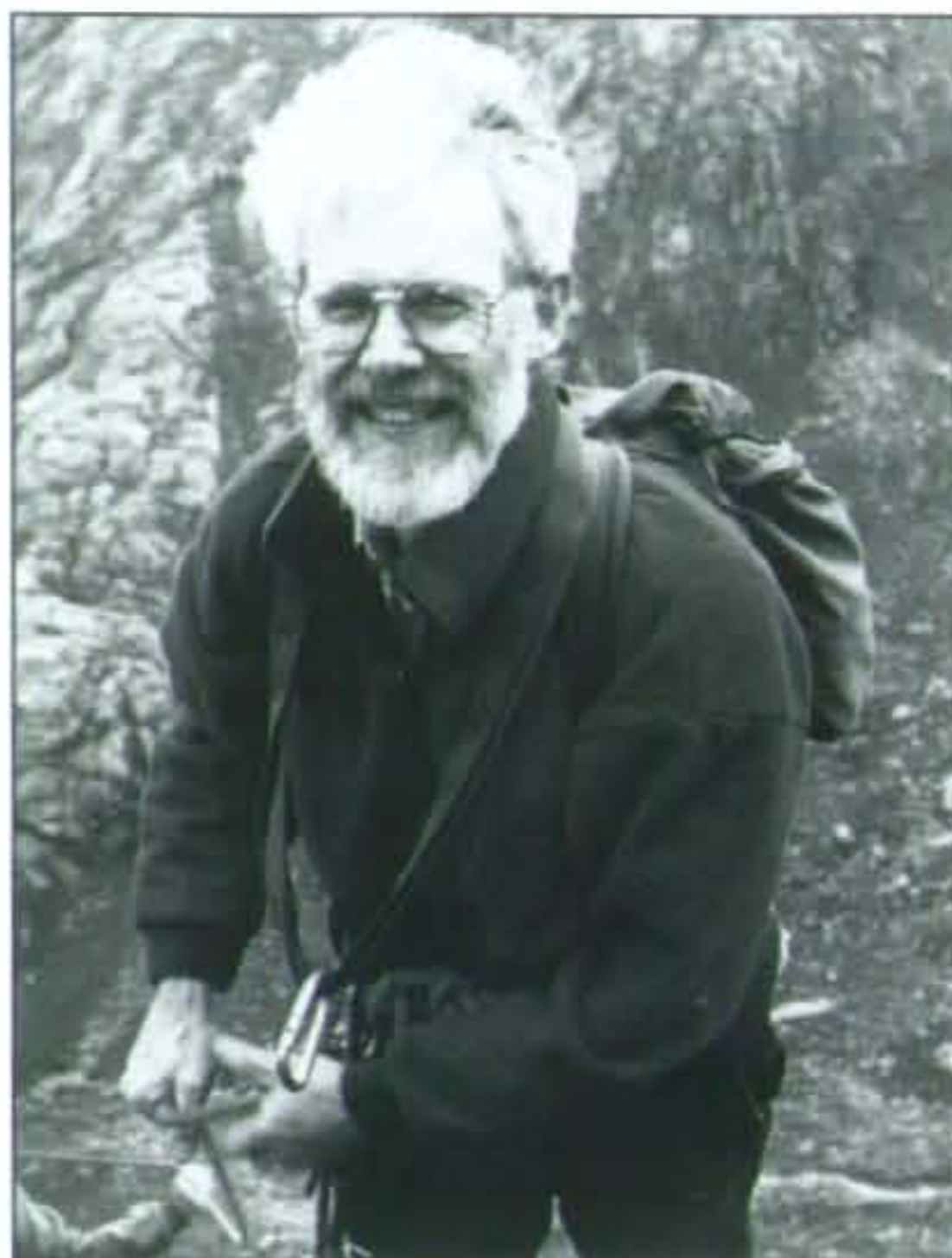


ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

The Senior Tutor writes...

Europe

The European Centre was opened officially by Sir Leon Brittan in February 1996 and has been in constant use ever since. Class teaching, language oral work, data retrieval and word processing and meetings of all sorts have filled its timetable. How did we ever manage without it? The number of exchanges is gradually increasing, with a new German connection being used in Spring and Summer 1997. A vital ingredient of any exchange is that pupils should have to work in the target language as much as possible. The European Community AS level achieved 60% of A grades first time round.



At A-level eight pupils achieved three grade As or better, and the English results were the best ever with 66% scoring an A or a B. The DfEE credited us with only 17.6 UCAS points per pupil, instead of the 18.6 which they actually achieved, because they do not count any exams taken in the LVI year. At GCSE our pupils averaged 8.1 passes at grade C or better, and 30% of subject entries scored A grades. 96% of our Fifth-form achieved 5 or more passes at GCSE. The DfEE figure of 76%, published in mid-November, is inaccurate because they consider only those over 15 and under 16 on 1st September. Please read instead the ISIS figures which are published in early September.

IT

The major development from the academic point of view has been the equipping of the Computer Room in the Science Labs, with 12 PC work stations on a network. The Third-forms are all getting their IT training through their science lessons this year. So far they have been busy retrieving data from the CDROM and learning how to do spreadsheets. The cry has changed from "Are we doing a practical, Sir?" to "Are we going to the IT lab, Sir?". It has been exciting to be able to make measurements in the lab and send pupils off to the computer room to work them up. JMT has devoted a good deal of time to setting it up, and is running an Internet Club there for interested Fifth-formers. Three Weekly Orders have been computerised with much labour from MOJ, several of us receiving our IT In Service Training to make it happen! Once it is running 100% smoothly, it will have eliminated most of the administrative problems of the old manual system.

Exams

Five of our six Oxbridge hopefuls achieved the necessary grades, with a more even split between the Arts and Sciences this time. We have a large number of pupils going through the rigours of interviews as I write, in December. The new system means that in many subjects candidates will be asked to sit a short paper at the University before being interviewed. The exams have not totally disappeared! Three of the class of '96 are going on to Colleges in the States, one each to Brown, Georgetown and Wharton. Over 40% of the year have taken Gap years, and we will not be certain of their University destinations for another ten months. At both A-level and GCSE we maintained the improvement of recent years.

What else is new?

The LVI Subsidiary curriculum has been enriched by the provision of American Studies through History and Literature by Lizzie Marlantes, this year's Harvard Fellow. Subsidiary Italian has also attracted a good number of customers. The National Curriculum to KS4 (GCSE) is now clear and we are moving towards it by introducing Dual Award Science GCSE for the Fourth-forms next year. Devoted scientists will still be able to opt for the three separate sciences, as now. A-level is in a stage of rapid development, with new syllabuses being written now for us to teach from September 1998. The new AS levels will be horizontal ones, based on the normal content of a LVI course. It is likely that the Universities will use these extensively for selection purposes.

People

James Tearle reached the final of the Salter's Chemistry Teacher award last year, but was just out of the medals. Earlier this term Michael Waldman delivered a paper on Jurassic Reptiles from Skye to the Continental Jurassic Symposium at the Museum of North Arizona in Flagstaff. It is great to see a colleague still active in fundamental research.

I would like to finish with a personal tribute to Charlie Macdonald who retired in the summer. He was my teaching guru when I started out in the Gibbon Lecture Room – yes, all those years ago! I have struggled to keep up with him ever since. In his gentle manner, his academic rigour and his support for colleagues and technical staff he has been an inspirational example to us all.

CHAPEL

The Chaplain writes...

Most schools would boast that "Chapel is the heart of the community". It is a well-known, glib, instantly forgettable sound bite. No one really expects the comment to be taken seriously. It simply means Chapel is quite important (like rugby, PSHE, matron etc!). What is so unusual is that at Stowe it happens to be true. Every term begins and ends in Chapel. It is only in Chapel that the community meets together with regularity. It is the source of identity and the focus of meaning at Stowe and the impact spreads over to every walk of school life.

There are unbelievable numbers who go to Crossfire or Bible Studies; Stowe attracts speakers with a national reputation, who are prepared to put God at the top of their agenda. Apart from preachers in Chapel speakers at the Theological Society have included Sir Michael Colman, Baroness Brenda Dean, the Lord Henley (Minister of State for Education) and Viscount Caldecote.

God matters! That it is from Chapel that the Charity Weekend sprang, raising over £2,500 for various charities, is right and proper and also at Stowe is inevitable!

Melissa's death once again underlined the crucial role of the Chapel as a focus for the School's feelings. It is crucial in every community that this need is met. It is my privilege to serve a school where the Chapel is the acknowledged source.

Inevitably there are a large number of individuals who enable Chapel to function as it does. Apart from those who lead Confirmation, preach and serve in Chapel (mentioned elsewhere) there are the Chapel Prefects (without whom Chapel would not happen: Tom Bell and Chris Dixey, who handed over to Toby Dixon and Harry Speir this year) and the Chapel Committee; JCG, JECH and the choir; Annie Nichols and the flower ladies; the cleaners, the list could go on. But this year I wish to conclude by paying special tribute to Anthony Bewes, Emma and Simon Taylor. Their contribution to the spiritual life at Stowe can only really be measured in eternity. All I know is that they were good friends and incredible supporters. They are greatly missed but Canford and the Church of England will be the richer for their move!

TMH-S

The Chapel Prefect writes...

It's a strange job being Chapel Prefect. One week you are looking after one of the top economists in the country who has just preached in Chapel (Lord Griffiths of Fforestfach, formerly Head of Baroness Thatcher's policy unit), the next you are keeping the Chaplain's children entertained while Frank Field MP, the prophet of the Labour Party, leads a seminar about "Christianity and Socialism".

Whether setting the Chapel up for its biggest Stowe Carol Service on record (over 1,000 in the Chapel,

amazing singing, fanfares and anthems, all by candlelight – thank you Mr Green and Mowbrays) or playing (and being beaten) at Squash by a 64-year-old Bishop (The Right Revd. Peter Ball, another preacher, the best this year, to my mind, who is a former squash blue), it's all in a day's work!

High points, for me, included the Confirmation Service, with an excellent lunch afterwards with the Headmaster, and Confirmation Retreat, when the Chaplain and I had to do the catering for fifty Stoics (I'm not sure that I shall ever fully rid myself of the smell of the fried egg and bacon).

Inevitably the preachers and speakers have been amazing, and apart from those already mentioned we have enjoyed Bruce Kent of CND; Sister Frances Domenica of Helen House Hospice; Baroness O'Caithain of the Barbican; former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Coggan; Baroness Perry, President of Lucy Cavendish, Cambridge; Sir Ghillean Prance, Director of Kew Gardens; the Archdeacon of London, George Cassidy; Chairman of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship, Viscountess Brentford; Andrew Rowe, MP; the Bishop of Brixworth; Canon Eric James and Canon Paul Oestreicher; and Cabinet Minister, Peter Lilley, MP, who preached his maiden Sermon at Stowe!

Toby Dixon

Lenten Addresses and more...

by William Barratt, the Secretary of Crossfire

The Revd. Rico Tice of All Souls, Langham Place, is one of the most sought-after speakers in the Church today: down to earth, personable and extremely funny. For three nights the Temple Room was packed with Stoics eager to hear him speaking on the theme "Get a Life!" He was both challenging and encouraging, combining sensitivity with his rugby player's aggression (he captained the Cambridge 2nd XV). That a number of Old Stoics, including Dalton Phillips (Grafton), Adam Atkinson (Grenville) and Camilla Squirrell and Maria Pickard (née Jarman) (both in Stanhope) joined him to give support and testimonies helped to ensure that this was one of the most powerful and effective series of Lenten Addresses in recent years.

That other speakers at Crossfire throughout the year have drawn crowds as large as Rico's is testimony to the calibre of recent speakers and the spiritual hunger and openness that continues to exist at Stowe. It is, perhaps, not surprising that ex-convict Ron Sims should attract over half the School, but when the usual turnout is between seventy and one hundred one gets the feeling that something must be going on!

A huge thank-you to all of our speakers this year who have included political lobbyist Mike Hastings, School governor the Revd. Jonathan Fletcher, worker among new age travellers the Revd. Vic Jackopson and the ever-popular Tom Smiley.

SERMON

by Andrew Rowe MP, 10th November 1996

There are at least two reasons why you should wonder whether it will be worth listening to anything I shall say this morning. The first is that I'm over 60 and therefore, by definition, incapable of understanding the modern world. The second is that I am a politician; and everyone knows that you can't trust what THEY say, even in the unlikely event that they say anything remotely interesting.

I plead guilty to the first charge. The longer I live, the clearer it becomes that I don't understand the world. My only comfort is that nobody else does either. Just when some part of it seems to be certain the facts change. Take classical history. Until this year it was known how far the Greeks travelled in search of trade. Now they have found a wreck which has turned those assumptions upside down. A fortnight ago I went to the British Museum to see the new Chinese exhibition there. It's a stunning collection of objects dating from about 1200 BC. The curators told us that until their discovery a few years ago it had been known how civilisation spread in China; now it's equally certain that the process was entirely different. Just look at the huge argument raging at the moment over whether there could be life on Mars and if the traces found on a meteorite came from there or arrived after it struck earth.

The point is that the more we know the more we discover we don't know. Far from creation being a jigsaw puzzle which we shall one day complete and be able to compare proudly with the picture on the box, it is infinite and that means that, although your generation has available to it hugely more information than was available to mine, the questions you can't answer have increased in number even faster; so your generation is relatively more ignorant than mine!

In only one sphere does our understanding remain apparently largely unchanged: human behaviour. And since that seems to be one of the main keys to how we all live on earth I want to talk a little bit about that this morning. I have a good precedent. Jesus talked of little else and His constant message is that unless each one of us has sorted out his or her relationship

with God we can't hope to sort it out with our families, our friends or the other people we come across.

It's an appropriate morning to talk about it because we remember today not only the two world wars, but also all those who have died in the endless wars which still disfigure our planet. The two world wars were started, remember, by the apparently most civilised nations on earth. If we, who had so much to enjoy and were so much richer than almost everybody else on the planet, could find nothing better to do with our wealth than use it to kill and destroy fellow human beings what can have gone wrong? And why do we still feel it to be essential to pour huge resources into building armaments more lethal than those available to any previous generation?

Wars start within us. They are the product of the feelings and actions of thousands of individuals; of you and of me. But I don't know anyone who wants a war, so how can people who don't want it fall so easily into it? Let me try to answer that difficult question.

I knew well a man who fought in the 1914-18 war. When I knew him he was painfully shy, unwilling to put himself forward even when others begged him to lead them, quick-tempered perhaps but kind to everyone and generous to those around him. He spent much of his time caring for his mother and sisters and for their children and their children's friends. When he died he was mourned by people of every generation and left a big hole in their circle. Yet this retiring figure had won a Military Cross in the war. He had dragged a wounded comrade out of a burning ammunition dump. He had also been mentioned in despatches twice. He had been gassed and returned to the Front after treatment. In other words he was brave, compassionate and intelligent and good at killing others.

He was a gunner, in charge of a horse-drawn battery, responsible for trying to destroy enemy gun positions. I asked him once what it felt like to take aim at German soldiers (who were just like him under their uniforms). His reply has always remained with me. "You can't afford to think of them as human beings," he said, "or you could never do it. I thought of them as par-

tridges and got a thrill when I landed a direct hit."

And of course it must be so if ordinary men and women are to take part in war. The very first moves we humans make when we want to destroy or cheat someone else is to find ways of dehumanising them in our own eyes. For a 'Paki basher' the target is not dear old Mohammed next door who is such a lovely neighbour that you could almost think of him as one of us. And for the Bosnian Serb the hate figure is not the charming Croatian daughter-in-law. By marrying into the family she has become quite different from the rest; she has become a person. The rest are the problem. The target for persecution or ethnic cleansing is always a shapeless collective: Pakis, Muslims or, in Jesus's time, Samaritans, publicans, sinners.

But if we succumb to the temptation to see other people as only there for our purposes and not as Jesus sees them (as each potentially a son of God), the potential for damaging them knows no bounds. There has been a lot of publicity recently about paedophiles. The chilling truth about them is that they don't care at all about their victims. They don't see them as a child with a life and hopes and fears of his or her own. They see them simply as a vehicle to gratify their own desires. All the presents, all the little kindnesses which win the child's trust are nothing more than tools to get access to what they want from the child. If they are rich enough they will even buy a foreign holiday to a country where they can dispense altogether with the sham of being kind and simply buy a child for their pleasure.

Although most of us, thank God, will never feel the urge to abuse a child or will resist it if we feel it, we shall, most of us, face the temptation to depersonalise some group of fellow human beings and in the process open the door to justifying ourselves when we treat them badly. The homeless, gypsies, football hooligans, lager louts, my list reveals some of my temptations. Who's on yours?

Jesus himself occasionally engaged in rhetorical collective nouns to drive home a general point. Scribes and Pharisees appear quite often in His talks but He never carried His rhetoric into His dealings with individuals. That seems to me to be the dividing line. The woman brought to Him accused of adultery was dealt with as an individual, a person different from everyone else,

and when he was asked to approve her being stoned to death he told her accusers to let someone among them who had no sin throw the first stone. You will remember that, faced with that challenge, they melted away. And then he told her to go and sin no more. Unlike so many of our muddled generation, He was not in the business of excusing her behaviour just because he took pity on her.

Now I imagine that all of you here look upon your time at Stowe as a time of preparation for adult life. That's what education's about, isn't it? And certainly it's true that who you are at Stowe will shape who you are afterwards. But on this Remembrance Sunday, when we recall particularly the 1914-18 war, it's worth remembering that many of those who died were younger than most of you. If parents agreed, and many did, recruits could join legally at 16, but there were thousands who joined up illegally at 14 and 15. They were often dead within days of reaching the front. If they had left all their living for later, they were sold pretty short, weren't they?

In this country it is a reasonable expectation that people of your age will live for many years yet, but even so it is statistically probable that in a population the size of Stowe at least one of you will die in the next three and a half years. And so, while you're right to prepare for the rest of your life, don't assume that you can put real life off until you've qualified. If it should be you who dies, where do you expect to go? That will depend entirely upon God and whether we believe in Him but, each of us can make some preparation. Jesus tells us that whenever we are required to leave this world for the next what we have or have not done for Him will be vital to the welcome we can expect: "Whatever you have done to the least of these my brothers, you have done to me."

I asked for the story of the Good Samaritan today because, more than any other, it shows me how easy it is to pass by on the other side, to find a reason for doing nothing for someone else. We don't often get the chance to play a dramatic role of rescue and it's easy to believe that in the circumstances of seeing a man lying half dead on the roadside we would instantly stop the car, rush him to hospital, find his home and make sure they had enough money to carry them over before the social

security stepped in. (I do wish, though, that I could shut up the little voice which asks me if, even in those circumstances, I might not find an excuse. Suppose I had an appointment with the Prime Minister? Mightn't I think that on a busy road someone else would be along shortly who couldn't possibly have something as important to do?) I don't want to answer that.

What we all get faced with every day is the little, unglamorous moment when we can choose to help or pass by. Perhaps you see a new boy who is looking lost or homesick and with a cheery "OK?" hurry on, barely aware that you have not even given him a chance to say he's miserable. Perhaps the gossip reaches you that someone's parents have split up and you could let them know that you are sorry and ready to help if they need you. But you are nervous about how to help or anxious that they might want more of your time than you want to spare. If this school is anything like the House of Commons where I work, these moments crop up often and most of us are found pretty inadequate when they do. We don't even take a second to say a silent prayer in support. We pass by on the other side. And goodness! that's easy to do; and so hard not to. That's why Jesus left us His

Holy Spirit so that within us, "nearer to us" as St. Augustine once said, "than we are to ourselves", we have a resource on which we can always draw if we choose to do so. If we want to stop to offer help, if we want for a moment to put our own concerns second to those of someone else, we shall be given the resources we need. The circle is a whole one. If we love God, we shall love our neighbour because the one is impossible without the other. If we love our neighbour, we shall learn to love God, because without him our capacity to love our neighbour will be found inadequate.

And so on this Remembrance Sunday let's remember the living even more than the dead. Let's remember that each time we see a fellow human being as a nameless member of a group instead of as a person different from all others, we play our own small part in opening the door to the next war. Let's remember that today is more important than tomorrow, since tomorrow may never arrive. It didn't for the millions remembered on this day. And, above all, let's remember that each time we pass by an opportunity to help another we grow a thicker skin against compassion and become just a little less able to face the great question: "Who is my neighbour?"

CONFIRMATION

The following were confirmed in Stowe Chapel on Sunday May 12th by the Right Revd. Colin Bennetts, the Lord Bishop of Buckingham:

Robin Creek, Lizzy Davies, Tom Ferry, Mary-Kate Lyell, Richard Prentice, Henry Coxe, Richard Going, Rupert Hayward, Richard Hignett, Dominic Spencer-Churchill, James Defty, Leo Fenwick, Harry Girardot, William Mann, Andrew Pitcher, Tristan Whigham, Helen Kerford Byrnes, Alexis Marq, Simon Oldridge, Charlotte Rollo-Walker, Charles Chute, Michael De Butts, Anthony Hopwood, Robin Jones, Alex Prideaux, Alfred Bagge, Toby Barnett, Robert Bell, Richard Clapham, Matthew Cumani, Peter Mann, Ben Scholfield, Will Bloomfield, Alexander Heath, Dan Westwood, Adam Cooke, Rupert Corbishley, Hugo Douglass, Alexander Janson, Alexander McMicking, Adam Cottrell, Charles Duffin, James Feilden, Edward Salt, Rory Scott, Will Watson.

As one parent wrote to me, "It was the most moving of services. To hear my son making his public declaration of faith, surrounded by friends and family in the most beautiful of settings, was of enormous importance to me. He knew what he was saying and only he was saying it. Thank you, Stowe, for nurturing his faith so carefully." Classes were led by Anthony Bewes, RBJ, AD, KFD, LJJ, MJB, SCT, ELCT, SJBA, REM, Patricia Smith and myself. The weekend away at Ledbury was led by the Revd. Simon Scott of Scripture Union.

This year's Confirmation Service will also be remembered by the Bishop of Buckingham as the first time he confirmed someone to the San! Rupert Hayward was suddenly taken ill during the service.

TMH-S

Alexis Marcq reviews last September's

CHARITY WEEKEND

It was the Revd. Hastie-Smith (who had organised the "Birtathon") who suggested that a serious effort might be made at the beginning of a new school year to help various charities. These came in the form of The Uganda AIDS Appeal, the ward for abused children at Guy's Hospital, the Pineapple Club (the Stowe Boys' Club in London) and the Frances Domenica Clinic in Ghana. The Charity Weekend did in fact replace what used to be Pineapple Day, where the School raised money for the Pineapple Club.

So on Saturday September 14th the weekend kicked off with a Charity Show, an event organised by the Revd. Hastie-Smith with Heads of Houses and a committee including Rupert Jupp, Tom Honeyman Brown, Toby Dixon and Kate Copper. A particularly successful auction began the show with various designer tops being sold for bargain prices. This later became very apparent when various third-formers strutted around the next day, desperate to show off their new "gear". They were, of course, oblivious of the fact that it was all far too big. Tommy Hillfinger shirts were made to look more like dressing-gowns.

At this point, after the successful auction, people were encouraged to raise money themselves by making sacrifices for the charities. Haircuts were seen to be the easiest way of doing this. People enjoy seeing others make idiots of themselves and so people pledged large amounts to see Ed Taylor, Ed Wainright-Lee and Alex Heath have their hair hacked at by Kate Copper. Indeed, she made a fine job of it! With each devastating cut Kate managed to destroy completely any vanity that might have been obvious before the stunt! Poor Wainers! It was Tom Lloyd Owen, however, who made the most serious job of this: Ed Taylor's hair was reduced to a state that was well worthy of the punters' vast sums. But the biggest pledge came when Armand David volunteered to have his eyebrows shaved off. Once again Kate handled the honours and although the job proved to be far more of a challenge than expected, it was finally completed and acknowledged by cheers from the crowd.

Simon Oldridge was very successful with his money-raising act. To the amazement of Stoics he demonstrated his talent as a street performer juggling with fire. It raised considerable sums.

The evening was not solely filled with activities to raise money. Tom Gamble headed a selection of surreal, amusing sketches and Will Bloomfield injected a particularly patriotic atmosphere into the event by playing "Football's coming home" by the Lightning Seeds. James McDonagh found himself being interviewed in a "This Is Your Life" manner.

Other activities took place outside Stowe to help swell the fund-raising. Mr Johnson agreed to bungee jump. He was accompanied by Tom Lloyd Owen and

Tom Honeyman Brown, both of whom joined him in the feat of hurling themselves off a 500-foot high crane with just a cord of elastic tied to their feet. It was well worthwhile, however, and something in the region of £500 was raised. This was not the only feat to be completed by a member of staff. Mrs Kettler, the Chatham matron, successfully parachuted for the first time in her life, raising some £800 for the good causes.

The whole school was also given the chance to raise money by making sponsored walks on the Sunday. The longest was a fifteen mile walk, which started at 6.30am. Named the Wardington Wander, it asked the walkers to return to Stowe from Wardington. The long walk was not compulsory. Instead there was the Helmdon Hike, which started some ten miles away, and the Syresham Saunter, a mere five miles from home. The walks succeeded in raising a large amount of money.

The walks were followed by a Car Boot Sale. Many people from Buckingham and the surrounding areas helped with this, either by selling their goods or by donating money generously. Whilst many were still milling round this, looking for a bargain purchase, the Celebrity Auction kicked off. There was much speculation about many of the items and the prices they might go for. There was Gary Lineker's signed Euro 92 shirt, Will Carling's rugby boots, signed photographs of celebrities like Richard Wilson, Nigel Havers and Cindy Crawford and a football signed by the whole Newcastle United team (including Alan Shearer). All the different items went for big prices, but it was Gary Lineker's shirt which fetched the most, a remarkable £200. Will Carling's rugby boots made only a little less.

It was all a marvellous way to get the new term going with everyone having a good time and also raising the magnificent sum of £2500 for the charities. A very big thank-you to all the sponsors, contributors, participants and organisers!



Photo: TMH-S

Members of the Charity Committee:
Toby Dixon, Will Bloomfield, Jane Collingwood,
Rupert Jupp and Tom Honeyman Brown

DRAMA

Senior Congreve

November 1996

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

Oscar Wilde's famous play, "a trivial comedy for serious people", provided a wonderful evening of entertainment in the Roxburgh Hall. Wilde's wit crackled crisply all evening, delivered by the cast with real style and verve, whilst the splendid situation comedy delighted the audience throughout. The programme with its cover illustration of Irene Vanbrugh, the first Gwendoline, and listing of George Alexander's original cast, reminded us that the first performance occurred back in 1895. One hundred years on, it came over as fresh, vital and very, very funny.

The set skilfully confined the action within a comparatively small acting area, eschewing realism and offering the actors a most interesting, stylised background, one in which subtle lighting effectively changed locations. The cast, beautifully dressed in period costume, thus dominated proceedings and held the eye easily. Characters were enabled to come boldly across to the audience; the spoken word was all-important. Yet good period atmosphere was maintained meanwhile via costume, furniture and, above all, stage presence.

Benjamin Bloomfield was a very convincing Jack Worthing; his trials and tribulations as the course of true love ran awry were a constant source of pleasure. Edward Raison as the irrepressible Algernon gave a remarkably mature performance. The opening scene between the two friends set the stamp on the whole production. Every subtle nuance was there, the words were pointed elegantly and the timing was immaculate. Then enter the ladies! Daisy



Gwendolines, ancient and modern

The Senior Congreve
Stowe School

present

The Importance of Being Earnest



22nd/23rd November, 1996

Roxburgh Hall

Brook as Lady Bracknell was a *tour de force*, small in stature but awesomely dominant. Gwendoline (played by Jane Collingwood) proved an apt daughter, one moment demure and sweet, but the next full of Bracknellian undertones. All four characterisations complemented each other splendidly. This was acting of a very high level.

As Cecily, the pretty ward in the country, Susannah Galsworthy provided an unusually empty-headed, 'dizzy' young lady, with a wonderfully braying laugh. Miss Prism (Kate Copper) and Dr Chasuble (William Stanton) were fresh characterisations, comparatively young as Prisms and Chasubles go, but full of subtlety and alert to all the humour of the situation. Then there were two extraordinary butlers, the decrepit Lane and the knowing Merriman, both played by Thomas Gamble.

As ever, much of the success on stage must be related to efficiency and expertise off it. The backstage team was led by Peter Mackay-Lewis (stage manager), Angela Pooley (DSM), James Clark, Barney Wrightson and Matt Rader (ASMs). The stage crew consisted of Alex Prideaux, Rowena Birkett-Jones, Rachel Tylor, Charlie Chute, Charles Harford, Polly Vickers, James Sleater and Rosie Ingram. Mark Ollard was in charge of props.

The directors, DSB and FAB, deserve every congratulation for bringing this classic comedy so splendidly to life on the Roxburgh Hall stage. It was played with great relish, whilst, perhaps most important of all, Wilde was allowed to make his own impact (and what an impact!) thanks to the production's inherent sensitivity and restraint. It all made for a delightful evening.

Noel Biggun



Photos: Charles Gargent

Jack Worthing earnestly proposes to Gwendoline Fairfax (Ben Bloomfield and Jane Collingwood)



The Importance of being Earnest



Top left: Lady Bracknell proclaims her views. (Daisy Brook)

Top right: Miss Prism and Dr Chasuble discover a mutual understanding. (Kate Copper and William Stanton)

Left: Algernon Moncrieff consumes the cucumber sandwiches. (Ed Raison)

Right: Cecily Cardew dreams of true love. (Susannah Galsworthy)

Below: Jack and Algernon watch while Gwendoline and Cecily reconcile their misunderstandings.



GODSPELL

Junior Congreve 1996



Godspell, the musical based on St Matthew's Gospel, was a great hit back in the early 1970s. The London production boasted names like David Essex, Marti Webb, Jeremy Irons and Julie Covington. In those far-off days it was distinctly daring to have Jesus as the main character in a rock musical. There were other novelties, such as the invitation to the audience in the interval to come up on stage for a drink. But would the show have dated, one wondered, after such a long time?

The Junior Congreve's directors deliberately stirred memories of 1971. There was David Byrd's long-haired Jesus on our programme and, even more dramatically, there he was looking down on us from the stage as we entered the Roxburgh Hall: one half of his face in light, the other in darkness; the one visible eye challenging, probing and beginning to cast its "spell" on us. Then suddenly he was gone. JCG's band had struck up the first notes of Stephen Schwartz's bright score. All doubts quickly evaporated. We knew at once that the show was as fresh as ever!

And so it proved. The company of forty excelled itself as it powerfully put over the story of Jesus: his teaching projected in his parables, his message of hope and victory encapsulated in a series of foot-tapping songs.

As Jesus Oscar Humphries did tremendously well, pushing everything through at a vibrant pace, pointing his lines carefully ("not as *I* will but as *Thou* wilt"), singing his songs with wonderful ease and unifying the whole piece. David Essex had very strikingly stressed the simplicity, even naiveté of Jesus. Oscar achieved some of this too and made him, above all, fun. If he did wag the finger at us quite often, it was always with a forgiving smile! This was a remarkably assured performance.

There were some fine supporting performances, notably from Dan McCarey as John the Baptist, Ben Scholfield and Damian Darkko. The commitment of the disciples and chorus was tremendous. The directors, TMH-S and William Bloomfield, had stretched the term "Junior Congreve" a little, by using lower-sixth girls as well as third and fourth form boys. The benefit was clear to see, for it gave the singing real distinction. Jane Collingwood delighted in her great torch song "Turn Back, O Man" and the bubbly "Learn Your Lesson Well", Mary-Kate Lyell made the very most of the well-known "Day By Day" and further fine contributions came from Daisy Brook, Helen Kerford-Byrnes, Kate Chambré, Annarella Small, Kate Pearce, Kate Copper, and Georgia Levison.

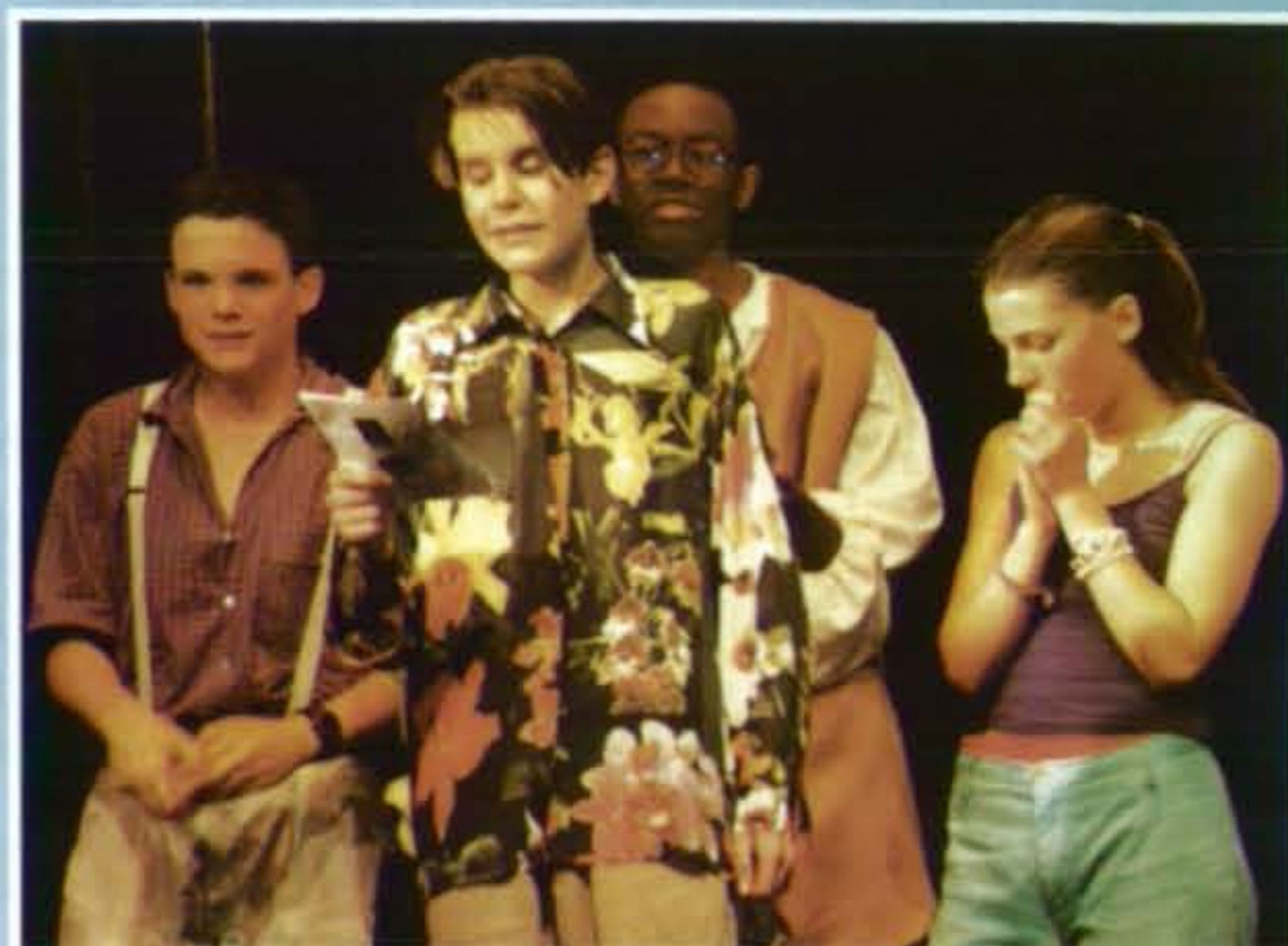
There were very many special moments: the arresting start with spotlit contributions from around the auditorium expressing the spiritual needs of the world: the joy and togetherness of songs like "Light of the World" and "We Beseech Thee": the dexterity of Jesus and the Baptist in coping with their music-hall number "All For The Best". Could Flanagan and Allen have done it better? The stillness and emotion of Ben Scholfield's finely sung "All Good Things": the transformation of "Prepare Ye The Way of the Lord" from solemn song at the back of the auditorium to lively dance on stage, lights flying everywhere: Alasdair Gaston's horrified "oh boy!" after the invitation to anyone without sin to cast the first stone.

Vitality was matched by emotion. Memories again abound: The Beatitudes from the gallery: the beautifully sung "Day By Day": the slow entrance of two groups of girls softly singing "On the Willows" whilst, on stage, Jesus prays and the disciples sleep (lights, music and staging combining, as so often, to tug at the emotions): the taking of the pieces of silver by Judas whilst girls sing the haunting "By My Side": above all the Crucifixion. One had wished perhaps for the Last Supper dialogue to be at a less frantic pace, coming so soon as it does after all those bleating sheep and goats, but the subsequent crucifixion was, as intended, both harrowing and triumphant. There was an awesome moment as the lights changed and Peter Dixon's guitar throbbed, Hendrix-like, round the auditorium introducing "O God, I'm bleeding". The joy of the resurrection and, indeed, the whole Christian message, can seldom be more clearly expressed than in the finale of *Godspell*. The cast played it handsomely.

There were several further contributions to the success of the evening. The Band of four (as in the original production) was splendid. JCG directed proceedings masterfully from keyboards and he must have been delighted at the superb contributions from Simon Post (percussion) and Angus Havers (bass). Then there was the set. Deceptively simple, it "made" the show, allowing ease of movement between stage and auditorium, offering different levels for performance, and, most crucially, defining and enhancing a small "acting" space. The *pièce de resistance* was the crucifixion, brilliantly managed. Technical expertise (including the highly effective body-mikes) gave the whole show an extra dimension. We have come to expect this from IJM and his splendid teams. *Summa ars est celare artem*. (i.e. If you work hard enough, nobody notices anything). There was a huge team working backstage, but perhaps it is not invidious to salute the work of the departing Peter Horrell, Freddie Alston and Claire Harvey?

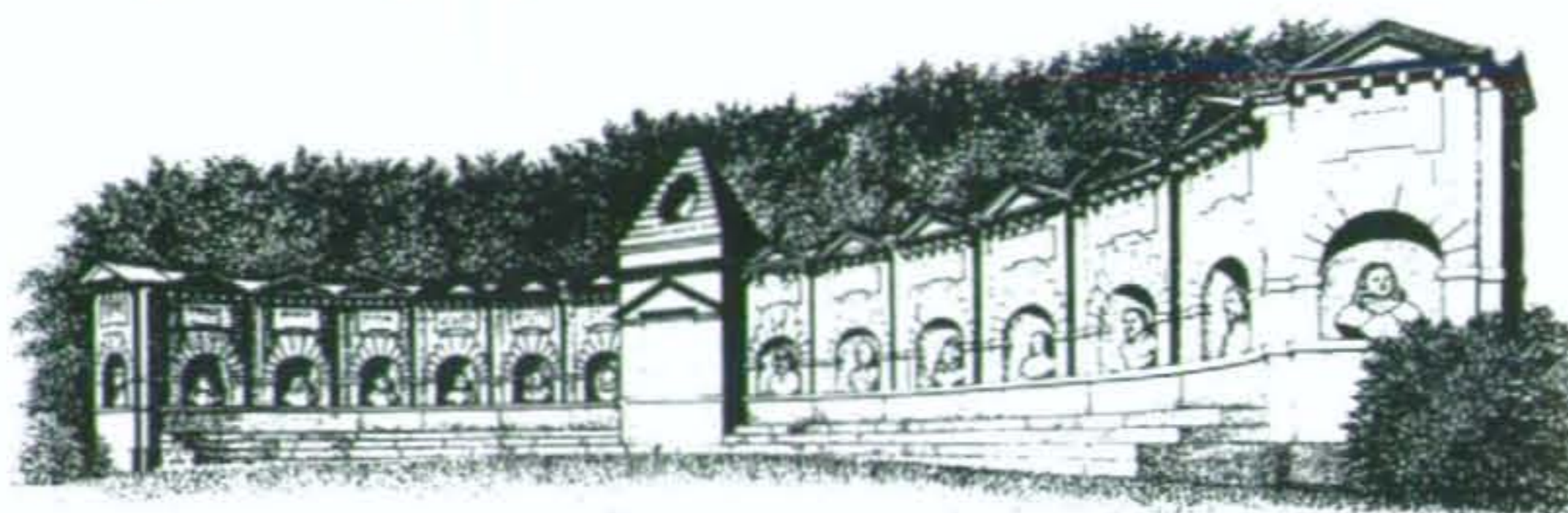
The directors, TMH-S and William Bloomfield, deserve all our thanks. So too FAB, whose late-added choreography was truly inspirational. *Godspell* was one of those joyful occasions of shared delight. The tunes will still be buzzing around our heads long after all the euphoria has subsided. And the message too perhaps? It was quite an evening!

AGM





THE NATIONAL TRUST



STOWE LANDSCAPE GARDENS TEMPLE OF BRITISH WORTHIES, Buckinghamshire (Thames & Chilterns): ET

Now that you have seen Stowe Landscape Gardens why not visit other National Trust properties within the Thames and Chilterns region.

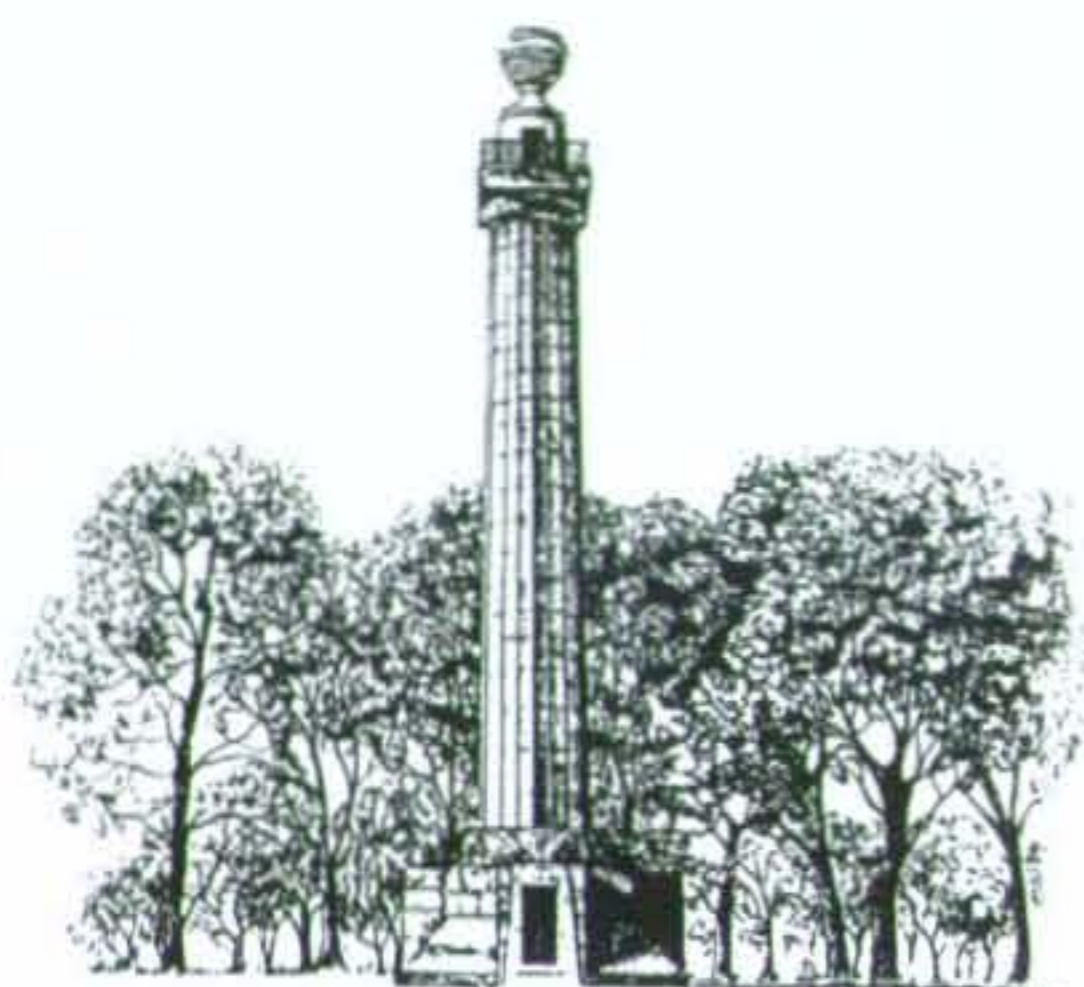


CLIVEDEN, Berkshire (Thames & Chilterns): BE

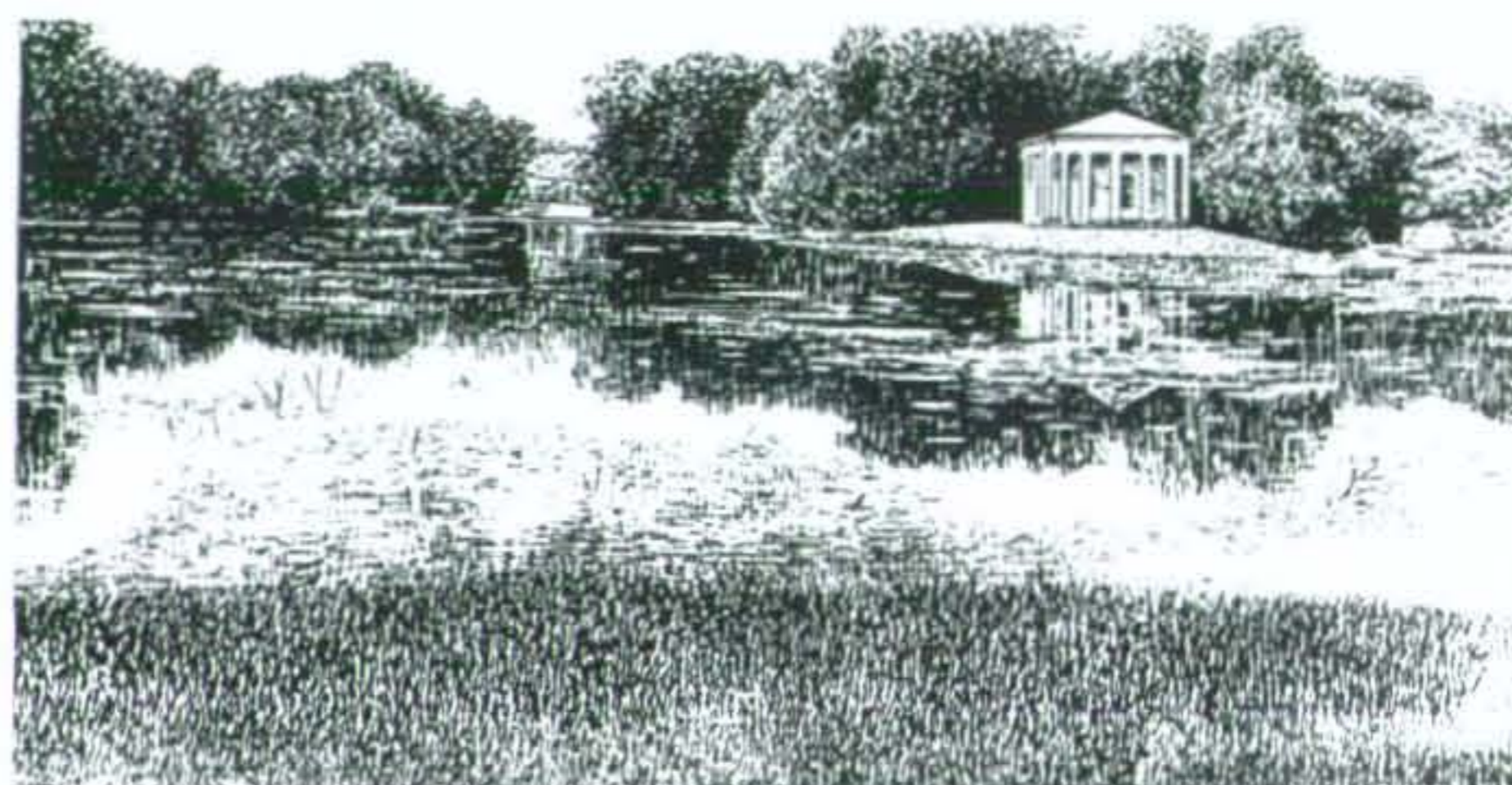


CLAYDON HOUSE, Buckinghamshire (Thames & Chilterns): CP

Stowe Landscape Gardens, Bucks; Claydon House, Bucks; Waddesdon Manor, Bucks; Hughenden Manor, Bucks; Clivedon, Bucks; West Wycombe Park, Bucks; Greys Court, Oxon; Basildon Park, Berks; Shaw's Corner, Herts; The Ashridge Estate, Herts.



ASHRIDGE MONUMENT, Hertfordshire (Thames & Chilterns): JP



WEST WYCOMBE PARK, Buckinghamshire (Thames & Chilterns): CP

Shakespeare in the Gardens

It had been a while since the potential of Stowe's gardens as theatrical sets had been exploited; so the idea of finishing the summer term with the school promenading around a series of Shakespeare scenes in different locations soon gathered momentum. Although the Gadshill robbery from *Henry IV Part One* was stifled, and the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* was grounded, three performances did see the light of a Stowe summer's evening, and the coldly ominous cloud that we've grown accustomed to at Speech Day proved once more to be more talk than action.

Under LEW's watchful eye, some Lower Sixth-formers assassinated Caesar and then attempted to explain themselves to a deeply miffed third form on the South Front steps. William Bloomfield and Alexis Marcq as Brutus and Cassius had the situation more or less in hand with their faultless logic and calm delivery, but when Tom Honeyman Brown as Mark Antony turned up and appealed to 3D's baser instincts he mined a vein which made the loosed dogs of war look like kittens. "Act like a mob," LEW must have directed, relishing the word "act", presumably...

Meanwhile, down by the Doric Arch, a mischievous plot was being hatched in sundry bushes on the edge of the Elysian Fields...a fourth-form cast directed by EST was setting about the garden scene from *Twelfth Night*, in which the puritanical Malvolio, played beautifully by Charlie Hart, comes across the forged letter apparently

abandoned by the Lady of the household and apparently giving away her love for him. The promenading audience arrived in time to see the giggling perpetrators of this little joke – Alex Janson, Ben Morgan, Toby Adams and Sam Lyle – scuffling in and out of the undergrowth barely suppressing their conspiratorial hysteria and the occasional rage of Sir Toby Belch while Charlie's Malvolio strutted and puffed himself up at the promises of what could happen were he to smile a little more and wear yellow stockings cross-gartered. This was perfect end-of-summer-term stuff, deft of touch, fluently delivered, tapping the general good humour of the time, letting us laugh at and forgive both Malvolio's ridiculous pretensions and Maria's cruel joke all at once.

"Here is the place," announced PASF's Middle Sixth troupe from behind us, as we turned from the Doric follies to the Styx hovel where *King Lear* takes its eponymous hero with his tiny band of loyal followers, there to meet Sam Emery's Edgar, freshly daubed with mud. William Kemble-Clarkson exuded the bonhomie of demented majesty, making the garden his stage as Matthew Furse-Roberts fooled distractedly and Angus McCarey as Kent tried hard to do the right thing. As the all-too-real storm clouds gathered, a bleak draught blew through the evening, leaving the audience with a shudder of gratitude to be in Stowe gardens rather than that unprotected and blasted heath, and to be able to return to the mansion for the night.

SGAH

House Drama Festival 1996

- BRUCE: THE CRIMSON COCONUT
- CHANDOS: DR STRANGELOVE
- COBHAM: SKETCHES
- GRAFTON: BOUNCERS
- GRENVILLE: LYSISTRATA
- NUGENT: FLESH GAMES
- WALPOLE: GREGORY'S GIRL

LYTTELTON: DREAMJOBS

The play was about five E-stream teenagers, sitting in the waiting room of the Youth Employment Service's office. The girls discuss their ideal jobs and this leads to the dream scenes where each girl acts out her desired job. Being an air hostess, dancer, nurse and model were dreamed out by Daisy Brook, Emily Williams, Alice Pilcher, Jane Collingwood and Lucy Welsford. After some discussion it dawns on them that dreams are definitely not reality and they will never fulfil their ambitions. Lights and set were done by Hilary Masey. Dreamjobs played to a packed house on the first night and many parents on the second.

Helen Kerford-Byrnes (director)

CHATHAM: THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

The Wind in the Willows was performed outside Chatham in the summer. The photographs show Toad (Toby Dixon) arrested by PCs Rupert Hayward and William Mann, David Widdick as Rat and a motley collection of weasels (led by TMH-S) on the House steps.





Chaucer in the Grounds

Last June the Canterbury Tales came to life in the Stowe grounds, PASF's fourth-form set having been challenged to create fitting costumes for their characters.

Anti-clockwise from top left: Richard Clapham as The Host; Kingsley Ford as The Knight; Drew Brennan and Chris Johnson as The Miller and The Parson; Hugo Douglass, Henry Gillingham and Oscar Humphries as The Shipman, The Doctor and The Wife of Bath; Damian Darkko and William Ingram as The Lawyer and The Cook; James Lyon as The Prioress and George Bertram as the Monk; The Prioress' back view.



Photos: PASF



The Beggar's Opera

Last October, performances of *The Beggar's Opera* took place in the appropriate setting of the Music Room, with RJSS directing.

Photographs (above; then clockwise) show Jane Collingwood and Simon Post; Simon Lobelson and Emily Williams; Ben Scholfield and Helen Kerford-Byrnes; Simon Post and Tom Smith Walker; Dan McCarey, Ed Raison, Matthew Rader, Charles Harford, Alex Kemble and Ben Scholfield; Tom Smith Walker and Helen Kerford-Byrnes.



Photos: John Credland



In the past few years Stowe has been fortunate in having a clutch of very talented music scholars who give up an enormous amount of time for the benefit of us all. At present we have twenty-five Stoics on music awards including sixth-form girls. Last July we said farewell to four notable musicians who have been exceptional in their contribution to our musical life. Angus McCarey came to Stowe from Christ Church Oxford and has played the 'cello, piano, tuba and sung baritone; finishing off a distinguished musical career with us he won a choral award to Trinity College, Cambridge. Angus Havers was also a former cathedral chorister, this time at St. Paul's. He played the 'cello and piano and was much sought after as a bass guitarist for the Jazz Band and Rock groups. Our two girl music scholars, Lizzy Davies and Claire Harvey, were both exceptional flautists. Claire left us to go on to study music at Huddersfield and Lizzy is at Cambridge reading Natural Sciences, but before she left she managed to gain her ALCM diploma. For those of us who were present it was a great musical experience to hear Lizzy and Claire play a concerto written especially for them by Paul Harris at the Valedictory Concert.

It is therefore not surprising that we have been able to produce a memorable year of music-making. It seems to be the consensus of opinion that the Orchestra, Jazz Band and Chapel Choir have never been better and have set new standards of excellence for future generations of Stoic musicians. The Orchestra's performance of the monumentally difficult "Marche Joyeuse" by Chabrier – in the original version – not the school one – I hasten to add – was a magnificent triumph and a great inspiration. In the same concert we also heard Natasha Ivanova sing

Ellington's "It don't mean a thing" accompanied by the Jazz Band and displaying her incredibly rich, sensuous voice.

This year also saw the departure from Stowe of two great musical supporters – Charlie and Gillian Macdonald. As a thanks for all their support the Choral Society performed Haydn's "Creation" which I understand to be one of their favourite choral works. Choral and Vocal music in general is going from strength to strength and as well as the Choral Society there is a large Chapel Choir and a smaller Chamber Choir and around twenty-five pupils taking individual singing lessons each week. The Carol Service has become so popular that many parents request tickets a year in advance and over three hundred people were unable to obtain tickets for this year's Carol Service. Once again, we were privileged to sing evensong in St. Paul's Cathedral, an occasion we look forward to each year.

This really has been a year of musical highlights and with over a hundred musical events it would be invidious to pick out individual performances. The Mozart Trio Prize, Wind & Brass Prizes, Senior Instrumental Recitals and A-level Recitals have all produced individual performances worthy of mention and fortunately we have the recordings so that future generations of Stoics will know that 1996 was a pinnacle in the School's musical history.

JCG

— Stowe and the Mozart Trio —

In February 1956 an American vocal group known as the "Mozart Trio" sang a concert for the whole School in the Temple of Concord and Victory. Amongst the group was John Yard, who returning to Stowe in 1993 was amazed to find such magnificent buildings and surroundings – because it was dark on his first visit he was totally unaware of them. Mr. Yard perceived Stowe as being the perfect environment for music-making and has become one of our most generous musical benefactors.

The "Mozart Trio Prize" has been awarded annually since 1994 after competition on the last Sunday of the academic year. Only those students who are at least Grade 7 are eligible to enter and every entrant must perform a substantial work, possibly a complete sonata or concerto. In addition to the overall winner, a prize is awarded in the following categories: Piano, Wind, Brass, Strings, Voice and Organ.

As well as performing with the "Mozart Trio" John Yard was a distinguished vocal teacher in Washington D.C. and during his lifetime amassed a huge vocal library. This he has generously given to Stowe where it is being temporarily housed in the gallery of the main School Library before moving to its permanent home in the projected Music School. Contained within this extensive and valuable library is a copy of nearly every choral work, opera and song ever written and this gives our students unrivalled access to one of this country's most complete vocal libraries.

— Humans and Cream —

A composer's year

"What I just don't understand is why anybody would want to create a human strawberry?"

Such is the first line of Mark Russell's mini-operetta *Humans and Cream*. I've always been a great supporter of composing for GCSE and this year has again proved how creative and imaginative our young composers can be. Mark's operetta is a work of real musical sophistication; perhaps the idea and story line are somewhat surreal but the musical treatment is quite outstanding. Mark seems to owe something to Benjamin Britten; his harmonic language is not a million miles away from arguably our greatest composer this century. It probably has something to do with Mark's early musical experiences as a chorister at Ripon Cathedral School where he certainly would have sung Britten. Hugo Chance has written a mini-musical entitled *Vincent is Innocent*. This is more 'user-friendly' music – ideal for prep-school audiences, but nonetheless well written. Hugo has an ear for tunes – not quite the thing in the contemporary music scene today. You won't often hear a 'tune' emanating from the likes of Harrison Birtwhistle (or any of our other avant-garde composers) that will have you singing in the bath or whistling on the way to the newsagents.

We owe yet another thank-you to Simon Lobelson who sang all the parts in the first performance (and subsequently the recording) of both these works. Copies are available for anyone interested!

James Vane-Tempest has continued composing in the manner we have come to expect. His *Jazz Suite*, which includes a part for viola (especially inspired by RJSS?) is a most successful piece. Who ever said the viola couldn't play jazz? And that's not the cue for another viola joke!

The younger composers have done no less well. And it's extraordinary how quickly a personal 'style' develops. Rupert Burchett enjoys rather complex rhythms – his piece for percussion instruments gave us all some headaches trying to work out the rhythmic complexities (not from volume of sound, I might add, though that was quite considerable). Simon Creek, who already has quite a formidable piano technique, keeps writing piano pieces that are too hard for me to play! His sense of humour also emerges in his music. His Christmas Song (still regrettably unperformed) contains quite a bit of wit. Alex Lyell

has discovered a real interest in form and has employed all sorts of literary shapes in his compositions – I especially like his use of palindrome. I haven't yet persuaded anyone to use a chiasmus!

Ben McCarey produced a wonderful 'Farmyard Carol' for the Christmas concert, complete with farmyard noises and in four parts! Michael Jones produced us a Christmas Fanfare and Thomas Irvine had all the audience smiling (if not laughing) along with his carol 'Christmas Bells'.

So then, all this leads one to ask, in a more global sense, 'whither music?' At least it's a question that I toy with from time to time. With the fads of the eighties now disappearing into the well-dim and distant past (we seem, for example, to have said cheerio to 'minimalism', although it still pops up from time to time) we ought perhaps to see the emergence of something new. But is there anything new? At the moment the answer is probably "no". Composers are doing just about anything in some form of neo-this-or-that style, but we don't seem to be moving ahead along any truly original avenues. Perhaps one of our own Stowe composers will go boldly where no man has gone before...

PDH

Humans and cream for me! Mark Russell

Moderato drammatico

It's tea and biscuits and cream for me

they can eat us with sugar and cream why can't we eat them with sugar and cream!

yum my yum my they will be in my yum my

— Combined Concert —

The joint concert of Headington Girls School and Stowe this year provided classical music lovers with a real delight. It was to be a joint venture at all levels, from the combined orchestra and choir, to JCG relinquishing the role of conductor for one of the pieces. As one walked into the chapel, it was an incredible sight, as it is every time one does so on these occasions, but particularly so, as approximately half of the faces were unfamiliar to me. The amount of work which had gone into making a venture like this work was evident, as the performance was seamless, and I was particularly impressed to learn that the whole occasion had been brought together in the space of one day. There had been a lot of hard work done beforehand, but on the Sunday of the performance there were just a few short hours, in which to arrange everything from the seating arrangements to allowing soloists to sing together with a new, enlarged orchestra, for the first time. Particular credit must go to them, of whom our very own Tom Smith Walker and Annarella Small, along with Simon Lobelson, made up three out of the five; the volume and projection of their voices was for the most part faultless, and one could hear notes with clarity. The choir, consisting of over 100 pupils from Stowe, also performed excellently, as did the combined performance of violinists, cellists, flautists, percussion players, and many others totalling about 80 in number. Overall I believe it to have been a very successful venture, which I know was well received by all who attended, and I hope that there are more events of this kind in the near future.

— Evensong at St Paul's —

A highlight of my year's singing with the School Choir undoubtedly was taking part in an evensong at St Paul's last April. It was a great privilege for the whole choir to be able to sing in so beautiful and well-known a cathedral as this. When we arrived we were ushered downstairs where we were given a briefing of the afternoon's procedure. We also sang Happy Birthday to the Greens! As we rehearsed for the evensong in the choir stalls, many members of the public who were looking around stopped to listen. Likewise, while we sang evensong, the congregation consisted of many members of the public as well as family and friends. It made one proud to be part of something which was giving others pleasure as well as ourselves!

Kate Chambré

— Lizzy Davies ALCM —

Lizzy Davies is the second flautist at Stowe to achieve the high distinction of a professional performing qualification. She now has the right to use the letters ALCM after her name. Lizzy has been playing the flute for ten years; she has been a member of the National Children's Orchestra and the National Children's Wind Orchestra; she remains principal flute in the Bedfordshire Concert Band as well as playing first flute in the Stowe School Orchestra. As a pupil of Sally Adams she has also won many competitions including the woodwind section of the Banbury Young Musician of the Year and the top woodwind prizes at the Bedford Festival over the last few years. She has gained distinction marks in nearly all her grade examinations and has already played professionally for the Stowe Chamber Orchestra.

PDH

— The Meal —

PDH's new opera, The Meal, with lyrics by Old Stoic Sam Edenborough, was given its first performance at Akeley Wood Junior School last summer, directed by Hazel Waldman. One of the young performers, Edward Lovelock (aged ten), writes an appreciation:

The Meal, a vegetarian operetta, tells the story of Princess Porcia, who is turned into a pig by the wicked witch Ardiveg the Carnivore, because she does not eat vegetables. The witch does not like vegetables so she cast a spell on the kingdom, forbidding anyone to eat vegetables. Porcia is served up, roast, to her parents at a royal banquet. The Prince Vegan, by refusing to eat meat, breaks the spell and falls in love with Princess Porcia.

It was great fun taking part in the play. I was one of the King's courtiers. The songs were excellent and very funny. The costumes, made by the GCSE pupils at the senior school, were great fun and colourful, for example carrots, tomatoes and onions.

*I think the most exciting part was when we had the jelly fight at the end of the play – with real jelly! But unfortunately we only had this on performance nights! On the last night the composer and lyricist came to watch the production. They enjoyed seeing their work on the stage and we were pleased to have them there. I am sure that in the future *The Meal* will be produced at schools throughout the country. But we did it first!*



COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our year is a busy one. In addition to the regular visiting, there is work with the blind and disabled. We would like to think that our visiting, whilst only able to help in a fairly superficial way, is valuable, but of course one is never able to relieve physical suffering or the permanent loneliness which is sometimes experienced. In Africa, where I was also able to do some community service, the needs are more basic. There is the mending of buildings, for example, and the raising of money. But the family unit is stronger and there is less need for purely social support.

The highlight of our year continues to be the Christmas Party. This is a chance for us to return hospitality to around one hundred and fifty people who during the year have welcomed Stoics into their homes. Other visitors are the disabled and many from the Red Cross Day Centre (now after budget cuts open on only two days a week) who come to our Firework Display; the School play is also popular and well attended each year.

The contribution which CS makes to the area is considerable and I know that it is much appreciated.

Oliver Trethewey

LITERARY SOCIETY

The Literary Society saw a wealth of informative and exhilarating speakers. Many of the speeches were preceded by excellent dinners in the Blue Room. These provided the Secretaries of the Literary Society, Matthew Furse-Roberts and Angus McCarey, selected pupils and some English staff with the opportunity to hear about the lives and works of the visiting speakers.

Last January, Stowe was graced not only by Duncan Forbes, who presented his own poetry and offered constructive criticism to that of selected Stoics, but also Dame Iris Murdoch and Professor John Bayley, who dined and talked with a small number of Stoics and PASF.

The next two Literary Society evenings, with A-levels approaching, were centred on *King Lear* – an examination text. The 'King Lear Workshop' came in the form of selected scenes put on by Stoics for Stoics, all of whom were due to sit the examination in either 1996 or 1997. Directed by PASF to show dif-

ferent interpretations of the texts, superb acting talent was seen.

PASF, in the second of the 'Lear' nights, presented his views on the Gods, questioning whether there is divine justice in the play, whether the overriding 'force' is malignant, and what the future prospects for Kent and his chums are (that is, of course, assuming his last line 'My master calls me, I must not say no' means he isn't going to go and kick the eternal bucket, having 'exited' stage right).

Mr Andrew Mayne finished off the academic year in full stereophonic sound to the dulcet tones of Larkin reading his own poetry. He provided a memorable talk and a chance for last minute cramming before A-levels.

At this juncture, Angus and I would like to thank Mrs Burns, who proved invaluable on numerous occasions by digging us out from under the weekly pile of ludicrous demands bestowed on us from above.

Matthew Furse-Roberts

Both Literary Society Secretaries, Matthew Furse-Roberts and Angus McCarey, distinguished themselves by securing places to read English at Cambridge University at Caius and Trinity College respectively (together with Jonathan Morrison, who is to read English at St Hugh's College, Oxford).

PASF

SCIENCE SOCIETY

The 1996 programme for the Science Society kicked off with a home-grown presentation entitled "Quick as a Flash – molecules in microtime" where BHO indulged his passion for exciting molecules and producing all manner of fluorescent glows. On a related "exciting" theme "Lasers", another trip to a Friday Evening Discourse at the Royal Institution followed, as a group of Stoics and staff donned their dinner suits and set off by coach for London, Stowe packed suppers augmented with some smoked salmon sandwiches and a little bubbly – scientists at Stowe have style too!

To end the Spring term, Dr. Russel Bayly visited Stowe to talk about the Medical Applications of Radioactivity and gave a clear and fascinating insight into some of the latest imaging and cancer therapy techniques. We hope to see him back to contribute to the Medical

Physics option in the new A-level Physics course.

The new academic year started on a musical note with a talk and demonstrations on "Musical Acoustics" by Dr. Mike Leask from the Department of Physics at Oxford University, who proved that it was not only your eyes that could fool you, but your ears as well. Professor Warwick from the Department of Cybernetics at Reading University brought along a delightful family of little robots to illustrate his talk "Will machines take over the Earth?". Much discussion and interest centred on the issue of artificial intelligence and when a computer might be considered a "live intelligence".

The term concluded on a chemical note with Professor Pickett, FRS, from the Rothampstead Plant Research Station, taking us on an amusing and revealing tour of "Chemistry in the Garden", pointing out that many plants we eat contained chemicals far more toxic than some of the pesticides we use to defend them against attack by insects and diseases!

BHO

JUNIOR DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Stowe entered the same three students (Oscar Humphries, Jerome Starkey and James Lyon) in 4 different public speaking competitions; sadly victory evaded us every time. Our first event was, however, a success. We competed in the Rotary Club local competition and qualified to compete in the county finals. The first two times we spoke on the injustice that was the OJ Simpson case; "There's no business like show business, the OJ Simpson case". We then went on to the ESU competitions, this time talking about televising courtroom cases. These were rather more organised events and our questioner (James Lyon) had to sit with an opposition group and question the speaker, whilst an opposition questioner would question our speaker (Jerome Starkey). All in all we did quite well; the general standard of our opponents' speeches was very high and so the best men won... sadly.

The junior debating was equally as eventful. These included a third-form only debate which was all about the necessity of school exams. Other motions

were: "This house believes that designer labels are both pretentious and fraudulent". The motion was not carried as the house only convinced 12 people (there were 70 in attendance). Another, which included the opposing wits of Ben Bloomfield, Alistair Rykens and, again, James, Oscar and Jerome, was all about the dangers of watching children's TV. This debate was somewhat more amusing and the scores more even. All this would not have been possible without Miss Baddeley's devoted organisation.

Oscar Humphries & Jerome Starkey

SENIOR DEBATING

This year the School has heard some superb speeches, seen some memorable occasions and a farewell to some of our more amiable speakers, including Will Kemble-Clarkson, Ashley Cahill, Chris Dixey and Hugh Carling.

The first debate of the year was entitled 'This house believes there is no hope in the future', ending with some hope when the motion was defeated! The term followed on with another two debates: 'This house believes Christmas is merely commercial', with Will Kemble-Clarkson, Jamie Heriot-Maitland and Leila Brahimy proposing, Chris Dixey, Will Barratt and Kate Maxted opposing. The motion was defeated, leaving the Christmas spirit of Stowe still intact. The second motion was 'This house believes a nation is regarded on its attitude to and achievement in sport', with Angus McCarey, Charlie Williams and Patty Gaffney proposing, Rupert Jupp, Jane Collingwood and John Morrison opposing. Again, the motion was defeated.

It was, though, the first debate of the next term which saw a first, an inter-School debate: Stowe vs Tudor Hall, with Will Kemble-Clarkson, Ashley Cahill and Kate Chambré representing Stowe. This debate saw some fine speeches, full of wit and intelligence. The Stoics made a convincing win over the girls on the motion 'This house believes the National Lottery does more harm than good'. The vote was 31 for the proposition (Tudor Hall) and 64 for the opposition (Stowe). We look forward to more of such events in the debating calendar. This took us to the final debate of the year, the last debate for Adam Riley, Jonathan Morrison and Matthew Furse-Roberts. The debate was a fine match on the subject 'The staff

should have no rule of censorship over School publications'. The motion was carried by just one vote, 21-20, with 16 abstentions.

The last debate of the year is not the last event in the Debating Society's calendar; there is the Debating Society Dinner – a fine evening supper on the South Portico, with the company of all those who had spoken during the year. This event is an occasion to remember for the speeches, the food, wine and company, ending with the handing over of the renowned Chairman's tie.

This year has seen a topical start, 'Press control public opinion' being one motion, and 'Our Monarchy should be replaced' another. The first of the two was proposed by Ashley Smatt, Mary-Kate Lyell and Alex Clempson, and opposed by Ben Bloomfield, Sabrina Wolfe and Will Bloomfield. Despite Mr Smatt's persuasive pictures, they were defeated 17-40. The second motion was 'Our Monarchy should be replaced', a very topical debate considering the present Royal Family's situation. This was proposed by Armand David, Kate Copper and Simon Lobelson, and opposed by Roy Chambers, Oliver Trethewey and Igor Lemech. A rather cheering result, the defeat of the motion shows the patriotic spirit of the School is still there: 8 votes for and 39 against.

So, with four debates still to come this year, we wait with dutiful anticipation for more of Stowe's finest, comical, entertaining speeches to bring us another fine year for the Debating Society.

At the Dinner, PASF, as President, expressed particular gratitude to the very special chairmanship exercised by Will Kemble-Clarkson and confidence for the Society this academic year under the chairmanship of Tom Smith Walker and the new committee.

Tom Smith Walker

Y CLUB

The Y Club stretches parts of the mind that maths modules and other small beer of the Lower sixth curriculum do not reach. SGAH opened the first meeting of the year by explaining in twelve minutes flat that there was no such thing as objective truth, and what science and scholarship sought was actually beauty. This proved a difficult idea to absorb but also, once in, as problematic to refute.

The secondary meeting had a go at some of the logic problems of old Oxford

entrance papers. Even the simple ones (e.g. when the presidents of France, Germany, Italy and eight other countries met recently, there was a good deal of handshaking. No one shook the hand of the same person more than once. Only the presidents of France and Germany shook the same number of hands. Prove that the German President did not shake exactly twice as many hands as the Italian President.) can take a minute's hard thought just to see the best way to get at them.

The third meeting took on a problem that had kept Geologists guessing for many a year: how come the rocks on the dead flat so-called "Racetrack Playa" of California's Death Valley occasionally move, leaving skid-tracks behind them? Mike Waldman joined us to provide all the Geological expertise needed to crack or frost-shatter. This logically teases, though the beauty of the answer lies in its simplicity.

Those attending were Baio Dejonwo, James Craven, Seb Solomon, Oliver Trethewey, Rupert Connell, Charlie Williams, Ed James, Alex Hobbs, Lorien Pilling, Robin Creek, Sarah Flavell, Georgina Rolt, Rosie Weston, Sabrina Wolfe and Alexandra Williams.

SGAH

RAF Summer Camp

RAF Summer Camp was a daunting challenge. Four cadets from Stowe joined about 50 cadets from RGS Worcester, Haberdashers' Aske's and Warwick School. A full and varied programme was followed that had been tried and tested at this busy and active RAF station. With one and a half Tornado squadrons on service in Turkey, there were only a few English Tornados on the base. The bulk of the Tornado flying was done by the German airforce.

A competitive edge was maintained throughout the camp with inter-squad competitions. We were able to visit various parts of the base and visited a hardened aircraft shelter (HAS) and were given instruction by a Tornado pilot. In the evening we were able to use the junior ranks' mess and all the facilities within it. It was a busy week which started at 6.00am each morning with a night exercise midweek. Due to weight problems two of us were unable to fly and this was very disappointing. Much was learnt by the four Stoics who went and we came back wiser cadets as a result.

Chris Johnstone & Ben Morgan

BADMINTON

Expectations were high coming into the new badminton season as there were five survivors from last year's Senior Team. The team was well captained by Alex Hobbs who set high standards during practices and matches for the others to follow. The Squad was helped once again by our visiting coach John Gurling, recommended to us by the Badminton National Centre of Excellence in Milton Keynes. He has been an inspiration to all our team squads.

The season started well as visitors Bloxham went down 7-2; first pair Allan Clayton and Joe Chanprabhap dominated proceedings winning all three of their rubbers. The B team won 9-0. Oundle were the next visitors and this proved to be a sterner test for the 1st VI. Although the second pairing of Andrew Au and Alex Hobbs put up most resistance it was not enough to stop the Oundle first pair winning all three of their rubbers. However, the excellent team spirit and strength in depth saw Stowe home by a winning margin of 6-3. The first away fixture was at Radley where the players were in dominant mood and ended up easy winners 8-1. Once again the trip to Rugby proved rather tricky. However,

This season Stowe put out seven different teams ranging from U14 boys to Senior Girls A and B. There has never been a greater number of pupils participating in the sport at Stowe. In addition to the eight indoor baskets, provision has been made for four outdoor basketball courts so although several of the more talented players are involved in the key sports on the playing fields they still manage to find the time to play some fun and serious basketball. In the Inter-House competitions Walpole took the Pearl Cup for the Seniors; Cobham won the Junior Trophy and Nugent took the Girls' Shield. The two Prep School basketball tournaments in March involving eight schools were a huge success with Ludgrove just pipping Millbrook House in the first tournament and Aldwickbury beating Blue Coat, Birmingham in the second. With the growing interest in Prep School basketball it is hoped that the Prep



straight wins by our ever improving first pair helped us on our way to an impressive 6-3 victory. Unfortunately the run of four successive wins was about to come to an end. The top three players were stricken by the flu virus and instead of cancelling the match a weakened side went to Bloxham. The team put up a brave fight but eventually went down 4-5. Although an unbeaten season was no longer a possibility a fully fit side took on Abingdon who over the years have been our strongest opponents. This match lived up to the expectations and went right down to the wire as Stowe snatched victory from the jaws of defeat to win through 5-4. And so to the final match of the season at Cheltenham where the hosts were proud of their new sports hall.

BASKETBALL

School Tournament will become established as an annual event in the Stowe basketball calendar.

U19 Boys

The season got under way with a new fixture against Eton who never really got into the game. Captain Adam Riley led the way with 16 points. However, every player got his name on the score sheet as Stowe came out comfortable winners 80-24. The team then travelled to Harrow without Captain and top points scorer Riley. Although they put up a fight, they suffered their only defeat of the Spring Term season. Radley had no answer to the quick fast-break style of basketball and found themselves at the wrong end of a 69-27 defeat. It was Tommaso Giudice's turn to dominate proceedings as he notched up 25 points against Winchester as the team won convincingly 72-41. Bradfield were expected to be tough and

Stowe had far too much fire power on this occasion and romped home 7-2.

The Senior VI fully deserved their successful season as they put a tremendous amount of effort into their training and matches. They have been well supported by the staff who have teamed up to provide the opportunity for players of all abilities to enjoy their badminton. Thank you to BHO, AD, SOC, GSR, AKM, RCS and John Gurling.

SQUAD:

Alex Hobbs (Capt), Allan Clayton, Joe Chanprabhap, Andrew Au, Chalermchai Mahagitsiri, Oliver Trethewey, Robert White and Alexei Loginov.

RESULTS:

Bloxham: won 7-2	Oundle: won 6-3
Radley: won 8-1	Rugby: won 6-3
Bloxham: lost 4-5	Abingdon: won 5-4
Cheltenham: won 7-2	

IM

it was not until the closing stages that Stowe went clear to win 59-46. The last match of the season saw another comfortable win, 68-39, this time against Bedford. They started brightly and took an early lead. Stowe came back well and their mean defence denied Bedford the opportunity to be creative in attack.

This year's team is arguably the best ever at Stowe and the new crop of players and their coaches will be set on building on the excellent progress which has been made over the last few seasons.

SQUAD:

Adam Riley (Capt), Mathu Kumani, Arvin Datwani, Tommaso Giudice, Kassim Lawal, Lebbie Anafu, Douglas Wong, Steven Davies, Chris Harrington, James Webster, Gernot Grun, James Cracknell, Dominique Dumaresq and Max Hefele.

RESULTS:

Eton: won 80-24	Winchester: won 72-41
Harrow: lost 33-39	Bradfield: won 59-46
Radley: won 69-27	Bedford: won 68-39

IM

CLAY-PIGEON SHOOTING

This year the clay-pigeon shooting team has once more prospered as one of the School's more successful teams, even though numbers have been cut quite heavily owing to boys having to do a full week of major sports, the "day off" having been moved from Thursday to Friday. Nevertheless each Thursday the familiar group of Stoics who take part in this lesser known sport trudges up to the Bourbon to the ever-smiling Chris Lockwood, Bob Spademan and Doc Waldman, who have once again stuck by their guns (sorry, couldn't resist it!) and with never-faltering faith coached us through what has been a difficult year.

The year kicked off in true style at the Eastern Regional championships, held on, for me anyway, the familiar stone chip-pings of the Kibworth shooting ground.

For once the weather there was reasonable and the shooting was also cool and relaxed. Our B team finished third and one of the newest additions to the team shot with repeated, unusual accuracy for a CCF member! After an incredibly tense shoot-off against people who came up to his waistline, Moritz Haesen did the team proud by coming away with the High-Gun B Team honours. The A Team fared slightly less well, missing out on a third place team trophy by just 10 clays.

The next competition was the Warwick Shield, our favourite competition as we were the current holders. This is an invitation-only shoot for the schools which finish in the top ten on the National Competition. We, somehow, had failed to do this so we were not in the running for the shield. However, there was a second competition which was for those other invited schools. We won this easily, collecting six individual trophies to add to those of last year.

The National Competition was held at the start of the summer term and as ever the shooting was of an immensely high standard, and, inexplicably, once more we shot below our normal standard, though we still managed to finish ninth. I was elsewhere, unfortunately, so missed this competition. However, I gather the team, although younger than normal, still shot commendably.

In the summer term there were two competitions at Stowe. Once more the

Triangle Cup was won by the 3-man team with the highest score. It is contested by pupils, parents and, of course, Old Stoics. Moritz Haesen, Pete Mackay-Lewis and I ensured that the trophy remained at Stowe, spending two-thirds of its time with Walpole and the rest in Chandos. Later on in the term the House Plate was won by the Walpole team of Jehangir Saifullah-Khan, Moritz Haesen and me who beat Grafton by eight clays. It was yet another exciting and successful day of shooting up at the Bourbon, not least because we won!

The end of the summer term saw the old guard of captain Oli Gregson and James Craik-White and short-term-shot Jehangir Khan leave. It was difficult to imagine the team functioning without them. Oli's calm was always an inspiration to the team. The captaincy was handed down to me and I felt I had a very difficult act to follow.

The teams which went to the National Skeet championship at RAF Lakenheath were hard hit by many changes largely because of CCF and D of E commitments. As the day dawned we found ourselves a man short, but the day was saved by James Vane-Tempest who did not mind at all being dragged out of bed on the Sunday; our thanks to WEHV for being so forgiving! However, in our depleted state neither team managed to continue the success of the last year and once more we left trophy-less.

The last competition was the inaugural "Heart of England" shooting championship. It was a disaster waiting to happen, or so it seemed. It all took place at a gun club all of two hundred metres away from three of the UK's highest security prisons. The weather seemed to be

holding up well when we arrived. However, after just three-quarters of an hour the light rain turned to heavy sleet to such a degree that it became difficult to see the clays. At one point we had the team jogging up and down to try and keep warm. Our fingers froze to the guns and refused to function for the second barrel. Our two teams concentrated more on survival than shooting. It became a joke and the more it snowed the more Doc Waldman looked like a snowman! A special mention must be made of the ever-faithful gang of parents who turned up to support and shoot. Not once was there a question of "What are we doing here? We could be at home with the Sunday papers, a log fire, a warm lunch and, most importantly, a gin and tonic!" Thank you so much for coming and providing the money for cups of heated up washing-up liquid and slightly doubtful beefburgers!

I must, of course, thank both Bob and Chris for their excellent coaching, patience and endless humour and also the ever-present Doc Waldman, who drives us to and from these competitions on Sundays free of grumbles! So next term the shooting season rolls on and we have even more competitions. We also look forward to more fun on Thursdays, the first female shooter for five years and, of course, more good weather. We are also looking into the possibility of arranging triangular matches with schools nearby and this will help us to obtain much valuable match practice. All I ask is that fathers support their sons in shoots, the Colours Committee leave the shooting tie alone and more girls take up the sport! The last girls' team to compete for Stowe won the National Competition and put our boys' team to shame!

Will Bathurst



Inter-house clay shooting competition.

Walpole team: Moritz Haesen, William Bathurst and Jehangir Saifullah-Kahn

CRICKET

1st XI

The 1st XI had its most successful season for many years, playing sixteen games – winning four, losing four, drawing seven, with one match abandoned. Captained well by Angus Campbell, nine of this young team will return next year.

Significant batting and bowling achievements contributed to this success. Three bowlers took 15 wickets or more. Tom Stables took 16 wickets at 33 runs each. Robert White took 34 at 17 runs each including three 5 wicket hauls: 5-47 against Northants U16, 6-25 against Winchester and 5-34 against Bloxham. Richard Harris took 47 wickets at 15 runs each including six 5 wicket hauls: 6-25 against Winchester, 5-25 against Bloxham, 5-40 against Free Foresters, 7-68 against Radley, 6-75 against the Oratory and 5-54 against Scotch College, Australia. Other useful contributions were made by Tom Sleater and Simon Part. It was a big disappointment to lose Will Milling, our other strike bowler, through loss of form and confidence.

The bowlers were backed up by the steadily improving wicket-keeping from James McDonagh. His good catching and stumpings together with those in the slip and gully areas and the improved outfield catching made a significant contribution. However, the ground fielding lacked consistency and will need to be improved next year.

Batting was far more consistent than of late, but only Robert White scored more than 500 runs. His 607 runs averaged 43 and included two centuries. Three more players scored more than 300 runs, with Richard Harris scoring 379 at 27, Rupert Searle scoring 319 at 22 and James McDonagh scoring 320 at 20. Charlie Saunders scored 289 at 20. Further worthwhile batting contributions came from Harry Singh, Tom Willis and Tom Sleater.

Of the three boys who played representative cricket, Richard Harris played for Nottinghamshire U19 team and was picked as a reserve for the HMC North v South game at Oxford, Robert White played for Northamptonshire Colts and U19 team and Charlie Saunders played

for Leicestershire U17 team.

The pre-season coaching course continues to go from strength to strength. 28 boys took full advantage of the coaching skills of Harold Rhodes of Derbyshire and England, Robin Hobbs of Essex and England, and Vanburn Holder of Worcestershire, Barbados and the West Indies. The boys were fortunate indeed to receive further coaching from Harold Rhodes and Robin Hobbs, passing on their rich bowling experience twice a week.

Thanks as ever must go to all those who helped in the smooth running of the matches – to all the umpires, including Clive Cross, Keith Timpson, Peter Gladwin and Ken Harper, to the scorer, James Wright, to Steve Curley and his staff for all their efforts in improving the wickets, to those members of the teaching staff who have given of their time, effort and support, to the caterers for their continual support and to the Headmaster's Office and Bursary staff for their help in administration.

MJH

2nd XI

The sun shone. The wickets were hard and good. This too was a talented group. But the recipe for a successful season includes one vital ingredient which we lacked: senior players. The increasing unavailability of the Middle Sixth led us to field teams which lacked the necessary depth to win matches. Several of our six defeats were wafer-thin ones. So much for our excuses!

Early on we enjoyed some sparkling all-round performances from Hugh Carling and some trenchant ones from Adam Riley, Charles Consett and Alex Bodikian. Mid-season we were helped to a win against Bloxham by some fine play by Tom Sleater, Mark Bowman and other Colts. But usually the onus was totally on the Lower Sixth, led heroically by Edward Wainright-Lee. It was indeed ironic that a side led by so talented a player should have such a bad season statistically! Edward kept wicket to a high standard, ran between the wickets like the proverbial hare and treated the bad ball and the not-so-bad-ball with utter contempt. His first-ball six against Bloxham,

1ST XI RESULTS

Northants 219-9 (White 5-47) and 140; Stowe 181-9 (Saunders 57*) and 160-7 (Searle 53) Drawn
 Winchester 108 (White 6-25); Stowe 109-5 Won
 Free Foresters 201-9 (Harris 5-40); Stowe 140-6 (White 89) Drawn
 Stowe 191-8 (McDonagh 53); Bloxham 79 (Harris 5-25) Won
 MCC 217-2; Stowe 220-4 (White 110*) Won
 Stowe 86; Bradfield 87-2 Lost
 St Edward's 85-3 Abandoned (rain)
 Old Stoics 211-9; Stowe 127 (White 55) Lost
 Radley 225-9 (Harris 7-68); Stowe 155-6 (Harris 54*) Drawn
 Oratory 247-9 (Harris 6-75); Stowe 143-5 (Harris 68*) Drawn
 Oundle 236-5; Stowe 220-7 (Willis 72*, Singh 78*) Drawn
 Stowe 223-8 (White 119); Rugby 169-4 Drawn
 Stowe 189; Scotch College (Australia) 124-9 (Harris 5-54) Drawn
 FESTIVAL (55 overs each side):
 Stowe 189-9 (White 56); Bedford 117-5 (31 overs) Lost on scoring rate
 Wellington 216-5; Stowe 118 Lost
 Queen Elizabeth's College (Guernsey) 204-8; Stowe 205-7 (McDonagh 71, Searle 54) Won

BEST BATTING AVERAGES:

	Innings	N.O.	Runs	Ave.
RA White	16	2	607	43.35
RA Harris	16	2	379	27.00
RTD Searle	14	0	319	22.70
CED Saunders	16	2	289	20.64
JRW McDonagh	16	0	320	20.00

BEST BOWLING AVERAGES:

	Overs	Mdns.	Runs	Wkts.	Ave.
RA Harris	286.3	50	724	47	15.4
RA White	196	44	608	34	17.8
TC Sleater	53	9	161	6	26.8
TR Stables	122	18	535	16	33.4

straight driven out of the ground, held up play for several minutes. He twice nearly killed the umpire with sweetly-timed drives... As a captain he was faced with constant challenging problems, which at least allowed him to learn from the experience.

In support Tom Smith Walker gave some highly committed all-round performances. Jonathan Corbishley, joining us from the 1st XI, is, as Andy Gray would say, a quality player. Lorien Pilling, turning late but effectively to off-spin, was the find of the season, also showing excellent all-round skills. He held the catch of the season. Alexander Heath dazzled on occasion and was another effective runner between the wickets. Al Barne's commitment was first-class, though with a lower run tally than his ability warrants. Martin Marston with his Victor Trumper backlift, Will Bathurst with his Fred Trueman grit and Yusuf Ahmed with his left-arm temptations were other regulars. All those mentioned in this paragraph (and, in addition, the captain) have been awarded their colours, because their commitment was excellent.

Many others played from time to time; one remembers useful contributions from Will Bloomfield, David Knowles, Kassim Lawal, Simon Part (before elevation), Alex Hobbs, Jehangir Khan and Tristan Lake.

If the year group continues to play the game next summer – and what better preparation for successful A-levels can there be than a practice mid-week and a competitive match on a Saturday afternoon? – they will be the nucleus of a very useful team indeed!

AGM

3rd XI

Yet again two matches were won (against Winchester and St Edward's) and three lost (against Bedford, Bradfield and Radley). The matches were exciting, the Stowe performance usually spirited, and the side showed good order in the field.

Against Winchester the team found itself at 90 for nine when Rupert Connell joined Jehangir Khan for the last wicket.

A triumphant Winchester fatally relaxed for a few overs. Stowe's last pair were transformed into giants, smiting the bowling to all points of the compass to add another eighty-five runs. Winchester faces were a sight to behold, while spectators were in ecstasy. But bowlers win matches: the third heroic performance was Alexander Heath's six wickets, his movement off the seam and accuracy could not be mastered. Cricket, of course, is a team game, and William Kemble-Clarkson's useful wicket and catch in the deep were illustrative of the way everyone contributed something.

Away against Bradfield Bathurst took a wicket with the first ball of the match, the Stowe wicket keeper, Lawal, taking an excellent catch. And indeed Stowe catching in the match was terrific despite its being in a lost cause. Knowles, for instance, took three catches in the deep; and McCarey made a brilliant diving catch off his own bowling – only to ground it. Such was Stowe's luck. The seam bowling of Bathurst and Hobbs (four and five wickets respectively) and the leg spin of McCarey were estimable. But the Stowe batting was unable to resist the fast, hostile bowling of a Bradfield man, whose captain's only ploy was to keep him on unchanged although Titley and McCarey fought a plucky rear guard action.

Henry Titley's captaincy in this match and the succeeding ones showed calm and judgement. He was able to lead his side to victory in the next game against St Edward's at home, when Stowe, in pouring rain, ground out an excellent victory, the bowling of Bathurst and McCarey doing the damage.

In victory and defeat the side showed good humour and dignity. We hope for better things next year. The team now knows that, as the saying goes, it's never over until it's over. To this they need to add more precise defensive batting technique.

EST/ME

Colts

As the Colts squad lined up on the first day I sensed this was not to be a winning season, not simply because we

did not even have enough players to field two XIs, but also because the stars of last season's squad had been promoted to the 1st XI; within two matches our skipper Tom Sleater had been taken by them too; and we lost Bob Willis for our last two matches as well. The result was that many of our remaining players found themselves being asked to bat and bowl for the School for the first time since their Yearling season. Given this handicap their results – played 6, won 1, drawn 2, lost 3 – were perhaps not so surprising.

Tom Sleater captained for the first two matches and on his promotion William Keeler took over the reins. Though never happy in this position, he was undoubtedly both the most responsible player and effective leader of a somewhat temperamental bunch.

On the bowling front we lacked any depth with just two pace men and a couple of spinners. However, William Keeler bowled tremendously against Bedford (6 for 25) and ended the season at the top of the averages with a strike rate of 11. Tom Willis had a good match against Winchester (3-29 and 44 runs not out), ending his season with a strike rate of 13.5. Mark Bowman and Rupert Hayward turned it a bit but with no great success, while James Neary and Aaron Merali proved...expensive!

With our batting line-up seriously depleted pressure was put on largely untried and tested batsmen who found it hard to last at the crease for more than the briefest of spells; Rupert Hayward, despite looking by far our most promising prospect, fell into this category. Indeed, apart from the odd well-crafted, responsible and straight batting innings from Keeler (av. 34.7) Willis (av. 22.4) and Mark Denning (av. 19.5), the most memorable were some awesome examples of free hitting and cavalier stroke-making by the likes of Kristjan Byfield (54 not out against Bloxham) and Thomas Arkwright (53 not out against Radley)!

In sum, I think it is fair to say that the team did just about as well as it could – given the dearth of real talent – and other than the loss against Oratory, that we snatched in the nick of time from the jaws of a certain victory by batting like complete idiots, I feel it can be proud of its season's achievements.

MOMC

Junior Colts A

The new season started like most, with rain. Bedford were our opposition and having won the toss we invited them to bat. We were chasing their 123 all out (Watson 4-26, Mann 3-20) when the rain stopped play at 39-1. The second game started like the first with the opposition scoring 139-9. Winchester's bowlers bowled well as we hung on for a draw at 62-9. Next came a strong Bloxham team. We restricted them to 135 all out (W. Mann 5-27). In reply we reached 135 for the loss of just two wickets, with A. Cottrell batting beautifully to finish on 88 not out. Our next visitors were Bradfield who batted far too long leaving us twenty minutes and twenty overs to reach their score of 184-5. The players batted out time as we reached 37-0 at the close of play. Radley on the day were too good for us as we were shot out for 69 and they reached this score for the loss of just two wickets. Oratory was our next match and new to us all. We played well only to draw.

The next two fixtures paired us against strong opposition in Oundle and Rugby. We let Oundle off the hook from 1 for 3 to a respectable 188 all out (W. Mann 7-65). In reply we were bowled out for 44 with only three batsman troubling the scorers. Next came Rugby away and our last game. We scored at a slow rate and finally declared on 157-7. The Rugby captain set about reaching this score by smashing the ball to all parts of the ground and finished up on 109 not out. He was dropped on 4 and 21. All in all it was a reasonable season with a good start to it. W. Mann was the pick of the bowlers finishing with 25 wickets while A. Cottrell had some useful knocks.

SC

Junior Colts B

The side played its cricket with gay abandon which led to early finishes. However, on a couple of occasions a little bit of steel in the batting led to victories and it is to be hoped that lessons will be learned from this.

One of the major plus points was the number of boys wanting to play and this necessitated the use of a rota system. Some boys felt unfairly left out at times but the system did enable a greater

number of boys to play matches if not every week then at least regularly. This of course meant that the B team was not at full strength but the experience gained by many on the rota should reap its benefits in future years.

Special mention should be made of Pitcher, Girardot and Hook, who learned much as captain, for their contributions with the bat and of Garbe and Girardot for theirs with the ball. A side needs eleven players and the others who made up the team can also be pleased with their performances and improvement.

Junior Colts C

Our captain Barney Barnes took five wickets to set up our win against Winchester. Some weeks later we defied cold, windy and wet conditions to complete a tough match against St Edward's. Kingsley Ford scored a dogged 90 runs out of a total of 156 and Barney's sporting declaration gave both sides a chance but St Edward's battled sensibly to win. In our third and final game, Radley turned on some accurate pace bowling against which only Robin Jones and Gideon Ashworth managed to put up effective resistance. We were beaten by a better team.

FGA

Yearlings

With unbeaten Hockey and Rugby seasons already behind them, there was no lack of confidence as the Yearlings faced a gruelling programme of eleven term-time fixtures, two of them on Sundays, four mid-week games in the Lord's Taverners Trophy and an end-of-term Festival of three 55-over games in three days – more cricket, in fact, than the 1st XI. Cricket is a more cerebral activity than its winter cousins, however, and depends much less for success on individual feats of strength and "derring-do" than on clear thinking, concentration and discipline. While the results achieved (eight wins, six draws and three losses) may fall short of the magic term "unbeaten", they represent a highly laudable achievement for a talented squad of players against generally strong opponents in a variety of formats and they augur well for the future of the game at Stowe.

To win at cricket you must bowl the opposition out and this was duly done on seven occasions. The opening attack could be formidable: Kavindele was more effective early on in the season when soft wickets forced him to bowl at the stumps. Worrall moved the ball a lot and bowled long uncomplaining spells into the wind, and Akinjide supported well as a change bowler, but lacked confidence and determination when entrusted with the new ball. In the later stages Peel worked up a lively pace when not suffering from bruised heels, and Coram James swung the ball late once he had overcome a tendency to obscure the umpire's view of the batsman! The quicks may be the glory boys, but the real requirement for success in school cricket is a good pair of spinners. Winton's slow left arm was consistent throughout the season, being economical, accurate and intelligent, and his overall haul of 27 wickets was a good reward for an unflappable temperament. It took Dudley, a seamer until he came to Stowe, some time to adjust to the rather different mental approach required of an off-spinner: his later performances, however, suggested that he and Winton could develop into a more than useful partnership as they progress up the school.

With a strong and varied bowling attack, the side was not easy to score against and Peel, the captain, was able to call the shots in most of the games. Only Radley were good enough to score at will, and won handsomely, while the draws with Winchester and Oxfordshire might have gone our way with more time in the former and more clement weather during the last twenty overs of the latter. In fact the weather in which the games were played was by far the most disappointing aspect of the season. Rare were the occasions on which the wind didn't blow straight down the ground and one game, against Northamptonshire, was abandoned half-way through because it was too cold for the players to continue. Under such circumstances it would be unfair to be too critical of the fielding: it certainly wasn't consistent, but overall remained keen and competitive and some good catches were held when conditions allowed. Much is expected of wicket-keepers in the modern game and Oliver showed a combative presence behind the stumps and a good pair of hands on most occasions.

The batting was only disappointing in the three matches that were lost: there was no reason to be bowled out by Radley and an overall lack of responsibility in the limited overs matches against RGS High Wycombe and Merchant Taylors' produced insufficient totals and cost dear. In the other games, however, the performances were never less than dependable from players who all displayed good technique, even at numbers nine and ten. Dudley and Oliver, in contrasting styles, developed into a useful and competitive opening partnership. Coram James' languid elegance at number three belied an ability to strike the ball firmly and dominate all but the best, or luckiest, attacks, and Peel, Kavindele, Wilson and Akinjide all made a number of belligerent contributions. All eight victories came when Stowe was batting second and on five occasions the total required was only modest. The remaining three, however, were against the clock and the odds and produced memorable strokeplay and great excitement. Bloxham conceded 150 in 21 overs (Coram James 57, Wilson 41 not out), Oratory 185 in 30 overs (Coram James 70, Peel 30) and Ardingly 193 in 30 overs (Coram James 84, Oliver 54).

There will be much good cricket to come from this team over the next four years provided they maintain their current appetite for the game and willingness to learn. In this respect they benefited greatly from the weekly coaching sessions with former England stars Harold Rhodes and Robin Hobbs. To them, and to everyone else who lent a hand, a hearty vote of thanks. Here's to better weather in 1997!

GAC

CROSS COUNTRY

It proved yet another successful season for the cross country club, led by R. Smith, a hard running and supportive captain. The senior boys and girls VIII's won their respective county championship (the boys completing a hat-trick of wins) and we provided nine pupils (four boys and five girls) for the county representative teams. Despite being left at the start due to organisational problems at Shrewsbury, the senior boys VIII finished

a commendable eighth out of forty-plus schools entering the Northern and Midland Independent Schools CC Championship. In inter-school matches the seniors lost to two teams but beat twelve. With the notable exception of Legge and Demchenko the intermediate team were not strong but kept going! We have an encouraging crop of third-formers led from the front by Coram James and Tull. SMcC

GOLF

From September 1994 to June 1996 the Stowe Golf team has played 42 matches: they have won 25, drawn 9 and lost 8, a record which surely would have won them the Premiership! But, to be serious, these are outstanding results, especially when one appreciates the quality of the opposition which includes not only the top golfing schools in a wide area from Rugby to Cheltenham and Eton, but also the local golf clubs and societies which always give us such strong opposition.

Last year the team was led by Hamish Mackay and Matthew Newnham (both of Temple) and this year Angus Campbell and Charlie Consett (from Cobham) were joint captains. Nephth Footrakoon was secretary and our number one player.

Golf is one of the few major sports where one can say to younger players "Look at the way the professionals behave and copy them". Apart from "a bent putter" at the recent Open at Lytham, this is still true and I have been delighted with the way our golfers have played and behaved over the past two years. They have had considerable success, some disappointments, especially in the Micklem, but overall they have enjoyed their golf and have been great ambassadors for Stowe. An excellent example of the quality of these players was when our seniors suggested that we took two of our best junior golfers to the Micklem tournament, to practise and absorb the atmosphere ready for next year, and all credit goes to Stuart Healey and Willie Watson for the way they conducted themselves.

In addition to these school and club fixtures we were very unlucky to lose 41/2 / 31/2 to the very strong visiting American touring team, from the East

Coast, who came to Stowe at the end of the Summer term. The return baseball match on the North front after dinner was a memorable occasion and much enjoyed by our visitors! At a domestic level Chatham won the Senior Golf Cup and Walpole the Junior Trophy, both very tight matches against Bruce.

The future is certainly 'green' as the golf course has never looked better and much credit must go to our groundstaff and particularly Jeremy Church, our Greenkeeper, and Steve Curley, our Head Groundsman, and his team of Steve, Lee and Neil. We have a wonderful facility in our golf course and we are constantly reminding pupils, staff and club members to treat it with care! To monitor play we now ask all golfers to display a golf tag on their bags which, in the case of the boys, must have their house numbers engraved on the disk, as well as their individual golf clubs named. These tags have been introduced, not to limit play, but solely to make everyone appreciate the course and to treat it in a similar way to any golf club. Golf is an extremely popular activity at Stowe for golfers of all ability levels and we are keen to emphasise how everyone must respect the course, as any damage, especially on the greens, is potentially very expensive to repair and almost impossible in a hot summer when growth is limited.

Next year we hope to develop the fixture list, especially the matches on Speech Day, to include not only the traditional Old Stoic match, but also a competition to include teams of Stoics plus family golfers. We started in a small way this year and hopefully more teams will enter next May. At a more serious level of competition, we are also hoping to organise, through the Old Stoic Golf Society, a pre-Micklem match at Woking a day before the actual tournament, and any offers of accommodation for the team members would be much appreciated by Chris Atkinson and myself.

Finally, I would like to thank JCG, RJSS and FAB, who monitor the golf activities during the week, and also CJGA and GAC, who on many occasions have accompanied the team on away fixtures during the year. Without all their help golf at Stowe would not be possible!

GSJS

HOCKEY 1st XI

The Pre-Season was well attended and thanks to Grafton House, CHJ and Mrs J. Buxton those needing accommodation were ably provided – especially George Alcock and his desperately needed ‘Shish Kebab’! Several 1st XI probables had previously attended training sessions on a Friday the latter part of the autumn term. It was very pleasing to see over 28 boys returning early to play in a triangular against Bromsgrove and Marlborough on the Sunday and to train hard with Ian Hughes-Rowlands of Carmock and Wales on the Monday.

The Pre-Season really helped set the scene for the start of the season when we turned a substantial loss at Colts level last year to get a 0-2 in our first match of the season, as usual against St. Edward’s. The next Saturday we met Shiplake for the first time and managed a good 1-0 victory. In fact it was to be one of two

wins all season: Hugh Carling netted in the second half. Our defence were beginning to get together well, with captain Will Milling and Ed Wainright-Lee as centre-backs, ably assisted by Lorien Pilling and Angus McCarey. The idea was to have a squad of 14 but some of the boys found this difficult to accept; it was not until the end of the season in Holland that the true significance of ‘Rolling Subs’ came to the fore – with players desperately needing a rest and playing an exchange very well.

This newly-formed 1st XI only had five Middle Sixth-formers in the team and five new players directly from the Colts 1st XI including Tom Honeyman Brown as the new 1st XI goalkeeper, literally being kept on his toes by pressure from Rupert Connell, who on one occasion took Tom’s place and played very well. Both GGJD and I knew from the onset that it was going to be a difficult

season and even to the last we never found a real ‘Goal-Getter’; hopefully one will materialise before next season. February saw fixtures against Rugby (0-3), Berkhamsted (0-1) and Oundle (2-4; a brilliant game). The goals, although few and far between, were scored by George Alcock, Tom Bell, Hugh Carling and James Webster.

St. Edward’s 0-2	Oundle 2-4
Shiplake 1-0	Abingdon 1-1
Rugby 0-3	Old Stoics 3-0
Berkhamsted 0-1	Radley 0-3
Pangbourne 0-7	

It would have been great to have had more wins but the hockey played was of a very high standard and with a little more experience next year of Astroturf play I am sure the results will be more impressive. Our hockey season is very short and we play several schools who allow their hockey boys to play hockey for the two terms at senior level. The new season will be led by Ed Wainright-Lee as captain, assisted by Charlie Williams as his vice-captain.

A particularly pleasing gesture came on Saturday, 16th March, when the 1st XI Boys invited the 1st XI Girls to share their end of season Hockey Dinner and a brilliant time was enjoyed by everyone. The season concluded with a very successful tour to Holland from Wednesday, 20th March to Monday, 25th March.

SQUAD (colours*):
WAG Milling* (Capt), GW Alcock* (V-capt), TJ Bell*, CP Marsland-Roberts*, H Carling*, ACH McCarey*, C Clark, KOA Lawal, CEV Williams, EWH Wainright-Lee*, LD Pilling, JS Webster*, T Honeyman Brown*

DCB

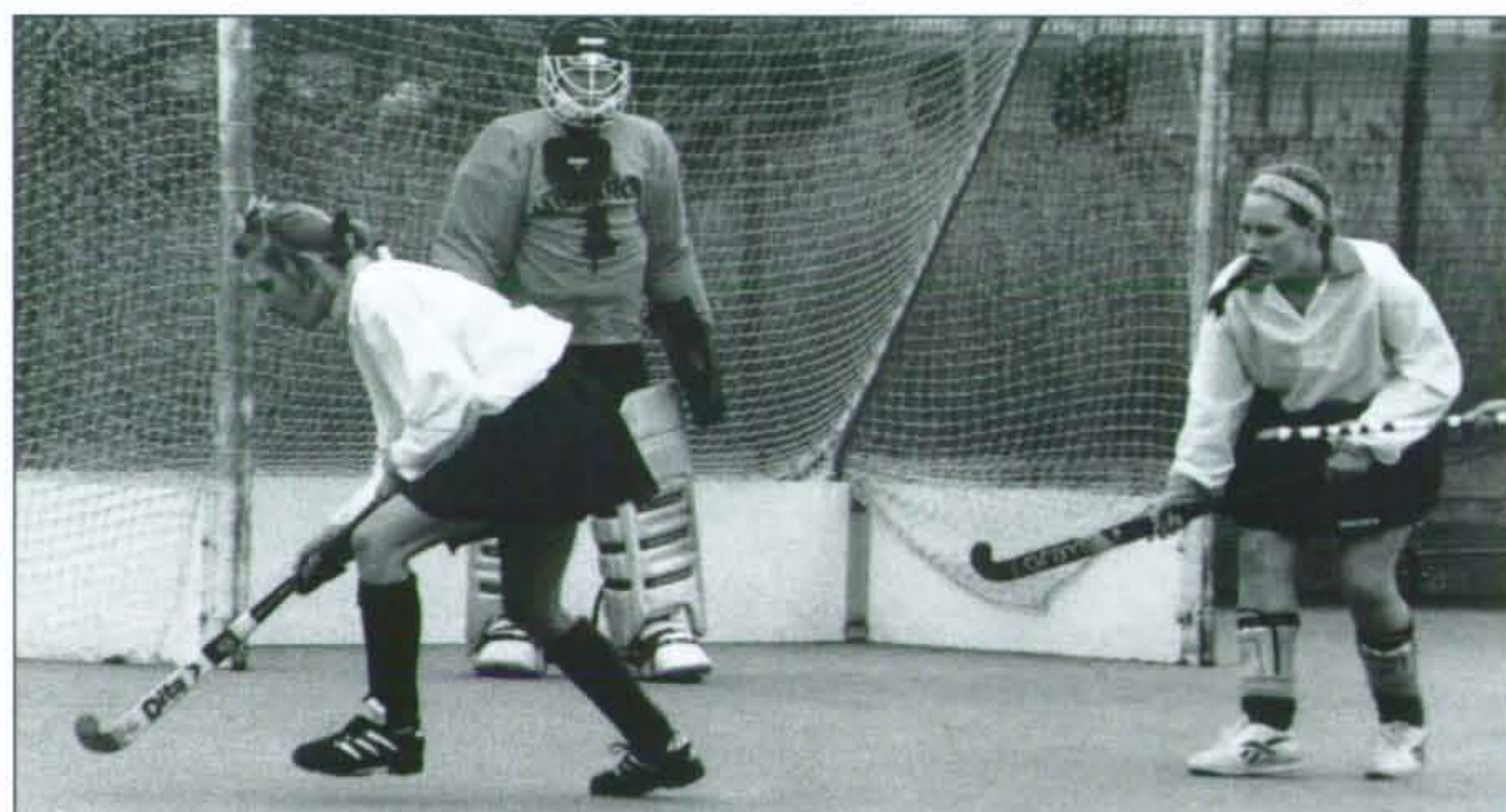
Hockey Tour 1996

*Noordwijk, Holland
March 20th – 25th*

This was to be the seventh tour in the last thirteen years, the third organised by myself. With the Headmaster’s permission we were able to extend the tour by one day, which made all the difference in spreading the matches and the ‘sight-seeing’ to a manageable experience. Right until the last minute, however, it



Stowe on tour in Holland: David Haggart, Angus McCarey, Crispin Marsland-Roberts, Tom Honeyman Brown and Will Milling



Charlotte Jones and Kate Stephens

was touch and go whether we would have a full complement; we were losing tour members rapidly for one reason or another. The 'last straw' was the sickness bug that hit the school in the last week of term. We literally took Oli Gregson from his 'sick bed'. Charlie Williams suffered while we were there and Kate Chambré and Cathy Browning both lost at least a day in the hotel. The main problem was that it was very weakening and the person afflicted could not really play any hockey. This was a particular problem for the girls' team as they only had 12 to start with. Hence the results for the girls were all losses but reducing in deficit as we played each match. The boys touring team included only eight of the actual 1st XI but others came and played extremely well like Tom Sleater. All were a credit to our school.

We stayed in Noordwijk at the Hotel Mariatta, the same as the previous year, but this year our host was expecting 18 year-olds instead of 12 year-olds as before. The programme of events was followed fairly accurately in spite of our driver's difficulty in being able to read maps or negotiate directions offered. They probably had other things on their minds?

All three clubs in Holland gave us great hospitality, especially Bloemendaal where certainly the boys were made a little more welcome than the girls! Our final match and evening was spent at Hisalis Hockey Club and they really made us very welcome providing us with a Barbeque and music and of course liquid refreshment; it would be good to welcome some of our Dutch friends to school in the future.

As in the past, it was great to have supporting parents to some of the matches i.e. the parents of Will Milling and Stuart Mun-Gavin. Thanks must go to 'player coaches' Anthony Bewes and David Haggart, GGJD (who would have liked to play) and Charles Gargent, Photographer and Goalkeeper (not for the boys). A very tired but happy group of Stoics returned to England and went their various ways for their Easter Holidays on Monday, 25th March.

DCB

2nd XI

The 2nd XI team has had a mixed season with plenty of close games and good wins. All boys bonded well and had a relaxed attitude towards their hockey and really enjoyed the season. They always showed determination and a willingness to win. They had excellent wins against Shiplake and Rugby and were unlucky to lose against Oundle and the games against Abingdon and Radley could have gone either way.

Their skills and team work have progressed well throughout the season and the team has been unlucky to have encountered weather that has left them having very little training going into the matches, but they have managed quite well.

Players that deserve mention include: Richard Harris for his ability as a cherry picker and the many goals he scored, Serrol Osman and the way he captained his team, Barney and Ollie Gregson for their determined defence, Charley Floyd for his skills around the centre and James Webster for his efforts on the right wing.

With such a young team most of the players will slot into the 1st XI with no trouble, making next season something to look forward to. Keep up the good work, boys!

DJH

3rd XI

The results did not always reflect the effort put in with only a few victories over the season. County cross country matches robbed us of our only naturally left-handed players which left the side unbalanced. However, to counter this we concentrated on quick attacks and early crosses down the right wing. This theory actually led to a superb goal in the final match which I suspect even the first XI defence would have struggled to prevent.

The problem with the side lay in our inability to mark at the back which meant that we were always liable to leak goals. The loss of John Lyle for almost the whole season was a serious blow because this was his strength. The major performances during the season came from Pearce and Hennessy in attack and Oldridge, Plyer, Reith-Hennessy, Nicoll

and Barrett in midfield. Dixey and Craik-White performed well in a holding role but despite great enthusiasm Marston, Carpenter-Couchman and De Butts must improve their defensive skills. Thomson-Moore also played for us but found the pattern difficult to get into. Walsworth-Bell and James both kept goal with enthusiasm if not always successfully and must learn to organise the defence in front of them for an easier life!

DCM

4th XI

By the time the firsts, seconds and thirds had picked their teams, the first Saturday of term and a match against St. Edward's was upon us. Unable to travel to St. Edward's that day, I wrote some names on a list and sent them off with an Aussie gapper who had strayed from higher echelons. Such are the conditions under which the fourth team coarse Hockey coach works. Aware of the Aussie's credentials, I eagerly sought advice on his return as to the wisdom of my team selection.

"Do you have another eleven players somewhere?" he asked. People who know about hockey cannot be expected to look after fourth teams, I concluded, and plotted on alone. Packing the team with boys in my own house who could not pretend successfully that they were off games or at university interviews when it rained on practice days, we weathered the last part of the season when there was no grass to practise on and the matches were cancelled anyway and ended up sheltering in Oundle school shop on the 24th Feb as a horrendous downpour left water lying in puddles. "Oh well we are here now. May as well..." The game that followed was more like rugger than hockey (and I am not just talking about James Fortescue's technique) and Oundle are awfully good at rugby...

So there was nothing else for it, we were just going to have to overwhelm Radley in front of a Stowe North Front capacity crowd of four Stoics, two teachers, a parent, two dogs and George's statue. Frustratingly, and despite lots of fast and increasingly exciting play, Stowe's thirty-eight scoring possibilities and Radley's five scoring possibilities

converted to a score of Radley one and Stowe nil. As Stowe repeatedly swarmed into Radley's defence to get the goal back, it became tempting to forget to look at my watch for a couple more minutes, but instead we settled our frustration at Pangbourne, defeating them 5-2 as, at last, just at the end of the season, we got the hang of banging them into the back of the net.

Adam Clayton captained energetically but steadily. Adam Carpenter-Couchman hit the ball unbelievably hard. Simon Forster ran fast down the wing and sent in (and often clean out the other side) some searing crosses which were picked up by Ben Styche. Tristan Lake and Conor Ramsden supplied the fanciest stick work and Ed James wore the most and protected the goal. James Fortescue, Vikram Tellis-Nayak, Nick Barrington Wells, Martin Marston, Alistair Reith-Hennessy, George Boyd-Gibbins, Josh Lyle, Tom Morley, Simon Maude-Roxby, Oliver Trethewey and Alexis Marcq all did their bit. SGAH

Colts A

There is always a large gap to bridge for the Colts hockey player between what he has been used to in the Third and Fourth-forms and the much greater pace and commitment now required. This already formidable task was compounded for this year's players by the need to learn at the same time how to play the game on artificial turf and to adjust to new requirements of skill, accuracy and teamwork. While natural grass tends to bring teams to the same level, artificial turf often accentuates even slight superiority out of all proportion. It was not surprising, therefore, that a talented but obdurate group found it impossible to achieve the same success they had enjoyed in the two previous seasons and recorded two draws and five losses in the seven matches played.

Several of the games were much closer than the scores would suggest and, overall, the biggest frustration was the inability to turn possession into goals. Hard though they tried, the best forwards, Keeler, Willis, Saunders and Hayward R., only found the net on four occasions while the midfield of Craik-White

(captain), Bowman, Bingham and Sleater worked tirelessly to create, but lacked the confidence to go through and penetrate. As a result the defence were under pressure not to make mistakes and defenders Byfield and Hayward G. and goalkeepers Arkwright and Austen responded manfully to the task. The team was heavily outscored by St. Edward's (0-7) in the first game of term, might have beaten Shiplake (0-0) if the match hadn't been on grass, gave Rugby (1-4) a good run for their money, narrowly lost to Oundle (1-2), held on manfully to draw with Abingdon (1-1), but faded after a bright start against Radley (0-2) and finally lost direction on the shale at Pangbourne (1-5).

To their credit the players bore these disappointments well and showed good spirit and self-discipline throughout. They learned their lessons the hard way but there is every hope and indication that the experience they have gained will be used to good effect over the next two years. GAC

Junior Colts A

On meeting the squad for the first time I was struck by how supremely confident they all were about their own ability and just a little worried that there appeared to be absolutely no basis for them to be so! Nevertheless, after a great deal of persuasion, some sound tactical advice and an unbeaten run that lasted well into the second half of term, it began to dawn on them that they might be able to learn something by listening to their coach and to win if they played for each other, rather than for themselves.

As the statistics amply bear out (played 7, won 2, lost 1, drawn 4) we were excellent in defence, letting in just six goals all season. James Lyon as goalkeeper was clearly instrumental in this; he was also fearless, energetic and his excellence gave great confidence to the whole team. He was ably supported by the somewhat temperamental but 'eager to get forward' Charlie and Luke Fenwick and Rob Bell.

In the midfield Henry Gillingham did his best to captain this somewhat 'know it all' team and it is a measure of his success that we ended up the most suc-

cessful Stowe team of the season. None of our midfielders, Henry Gillingham, Rory Scott or Toby Adams could be called imposing either physically or technically, but they gave their all and played simple and effective hockey.

Up front we lacked the penetration needed for match-winning and our tally of just seven goals all season is a measure of this. However, it is also fair to say that had our midfielders been fitter they might have provided greater support to their generally outnumbered forwards. Stuart Healey and James Defty are both blessed with wonderful stick skills, but, lacking the stature and confidence to take on some enormous opposition defenders, they seldom proved a real threat. Adam Cottrell took on the mantle of centre-forward, but appeared more comfortable playing a supportive role as an inside. In an attempt to bring greater penetration (the desire to kill their goalkeeper!) into our forward line, William Mann was recruited from the B XI for the occasional game. Despite his undoubted enthusiasm for this role, his lack of technique was shown up by the better defenders he encountered at this level.

As for the matches, the first against St Edward's resembled a yearling's D XI match with the whole game played in the middle of the field by all 22 players and but for two break-away goals, one by Rory Scott, the other from the opposition, the game was a rather uninspiring 1-1 draw. Fortunately the match against Shiplake was a far more spectacular affair; end to end stuff on a dreadful pitch and nail-biting to the finish. We might have scored twice in the first half; equally we could have been three down by the end, and but for some excellent saves by James Lyon and some sterling defence from Leo Fenwick, we might have been. As it was we ended with a goal-less draw.

Against Rugby we looked half asleep in the first half and they ran rings around us, but after oranges and a stiff team talk we dominated the second half with Rory Scott cracking in an excellent shot from the top of the 'D' to level the match 1-1.

Hungry for a win we threw ourselves wholeheartedly into the Oundle team who found themselves two goals down (Defty & Scott) at half-time having failed to maintain any sort of composure against a side they imagined they'd walk all over.

After netting a third (Defty) we ran out of steam, allowing their aggression, 'gamesmanship' and superior fitness to get the better of us and we ended up conceding two (the book says three) and they won (drew) the match.

Ironically we suffered our only defeat of the season against the worst team we played – Abingdon. To use the words of our literary goal-keeper "we should have thrashed them... after half-time we were thirsty for blood (MOMC: nothing to do with the team talk – honest!), Abingdon blood, and the referee came under that category as well". It is true we seldom got near their 'D' without conceding a foul and that the pitch, resembling a ploughed field, took a great deal of skill out of the game, but we should never have lost.

Next was a needle match against Radley which we were fortunate to draw since almost the entire game was played in our twenty-five; well, they do say "play to your strengths", not that we had much of a choice! Nevertheless, it was great to see our centre-forward Adam Cottrell playing his most (only?) aggressive game of the season, blasting everything that came near him towards their goal and finally scoring from a controlled sweep off his left hip that owed more to his cricket coaching than to mine!

In sum the team matured enormously during the season and by the end were an absolute delight to coach; my hope and prayer is that they do not allow the success of the season to get the better of them at the start of the next!

MOMC

Junior Colts B

We had a season of mixed success (2 wins, 3 losses, 1 draw), playing a free-wheeling style of hockey in which we scored more goals than any other Stowe team (13) but conceded even more (16). Alfred Bagge did a fine job as keeper, supported by an attacking back line of Clapham, Choomduang and Douglass. Our halves, Ashworth (captain), Baines, Girardot and Garbe gave us plenty of possession in midfield while Mann, Pitcher, Webb and Pearce worked hard up-front. Other contributors were Demchenko and Russell.

FGA

Junior Colts C

The Junior Colts C XI was an enthusiastic team which enjoyed a good game. It was strongest in mid-field but lacked sufficient hitting power in attack to score many goals, especially after promotions to the Bs. The defence never quite settled down, particularly since there were three different goalkeepers during the season. The first goal of the season was quickly scored by Stowe in a well balanced match against St Edward's. The score against Radley reflected the size of the opposition's forwards. Unfortunately two other schools could not raise a team at this level.

TEAM FROM:

K Ford (capt.), A Pitcher, D Brennan, D McCarey, A Medwell-Bates, J Fielden, J Starkey, M De Butts, J Sleater, J Ogle, E Salt, M Cumani, E Demchenko, R Jones, C Robinson.

MJB

Girls

Artificial Turf, or 'Astro' as it tends to be called, is the most demanding and least forgiving surface on which to play the game of hockey. The smallest differences in technique, teamwork and vision are accentuated, whereas on grass, because of the difficulty of moving or controlling the ball at speed, it sometimes proves impossible for the better team to turn its advantage into a positive result. Greater demands are made on the players in terms of fitness, awareness and precision of passing and the whole pattern and conduct of the game requires a different level of concentration and flexibility. It is therefore greatly to the credit of the Squad that they took Stowe Girls' Hockey irrevocably into the "Astro" age with enthusiastic and committed performances that firmly established their credentials as a force to be reckoned with and brought them three good wins and two breathtaking draws from nine term-time fixtures plus a best-ever placing of third out of eight schools in the Bucks County Round of the National Schools U18 Championships.

The start was not auspicious. A strong Wellingborough side, many of whom had shirts covered in county representative badges, were better prepared

and better able to take advantage of the "no off-side" rule and it was only the experienced goalkeeping and sweeping which restricted them to four goals. Lessons were quickly learned, however, and an altogether more compact passing game saw territorial superiority over Bloxham eventually turned into victory with the season's first goal from captain Kate Chambré, already stamping her authority on midfield. It was perhaps unfortunate that two of our first three opponents play together from at least the U14 age-group for, while Rugby were strong defenders in their own circle and dangerous at the other end, Stowe had much the better of the midfield exchanges and put them under great pressure for much of the second half. It was disappointing to end 0-4 down.

Two Saturdays of defeat bracketing one of Exeat inactivity did not seem ideal preparation for the team to pit itself against the best players in the County in a competition requiring seven 12-minute games to be played in the space of three hours. Stowe's squad of sixteen players rose magnificently to the challenge. The three strongest teams came from the south and in previous years it has been a question of keeping the scores down: this year saw Stowe give as good as they got against Dr. Challoner's and Wycombe High in scoreless draws, and lose only to the eventual winners, Sir William Borlase. With three wins and a further draw in the other matches, they had broken into the top three for the first time. Morale was high in McDonald's at lunch time!

A settled team had now emerged with an effective style of play based on quick, accurate passing and close support of attackers by defenders, and vice-versa. These qualities were much in evidence in the two drawn games immediately before half-term. Cheltenham and Kimbolton were both good sides and play ranged from end to end at great pace, with breathtaking excitement and with much skill and wholehearted commitment: ultimately nobody deserved to lose.

The second half of term was to hold difficulty and illness, and it was unfortunate that it proved frustrating that disruption caused by absence, illness and injury prevented further development of the team. Indeed, under the circumstances

that prevailed, it says much for their perseverance and character that they succeeded in maintaining a good level of play throughout. St. Edward's benefited from the one day of the season when the defence had so little to do it panicked when the ball entered our circle, and the attack made so many chances that the forwards forgot to put them away.

The first floodlit game saw a comfortable victory over Royal Latin by 6-1, even though it wasn't until the last quarter of the match that most of the goals were scored. Haileybury's resistance was spirited, but stronger finishing and defending saw us home 3-1, while the match at Uppingham provided an excellent exhibition of close passing and possession from Stowe in the first 20 minutes and an equally impressive demonstration from the home side of how to turn half chances into goals for the remainder. The season ended as it had begun, with a 4-0 defeat: the final game had been closer than the score! The past

two seasons have witnessed enormous change and progress in Girls' Hockey at Stowe and the most important ingredient in this process has been the unwavering commitment and enthusiasm of a talented group of Middle Sixth players. Hannah James, Sarah Flavell, Emily Williams, and Daisy Brook in defence, and Alice Macfarlane, Kate Chambré, Camilla Hicks and Charlotte Wainright-Lee in midfield and attack, have been the backbone of the team and have exhibited great enjoyment at playing the game well, and an exemplary willingness to try out new ideas and learn more about it. They were all awarded Colours last year. Laura Humber (left wing), Charlotte Oliver (left midfield), Emma Nicholas (right back and midfield) and Charlotte Wainright-Lee (left and right defence) are this year's new Colours and to them will fall the responsibility next September of carrying on in the same vein. On the face of it they look few in number, but not least of the advances made this year has been the

emergence of a regular 2nd XI who have played seven matches and done much to foster enthusiasm for the game. Under their coach, TLH, herself a former England player, they developed a great team spirit and overcame the early, and inevitable, disappointment of losing their potential goal scorers to the 1st XI, and consequently their first four matches, to record two good victories later on. The enthusiastic commitment of the Middle Sixth was again in evidence. Caroline Smith, the captain, Rosie Weston and Rachel Arbuthnott might well have played 1st XI hockey in other years, and their persistence and spirit were matched by Suzy Rasch, Sabrina Wolfe and Hilary Masey. All were awarded their Colours.

It only remains to record the result of the House match, 3-1 to Lyttelton in a well contested match, to thank TLH and RERD for their unstinting support and to look forward to starting again from scratch in September 1997.

GAC

RUGBY 1st XV

The season started off in earnest with a pre-season training week at the end of August. This consisted of four hard training days before a game against a Northampton development side. Unfortunately this game was lost. However, the team fought well and in the first half they took the lead. Towards the end a combination of fatigue and the opposition's superior fitness began to tell. The team performed so well that Northampton have decided to keep this fixture for next year; well done!

From this initial bench mark the team trained hard and we all looked forward to the school's very first game in the Daily Mail National Knockout Competition against Ousedale. This game was won easily 53-0. The next game was away against a strong Uppingham side. By all accounts this was a hard fought game with Stowe defending with great vigour and strength, and eventually overcoming the opposition 12-8. Having met the opposition coaches the next week they could not believe how well the Stowe side had played. "We have never played a

Stowe side like that before", they commented. The players enjoyed winning and so started to make it a habit with two good wins over Shiplake (88-3 a school record?) and The Royal Latin. A greater test was on the horizon as we had been drawn against RGS High Wycombe (previous winners of this competition) in the next round of the Daily Mail cup. With preparation for the game against RGS on their minds the team forgot their winning ways and lost to a strong John Cleveland side. However, this gave the team a timely reminder that unless they worked hard at their game it would not necessarily mean they would win. The 9th October soon arrived and the team were ready and slightly wary of their opposition. In the first half the 1st XV gave RGS too much room and this essentially led to RGS gaining a good lead. The second half however was a different story as Stowe went at them like a team possessed and were unlucky not to be awarded a penalty try or two as RGS persistently killed the ball. This did not happen and RGS ran out winners 15-21.

They say things happen in three's and this was to come true as the next game was recorded as a loss against an Abingdon side at home. This was probably due to fatigue more than any thing else. The rot had to stop and after a week of light but quality training the team secured an important win against Stamford who had not come just for the ride. The rugby was not great but it was a win, an excellent morale boost just before half-term! Straight after half term we had a good win against Mill Hill where the team probably played its best rugby. The next two weeks were a bit of a blur due to the flu virus which hit the school badly. With the cancellation of two block fixtures training sessions were rather more light-hearted than usual as the 1st XV were introduced to new skill Speed ball. (The forwards weren't so good! The idea of speed gave them a few problems). So to 30th November and the arrival at Stowe of St. Edward's. They were a good side. The team played very well and as always defended brilliantly but came a close second. There were a few comments from



Photos: Ivor Biggun

The 1st XV in action on the North Front, 1996

their supporters such as "Stowe are now in the first division of rugby". Excellent year, well done boys!

SQUAD:

Heath, Lawal, Hayward R., McDonagh, Honeyman Brown, Barbour, Barne, Wheatley, Denning, Boyd, Knowles, Keeler, Woods, Hayward G., Clark, Williams, Dobbin, Ricketts, Wainright-Lee (Capt), Lloyd-Owen, Anafu, Pearce.

RESULTS:

Ousedale: won 53-0, Shiplake: won 88-3,
Abingdon: lost 3-21, Mill Hill: won 29-3,
Uppingham: won 12-8, MCS: won 27-6
Royal Latin: won 41-0,
J. Cleveland: lost 5-19,
St. Edward's: lost 8-17,
Stamford: won 15-5,
RGS High Wycombe: lost 15-21,

Budge Pountney

Rugby Sevens

The spring term saw us trying to get a sevens squad together and a few more tournaments to make the effort worth while. Disruption to our games programme meant that we rarely met as a final squad to develop a sevens strategy. This had to be done at the tournaments themselves.

Our first visit at the Windsor Sevens enabled us to look at which way we should evolve a playing strategy. It became clear that Alasdair Barne and Luke Woods would be the area to punch holes and get behind the opposition with David Knowles, Ed Dobbin and Ed Wainwright-Lee to provide the finishing touches. A suspect defence was tightened up with earlier pressure on the opposition to force mistakes. The first match against Douai saw Alasdair Barne run in two tries (whilst he still had fresh legs) and Ed Dobbin one try for a 17-10 victory. Having watched a very strong Aylesbury seven demolish their opposition we had nothing to lose except the next game. Despite Luke Woods and David Knowles appearing on the score sheet we were defeated 10-29. Our next plate competition match against Haileybury was a very tense and close game with us losing in the last few minutes 17-24, the captain, Ed Wainwright-Lee scoring his first two tries of the sevens season. It was a good first tournament that saw us develop as a sevens side.

The Buckinghamshire County Sevens was next and two teams from Stowe were

entered. There were two separate competitions for A and B teams. Ed Wainwright-Lee led the A seven with Angus McCarey leading the B seven. The A team were eventually beaten by a strong Lord William's side while the B team were narrowly defeated 10-15 having had a try disallowed in the last few minutes. Two runners-up trophies were carried away by a jubilant sevens squad that had now developed an effective sevens game.

The Rosslyn Park National Sevens found the team attending with a cover member of staff and a depleted side due to the Geography field trip. Despite this they were still able to perform well with victories over Kent College (33-12) and Clayesmore (43-5). Defeats against King's Bruton (5-36) and Wellington School (7-21) meant that we were unable to progress to the next round.

It was a very enjoyable sevens season with good responsive Stoics who only just missed out on a major trophy. All looks good for next season and, with determination, I am sure we will bring something home from one of these tournaments. My thanks to Ed Wainwright-Lee who showed good captaincy on and off the field and to IM who stood in as 'cover' for the Rosslyn Park Sevens.

SHM

2nd XV

The newly formed coaching partnership of Weston and Ayers was greeted by a disparate (if not desperate) band of individuals at the start of the season including some of last year's First XV, some eager new Lower Sixth-formers and some promising newcomers recently transferred from other establishments. After the narrowest of defeats 19-20 away to Uppingham it seemed clear that there was a great deal of potential in this side, even if we had already lost scrum-half Oldridge with a broken wrist.

Wins at home against Shiplake and Royal Latin served to confirm this early promise with a total of 84 points being scored by a good spread of players in the two games. Sadly these victories were balanced by defeats to John Cleveland College and Abingdon and, as usual, it was at this stage of the term that the inevitable drawing up of players to the

First XV started. The remaining stalwarts, ably led by De Butts, Smith Walker, Floyd and Bathurst squeaked a narrow 6-3 victory over Stamford on the South Front and went on to record a solid away win at Mill Hill with tries from Denning, Borradaile and Keeler.

Having endured two "bug-ridden" weeks and cancellations of the Bloxham and Pangbourne games, we resumed with a learning experience against St. Edward's. A 0-13 away defeat was no mean feat and the closest the Seconds have been to Teddies for many a year but, all in all, it was a match best consigned to the depths of the memory.

The final game of the season was the most enjoyable both to watch and I'm certain to participate in. The rugby was free-flowing and exciting with much interplay between forwards and backs, broad smiles all round, and a 44-10 victory (with two tries each for Heath and Sleater). It was an excellent end to the season which showed the skill, enthusiasm and camaraderie that had built up in the side throughout the season.

Our thanks to all who represented the Seconds this term and especially to Will Keeler (Player of the Year and top points scorer) to James Neary (Most Improved Player) and also to the flying Banda, the huge stock of flankers and wingers and to Simon Forster who has now completed his sentence of two years in the side.

SJBA

4th XV

Best team in the School! The 4th XV had an amazing season. With outstanding team spirit and play we overcame all odds. The 4ths are sometimes thought of as jokers but this year they turned the rugby tables upside down. Outstanding playmaking came from Olly Booth and Harry Granville. The superior fitness of our back row – "Piggy" Wills, Hugo Gordon Lennox and Tom Gamble, with guest appearances from Richard "Goza" – capitalized on this. Some outstanding recycling of the ball came from pack members Dom Gwyn-Jones, Ally Rykens, "Gambers", Ben Pattinson and Will Austen. Against Mill Hill it was our pack which caused the demoralisation, allowing the backs to run many tries.

Highest try-scorer, Dom Spencer-Churchill, brought about Mill Hill's demise with a fifty-yard dash.

Outside the pack hard-tackling Olly Harrison meshed well with centres Ben Bloomfield and Mark Pearson, whose runs smashed through many a tackle. Another centre, "Damager" Westwood, scored two tearaway tries in the Abingdon match. Martin Marston had a great season at full-back and protected our line brilliantly. Sunny Moore and Will Morley also played full-back; Sunny kicked 8 points in the Mill Hill match.

Overall in our amazing season we won 6 and lost 1. Our scores were always high. Against Uppingham we won 48-0. It was the team spirit which accounted for our success together with the superior coaching skills of Mr Vernon and the Revd. Hastie-Smith.

Hugo Gordon Lennox (captain)

Colts

The keen and enthusiastic squad of boys have been a pleasure to coach this season. There is much to praise about a side who had not tasted victory a great deal in the past but showed determination to succeed as the season progressed. Indeed, the final match against Sedbergh on the North Front was a fitting testament to the progress they had made and to the hard work they had put into developing their rugby as a team. Our first game saw us take on a strong Uppingham side (lost 5-32) which demonstrated a strong defence as our forwards secured virtually no ball up front. It was very clear from this game where the coaching would be concentrated initially. Our next match against Shiplake saw us win a close game with a scrappy performance. We did, however, cross the opposition line and were at last scoring points.

As confidence grew, we moved up to John Cleveland College (lost 5-45). Our forwards were now rucking effectively and the backs knew how to attack clinically off quick ruck ball and finish possession with a score. Somebody had told the opposition this and all quick ruck ball was killed or heavily delayed by the John Cleveland forwards. This, coupled with a very poor start that found us missing tackles in the first fifteen minutes, meant that the game was lost in the first half. We

pushed hard to win the second half and very nearly achieved this, losing it by only a few points. Was the poor start just a hiccup? With this good second half performance we had now shown that playing faster rugby had made us fitter and we were able to take on strong opposition right to the final whistle. Abingdon, away next, and ten minutes into the game we were 5-22 down. Another poor start had thrown the game away. In this match, however, we nearly won the second half and looked the better side. Ball was now being won up front and the backs were attacking with flair. This was a game we should have won and we knew it.

Roade School (won 36-12) were our visitors on the Bourbon and we were impressive winners against much bigger forwards who were unable to cope with the speed of the ball we won up front. The forwards were now taking on bigger opposition with determination and the quality of the ball won was first class. Bristling with confidence, we moved down to Mill Hill who had defeated us heavily last year. Again we found ourselves playing against a much bigger and more powerful pack who did present us with problems. However, a fast game on our part caught them completely by surprise and a stunning 52-7 victory was achieved. We were now convinced that we could compete in all areas of the game. The following matches against Bloxham and Pangbourne were cancelled which was a great shame as we needed the match experience and could have picked up another victory.

Having not played a match for some time we were forced to meet a good St. Edward's side that had also beaten us heavily last year. The week's coaching had not been easy as the early sharpness had to be regained. Like Mill Hill, St. Edward's were surprised at our competitiveness as we took the game to them determined to gain another win. Indeed, an early drop goal, a result of our first ten minutes domination of the match, saw us take the lead. St. Edward's showed character as they took control of the latter part of the half and scored just before half-time as we lost concentration at a penalty. 5-3 at half-time and there was still much to play for. St. Edward's started the second half convincingly, scoring within minutes of the start. We conceded another

try on the final whistle, finishing a match where everyone had worked extremely hard for the whole game and had experienced the necessity for mental concentration throughout. It was a great experience for us as we had rarely (if at all) played a game that was this close at the final whistle. St. Edward's had only just beaten Magdalen College School and another tough match was anticipated. A sharp and quick Magdalen side caught us fast asleep in a first half where crucial tackles were missed. A classic colts' first half found us lapsing into old habits and 0-21 down at half-time. The second half was a closer battle (15-10) as we began to show the determination of last week's match. The stage was now set for the final match against a visiting Sedbergh side on the North Front. We were two players short of full strength and had to rearrange our three-quarter line. Would we shoot ourselves in the foot in the first fifteen minutes as we had done so many times before? Not this time, as Stowe had the better of the first half, failing to convert pressure into points. This match was testament to the progress the squad had made and although Sedbergh (lost 5-22) took control of the latter part of the second half, the colts came off the field full of credit.

This has been a very enjoyable season for both coaches and players, who maintained a mutual respect for each other throughout. I must thank AMcD, Ray Dawson, SMBS, RBJ and Steve Taylor for their valuable coaching experience and support throughout the term. Stowe's parents have been enthusiastic and have supported the team well. Above all, on behalf of the coaching team I must thank the A, B and C team players who have worked hard to ensure progress throughout the season and who will take their places in the senior sides next season with greater confidence.

SHM

**ANSWERS TO
THE GREAT STOWE LION
COMPETITION**
(pages 14-15)

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 (b) | 2 (a) | 3 (c) |
| 4 (b) | 5 (b) | 6 (c) |
| 7 (b) | 8 (a) | 9 (b) |

SAILING

The sailing weather of 1996 was some of the best yet, despite the rain that often accompanied the wind. The Stowe sailors, mainly kitted out in new wetsuits, relished the challenge, although the Commodore's cap and sunglasses had to be rescued from Farmoor's wild waters and one Stowe pair almost nose-dived their swamped dinghy to the bottom of Oundle's gravel pit.

The sailing team proved determined and enthusiastic, but lacked the regular club racing experience at home that makes the difference in inter-school matches. Nevertheless they did win several contests, most notably at the regional British Schools Dinghy Racing championships held at Farmoor, where they did well in the Rose Bowl competition.

It is sad that changes to the pattern of activities prevent sailing from being offered in the autumn term. A large number of Stoics tried some sailing during the summer term and enjoyed both the 420s at Great Moor and the Toppers on the Eleven Acre Lake at Stowe. As always, this is possible only through the generous help given by colleagues, especially DWJ and SGAH.

House Matches: Chandos

Helmsman's Tankard: Simon Oldridge

Junior Pennant: James Sleater

COLOURS AWARDED TO:

Tamsin Abecasis, Peter Mackay-Lewis,
Simon Oldridge,
Constantin Thyssen

TEAM FROM:

Simon Oldridge (captain),
Constantin Thyssen (commodore),
Peter Mackay-Lewis (secretary),
Tamsin Abecasis, Conor Ramsden,
Hugo Gordon Lennox, Jimmy Watson,
Charles Gargent

RESULTS:

Radley (A) 0-2
Rugby (H) 1-2
Magdalen College School cancelled
Bloxham (H) 2-0
Uppingham (H) 1-2
St Edward's (H) abandoned at 1-1
Oundle (A) 0-2
Midland Region Championships BSDRA
(A) semi-final of the Rose Bowl
Staff (H) 1-1

MJB

SCULLING

Over sixty Stoics of all ages and both genders were on (and some in!) the water this summer. The purchase of two new sets of blades and some DIY enabled us to use all the boats housed in the old changing huts on the Eleven Acre.

The boat trailer was also revamped in gleaming Stowe livery (blue with yellow hubs!) and, for the first time for quite a while, nine of the club competed in a full regatta (Star Sprint at Bedford). This was more for the experience but Edward Gambarini did particularly well to reach the final of the J14 sculls. All were very grateful to the large number of family and friends that came to support us at this event.

On our home waters, this year's captain, Willem Van Lynden, drew up a knock-out competition for the four different types of boats at Stowe. The finals were held on an evening in the last week of term and congratulations go to the winners: Willem Van Lynden (Shell boats), William Stanton ('Toothpicks'), Louis Aslett (senior clinker), Peter Mann (junior clinker) and Alex Pooley (red boats). The overall House Cup was won by Grenville with Chatham and Grafton in second and third places respectively.

Stoics can also share in Steve Redgrave's and Matthew Pinsent's success in Atlanta. Our very own James Sleater and Alex McMicking took time



out of their busy GCSE schedules to help the Olympians sharpen up their technique during their winter training! All of the club's 'bigwigs' will be around next summer and I hope that the club will consolidate the progress made this season.

The officials remain unchanged:
Willem van Lynden (Captain),
Susie Rasch (Ladies' Captain),
Edward Taylor (Vice-captain) and
Charles Bell (Secretary)

WEHV



Back row: Alex McMicking, Charles Bell, Edward Taylor, Willem Van Lynden, Matthew Nicoll. Front row: Edward Gambarini, James Sleater, Jerome Starkey, James Cara-Southey.

Photos: WEHV

SQUASH

The disappointing results which the season produced belie the effort and enthusiasm that the 1st V put into their matches, losing eight out of nine games. Many games went to five and we just missed out. The 2nd V had a very good season, winning six and losing only one.

The very strong Colts side won all five of their games, and we hope they will continue to improve next season. Junior Colts won two and lost two and the Girls played three with one win.

SQUADS (* denotes Colours)

1st V: RA Harris*, JRW McDonagh*, CD Woods, HJ Speir*, TJ Dixon, EWH Wainright-Lee, RDC Plyer*, CN Bingham, JN Mehta.

2nd V: AJM Campbell, JP Corbishley, CED Saunders, AH Merali, K Tepalagul, APK Au.

Colts: CN Bingham, WJE Keeler, AM Lockhart-Smith, CED Saunders, AH Merali.

Junior Colts: WJP Watson, SW Healey, BB Schofield, RDC Plyer, MD Webb, LJB Herbert, HN Coram James, TW Radmall.

Girls: Kate Copper, Eva Granderath, Jennifer Addison, Catherine Dickson, Durga Gohel.

School Championships:

Senior: RA Harris beat HJ Speir 3 – 1

Junior: HN Coram James beat LJB Herbert.

MJH

SWIMMING

The school swimming sports heralded the new swimming season on Sunday, 4th February 1996; the thinking behind this is to enable us to identify our swimmers earlier. Alec Cunningham from Bruce swept the board with individual trophies for the 50m Sprint Freestyle in 27.21 sec, the 50m Butterfly and the 100m Freestyle in a new school record of 58.78 sec. High standards and Personal Bests were to be the tone of the swimming team this year, ably led by Bradley Smith and Una Laffan. The Open Medley Cup went to William Skidmore of Walpole and Laurence Herbert of Cobham received the Junior Medley Trophy. Una Laffan of Nugent retained the Thomas Hobbes Individual Medley Cup and also was presented with the Geh-Spencer Trophy for individual achievement for her commitment and hard work for the team this year.

The House Trophies were as follows:

Junior House Cup — Cobham

Intermediate House Cup — Grafton

Open House Cup — Retained by Bruce

Girls House Cup — Nugent

Inter-House Relay — Chatham

Overall Winner's Cup — Grafton

The swimming season, as last year, has been intense, trying to fit as many fixtures into the programme as possible, with several schools struggling to raise a team. We swam against 11 schools in all, twice challenging Haileybury whom we beat at Senior level on both occasions at the Harrow Six Schools on the 27th April and here at Stowe.

The most successful team were the Senior Boys, led by Bradley Smith, who beat 8 schools this year: Oakham, Rugby, Uppingham, Radley, Merchant Taylors', Felsted, Haileybury and Aylesbury GS.

SQUAD:

B Smith, A Cunningham, D Collier, T Dixon, D Hoare, G Portman, M Nicoll, O Bray, A Howes, J Naim.

The Girls' team, this year captained by Una Laffan, showed every promise of good results. They competed well at the Harrow Six Schools, coming 2nd only to Felsted; however, they only managed to beat Haileybury twice and were not far away at Rugby. The individual events let us down as the relays were well competed, with a great deal of effort being made by Kate Stephens and Jenny Addison.

Photo: © R & H Chapman



The Swimming team, 1996. Back row: M Pearson, V Raimov, W Skidmore, DCB, J Hyam, H Chance, M Cumani, P Pundarick. Middle row: J Nettleton, O Garton, G Rolt, D Hoare, D Collier, T Dixon, J Collingwood, J Biddulph, J Nairn, Front row: K Stephens, O Bray, U Laffan, A Cunningham, B Smith, J Addison, M Nicoll, K Copper.



Photo: DCB

The Public Schools Championships at Crystal Palace

SQUAD:

U Laffan, J Addison, K Stephens, G Rolt,
J Collingwood, O Garton, J Larsen.

Sadly Kate Copper dislocated her shoulder in the first match and was unable to take part. The Intermediate team of W Skidmore, M Pearson, E Raimov, H Cumani, C Howard and H Chance, led by Jonathon Hyam did not begin well, but finished by beating Uppingham and then both Rugby and Oakham very convincingly.

The Junior team was captained by James Nettleton who demonstrated excellent ability and flair for encouraging

and leading by example. The team was very small and was boosted by the very quick times of Pokpong Pundarick of Grafton who really gave the team an uplift by winning regularly the individual medley and the freestyle.

SQUAD:

J Nettleton, P Pundarick, O Bernadotte,
S Musker and occasionally L Herbert.

It was all too much for the 4 boys trying to compete in everything, but they did manage wins against Felsted, Merchant Taylor's, Uppingham and Haileybury; so all was not lost.

In May we returned to the National

Public Schools Championships at Crystal Palace with both a boys' and a girls' team. Swimming in this famous 50 metre pool is such a great experience for our swimmers and this year the girls were 5th in their Freestyle Heat and 8th in their Medley Relay. The boys were brilliant and qualified for both Finals in the 'small schools Cup'! In the 4 x 100m Freestyle Relay we finished 8th, but in the 4 x 50m Medley Relay we finished 6th in the Final beating Repton and Eastbourne College.

This year four swimmers went for County Time Trials: Una Laffan, Bradley Smith, Alec Cunningham and Laurence Herbert. Alec and Una both were selected for North Bucks and they represented the County at Stantonbury in June. Achieving good results at top competition gives the profile of Stowe swimming a real boost and justifies all the continued support from CHJ, JLH-J and KFD.

DCB

TENNIS

Tennis at Stowe remains buoyant and the Astroturf pitches have proved a satisfactory replacement for the Palladian courts. The Senior teams had a mixed season with the firsts only managing one win but making the second day of the Youll Cup for the first time for several years. Datwani, Berry and Gregson all earned their colours – with Datwani an exemplary captain and he and Woods playing some memorable tennis. The second six were too strong for most opposition, as so often seems to be the case.

The Colts' fortunes were also mixed and only three fixtures took place before the onset of GCSEs. One or two players, such as Bingham and Keeler, may

develop into future first-teamers. The U15s had a splendid season, winning all matches and showing considerable composure under pressure and a real will to win. The squad was a pleasure to work with and the variety of pairings successfully tried is testimony to their maturity and confidence. Scholfield, Adams, Fenwick and Cottrell all have considerable potential, with several others close behind. It will be interesting to see how they develop in the next three years. Yearlings fixtures were severely limited and the squad never really got going – cricketers missing all Saturdays and most of the professional coaching sessions.

RRA

WATERPOLO

An Inter-House Waterpolo competition was held for the first time for several years (in the second half of the summer term) and proved to be very popular. Walpole were the overall winners for 1996. Hopefully this competition will continue as Waterpolo is a terrific stamina enhancer for swimmers.

DCB

Seasons

*Placidly pondering on a
Now peaceful past
Time proceeds in a
State of yesterday.*

*The present flows
Through him
The ripples of himself
End in the future.*

*A silent sigh slips
Through his parted lips
And mingles with the
Sweet summer breeze*

*As Death's dark breath
Blankets him from
The present
Winter gale.*

Anthony Hopwood (IV)

Beyond the horizon

*For now we don't care:
Life seems eternal,
Why should we prepare
To die and be buried?
Why not just be happy?
Death is unreal,
It's distant and misty,
Why then be insane?
Why worry about our brain
By trying to face it?
Why look in the distance
Beyond the horizon
To see what's not clear,
What's so unfamiliar,
What fills us with fear?*

*But shouldn't we focus
Our vision and foresight?
At once be awakened
From drowsy living
And murder the mirage
Of distant horizon,
Destroy the illusion
Of endless existence,
And cease being dormant:
At last understand
That to live is to die.*

Alexei Sorokin (IV)

Knowing Better

*For now we look through a glass darkly
Unable to see the truth
We are blind to all things bad
And we are happy in our youth.*

*We are friends, and we are blind,
All things to us are sweet and kind
We are friends – we enjoy our life
There's nobody there to twist the knife.
We are friends, we play some tricks,
We're shallow minded, it gives us kicks,
We are friends, we have a good time,
We are young, we're in our prime.*

*And then face to face
Now able to see the truth
We are not blind to all things bad
We are tormented in our youth.*

*We are lovers, and we can see,
The evil behind you and me,
We are lovers, we endure our life,
He's always there to twist the knife.
We are lovers, we don't have fun
We're always with the other one.
We are lovers, perhaps to be wed,
We are young and in love –
We might as well be dead!*

*For now we look through a glass darkly,
And then face to face.*

Helen Kerford-Byrnes (LVI)

Everyday London Metro... Part one

*Sitting in a tube,
cardboard cut out,
one hundred miles wide,
one mile long.*

*'Beatles Anthology' posters the walls,
mapped out eyes stare through,
a crisp packet is stretched,
an old fool is crushed.*

*Baby carried high,
too high for breath,
mother suffocates with frustration,
dummy drops to the floor.*

*Cola gone warm,
ice caps melt here,
the partition doors are jammed,
half an eternity stuck in this sauna.*

*Like sardines in a tin,
maggots in an eyeball's socket,
we're crammed in a never resting coffin,
cremating the city streets.*

*Bent over double,
shoe caught in a second's gap,
shirt skin-tight, soaked,
pockets picked without a care.*

*Another delay on the track,
the Devil's open mouth yawns,
no one here gets out alive,
yet we submit to the machine.*

*Dead, we must all be,
underground, buried alive today,
rush hour crams the rest in,
Harrods sale, get it quick.*

*Lou R's Velvet is not here,
should have jumped off long ago,
been sucked in, chewed up,
waiting anxiously to be spat out.*

*Life's miseries forgotten for a while,
but not for long now,
the HMV package ruined,
no one's to blame.*

*The old fool near the end,
a chewing-gum seat lies close,
he rests in peace,
before climbing home to bed.*

*Dour faces cringe with self-pity,
useless lives that could have been,
don't bore me with details,
only one stop left.*

Ashley Cahill (MVI)

The Visitor

*I was led through the labyrinth of white corridors
Chilled by the inmates' primal screams
Which, together with the bleach, violated my senses.
I was led to room 201.
The warden hurriedly unbolted the door of the cell,
He said nothing, but his face told me everything.
"Thirty minutes... I'll be counting." He disappeared.
I walked in, sat down; he was opposite me.
Through the glass shield I could barely make Jack out.
"You look well." I broke the uneasy silence.
His chapped lips opened:
"Thank you, I de-loused myself especially.
1337 days and this is my first visit:
It's enough to drive you mad.
I was having a bath with Gomez, my hamster,
After an invigorating Radox soak, I pulled
Out the plug; it looked innocent enough, but no:
Shadowy spectres trapped between two worlds
Rushed out wailing and cocooned me
In a demonic dome of dark, dreary dementia.
Gomez, understandably perturbed, jumped into
The blender, which reminds me:
On the night of the third lunar eclipse
In the Balatian forest of sorrow, they sought my soul."
"Sorry, busy tonight," I said, "potatoes in the oven."
Jack leant forward and whispered coldly:
"I'm not mad, but after what I've done,
It's easier if I appear to be. Sorry."
Jack's skull smashed through the thick dark glass.
Only now did I see him face to face.*

Tom Gamble (LVI)

Hindsight

*For then we had seen through a glass darkly,
But next face to face
After searching for a clue
To find in an obvious place.

For then we saw through a glass darkly;
But now face to face:
After the confusions and the hurry
To find there was no need for haste.

For now we see through a glass darkly,
But then face to face:
Stuck in a game of patience,
Only to find the last ace.

For now we do see through a glass darkly:
But then face to face.
After sprinting the race of life,
To find no need for such pace.

For now we are seeing through a glass darkly;
But soon face to face.
Unclear as here on earth
To be clear in the land of God's grace.*

Michael De Butts (IV)

Fade to Black

*Blowing the dust from the top of the collection
And sifting through the well preserved faces
That once had served to occupy and clutter his youth
He saw frozen smiles that knew nothing of the quarrels
Distance or death that came between them now.
Greg and Jamie who had moved to Atlanta, Georgia
And Hannah their little sister –
God she must be nearly forty –
Unable to remember answering the infrequent
International calls in her new-found accent,
Now a fully grown woman far down the road of love
and passion.
And not once did he suspect that the years would be so
long
Dividing friends and moving lovers on into a tatty box
Marked "Rejects", once used to conceal ill-made
shoes,
Now an ill fitting home for people who
Had once stimulated and formed his thoughts,
Enhanced his mind
Shown him ways in which he might or ought to have led
his life,
Giving him guidance in the early days,
The films the concerts the plays,
All half the story without his cousin, Paul,
Who had accompanied him on more than one occasion
To the latest production of Othello
Or the Arsenal home game.
Helen from Lulworth Cove, or was it Notting Hill
Gate?
Whose to say?
Dim scenes of summer on the beach
Next to the rain of a London day
Confusing the issue of who hailed from where
And what they mean now that they have gone.
And then the yearning to search them out
And try in vain to recapture some of the spirit
Some of the essence of what had died
When lips parted from the last kiss good-bye.
But how can you crawl back to someone you briefly
knew
In school or at work or on holiday and say:
"I need you now my life has decayed?"
It would mean a few uncomfy drinks in a noisy bar
Before promises to call and keep in touch
And then the drive back to the husband and children to
say
How he drank too much and was very depressed and
Why he sought me out I have no idea
I really don't know him all that well
I suppose he was more a friend though I always imag-
ined us
More as pals.
And then away again you'd fade
Never more I your life invade.
And we'd move from this depressing grey
Back to the warmth of black.*

Matthew Furse-Roberts (MVI)

Dark Glass Between

*When you laugh, I laugh with you,
And so does everyone around us;
The smoke, the talk, the people
Create a screen and we become surplus*

*To an intimate existence:
We're friends for a while, act like friends
We can talk behind this façade
But the loneliness will return when it ends.*

*They leave the house, disembodied from you and me,
Wrenching emotions and warmth from our pain,
They leave us naked without the glass
Leaving me characterless and you without name.*

*We become objects, static and sculpted
And the house disintegrates, looking away
The temperature's plummeted, absorbing barricades
And I realise this is no longer a game we play.*

*Those two people were blinded by love – they couldn't see,
We felt ecstasy at the other's touch,
At the looks and laughter, agony and joy
But they crumbled to sand and became too much –*

*To harbour because there was nothing there:
Love with the fragility of glass had gone
Replaced by nothingness, but that had slipped
Because the anterior had never been that strong.*

*It had been a delirium, drug-like, and temporary,
A dream that could never be real
Because we couldn't connect psychologically –
You could never know how I feel.*

*So, exposed, in countenance, vis-a-vis,
Face to face we could never meet:
We lived and loved together, not each other
Because we were veiled by this sheet.*

*Looking into a dimly-lit mirror at yourself,
Reflecting, you should see your being whole
But this dark glass between rendered us occluded
Never to expose the other lover's soul.*

Kate Stephens (MVI)

The Last Glass

*"Again!" he called while slowly sinking down.
By now he'd sat there for about three hours
A man rejected by society.
He stared at his last glass which was half full,
The bubbles gently floating to the top.
Dimly through the liquid's amber hue
He held the world in dark and sombre view.
And as the waiter came with his next drink,
The scene began to blur before his eyes.
He fell unconscious, drifting far away.*

*Floating gently through the empty space
A light glowed very faintly in the void.
He swam, or was it flew, towards this light?
Upon arrival paradise greeted his eyes:
The place was white, the gates were made of gold.
A man was there, his name tag said 'Peter'
Who opened up the gates to let him in.
"Our Lord requests thy presence, my good man.
Go seek him out and beg for audience."
He knocked upon the door of God's abode.*

*"My dear sir, how go things on the earth these days?
I hear there's tension in the Middle East.
But still, we're here to talk of your problems,
I've heard you have a trouble with the drink,
Well, I am not the sort to hold a grudge
And as death came to you before your time
I'll send you back to earth to live your life."
On waking up, he saw the waiter's face
And he leant upon the man, who helped him up.
"I'll have another one of those, thank you."*

Simon Creek (III)

Face of life

*Skipping the way to school each happy morning
Days passed unrecorded and future worries unemployed,
And after the troubled terrors of goodbyes,
Life was not considered but enjoyed.*

*As years mature, life is clear and climbs,
Parents guide as friendships grow,
School cultivates, develops
For the life ahead he doesn't know.*

*Free from sheltering institution
Time and life are bought, youthful clarity left behind,
A passion for progress, height and power
Stains the brain and clouds the mind.*

*As life wears on and man grows stale,
While setting his children on the race
He turns his mind to where it's led –
Oh for youth and a clean, clear face!*

*Money's in, so where's the fun?
What of all those deeds undone?
All life's battles left unwon,
And life's races left unrun.*

*And all the problems life has caused
Will Jesus come to judge the world?
Will science enigmas still unfurl?
What once was clear, unknown lies dark.*

Roy Chambers (V)

Literary Society Workshop on *King Lear*

There have been drama workshops before, either organised by the English Department or performed by invited outside groups. On this occasion PASF had arranged for individuals and groups amongst the MVI A-level English students to perform contrasting versions of short scenes from *King Lear*. The audience was composed of the English students from both sixth form years, all of whom were studying this Shakespeare text. These were interactive pieces of theatre, inasmuch as the audience were invited by PASF to comment on presentation of scenes and characters, expressing their own views about whether the acting and direction had projected the play in ways which corresponded to their own experience and understanding of it. Some pieces were presented in two different ways, reminding the audience that *King Lear* is not only a theatrical experience, but also that experience has largely been determined by the choices of the play's interpreters. The text is not stable.

The first scene of the play was first presented with Matthew Furse-Roberts and William Kemble-Clarkson playing the Dukes of Gloucester and Kent in affable conversation not only about politics, but also about Gloucester's son, Edmund. This conversation is anything but affable for Edmund, who, though receiving remarks of affection and praise, much more feels he is being condescended to about his bastardy by his insufferably complacent elders. The two versions of this scene featured two Edmunds played by Hugh Carling and Jonathan Morrison respectively, and effectively, with the former sardonic and sarcastic and the latter expressing accents of bitter hurt.

The following scene, showing the division of the kingdom and the rejection of Cordelia – symptoms of Lear's devastating folly – is, we know, of decisive importance. It is also, stylistically, quite unlike the rest of the play, marked so heavily as it is by ritual, ceremony and an almost mythical – even fairy tale-like – quality. The King of France, Duke of Burgundy and Kent were acted by Vikram Tellis-Nayak, Andrew Pearce and Angus McCarey respectively. Goneril and Regan were subtly played by Fenella Hunt and Charlotte Jones, showing easy filial affection but suggesting something heartless beneath the surface. King Lear himself in the two versions of the scene was one main focus of attention. Miles Walsworth-Bell played him in briskly bureaucratic fashion as a man shuffling off his responsibilities and clearly nonplussed, and then angered by Cordelia's refusal to succumb to florid rhetoric. Kate Stephens accentuated Cordelia's restraint – a striking portrayal of icy reserve, and properly suggestive to the audi-

ence of a latent tension in the text: we appreciate Cordelia's integrity, but the restraint she shows might well provoke a father to some irritation at least. The second version of the scene showed a geriatric Lear – Chris Dixey – and a scornful Cordelia, Kate Stephens portraying her in contemporary style with 'attitude' and gum-chewing impatience. The portrayals in themselves were effective, but I think (others would disagree) that instead of two unsympathetic Cordelias, one version would have been a more effective contrast if it had been suggestive of something vulnerable.

Inevitably there were scenes from the heart of the tragedy. Edgar, falsely accused of attempted patricide and exiled from society, seeks to elude his pursuers by disguising himself as a 'bedlam beggar'. Sam Emery convincingly acted Edgar's resourcefulness *in extremis*. The audience appreciated his urgent disrobing and daubing himself with mud. And the theatricality of this was supported by Sam's articulation of the speech. Words and action revealed further meaning: that Edgar has been 'stripped' of layers of humanity and identity by the injustice inflicted on him; with a ruthless logic born of moral insight he completes the process until he can say "Edgar I nothing am". He is not only a victim of the anarchy unleashed upon the world, but also the conscious actor of a central metaphor of the play: humanity, reduced to its most abject state, must seek ways of morally reconstituting itself.

In the next act Lear, in a state of real distraction, hears poor Tom's tale of his degradation and torment (Edgar's fiction) and immediately identifies Tom as revealing the true condition of man. Whereupon, Lear, compelled by a moral logic of his own, strips himself of his garments to reveal himself as sharing in Tom's desolate, naked truth. Ashley Cahill, as a third King Lear, and Sam Emery arrested the audience's attention, who, in turn, responded to PASF's questions about what they felt they had witnessed. The final performances were Hugh Carling and Jonathan Morrison each delivering Edmund's ironic and mordant "God stand up for Bastards" speech. These soliloquies wholly absorbed the audience, their defiance – mocking in the first, angry in the second – making a memorable impact.

One of the admirable things about the exercise was that some of the actors and actresses were Stoics with practised skills, whereas for others it was a new experience. Stoics could appreciate that they were doing this for each other and took pleasure in their joint participation as performers and audience.

EST

BY DESIGN...



MOBILE KITCHEN
pine & laminate
Krystjan Byfield



MEDIA CABINET
acrylic, cherry & MDF
Harry Granville



AMBIENT LIGHT
PVC, MDF & polyester resin
Tim Clarke-Payton



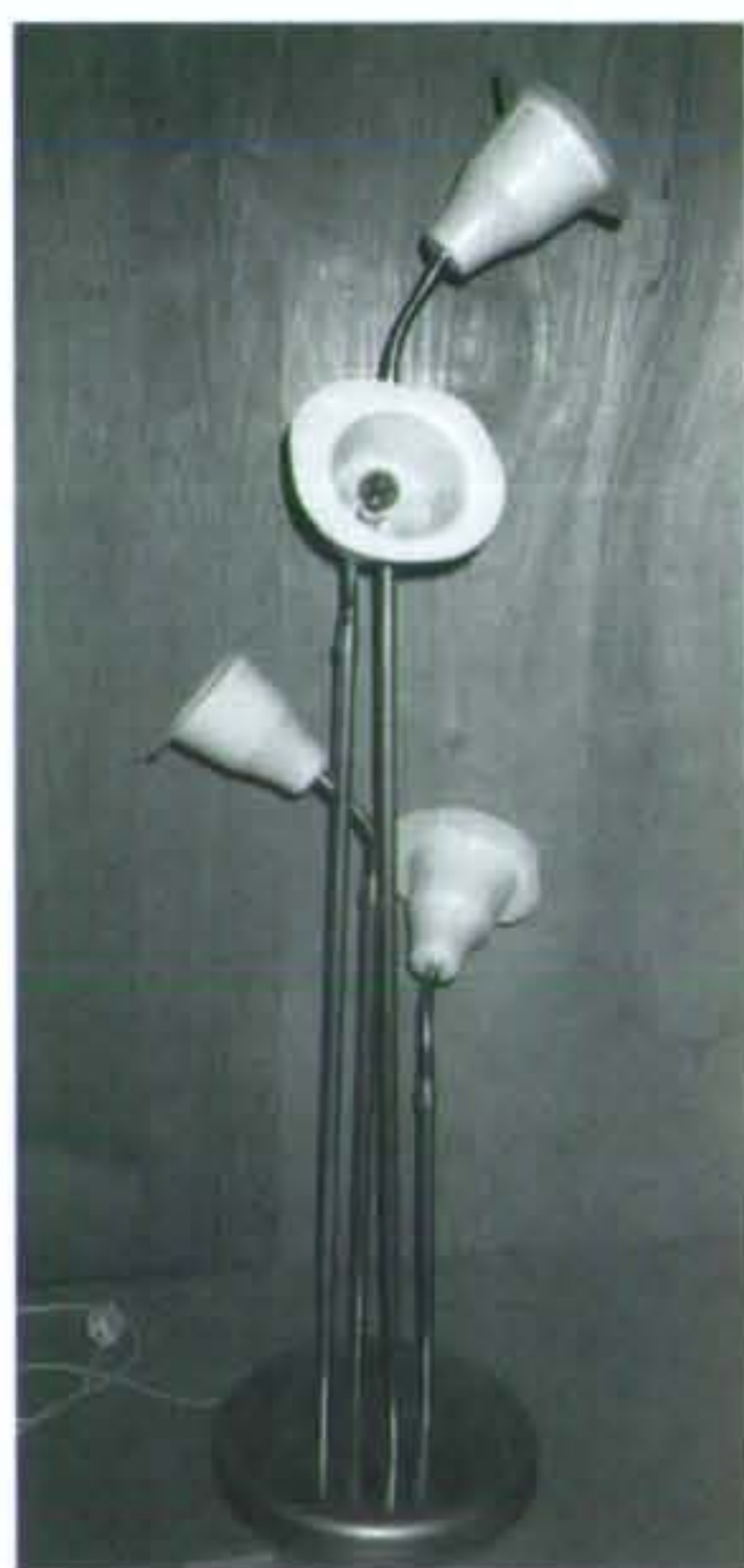
PLAY TOWER
larch & steel
Alex Finch-Knightley



FIRE-GUARD
steel
Nick Mullineux



DOVECOTE
plywood & roofing felt
Harry Coxe



MOOD LIGHTING
steel, MDF & vacuum-formed polystyrene
Nick Mullineux



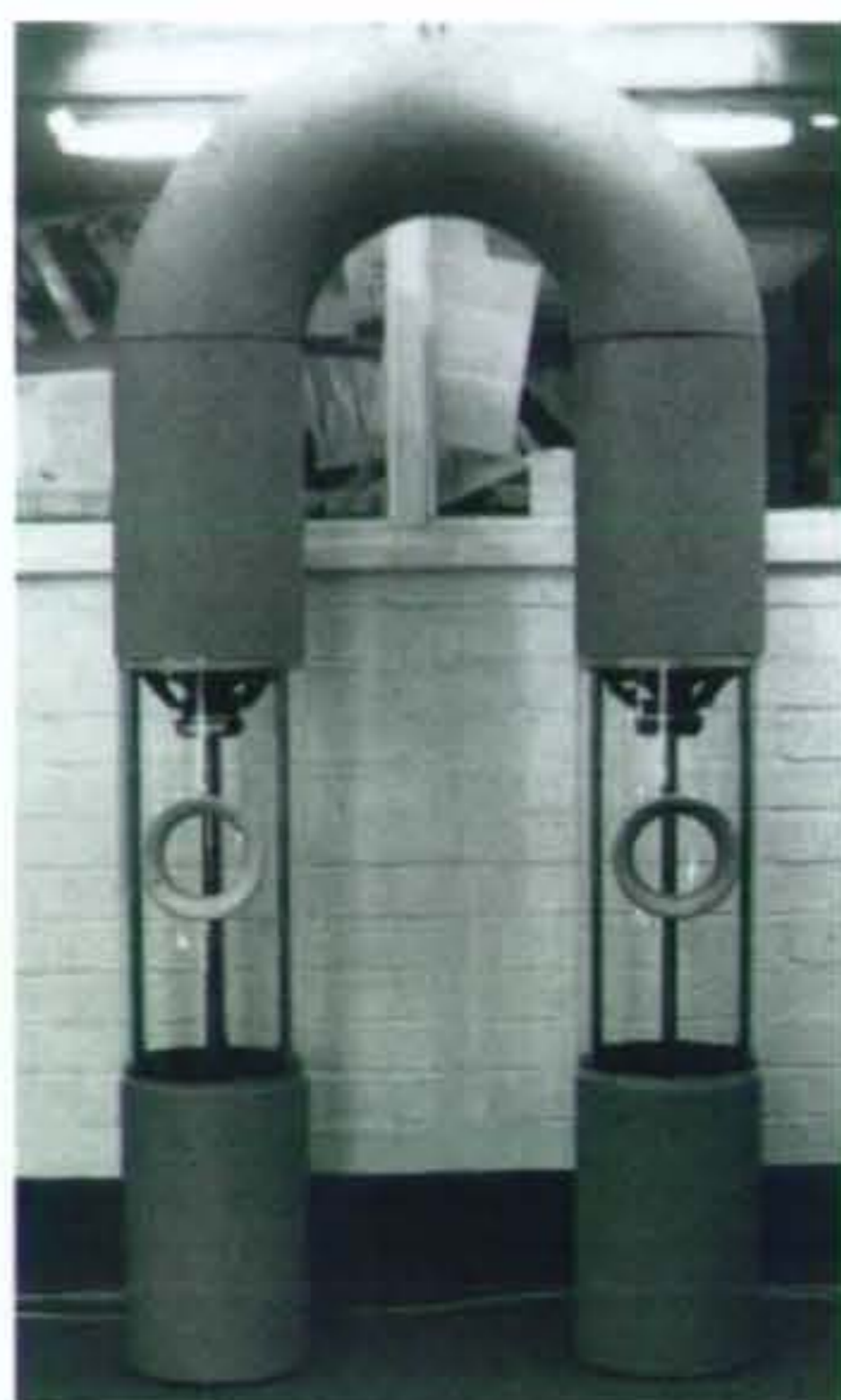
BRIDGE *steel & pine* Giles Barker
PERGOLA *cedar & pine* Harry Vernon



CHAIR/BED
foam, hand-painted fabric & steel
Tessa Braithwaite



TRAILER plywood & steel
Barney Wrightson



SPEAKERS
MDF, acrylic & GRP
Max Mlinaric



CHAISE-LONGUE
steel, nylon & fabrics
Niccolo Montesi



MIXING DESK
steel & MDF
Tom Dent

**A selection
from Stowe's
Design
Exhibition
June 1996**

The subject continues to grow in popularity and this year's Design Exhibition demonstrates the ambitious and diverse range of work that characterise design at Stowe



COMPUTER DESK steel & MDF
Dominic Taylor



RECHARGEABLE
DIVER'S TORCH
PVC, acrylic, GRP
& electronic
components
Freddy Alston



MEMPHIS CHAIR steel, pine & acrylic
Dom Dumaresq

Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize

The Gavin Maxwell Essay Prize title was: "The place was right, the time was wrong". The idea here is simpler to grasp than in the case of the Roxburgh Verse competition, but the challenge remains sharp: to imagine a narrative or situation which crystallises the implied possibility of tension, irony or dislocation. There was a good quantity of exciting writing submitted, and below is a selection which should thrill, amuse or intrigue.

Rest Bay Home

The sign was tastefully designed and carefully placed by the side of the road in a way to make it obvious if it were being looked for and inconspicuous if not. The pale blue background blended with the sky on a sunny day, but on a grey day it reminded the inhabitants of the sea that was held back by a stone wall only metres away at the bottom of the garden.

The driver of the silver Volvo was looking out for the sign and so saw it straight away: 'Rest Bay Home Please drive slowly'. Following the instruction, the car gently pulled into the drive, and its occupants surveyed the house.

The house was tall, white with grey window sills. The grass was cut neatly all around it and only at the edges of the garden, leading down to the sea, did it begin to grow long and wild – a nature-made set of brakes to stop the wheelchairs hurtling onto the smooth sand which was "not suitable for a wander... dangers of the sea, and ... all that". Both persons in the car took in the view, but with different feelings. The driver, previously uneasy, now felt reassured by the clean and well-cared for aspect of the house and its grounds. The passenger took little notice, and only stared at the few flowers in the nearest bed.

"Petunia, a little early for the season, must have had special plant food. I wonder if there is a shop nearby? Tulips. Beautiful. Hard to grow on this soil, I would have thought. Forget-me-nots-rogues! – how did they get in? Surely everybody knows they're little better than weeds?..."

"Come on, Ma, let's get out of the car. We've got an appointment with the Head Nurse at 2 pm. We'll be late if we don't hurry. Looking at the flowers? Pretty aren't they? Here, let me give you a hand."

"Hello. I'd like to welcome you to Rest Bay. I trust you had a pleasant journey."

"Oh yes, yes, fine. Haven't we, Ma?" Cecily smiled back at her daughter in dumb agreement with a statement she hadn't heard. She could not work out why her daughter was making such a fuss. She did not mind where she went. The homes were all quite good these

days, she'd heard. And it didn't make any difference if she was near the sea – she could always hear waves in her left ear, anyway. She smiled again, while her mind prepared to take a bathe in the cold salt water.

As they were shown into the bedroom, Margaret smiled at the young, spotlessly clean nurse who was taking them around. It all seemed pleasing enough to her – if only mother would make some comment. Ma had hardly spoken since they had arrived, come to that, she had hardly spoken all day, despite questions gently dropped in her direction at every possible occasion. Did she dislike it so much? Maybe she was scared of coming away. Many old people were frightened about going into care for the first time. And it was so difficult to find the right place, apparently. The difference between the homes was amazing. But no – this seemed very nice. And the girl was so, well, so pleasing. If only mother would give some sign of how she felt. After all she needed to be in care now. There was that hearing problem, and she simply couldn't manage the stairs. No, this seemed appropriate. She would talk to mother on the way home.

The next stop on the tour was the "truly superb dining room, recently equipped with new tables and with a full dinner menu for which we are renowned by our visitors and occupants". Margaret and her mother duly obliged and stayed for "a quick dinner to get a taste of the wonderful food".

It was true, thought Cecily, the food was fairly wonderful. A long time since Meg had cooked her anything this good, and even longer since she'd eaten at the same table as other people. Not that she was complaining, oh no, Meg was so good to her. And it was only Meg's generous consideration that led to her taking the tray of food to her room. It saved her coming down the stairs three times a day. Not that she would have minded so much. With a little help it wouldn't have taken long. But dear Meg, when she had protested about the food arrangements, insisted it was the least she could do ... But oh! the vegetables do taste fresh here! Were they home-grown perhaps? Maybe she could have a little

plot in the garden and grow flowers and veg. The soil must be fertile in the area. And she could ask one of the nurses if she wouldn't mind helping with weeding. Poor Meg just didn't have the time to indulge a selfish old lady's fancy for a plot in the garden. Actually, some of the residents didn't look too old. Maybe they might be able to give her a hand. She would enjoy talking to someone her own age again. They shared an understanding with her that the young often just didn't have.

It was true, the food was fairly wonderful, thought Margaret. But the other inhabitants! Could she really let her mother live among them? And why wasn't she talking? She must be really miserable. Maybe, just maybe, she could bear the burden of looking after her a little longer? But how would the kids react? And could she really handle the strain?

She surveyed the residents more carefully. The two men at their table sat mechanically putting their spoons into their mouths. Often the past mouthful was not swallowed and sometimes the spoon was just empty. At every spoonful a dribble of the gravy trickled down their chins, some collecting in the grey bristly stubble. Some fell onto the napkins tied around their necks with shaking, worn hands. Margaret failed to see the similarity between these men and her own baby, whom she fed with love every night. She merely saw the food stains on their clothes marking them, as an outward sign to

others, as old and robbed of their dignity with no reason left for living. The nurse came round occasionally, mopping their chins with a damp cloth and smiling cheerily, asking if they were enjoying their meal. She didn't even seem to notice that the men never answered, or even acknowledged her, but moved on happily to the next table.

The end of the day came and the sun setting outlined the dark cliffs against the thrashing sea. Meg shivered to herself as she saw this. Cecily smiled at its beauty.

They reached the silver Volvo, patiently waiting for their return. It spluttered with joy as Meg started the engine, and, like a trusty dog, started to lead them home. Cecily uttered the first words since they had arrived: "Nice, wasn't it dear?"

"Ma, don't worry. I will not let you be put in a home. I agree with you, the place was right, but the time was wrong, and don't become anxious, mother! I will never allow you to be shunted away from me against your will. You will stay in our house just as long as you please."

Cecily settled back into her seat and stared out of the window in a bemused silence. Meg smiled to herself, contented that her mother would be happy, and she would continue to fulfil her duties as a loving daughter.

*Sabrina Wolfe (LVI)
Senior Prize Winner*



Theo Turner (III): Palladian Reflections

Returning Home

Returning years later, I knew that it would not be easy: so much had changed which couldn't be ignored. I entered the stone-floored hallway of the house and its melancholy weight bore down on me. So eerie: a feeling of complete estrangement from somewhere that had once been my home. A vivid image flashed in my mind – my mother standing in that doorway, with the evening sun silhouetting her form with a warmth that I have not experienced since – she was smiling at me... the image cracked as I remembered the succeeding conversation when I managed to lose my dependency on my mother and give away my eternal childhood. I told her that I was leaving home.

Well, we had returned and standing there with Hannah, my sister, and her four-year-old Aphrodite of a daughter, Grace, I felt somehow twisted inside. It was a feeling which I could not identify but the discomfort was immense, disturbing, and made worse by the fact that I could not comprehend or conquer it.

"Shall we get started?" Hannah did not seem to be affected, but then she had always been matter of fact about everything. I've rarely seen her cry or raise her voice; even as a child she exuded diplomacy and calm. I used to worry that there was something wrong with her – she seemed to be immune to any emotive forces. I questioned my father about it once.

"You have to learn that everyone reacts to things in different ways," he told me in his reassuring, fatherly, you'll-understand-one-day voice.

"You, my prima donna, will always be melodramatic – not that I'm saying that's wrong. Hannah, on the other hand, takes things, apparently, in her stride. She adapts. I think if you look closer you'll find that she does feel, perhaps more deeply than any of us but keeps it beneath the surface and her exterior reserve prevents people from seeing. She's a very closed character and intimidates herself with shows of emotion. Maybe she'll change in time, but don't force it."

I looked at her now and saw a sad tinge of what he must have been referring to. Hannah's soft grey-blue eyes, so full of life, vitality and a form of repressed energy which seemed to mirror her gentle nature, were looking toward that same doorway and I saw a sudden gasp in them attempting to suppress what she was feeling.

When you walk amongst a flock of sheep and you're scared, the animals can sense it even if you try to conceal it. At that moment I saw Grace as one of those sheep as she reached up and clutched her mother's hand, not in a child-like, demanding way, but in a reassuring way which implied security and love. It was as though she knew what Hannah was feeling, perhaps through a sixth sense activated between mother and child, but I could also see that Hannah was concentrating very hard on maintaining her façade. Physical contact was not needed to sustain her composure.

I had to escape; I loved Hannah deeply but couldn't discover what hurt lay below the surface, not at the moment: selfish I know but I was barely coping with my present emotions.

"I need some air. Grace darling, come for a walk with me. Leave mummy here for a few minutes." I held out my hand and the beautiful child, sorrowfully looking at her mother, followed me back out of the front door.

The April sun seemed to lift her spirits as much as it made her curly white-blond hair glitter and dance in the breeze, and she came with me unquestioningly. I didn't question myself about where we were going, just walked, towards the only place that I could trust.

I heard the gravel crunching under our feet, their rhythm; then following the high red-brick walk, the soft dirt thudded gently and repetitively as we continued. The path-way that we had cleared through the brambles was overgrown and clawing but I walked on and Grace followed in my tracks. My chest was tight, full of the past, as we reached the little gate that we had made from sticks and string.

I wanted to laugh – it looked so magical, as if we'd never been away. It was like coming home, back to somewhere that was safe. I took my shoes off and walked on the soft, damp grass. Happiness surged in. That was where we used to have camp fires in the twilight: Hannah and I, cooking toast and toasting marshmallows; the tree in which we tried to make a tree-house one September; the blackberry bushes; the den under the apple tree where we used to eat our picnics and later smoked our first cigarette; the rocks that could still be made out, marking the graves of various cats, guinea pigs and goldfish; the flower beds where we dreamed that the flower fairies lived! Small things, pathetic but true.

Cocooned in the warmth of memories I felt soft, floaty tears trickling down my cheeks freely, uninvited. I wanted to remember this place with happiness and there was something in the tranquillity that the tears destroyed. I watched Grace exploring as we used to do. Curiously, I felt a sort of resentment at her invasion that moment as she crouched, with her back to me, examining our den. She turned.

"Let's play hide and seek." Her eyes sparkled with a gaze of blue innocence which could turn anyone with vaguely maternal instincts incoherently broody. I lurched towards her, knelt beside her on the grass and clung to her. She had everything that I wanted and she had almost replaced Hannah and me with her life.

I felt a hand on my shoulder, I turned, it was Hannah. She was crying. I stood up and turned towards her. We looked at each other, sharing our memories. She, now married with a child. Me, working in the city, a job that I hated. We didn't belong to our little world anymore – surplus to our existence. Hannah was happy, so was I, I supposed, but not in the way we had wanted to be.

The place was right, the time was wrong and would always be out of joint. I just wanted it back, wanted to experience it again. Time – where is my childhood? Where are all my dreams? Where have you taken them? I want to stay here for ever, but not the way it is now, the way it used to be; it felt so right. Time, where have you taken me?

Kate Stephens (MVI)



Beth Ryden



Mary-Kate Lyell

Pearl Harbour

It was early on Monday, April 3, when we set off from Honolulu, the state capital of Hawaii, to visit the starting place of The Pacific War and America's involvement in World War II – Pearl Harbour. Over half a century ago the Japanese roused a sleeping giant when they bombed the large port in America's only island state, in the mid-Pacific. On that fateful morning of 7 December, 1941, Japanese planes sank or badly damaged 21 American battleships and destroyers – the whole Pacific U.S. fleet apart from the aircraft carriers that were out at sea.

As we drove from the resort of Waikiki beach in Honolulu, we left behind high temperatures, bright sunshine and clear, blue waters. Nearing Pearl Harbour, the weather became overcast and dull and rain began to fall. When we arrived, the weather had become even less inviting and the atmosphere was foreboding. There were a large number of Japanese tourists at the visitor centre, as there had been throughout Hawaii. There seemed to be even more Japanese than there were Americans, but the war of fifty years ago did not come between them and the Japanese got on happily with all their famous tourist activities, namely taking hundreds of snapshots capturing everything on their video cameras.

As we waited for the boat that would take us out to the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial in the harbour we looked around the museum and the Remembrance Exhibition. The buildings were similar to the rest in Hawaii, being open-plan with only a little shelter from the weather and containing fountains, ponds and exotic plants.

However, they belied the sombre nature of the shrine to the American dead. The morning when we went to Pearl Harbour was the only one of all the days that we were in Hawaii that was dull, gloomy and wet. During all the other days and everywhere else that we went the weather was hot and sunny. Even before and after we went to Pearl Harbour the weather was very pleasant. It was as if the events of over half a century ago hung over the harbour ensuring that no-one forgot the lessons that were learnt, so that no global war would ever take place again with such horrific consequences.

The museum was interesting and I discovered a number of interesting facts there. The statistics, however, made very sombre reading: in the attack, 2395 Americans were killed and 1178 were injured while only 64 Japanese were killed and a very small, unknown number were injured. This suddenly made me realise that I was standing on the site of a mass slaughter. In just two hours on a rainy December morning more people had died than I could even begin to imagine.

The loud speaker eventually summoned us to the theatre where, after a short talk by a National Park ranger, we watched a documentary film about the attack. The film showed footage of the huge American battleships being destroyed without being able to defend

themselves. Plumes of thick, black smoke billowed from the crippled giants as the small Japanese planes sped past untouched. Many ships sank to the bottom within minutes, trapping all the men inside.

After the film, the truly international gathering filed onto the motor launch and we set off towards the floating memorial. Among the party on the launch there were Americans, Canadians, British, Japanese, French, German and many other nationalities. Needless to say, it took a very long time to repeat the commentary in every language! As we surged away from the land, I noticed how cold and grey the water in the harbour appeared. It looked more like the North Sea than the Pacific Ocean.

When we arrived at the Memorial, it was difficult not to laugh because it looked more like an upturned white, mobile telephone than anything else! The 184-foot-long structure that spans the mid-section of the battleship U.S.S. Arizona is explained by its architect, Alfred Preis, the designer of the Memorial as follows: "wherein the structure sags in the centre but stands strong and vigorous at the ends, expresses initial defeat and ultimate victory... The overall effect is one of serenity. Overtones of sadness have been omitted to permit the individual to contemplate his own personal responses... his innermost feelings." That explains it all then!

Once inside the floating Memorial, the atmosphere was more peaceful and more respectful than in any church in which I have ever been. Even the noisy French stood in complete silence. On one wall the names of all those killed aboard the Arizona are engraved in marble. When looking over the side, one can see through the clear waters. The great ship still lies there, only one foot below the surface, with its 1,117 crew still inside. We were standing above an immense watery grave.

For all those young men and women who died doing their duty, defending their country, the place was right, the time was wrong.

Kingsley Ford (IV)

In Loving Memory

*Like multi-coloured dominoes
They mean something to someone.
A girl huddles into her jacket,
Clutching for warmth and comfort.
A daffodil, a snowdrop, the seasons come
Placed in loving memory of
The unrequited earthly love
With body, substance, form and mind.
But the spirit never dies:
On the surface hard stone,
Underneath, undaunted by mortal fear,
The dead live in the heart.*

Kate Stephens (MVI)

Speech Day

The early morning mist was like a tablecloth, clean and white, draped over the never-ending table of the countryside. The day would warm up, but as I stepped out of the car a chill lingered in the air. For this one day of the year the hockey pitches and cricket squares ceased to perform their usual tasks as they were transformed into car parks to try and accommodate the vehicles of the various parents and relations who had turned up for the summer Speech Day.

Three years had passed since I had left my small, rural prep school and this was the first occasion that I had driven through the blue, wooden gates not as a pupil but as an Old Boy. As I headed towards the small, white marquee in one corner of the playing field, colourful memories of my schooling here flashed through my mind, but they were slightly tainted with nerves about my unannounced return. I began to wonder if anyone would remember me or, indeed, if I would recognize my former teachers. I stood on my own in the crowded tent, concentrating on the cup of black, oily coffee in my hand. Now and then I looked up, glancing about me, desperately trying to find someone I knew to make conversation with. But all I received in return were cold stares from the parents, who saw me as a stranger from outside, invading their community. But I was more than a mere stranger, I had been a part of this close community for almost ten years, and yet, unfortunately, it seemed that all my contributions to the school had been swept away and forgotten as soon as I gave up my position as a pupil in the school.

The headmaster, as had always been the tradition, started the speeches promptly at ten o'clock. This year I sat with the adults, the parents and grandparents rather than with the pupils of the school. For some reason the speeches made more sense to me than they had done in years gone by and the jokes were mildly more amusing than I remembered them. I supposed it was because I had grown up since I last heard them as a pupil. I stared across at the rows of plastic, folding chairs that the pupils occupied. I recalled how uncomfortable the chairs had been, making it necessary for you to fidget frequently which then brought upon you the whispered telling off from the teacher positioned at the end of your row. I used to sit as far back as possible with my friends so that we could talk during the prize giving, which we regarded as extremely tedious, unsuccessfully trying to conceal our laughter and chattering.

With the formalities over everyone drifted off for a long, lazy lunch in the grounds. I opted for a stroll round the school buildings, to reminisce in my favourite old haunts. Rounding the corner I met my old English teacher. He was a middle aged man with a thin beard that inadequately hid the scars of acne from his teenage years.

"Hello, sir," I blurted out instinctively, even though he was no longer my teacher. He must have seen my embarrassment as I realised what I had said, because he laughed.

"Old habits are hard to break, eh?" he chuckled and I nodded my reply sheepishly. I then filled him in on what I had been doing in the years since I left and he appeared genuinely interested. We parted and I moved on to the classroom block. In one of the classrooms I entered there was a new teacher that I did not know.

"Hello," I said tentatively. She greeted me but then returned to applying the finishing touches to her display of her form's work. The layout of the room had stayed the same and I sat down at what had been my old desk. It was next to the window and the view from it had not changed, and I was still able to look out over the place where we used to play at break-times. I even half expected the rest of my class-mates to fling open the door and rush in for a lesson; but of course they did not.

I hovered in the entrance to the dining room, with its distinctive aroma of school dinners. I studied the wooden boards that hung all around the walls of the room. Etched into them were the names of by-gone head boys and girls and of those who had gained scholarships to the "grown up schools" that the teachers kept telling us about, but which at the time we viewed as something hidden long in the future.

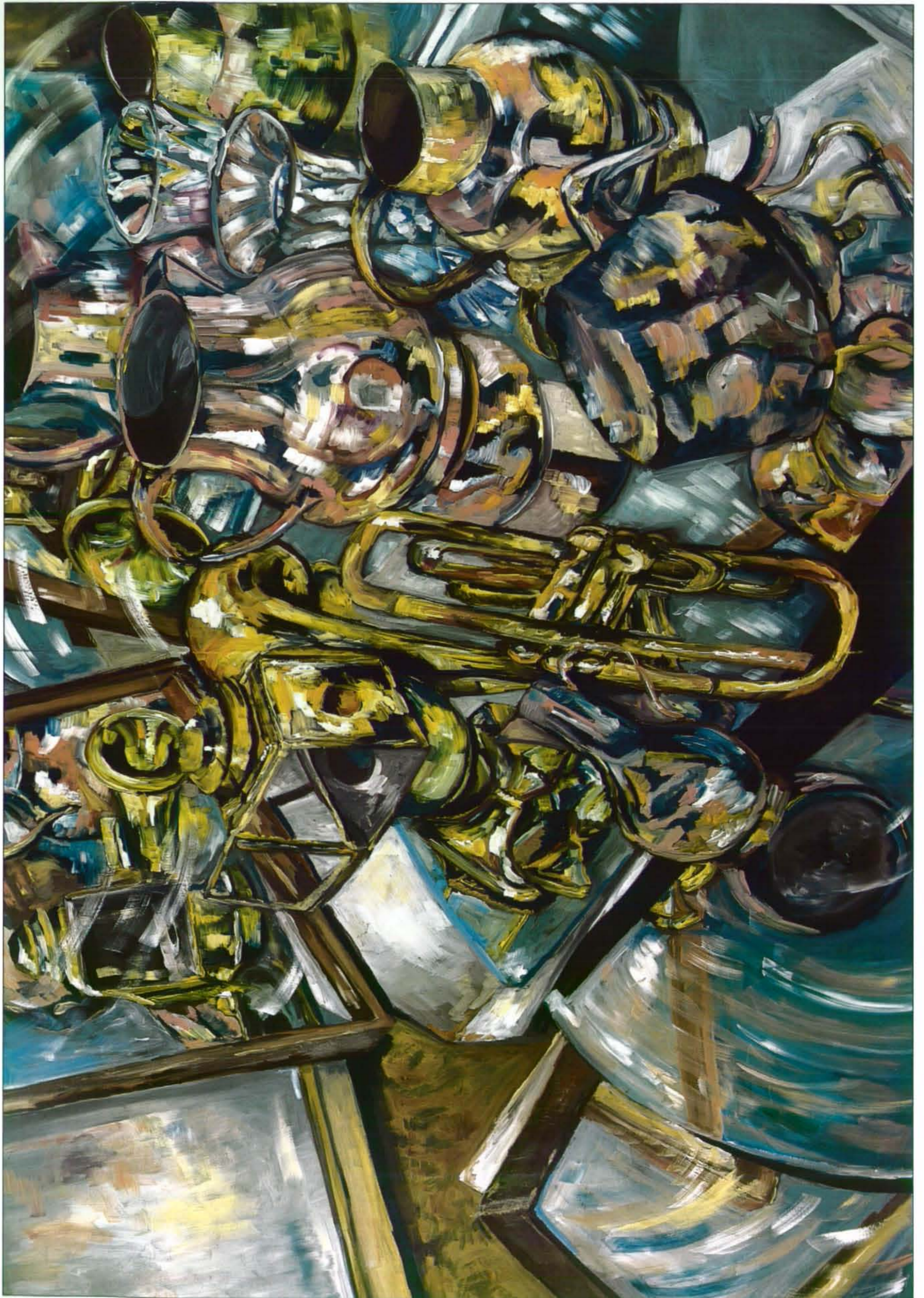
The names went back for decades and every meal time we would read them to ourselves as the teacher said Grace. We remembered very few of the people written on the boards, the majority being merely faceless names from the past. But now my name was recorded on one of them, and I imagined that the present pupils did exactly as I did, not able to put an image with the name. As I made my way along the drive to the front of the school, I realised that nothing had changed; the place was how it should be, how I remembered it used to be: the clutter of muddy boots in the changing rooms, the fragrant cocktail of deodorants, used in excess by the boys in the dormitories, and the studious atmosphere of the library created by the unbroken silence. I perched myself on the crumbling stone wall that surrounded the headmaster's garden, once my favourite spot for just sitting and thinking. While I looked round at the families enjoying their picnics under the sun that now shone with bold confidence in the sky, I realised that I wanted desperately to live out my time here again. But I knew that I could not, my friends had moved on and I had to do the same. My time had been, it was in the past and now it was someone else's time.

The place was right, and always would be, but the time was wrong, and no-one could alter that.

Lorien Pilling (LVI)



Tristram De Silva



Lucinda Stucley

A day in the death...

"Hello, thank you for coming, I'm Charlie Stone. I've been here 50 years now; I died on the 20th December, 1995. It is now the 20th December, 2045. So, you lot died yesterday. Well it's my job, being one of the oldest here, to fill you in. After you die you first watch every day of your life on a giant screen; you watch every moment, even the silences. You will learn a lot - I have. I've cried at myself laughing, laughed at myself crying for 50 years. Today I am going to watch the last day of my life in glorious Technicolor. You lot come and watch just to get a feeling for it. Then tomorrow you'll start your deaths. I'll say good luck now - it's hard work looking at yourself - because I'll be off tomorrow to join others who have seen it all. I've invited some old friends. They don't mind coming, they have all the time in the world where they are. I wake up in ten minutes, let's go and sit down, goodbye."

I walked with the others into the box, rows of people sat inside, the walls closed in, the rows became one, the breathing silenced and the lights dimmed. There was an atmosphere of nothing except for the words, huge letters suspended in the air or on the screen. I was not sure, but they filled in the spaces, loud and white against the pit of black silence surrounding me. They shouted "Mr Charles Stone 1945-1995, 20th December, 1995. The place was right, the time was wrong. NO THINKING IN THE AUDIENCE, UNLESS AS MR STONE." I became nothing, the audience became one as we sat in the toenail of Charlie's life, watching from his eyes, engulfed by the screen so close. We fall into it and past it, like Alice stepping unblinking into the world. We become mixed with the blood on the screen and we are shot into the arm of Charlie. I finally lose all identity and fall into Charlie as he wakes, leaving the unified beat of the audience as we become Charlie...

I remember two portions of the day, when I woke, and the end... My head feels like an eggshell, liquid brain floating in it, bursting and expanding. I wait for it to crack. It doesn't. I cough, something funny crackles in my sand-paper throat, (I've gotta stop smoking, it'll kill me). I throw the ringing demon at my ear across the room and lie for a moment, eyes closed (a quick thought: what if this morning things had changed, what if the colours had changed, anything...?). I open the pounding windows in my face, and groan. Last night is beginning to re-assemble itself like a jigsaw in my mind - in fragmented pictures: beer, Angie, beer stain dripping, Angie, drip...drip - a slap (she's a big girl), drip (beer or blood?) drip, a screaming red faced Angie... closer... drip... the floor of white tiles, an evil stench, paralysed... drip... rain down my back,

rows of sweet wrappers, cold coffee, soggy chips, loose change... drip... I stop, life is too short to consider how low I can get. She is sitting now, sagging towards a mirror, painting her thin lips like a puppet. Her face reflects back at me, a thin grey layer of skin stretched like a drum over a lumpy landscape of features. She is, I believe, in the process of "putting her face on". Painted woman. (No, not woman, woman is curves and delicate looks, not lumps and grimaces.) A repelled shiver ripples over me; I repress a violent animal urge to hurt her. As if her face wasn't cruel enough to be confronted with at 6.30 on a Monday morning, she has to increase my pain by talking. Imagine a road drill, seagulls picking at bread, hyenas ripping a giant carcass, the highest note of an out-of-tune violin, repeated together over and over, and you're not close to the sound her voice imprints on my pathetic hangover.

"'bout time you made a move. Got a head 'ave you? Good. Bloody deserve it! Drinkin' like a fish, you haven't got the money or the strength to drink like that; everyone was laughin', you know, thought you were a right joke..." Her voice swam around in a corner of my brain. I left it there, humming to block it off... "Nobody ever really done me, oh she done me, she done me good." (Incidentally Angie hated this song; she said the Beatles were fine until "those drugs". I believe maybe if she tried "those drugs", she would have found the 'finer' side to the Beatles.) I had managed to dress myself despite a surge of sick creeping around my blood, and I grabbed my keys and ran for the door. Her voice chased me down the stairs, swirling with the brown carpet into a perfect concert of dizzy senses as my hangover crept over me.

"8.00 Mr Jones, hospital. Be nice, he's ill, dying! Got it? Pick him up at 9.00. Sonya in between. 9.35 woman. Stranger. By the fountain, the place. Be on time. Are you listening to me...?"

It's 9.15. Mr Jones is dying; he looks dead already. I don't mind, I don't like him. I've always wondered why people suddenly respect someone when they die. I don't. Mr Jones is a bastard and will still be a bastard when he's nothing but a name on a stone. In fact seeing Mr Jones has made me feel young again. I don't feel old, not in my head, I feel like I'm still in a dress rehearsal for when I get old. Does that sound funny? I drive around for a bit until I reach "the place". It's a park, lovely place, slap bang in the middle of the towerblocks like a virgin in a brothel. I park the cab on the road, next to the fountain, facing the bank. I'm 20 minutes early. I know this because the bank clock tells me so. 9.15, I walk into the park; it's a lovely sunny day. I sit on a bench and breathe it all in. The world



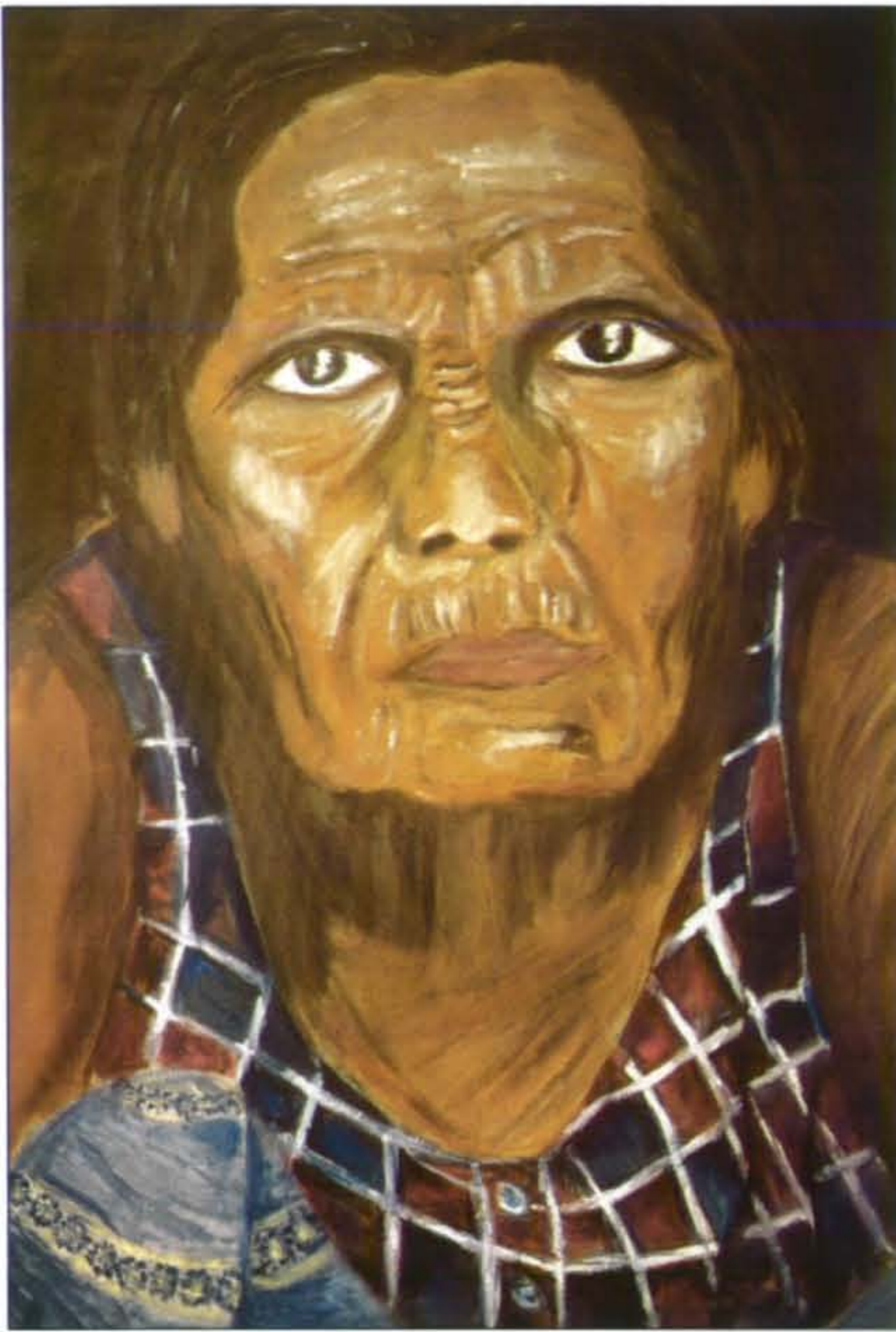
Tom Bell

stretches and yawns around me, the shadows lying like cats under the dripping trees. The sun has poured into every crack of the earth like honey and the trees stand like figures running from a volcano. The city wraps its sights, sounds and smells around me as I look blankly at the buildings. So many windows, so many eyes. Match box flats, stick men figures. My thoughts ramble loosely for a while. I look again at the clock. Still 20 minutes, that's nice. I don't want to move. I watch a tall woman with dark glasses jog out of the bank. She runs across the road towards my taxi. I look at my watch, 9.35. Just my luck, should never trust anyone's time but your own, that's what I say. I walk slowly towards the cab, I'll only be a couple of minutes late. The woman's looking around frantically, at her watch now. People should just slow down. She's running in the other direction now, away from the bank. I lose her in the crowd of people swarming like ants about the huge glass bank. She could have waited, it's so rude... Glass shattering, crashing, cutting the sweet soft air. Face to the floor, limp bodies stretching, cold concrete, as cold as me, so cold...

The lights in the room switched on and, feeling drained, I clicked back into myself. Charlie stood at the front, as white as the screen. "Thank you everyone for coming, especially those of you who died today too."

He looked past the rows of faces to one still seat at the very back. The woman with the sunglasses was cowering into the back of her seat, her face a twisted mix of hate and guilt. Everyone began filing out of the room but she stayed seated, at the very back, as another group of people began walking into the room. And I suddenly realised 234 people died as a result of the "Bank bombing", and they all had a film of their last day to show. The films would be different, as people's lives are, and she would watch everyone of them, see with the most stark realism what she had taken from them. I left the room. She would leave the room too in 233 days, and perhaps she would have had time to consider what she did.

Georgina Mackay (LVI)



Kate Copper



Durga Gohel



Tom Bell's A-level Exhibition

Waiting for the end

They say crime never pays. Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't, but now I have lost everything, everything but this plagued conscience, and the knowledge that soon my fate will come. I pray they make it swift.

It was a week ago. A week. How that day returns to haunt my dreams! The night before, they had called a meeting to gather in an abandoned warehouse on an industrial estate somewhere on the outskirts of Dublin. It was cold that day, the weather echoed my nervousness, but I knew why I was wanted. I made bombs, for monsters, monsters who hold the lowest respect for human life, in the wake of their selfish ambitions.

"We want yer te make us one of yer little toys, Sean," said one of the men from the shadows. Toys? Toys! I seethed in a fiery rage at the comparison. They had no respect for the power of "a little toy." Inwardly I bitterly disagreed with them, their stupid little toys, and "The Cause," but such was my fear of them I suppressed the protest inside me. I needed the money.

"So Sean, what's it te be then? Are ye with us or against us?" I shivered, the cold was biting at my flesh. A chilly silence filled the air, as I stood, motionless.

"Sean, don't go soft on me now, we can't have people who won't co-operate with us now, can we?" I knew what that meant. There was a bitter sarcasm in his tone. I swallowed, and stuttered, "Sh...sure boss," knowing it was wrong, but I had no option.

The white and malevolent face loomed from out of the dark depths of the shadows. It grinned, a gold tooth shining out from amongst the nicotine stains. The smile faded, and he spoke with a more sinister tone.

"Same place, tomorrow, whit de goods" – and faded back into the darkness.

I stood, motionless, my heavy breathing echoing in the chill silence. It seemed like an age before my senses returned, but I had work to do, no matter how much I disliked it.

That night I set to work, fighting the mists of sleep into the small hours of the morning. I looked at my creation and I hated it, as Frankenstein did his monster. A bomb is not a childish image of fuse and ball. A bomb does not go up in a puff of smoke, leaving a sooty trail of black eyes and band aids. A bomb lies dormant, waiting for the fatal moment to pounce. A bomb leaves a trail of destruction in its wake, inflicting wounds, tearing off limbs, destroying lives. And I had dropped so low as to become a part of this, this blatant disregard for life. Sometime I will pay for my part in this, I had thought that night. How right I was to prove myself to be.

The little sleep I got that night was plagued with

fevered nightmares. Victims of my "Toys," rose from the dead, their grotesque grins, the hollow depths of their stares, boring into my imagination. Bombs went off in playgrounds, and I stood, watching the broken bodies reach out for help, as those monsters stood laughing in the smoky mists, and for whom, for what? "The cause, the cause," they chanted. I could not deny this reflection of reality. In vain I cried out in my sleep, but only morning would deliver me from this torture.

Morning came, a cool breeze flowed in through the curtain. I woke. It had been a long night, and my expression in the mirror showed it. But for once I felt a purpose; it was as if that night of torment had a meaning. I knew why they wanted my bomb; so now I was going to give them their bomb: "Whoops! I seem to have set the timer wrong, what a pity." I sniggered at the thought.

I arrived at the warehouse early. I felt refreshed; consequences did not trouble my conscience. I wish they had.

The timing was perfect, or was it? A brilliant cloud of smoke rose into the sky. I shuddered, and turned away.

I knew my time had come, I had seen it in films. Mafiosi hunting down defectors, the bullet through the windscreen routine: quick, painless. I didn't own a racehorse so that bit didn't bother me...

These monsters are not so professional and quick. This past week has seen horrors I could not have imagined in my wildest dreams. My parents. Dead. My Brothers. Dead. Last night I received a package. The question of my dog's disappearance was brutally answered with a note scrawled in a rage: "The place was right, the time was wrong."

All I can do now is wait...

*James Lyon (IV)
Winner of the Junior Prize*



Theo Turner (III)

Foul Play

It was five thirty and almost dark; the winter nights were steadily creeping forward and the synthetic glow of electric light lay lazily over the houses, blanketing the city as the children and commuters alike made their ways home. Exhaust fumes filled the air, brought on by the onslaught of traffic, slowly spewing the toxic fumes into the air as people made their way to their various destinations. The tarmac court was well lit by the street lights running down its lengths. The fencing that stood, albeit precariously, around the court had long since lost the silver shine of novelty, which had been replaced by the somewhat less picturesque dappled red of ruthless rusting. The hard surface of the court was older than the fencing but, thankfully, still in much better condition.

The lines had faded but the boys knew where they had once been and played accordingly. The two hoops had lost their nets and the backboards were rotten and disfigured, but at each end there remained a metal ring through which a ball could be passed, sufficient for a game of basketball. Shouts filled the air as the boys ran about; the noise of their feet was accompanied by the bounding sound of the ball hitting the tarmac. Occasionally the rhythm of their feet was interrupted when the ball was taken out of play or when somebody scored. There was no referee; decisions were made as they went along, which, surprisingly or not, seldom, if ever, resulted in an argument. Tonight, however, there had already been a few decisions that Leroy had disagreed with, but so far he had remained silent. Winston was on the opposite side and he had the ball at the moment. He ran it up the centre and Leroy moved to meet him. Winston tried to run it around him, but Leroy blocked his path. The two danced around, each trying to outdo the other but eventually Winston, aware of the time already spent in the stalemate, passed the ball away.

Charlie was the theatrical boy in the group, giving an intermittent commentary on the game. It was Charlie who received the ball. "...an' it's Charlie who has the ball. He's runnin' it down the wing... steps into the centre... is he goin' for the three pointer? no he steps in... runs through the defence... jumps, and scores!" He ran back, a smile across his face. "Nice work, Charlie," said Winston. The ball was coming back now. Charlie ran to greet the attacker. The ball was passed straight away. Leroy received it and ran forward. There were just the two defenders ahead of him but both were standing inside the 'D'. He moved up to its edge, waited for a second, preparing to shoot. "Man on!" came the call from behind. He jumped up and threw the ball. It landed on the inside edge of the hoop and rolled around the hoop, before it dropped through, denoting three points to his side. A small cheer went up from the rest of his side. Now Charlie had the ball, "...an' he's

movin' it nice an' smooth up the court... past on a little burst... past Eddie... an' he's comin' up to Leroy." Leroy ran towards him and lurched forward in a dramatic attempt to steal the ball. Charlie tripped and tumbled to the ground. "Hey, that was a foul man!" cried Charlie from the floor. The ten boys on the court gathered round the scene of the accident. "Yeah man, that was way outa line!" said Winston in a slightly over accusatory tone. Leroy didn't know whether to deny it or apologise, but Winston was looking for a reaction, "If this was for real, you'd been off, man."

"It was an accident; I didn't mean for Charlie to trip up, but it wasn't my fault. That was no foul," replied Leroy in a defensive but assertive manner.

"That was a foul, plain 'n' simple," replied Winston.

"Hey, Charlie, you okay?" asked Eddie.

"I'll be all right, man, but I hurt my ankle."

"Listen Winston, that was an accident. Charlie, I'm sorry."

"Don't start with me, you gonna get in way too deep." Winston was the same height as Leroy but wider in the shoulders. "Calm it, man, I don't want no trouble, you hear me? I'm not game for a fight." Leroy was backing off but Winston continued to look for a response. "What's the matter, you scared?"

"Shut Up."

"You scared you?"

"I'm not scared, I just don't wanna fight you. Don't you get it, you thick or something?" Leroy was getting annoyed now and beginning to give Winston what he wanted. "Come here an' say that," demanded Winston.

"Hey, just go an' cool off, Winston." Eddie was trying to make peace.

"You stay outa this."

"Calm down, all of you, it was just a tackle and I'm okay anyway." Charlie was coming to Eddie's aid; Winston was getting furious and desperately wanted to hit someone. "Come on guys, let's get on with it!" said Mike, who had no interest in the argument and was now becoming bored. "Shut up."

"Winston give up, we all gettin' bored with this.. ."

"Shut up."

"So what if it was a foul? Who cares..."

"I said shut up."

"What you wanna do?"

"I'm not gonna shut up just 'cos you wanna.."

Winston hit him. His clenched fist landed neatly just beneath Mike's eye. Mike staggered back and sat down on the tarmac. "What the hell you on? You goin' crazy, Winston." Leroy walked up to him and grabbed his shirt, thrusting him backwards onto the fencing. Winston struggled free and pushed Leroy back. Leroy pushed back, again sending Winston into the fence. Winston bounced back and swung his right arm at

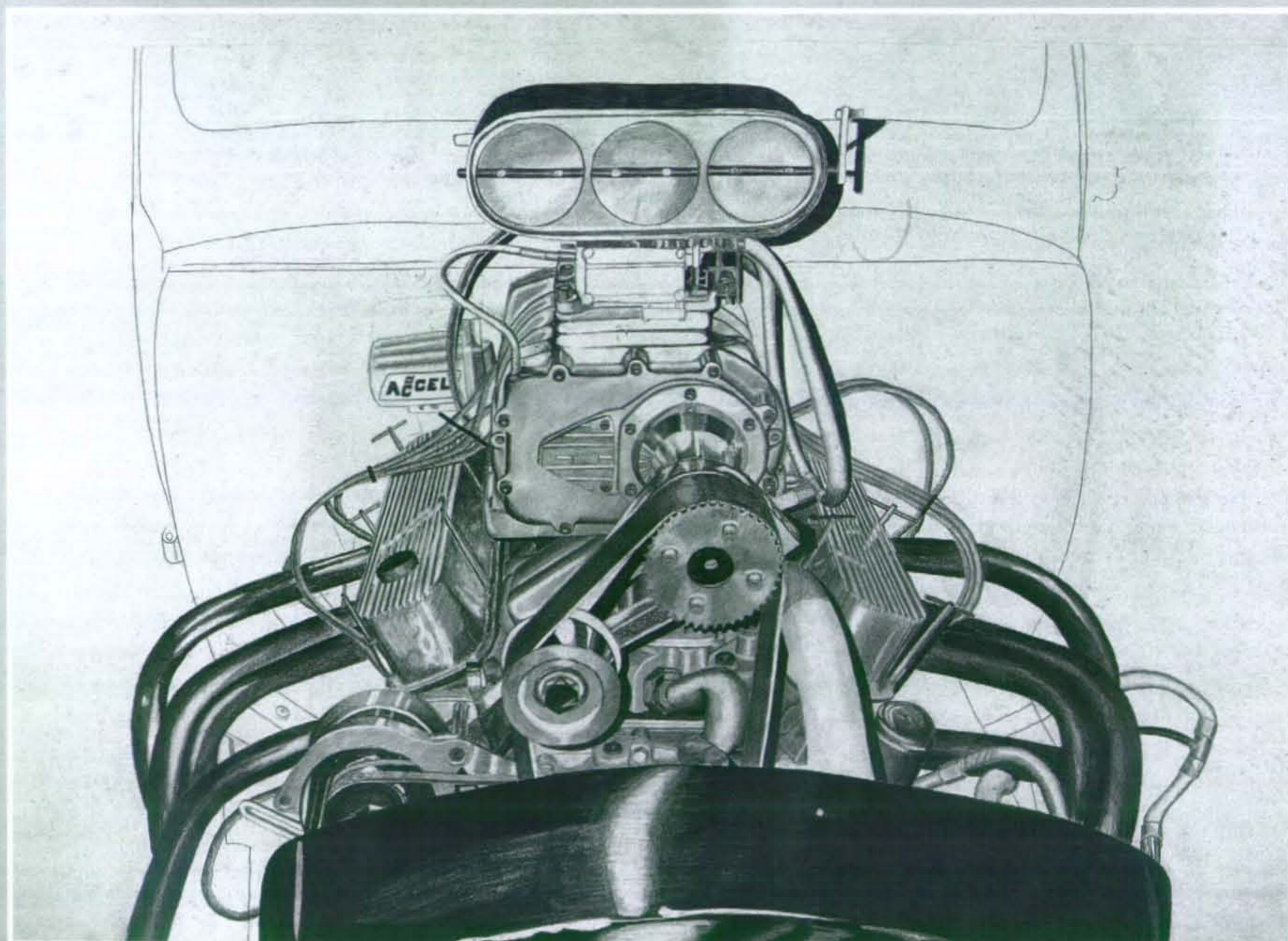
Leroy. Leroy, seeing it coming, ducked and sent a volley of short hard punches into his stomach. Winston coughed, but hastily stood up. Leroy had the upper hand but Winston was the stronger fighter. Then from nowhere Winston threw two punches at Leroy's nose. Leroy swerved but not in time. The fists caught his jaw and sent him spinning to the ground. Mike, now standing, rallied the others, "Guys, look at that, first he hits me an' then Leroy, an' all for nothin'!" Winston realising what was imminent turned and ran to the gate in the fencing. The other eight, without any further encouragement, ran after him. Leroy staggered up and followed the crowd.

Eddie was a sprinter; he caught up with Winston in only a few seconds, just as he was crossing into the park. Eddie hurled himself into Winston who toppled forwards, thankful for the grass underneath him. Eddie tried to get an arm around Winston's neck but he was shaken off. Winston jumped up but Eddie wrapped his body around his legs, creating just the delay that the others needed to catch up. Everybody just leapt onto

Winston, knocking him down until his body was no longer visible below the pile of wriggling bodies. There was a lot of shouting but nothing was communicated. There was however an irresistible excitement that gripped the mass of bodies driving them in an obscene 'shivering' delight to inflict pain. Winston was absolutely powerless even to move a single limb; the weight of the bodies piled on his chest was sufficient to render him immobile without the crippling effects of the mob. Leroy, who had arrived slightly after the main group and had missed the hooligan-like desire to get involved, arrived to witness a scene of absolute chaos.

"Guys! You gonna kill him!" Then suddenly the trance was shattered and everybody staggered up. Appalled and amazed at what they had done they scattered into the darkness. Leroy crouched down and began to cry. The screech of brakes made him look. The grass was lit by the red and blue lights. Two men in green, both carrying medical bags and a stretcher ran towards them.

Jerome Starkey (V)



Alec Cunningham

Guy Scott writes of twelve months in the life of

The Art School

As we saw in the Speech Day exhibition and can see in this edition of *The Stoic*, the work in the Art School is always changing and developing both in terms of subject matter and techniques and much of the exhibition work from the A-level students was possibly the most exciting that I have seen since coming to Stowe.

This development is mainly inspired by the contrasting demands of Universities and Art Schools, the one needing high grades at A-level and the latter requiring very diverse portfolios for interview. To meet all these examination requirements is a struggle in terms of manpower and facilities, especially as the Art School now has over sixty students taking A-level Art in the Sixth Form and thirty students taking Art History as a separate A-level subject!

As listed elsewhere, the results at A-level and GCSE have been exceptionally good over the past three years with 44 A grades, 13 B grades and 2 C grades from 59 candidates. In addition we have had a high percentage of A* and A grades at GCSE which bodes well for the future. It is particularly rewarding when students specifically come to Stowe to join the Art School in the Sixth Form.

But possibly a more valid assessment of these students' work is the fact that Stoics have over the years obtained admission into the top Art Schools and Universities to read Fine Art and Architecture and some have obtained places directly onto degree courses without the need of a Foundation year.

To add quality to these portfolios there is no doubt that the Simon Alper (OS) Print Awards have helped enormously over the past four years and this year the prints of Lucinda Stucley and Tom Bell were quite outstanding. Only in the future will these students realise the importance of working with the great printmaker Stanley Jones, who has over his career worked with such famous twentieth century artists as David Hockney, John Piper and Elizabeth Frink and illustrators such as Paul Hogarth and David Gentleman.

At the beginning of this year the Art School was invited to exhibit at the very famous Mall Gallery in London as part of a wider exhibition, organised by Lady Lyell (mother of Mary-Kate and Alexander). Ninety-five paintings and prints from present Stoics, Old Stoics and the Art School staff were on show to an invited audience which included Prince Edward and Gary Lineker and over five hundred parents, prospective parents and friends. What was particularly gratifying for the Art School was the support of famous Old Stoic artists such as David Shepherd, David Wynne, Simon Whistler, Robbie Wraith and David Williams-Ellis, who not only exhibited some superb

work of their own but also attended the private views and were so encouraging to the present Stoic artists.

On a wider 'European' front KM and CCR have organised a series of outstanding art history trips to Paris, Venice and Florence so the students could experience at first hand Renaissance paintings, sculptures and architecture, as well as visiting the major galleries in Paris. These trips are vital for their A-level studies but also create a unity within the Art School. There is no doubt that the students have more focus on their return and these trips are always the highlight of the time they spend with us in the Sixth Form.

An area of excellence which sometimes gets neglected is the Creative Textile activity which runs so successfully every afternoon in the Art School. This activity, organised by Mrs Mullineux, is very popular with Stoics of all ages and the work displayed on Speech Day is only a small percentage of the wall hangings, bean bags, bed covers and garments which are created each year in this department.

We have now set our sights on the creation of a 3D sculpture studio in the Art School, as this area of study is vital if the students are to develop their ideas to the full. We hope very much that funding for this will be found in the near future.

In the theatre design area the work of IJM and his theatre crew goes from strength to strength. A multi-purpose, stylised set was speedily designed for the Senior Congreve when *A Tale of Two Cities* was changed to *The Importance of being Earnest* at short notice. For the Junior Congreve production of *Godspell* a scaffolding set was created which was equally successful and it proved, if proof was needed, how well IJM has trained the crew, for when he was unable to be present, they handled the back stage with considerable professional competence and the show was a stunning success.

What of the future? The Art School numbers grow each year and new studio space will have to be found in the near future! The co-operation between History, Art History, Theatre Studies and Design Photography continues to develop and these important links are essential if the students are to see art and design in the broadest sense. The creation of a Faculty of Creative Studies greatly helps this inter-departmental co-operation.

In the same way Visual Education, as a new subject in the Third Year, is also very exciting as it encourages students to look at the unique Stowe landscape through the eyes of historians, art historians, classicists, architects as well as artists and designers. Stowe is certainly at the forefront of this pioneering work.



Lucinda Stucley

STOICS ABROAD

Will Bathurst writes of his involvement in last year's

MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTS IN PARIS AND DUBLIN

The Model European Parliament is coming to Stowe next Easter, between the 5th and 13th of April to be precise. It was created to foster the development of an awareness and understanding among the young people of Europe. In doing this each country sends a delegation of 10 students to the site of the session. When together the 150 students are then split up into 10 separate committees, taken from the actual list of the European Parliament, that discuss and debate the issues. They then come up with a resolution that is debated in the General Assembly at the end of the week. They then vote whether to not to pass the resolution for submission to the real European Parliament.

I have been fortunate enough to attend two of these Parliaments. The first was at the start of the Summer term in 1996. We sent a joint delegation of ten students with Sedbergh. Our five were Chesney Clark, James Wright, Emily Williams, Leo Brown and myself. We were all a little apprehensive at first because of the obvious prejudices that Europe has of the UK and its not unfounded constantly negative attitude.

We all lived in a boarding school on the outskirts of Paris called Passy Buzenval, which made us feel very privileged to be at Stowe not there. The first two days, as in all MEP sessions were spent team-building and learning the names of our fellow delegates. These few hours of friendliness were then followed by two days of heated debate in which we debated the issues with our interests at heart, not the chosen views of our respective governments being taken into account. Amidst these civilised arguments we eventually came up with the resolutions that we presented to the Assembly.

We met in a variety of distinguished French governmental places. The opening ceremony took place in the Assemblée Nationale; then we were invited to a reception at the British Embassy where we were looked after with real British Hospitality. Then we re-wrote the history books. We became the first people outside the French Senators to debate in the Palais du Luxembourg. It was a wonderful experience and worth all the work that we put in to it.

Dublin was an altogether different experience for me. It happened at the same time as Ireland's chairmanship of the Council of Ministers. I was chosen as Vice-President

of the whole thing and given one of the Committees to look after and somehow come up with a resolution on the Problems of Genetic Engineering and the use of hormones in animal farming. I did not know the first thing about this topic and that made things hard in terms of motivating people and trying to get them to cross the language barrier and debate.

We were based at a day school in Dublin called St Andrews and that made getting to know everybody very difficult as we were all staying in different areas of the city. The opening ceremony was held in the former Irish House of Lords which is now the Bank of Ireland. The House of Lords voted itself out of existence and now the rooms are used for functions. Our session was opened by the Irish minister for education Mrs Niamh Bhreathnach. Again we were invited to the First Secretary's house in Dublin. He called in caterers and made us very welcome indeed. We were exposed to a large amount of Irish Culture including a certain amount of Irish dancing at the European concert where the British got up and in true style sang *Jerusalem* and *Swing Low*, led tunefully by GGJD.

Then in no time at all, slowed only by a reception at the Lord Mayor of Dublin's house, we were in the middle of the General Assembly. Dick Spring came to speak to us on the matter of security and a common European defence policy. We met in the Dáil Eireann and I made a personal record by being the first ever non-Irish person to chair a debate in the Dáil.

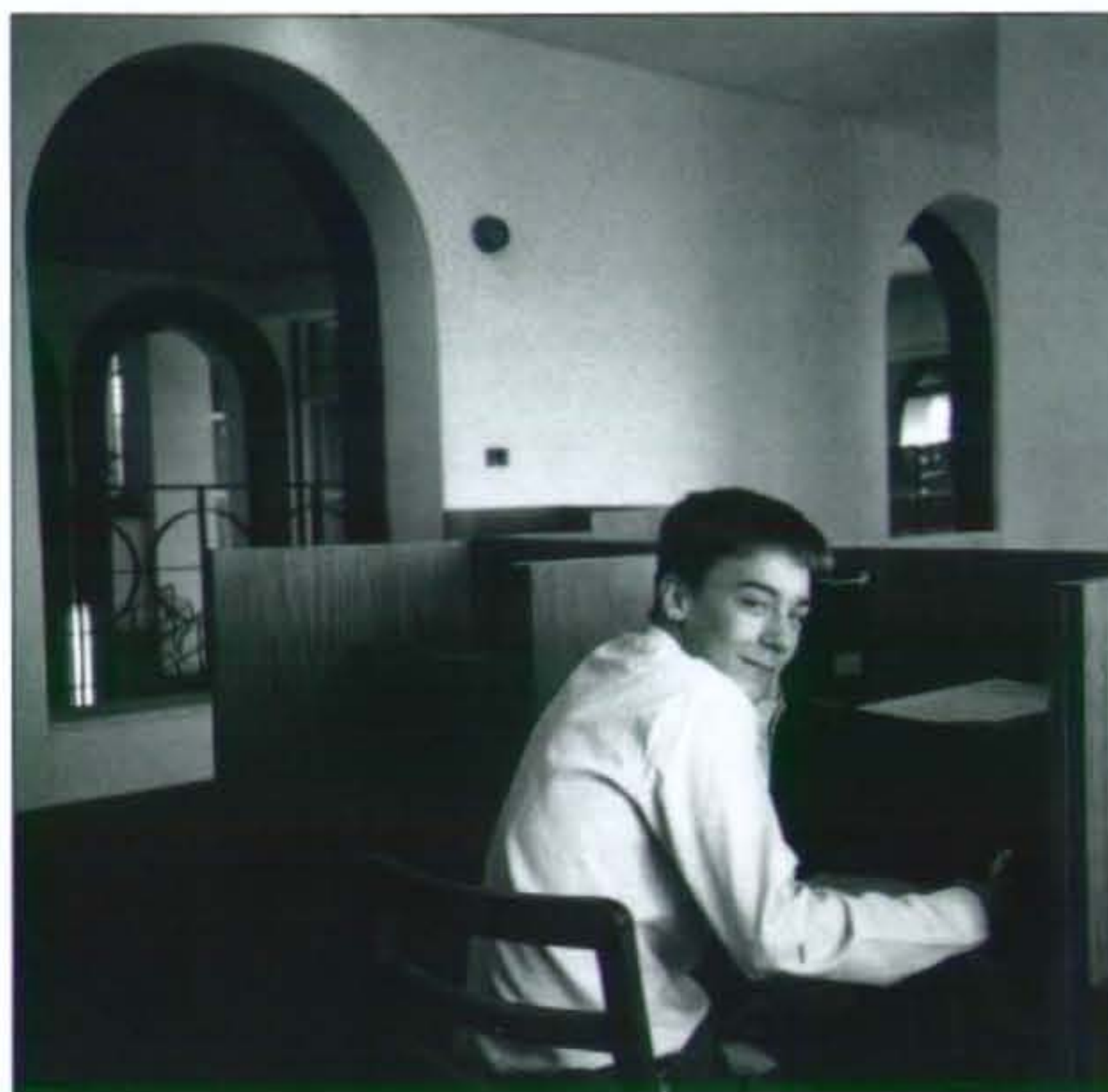
The Model European Parliament is an ever growing organisation and this is thanks to the efforts of a forceful but very nice lady called Mrs Van Sminia who seems to always get us into places like the Dáil. All 15 member states are involved obtaining sponsorship to be there, representing their country. The debates are very worthwhile and of a very high standard as some delegates are chosen through a series of national competitions. You learn a lot from an MEP session, but most of all you learn how to get on with people from all cultures and make lots of friends while also getting into some of the key issues that Europe faces. It is very satisfying to come up with solutions before the real parliament.

Oliver Trethewey writes about his experiences during four months as a pupil in Malawi last winter

KAMUZU ACADEMY

Outside Kamuzu International Airport I was met by a member of the teaching staff and his driver. (As I was later to learn, all staff are supplied with a school driver, when travelling). My cases were whisked up, and before I had time to ask any of the questions with which I had been primed, (mother's maiden name...etc) to ascertain the validity of the supposed representative from the Academy, I was rushing along a deserted road northwards, having been wrenched from any feelings of uncertainty I may have been having, and thrust onwards into the next stage of my journey.

The teacher, I discovered, was a member of the biology department (100% of it, in fact!) who lived alone, and had been at the school for a little over ten years. He was just in the middle of telling me more about the school when we were stopped by a military roadblock. These are set up by anybody with a uniform and a gun, and they require an experienced hand to negotiate your way out of them without a search for guns and other illegal artefacts. We had that steady hand, in the form of our driver, who being a native speaker could converse more efficiently than either myself or the teacher. The scenery on the way North was fairly barren, with little water, as their seasons are the reverse of ours, and summer had just begun. Small pockets of irrigated land poked out of valleys, simple green specks, as we rushed past, but no doubt a whole family's dedicated hard labour goes into its maintenance. The road lasted for about an hour, and then the teacher informed me that that had been the good bit of the journey; the tough section started now. I would not call one hour of rushing through strange countryside, fearing for the safety of the boot as it rattled violently, and mentally swerving slightly earlier than the driver evidently thought was needed to avoid animals, a good journey, and so it was with mixed feelings that I watched us leave the tarmac behind, and swerve through trees in order to get to a small dirt track, which I was assured would eventually lead us to the School. For about half an hour I grew more and more sceptical, as we passed small villages, with the locals tilling soil, as the youngsters played in the dirt, and there was still no sign of civilisation.



Oliver Trethewey in the Library at Kamuzu Academy

Now I have never seen a mirage, but I would image that what I then saw comes very close to the real thing; suddenly there appeared power lines, a road, small cottages, a post office, and a small supermarket. I was not dreaming, this was Kasungu, the village that had built up around the school, in order to provide the essential services that the teachers, as well as the local inhabitants, needed. There was a luxurious roundabout, with the first flowerbed I had seen, and a gardener whose sole job was keeping that 15 square metre area in pristine

order. A signpost appeared out of nowhere, and we were stopped by a uniformed guard in an undersized outfit, with an oversized hat, who recognised my driver, and signalled us in. What I then saw defied belief, as having been faced by hours of arid countryside and only a few small villages dotted along the route, here in front of me was a huge, red brick building, fronted by a magnificent ornamental lake. In the space of the 30 seconds it took us to reach the covered entrance, I had had pointed out to me the basketball courts, the tennis courts, the cricket pitch, the football field, the athletics track, the swimming pool; the list was endless. It was now evident to me why there had been so much fuss made by the country at large, when President Banda decided to build this symbol of western education, "The Eton of Africa," at such huge expense to the country. Nothing was spared in its construction, as each brick was hand made. The school itself had been modelled on some of the great architecture of the western world, from the administration block, to design which architects had been brought in especially from outside the country, the magnificent library, modelled on the American Library of Congress.

The school uniform came from South Africa and was purchased by "The Dame," as she is called, a title given to what at Stowe may be the head matron. She was in charge of keeping cleaning staff in check, giving lessons in etiquette to the new boys and other such tasks, as well as the uniforms. Up until last year, the current Dame had simply flown to South Africa, bought all that was needed for the pupils, or the school generally, and the bills were

then presented to the Malawian Embassy there, where they would be taken care of. Nowadays, however, things are not as plentiful, and some of the uniforms show signs of needing to be replaced, but still all was provided, as the school did not charge fees until last year. This meant that on the basis of a national test, the two best boys and one girl, from each district, would be unconditionally accepted. They would be given everything right down to underwear and toothbrushes, and a twin room, which is the way all pupils are housed.

I can imagine that it would have been a shock for them to enter such a magnificent place, after having lived out in the bush for the most part of their lives; for me it was an incredible experience, for one could almost have forgotten one was in the middle of Africa, were it not for the black faces and the lack of rain. This feeling that the School, though far removed from Stowe, was modelled on what the President considered the stereotypical British boarding school helped a great deal with my settling in. There were the same sort of routines to be adhered to, and these were quickly explained to me, when term started.

This was not the sort of beginning of term one has come to expect in Britain, as in the case of the Academy there had been problems with the funding, and some doubt cast over the School's future. For this reason all pupils had not come back to school, but had waited to see if there was to be a school for them; an announcement was made over the radio, as the only form of communication for most of the pupils, and it was then left up to them to get transport back. Some of the parents with big trucks simply picked up people on the way from the capital, much as the London route is operated here at Stowe, and others took the arduous bus journey from wherever they lived, some up to 9 hours away. This all contributed to a rather disjointed start to the term but it gave me time to explore the surroundings, and get to know my way around. For me the weather was lovely, and so I went swimming every day, but when the pupils came back, they were amazed as I did not know it got very much hotter than this, and they would only swim when the weather far surpassed anything we could hope for of a British summer.

Surprisingly, this was one of the few areas where the pupils and I did not meet eye to eye, and I was surprised in every case at how welcoming and considerate they all were towards me. I had conditioned myself to expect some form of discrimination, as I was the first white pupil to enter their school in its history, and I came at a time when a lot of their friends had had to leave, especially in the 6th form, as one can apply to university after GCSEs in Malawi, and so priority funding help was given to those who had not yet completed this level, leaving very little to help those further up the school. As I said though, there was no discrimination whatsoever; in fact it almost

went to the other extreme, and amongst the little ones it was seen as a privilege to be a friend of a Mazungu, white person. This, combined with the fact that it is not unusual for two male friends in Malawi to hold hands, and therefore they would all like to hold my hand as we walked along, was overwhelming at first, making the first few days of term a little uncomfortable, but I soon came to accept this behaviour as normal, and the more time I spent there the more comfortable I felt.

Another thing which made it easier for me to integrate was that all of the pupils were fluent in English and they were made to speak thus in all lessons, and at all times outside the boarding house. Inside the boarding house, though, I picked up a few phrases which helped me to get by, and also soon learnt how to use the big sinks provided, as at first I thought they were just oversized to wash up in, but then two things were explained to me. One was that there is no facility for making your own food, and the other was that the big sinks were used for doing the washing, as we had to do all our own underwear and socks, and though shirts were laundered for us on a weekly basis, there was still all of my casual clothes which got dusty almost all soon as they were put on. This would not have been such a problem if it were not for the fact that all pupils have to be changed into home clothes before supper, to avoid unnecessary wear of the uniform; only the prefects were allowed to keep their uniform on, and this was considered a privilege. The boarding house itself was really excellent, as it had been designed specifically for the purpose, with rows of 16 studies, 8 on each side, ending with a bathroom and the sinks. In between each row there were gardens kept in immaculate condition by the gardeners who seemed to come in their hundreds every morning, as the staff all arrived from the local village. Tuck was kept in the locker at the end of the bed, that is if it was obtainable, as the local supermarket rarely got in snack food (it all had to be imported from South Africa). When it did come, though, it was incredibly expensive, at over £1 for a Mars bar, but the food was not excellent, so I did indulge myself once in a while. Breakfast was two slices of bread, with either jam or golden syrup, and an egg. Then at lunch there were various sorts of chillies and meat dishes served with rice or potatoes, and then supper was usually Nsima, a sort of thick traditional porridge, which was served with "Meat in gravy," as my diary recalls for the most part. To say I grew fond of this dish would not be true, but I came to accept it as the staple food, as there was simply no alternative! What I found was that usually, with copious amounts of chilli sauce, it was OK!

However, I did get hungry, as I was used to the idea of being able to eat some of one's own food later if supper is not very nice. Here that was not an option, and so once I found myself buying 14 plain white rolls, and eating them



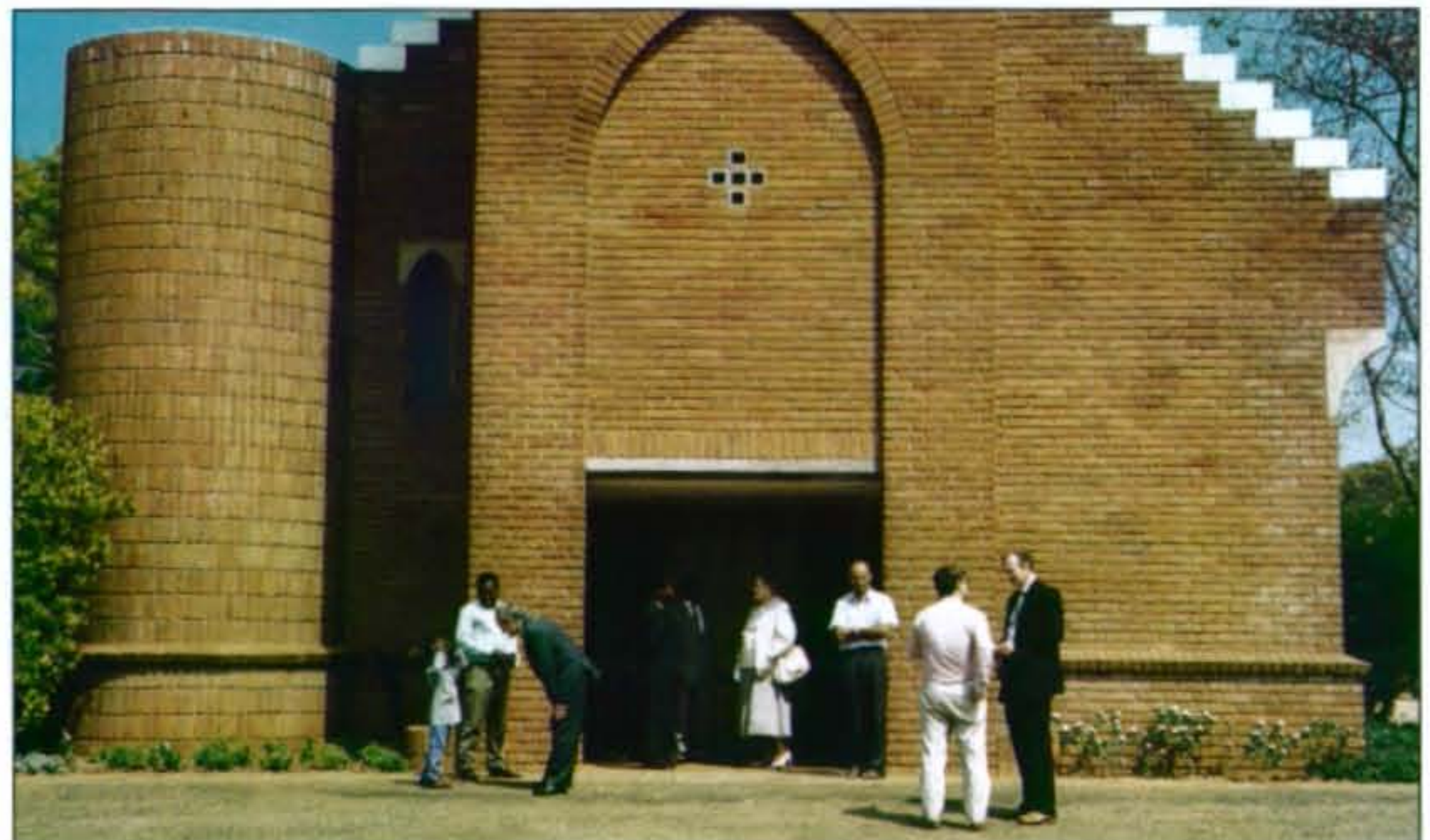
Kamuzu Academy main buildings

all on the way home from the supermarket, just plain, to satisfy my hunger. I did lose weight, but I was by no means starving. I became aware that there are those in the world who really do not have enough to eat, and cannot have snacks whenever they want.

In between the meal times there were of course the lessons, carried out in English, which was lucky, as this was the first term of my A-levels, and I had to keep up with all the work going on there, as well as thinking of what I was missing at home. I did find the transition quite tough, as the work got a lot more difficult and specific, as I was having to also deal with being in such a strange environment, however welcoming it may have been. Once a routine had been established, on a daily basis, things are easier as you know what to expect of the day, and you have homework to fill up the empty times when you would otherwise be thinking of home or friends you were missing. The workload was not huge, although at times it was difficult to get things done, as the power was not exactly dependable, and it got dark reasonably early. The system was that if the power went off, the emergency lighting would come on, be it 10 am or 10 pm, and would run down after about an hour. This meant that prep could not happen and the darkness was so black that nothing could really happen except reading by torch light. Unfortunately I had not banked on the frequency of



Lilongwe Bean Market



Headmaster (right) and staff outside the Academy's Chapel



The children of one of the School gardeners

these power cuts, and so my batteries went dead very quickly. I actually found myself writing my diary one evening by continually lighting matches, and writing before they burnt down and went out!

The work was fairly difficult, but I got by as I was enthusiastic having been able to choose the three subjects that I really enjoyed, English, Maths and Chemistry. The teachers were really supportive, and they helped me with the extra work that I had to be doing in order to keep up with what my peers back at Stowe would be studying. However, there was not really that much of a gap as all the students at the Academy did international A-levels which are very similar to those that we study for here. Teaching styles were, however, very different, as the students realised what a privilege they had bestowed upon them. They were unbelievably keen to learn, a prime example of this being one of the junior classes which I heard complaining that they had not been set as much homework as the others in their year. This attitude was also present in class, where the students were very reluctant to ask questions, preferring instead to be given notes, as this is what the large majority of them considered to be good teaching. If they had not been given notes, even in my year, there would be a feeling that they had not gained from the lesson. The expatriate teachers said that they found it very hard at first due to the lack of feedback, in order to ascertain if the pupils were coping with the work, and if they understood it. I also found that I stood out from the rest of the class, as the British system tends to encourage an inquisitive nature, which will question and comment upon things that are not quite clear. This, surprisingly enough, was a cause of some tension in the class at first as, particularly in English, I would question a particular interpretation or inference from a quote, and the rest of the class, one could tell from their expressions, simply thought that it was obviously correct as they had been told this, so to question is a strange thing to do. They have such respect for the teachers, and see education as the key to a better life, which had to be seized unquestioningly.

Football is the main interest of a large number of the boys. Girls were not permitted to play. Everywhere that I went in the country there were little groups of children kicking around a ball of some description, from an unripe piece of fruit to a tin can wrapped in rubber bands; there was tremendous ingenuity. Athletics was also popular and the track was used often by boys who would find a free half an hour and go out to practise. This enthusiasm was partly to do with the weather, as it had reached a glorious state of not being too hot, and yet warm enough to be out in shorts and T-shirts outside lesson times. The humidity did not start until nearer Christmas which was, depending on the year, about the time when the rains started. The year I was there they were slightly early, as it

seemed I had brought the British influence with me. I remember on the night of the first storm sitting outside the main school block, and simply watching the sky; with crashes of thunder and lightning it was one of the most spectacular things I have ever seen. This was combined with the knowledge of the barren and arid landscape which lay outside the walls, keeping the outside world at bay, and I could really feel the atmosphere of excitement, as I walked through the village the next day, knowing that the crops would now begin to grow, and another cycle of life would begin.

As the first rains arrive, so a certain variety of insect suddenly hatches from under the ground where they buried themselves to hibernate over the colder months. These are like giant ants, with wings, which have only 48 hours to mate, before their wings fall off, and they lay their eggs underground and perish. The one meaningful facet of their existence was shown to me, as I witnessed a large number of the pupils rushing around and collecting them as apparently they were nice to eat... To witness a big plastic bowl full of these squirming 'things' was not pleasant, but one of the senior boys managed to get the cook to fry them for him, for a small share of course, and then I reluctantly agreed to try them, finding them to be a bit like Dime Bars, "Soft on the outside, Crunchy on the inside." I only had one, but the vendors in the capital set up stalls, and continued selling them much as we sell roasted chestnuts at Christmas, for days after.

As well as academic classes, and sports in glorious sunshine outside, there was the facility to participate in a community service programme, which involved going out into the local village, and helping in some of the services which were in need. These included the clinic, which was both under-staffed and under-funded, with shortages in medicine and facilities, as well as the primary school for the local children. This had a staff to pupil ratio of about 80:1, with only eight class rooms, for some hundreds of pupils. Thus the day had to be divided into shifts, with each class lasting for half or a third of the day. These were the realities outside the big cast iron gates that enclosed the manicured lawns and privileged people. I am glad that I had the unique opportunity to experience this true African life first hand, twinned with the experience of studying in such a beautiful and magnificent place. The lessons of independence, as well as of relating to others and coping with foreign situations, will remain with me for the rest of my life, I am sure, and I hope that future Stoics may have the privilege of being involved in such a project as this one, with the help of such supportive teachers on both sides, and such friendly faces greeting you wherever you go.

ARIZONA

In 1971 Dr Mike Waldman discovered a fossil mammal and other vertebrates in Middle Jurassic rocks on the Isle of Skye. Subsequently he and others have found more material, including the remains of fish, amphibians and reptiles, some studies of these having appeared in print recently, following the initial publication in earlier years. Here MW writes about an invitation to speak last summer at the Continental Jurassic Symposium at The Museum of Northern Arizona.

It arrived towards the end of the Autumn Term, 1995. Inside an unobtrusively franked envelope from the USA a letter on bright royal blue paper trumpeted a "Continental Jurassic Symposium" and positively shouted "Read me!". Words guaranteed to make a geologist's heart beat faster leapt from the page: Colorado Plateau, Grand Canyon, Morrison Formation, Navajo Sandstone, dinosaurs; and, of course, these words beloved of every member of our arcane profession; no, not "What'll you have to drink?" but "Field Trip"! "Well", thought I, "great idea, but..." and it was only then that the dates 21st-26th October sprang into sharp focus. Lightning crackled 'Highlander'-style around my cranium. "...surely that's around half-term?" Yes! Could this be "A sign" perhaps, "A Portent" yet, "An Omen" even? Was it "Meant To Be"? Hardly, but it sure was a handy little happenstance! As if to nudge me further along the trail there came a second letter from the organisers: "We invite you to present your recent data and interpretations on Jurassic geology and paleontology. We believe a talk and paper by you would enhance the scientific significance of the Symposium." Vain? Me? Nah! Proud? Ha! Easily flattered? Are you kidding? Some hope after teaching for so long! But... when it comes to not resisting temptation you can put me right up there with good old Oscar Fingall O'Flahertie, and so the die was cast, or more appropriately perhaps, the craps shot!

Slowly, oh so slowly, the pieces began to fall into place; air tickets were bought and bank managers avoided with sidesteps that would have made David Campese green (and gold) with envy. The award of a travel grant by The Royal Society, to which I shall always be grateful, came as a welcome relief at this time, while my research into Jurassic vertebrates continued at the University Museum in Oxford whenever time allowed (ie rarely!) in order to be ready for the conference.

The long haul to Phoenix was, of course, incredibly tedious and only became exciting as we neared our first destination and the dramatic scenery of the area, including Meteor Crater, began to appear. Phoenix to Flagstaff was a memorable flight in a twin-prop

Beechcraft 1900. "Real flying," grinned Hazel "Biggles" Waldman, with a manic gleam in her eye, as she pulled on her goggles and leather helmet, obviously ready for The Red Baron, or even Snoopy. I exaggerate a trifle, but only about the headgear!

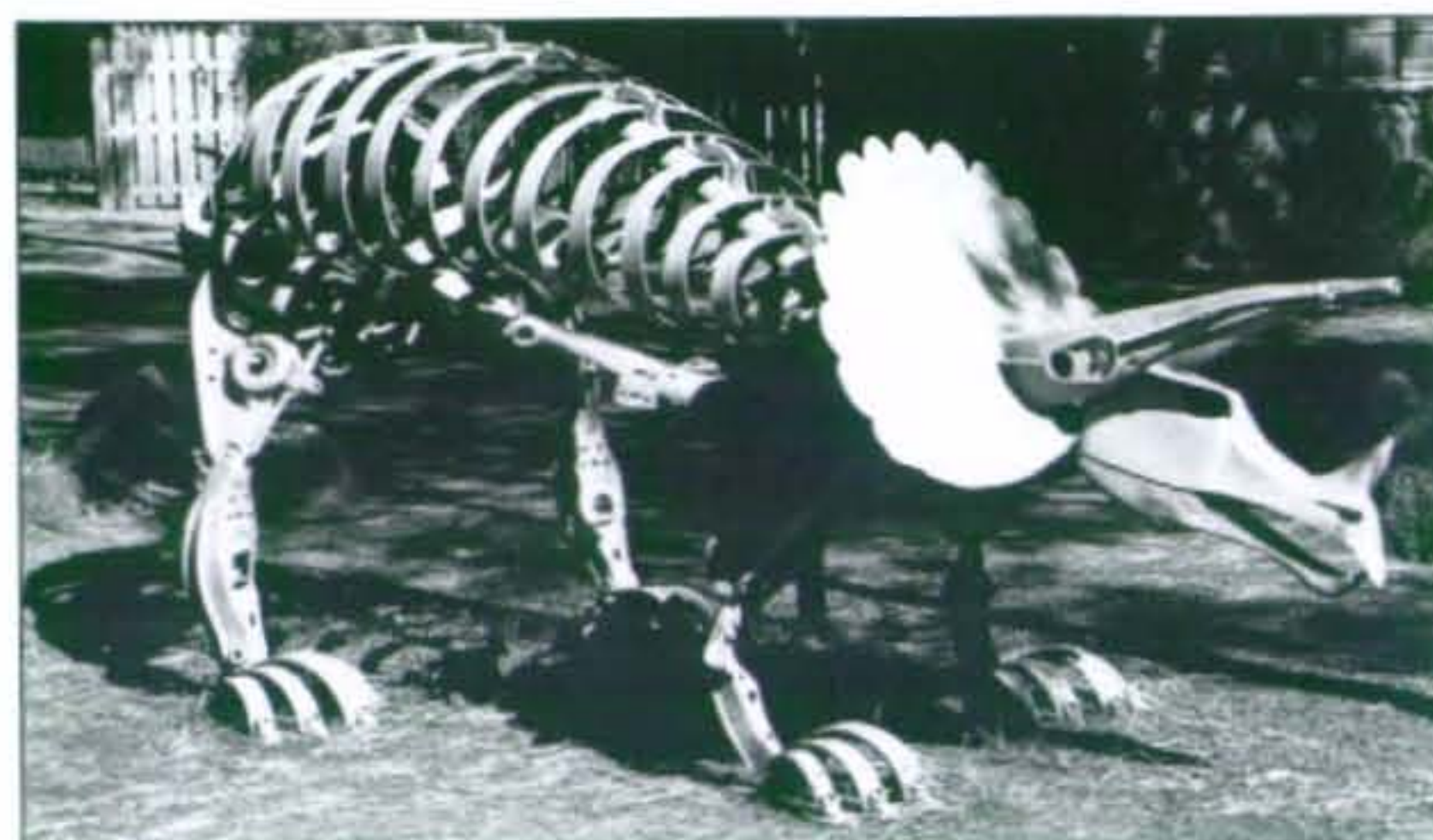
Bathed in that familiar, but always breathtaking orange evening light, the whole terrain was laid out below us, a giant, delicately-tinted relief map; every canyon, butte and mesa picked out in brightly glowing ochres contrasting with the deepest of black shadows. We wanted it to go on for ever, but a mere forty minutes in the air seemed to pass in as many seconds.

Flagstaff is an entertaining town with more than a hint of the old frontier about it, a fine Museum and University, as well as the Lowell Observatory where Pluto (the planet, that is, not the dog!) was discovered in 1930. The people are very friendly and genuinely interested in their visitors, and this helped to make the conference a great success.

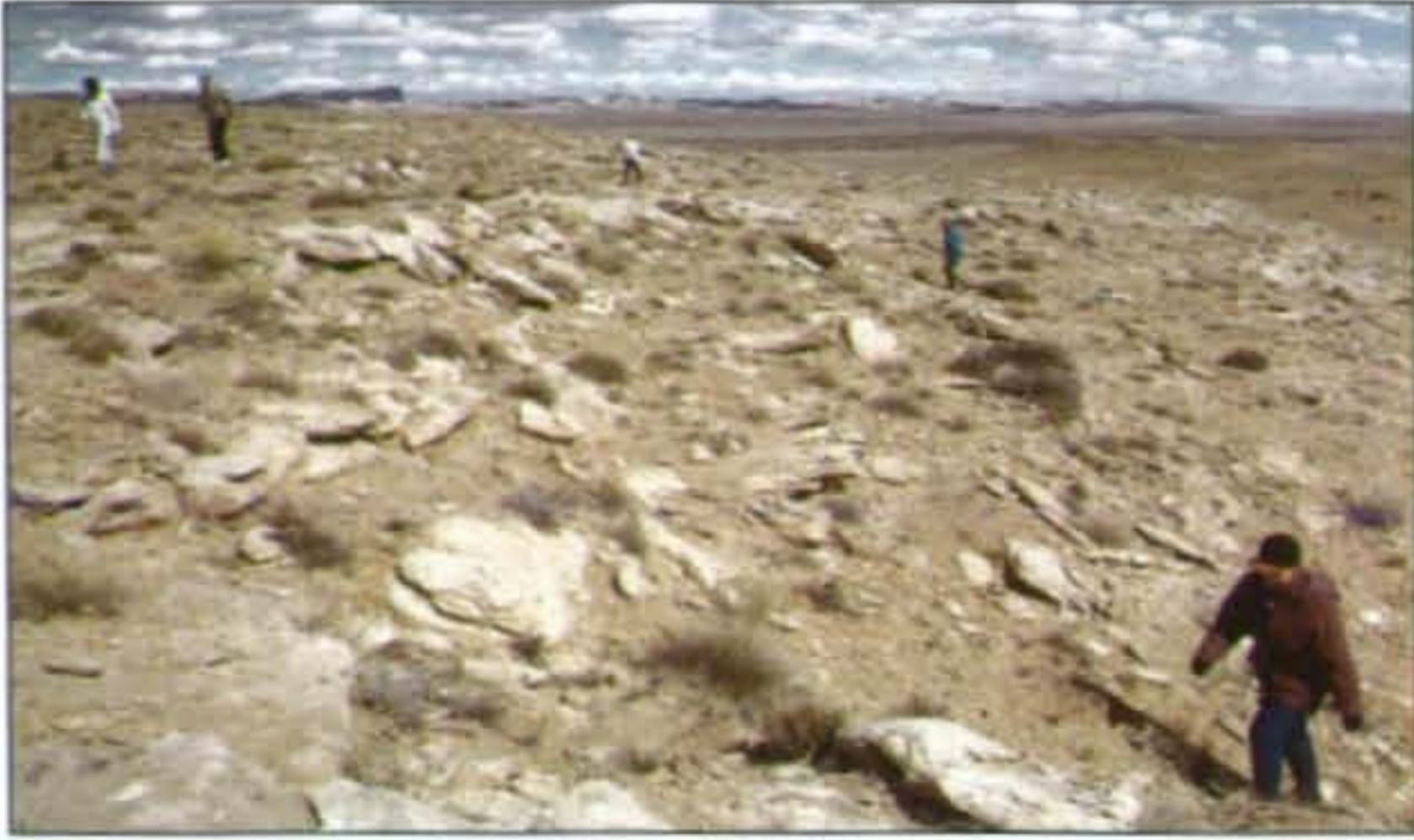
The first three days of the meeting were occupied by many excellent talks given by geologists and paleontologists to their enthusiastic multinational audience, as well as a great deal of informal discussion. This was followed by the same amount of time in the field, walking, scrambling, searching (and sometimes finding!) but always studying lovingly some of the most remarkable and beautiful geology and topography in the world; a childhood dream fulfilled at last.

All too soon it was time to return to Flagstaff in a snowstorm which persisted until the following morning, when we tramped across the tarmac, a rare experience these days, to Hazel's trusty Mesa Airlines Beechcraft, carefully avoiding the copious draughts of de-icer being sprayed over the little plane. Up, up and away, to coin a phrase, and three-quarters of an hour later and 6,000 feet lower, we touched down in Phoenix, back in the land of shorts-and-T-shirts once again.

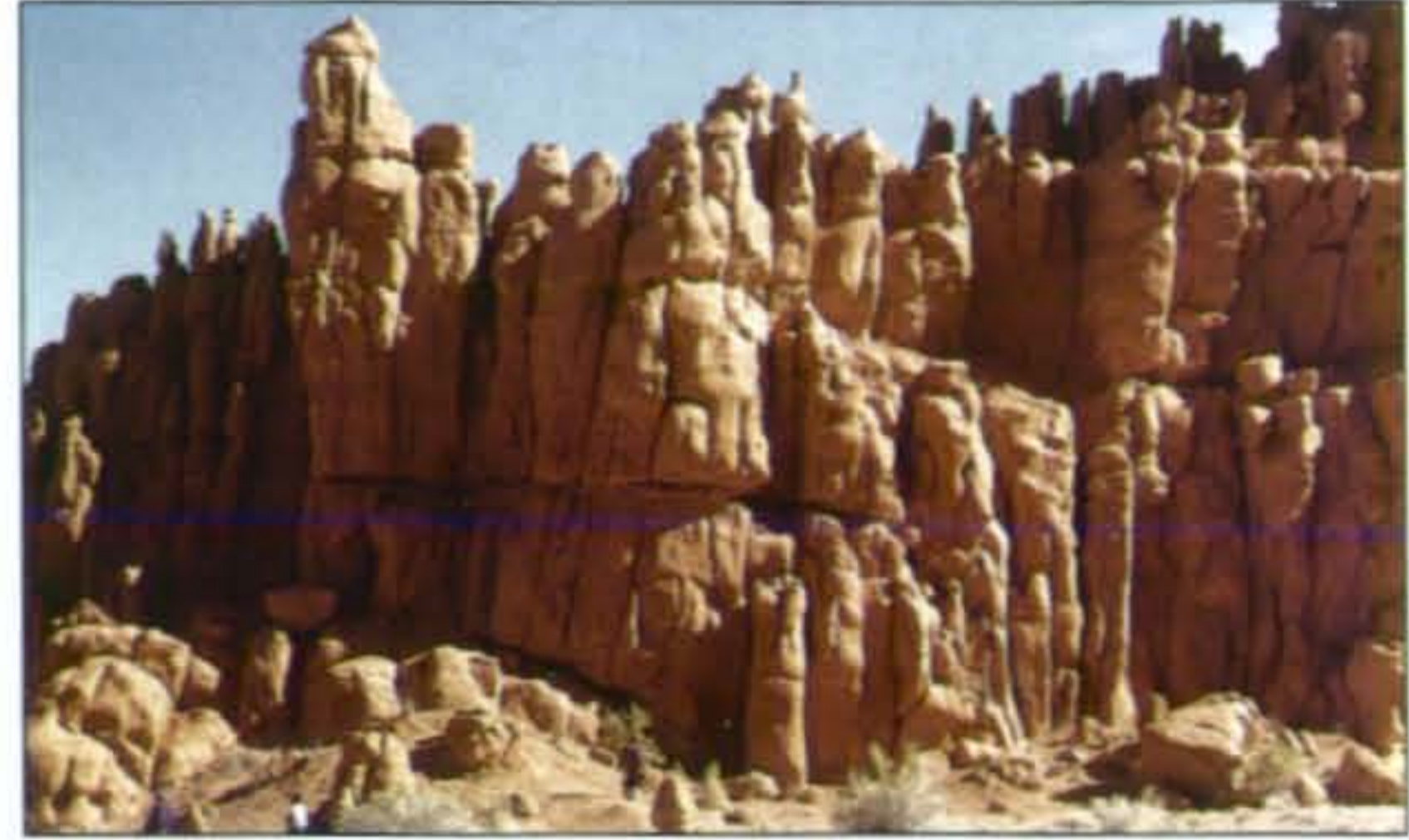
What memories did we carry away with us after this experience? The delightful, open friendliness of the people of south-western USA; the eerie, hostile beauty of the Colorado Plateau and the Canyonlands; the experience of standing on "Route 66" in Flagstaff, with the



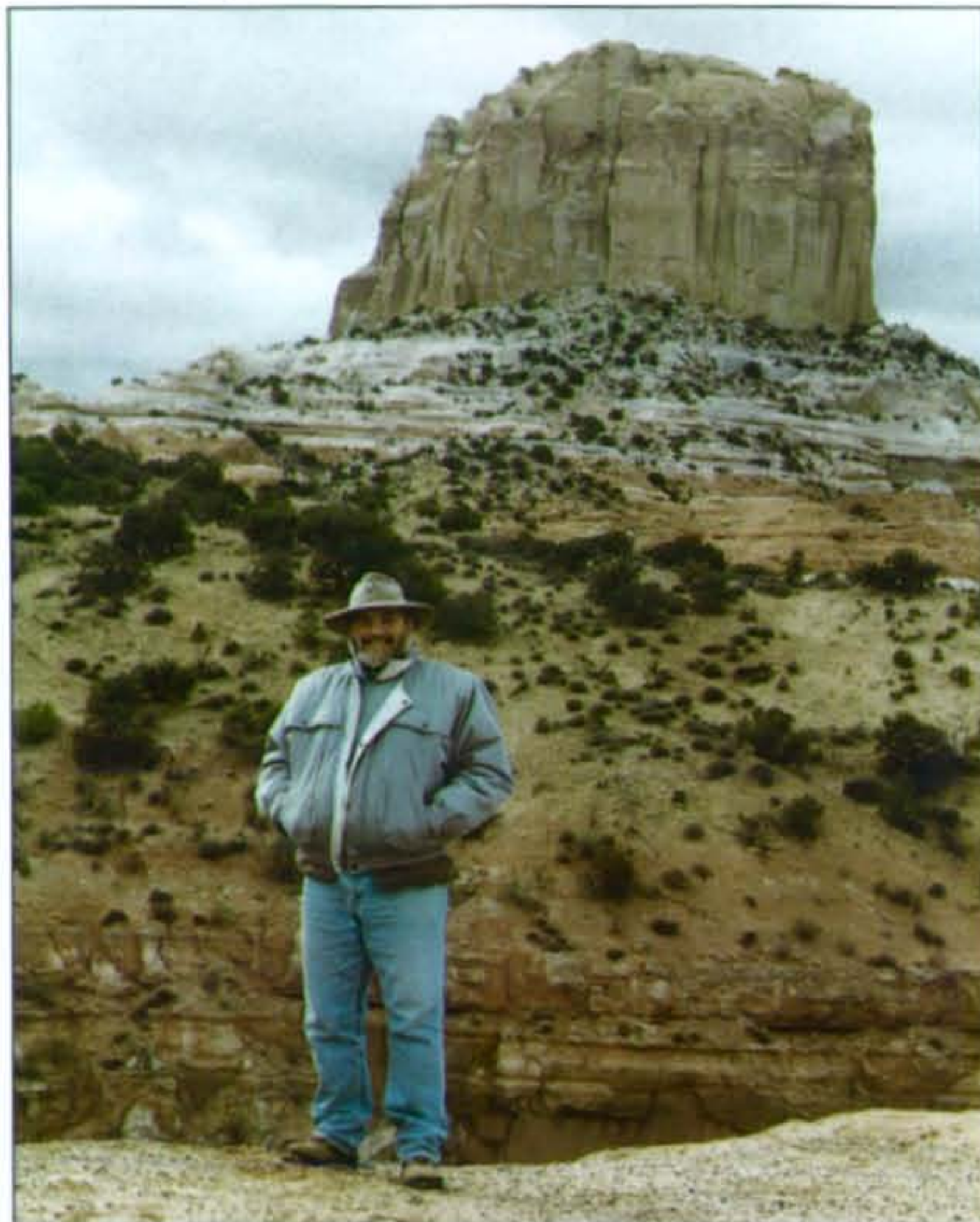
Triceratops sculpture. Museum of Northern Arizona.



Symposium members (Hazel Waldman in foreground) search for dinosaur remains in the Middle Jurassic Morrison Formation near Kayenta, N. Arizona. We found dinosaur footprints at this site!



Middle Jurassic red sandstones of the Summerville Formation at "Baby Rocks" near Kayenta, N. Arizona. The name is derived from the way the rocks weather into rounded forms known in this region as "rock babies".



MW, never happier than when 'in the field', at Square Butte, near Kaibito, N. Arizona.



A large, three-toed, carnivorous dinosaur footprint in the Lower Jurassic Springdale Sandstone, near Tuba City, N. Arizona. (The scale-bar is 10cm long)



Part of the Grand Canyon, viewed from the eastern part of the South Rim. The Colorado River may be seen in the centre, a mile below the rim!



Cores of ancient Tertiary Period volcanoes, exposed by the forces of erosion, stretch away into the Northern Arizona desert.

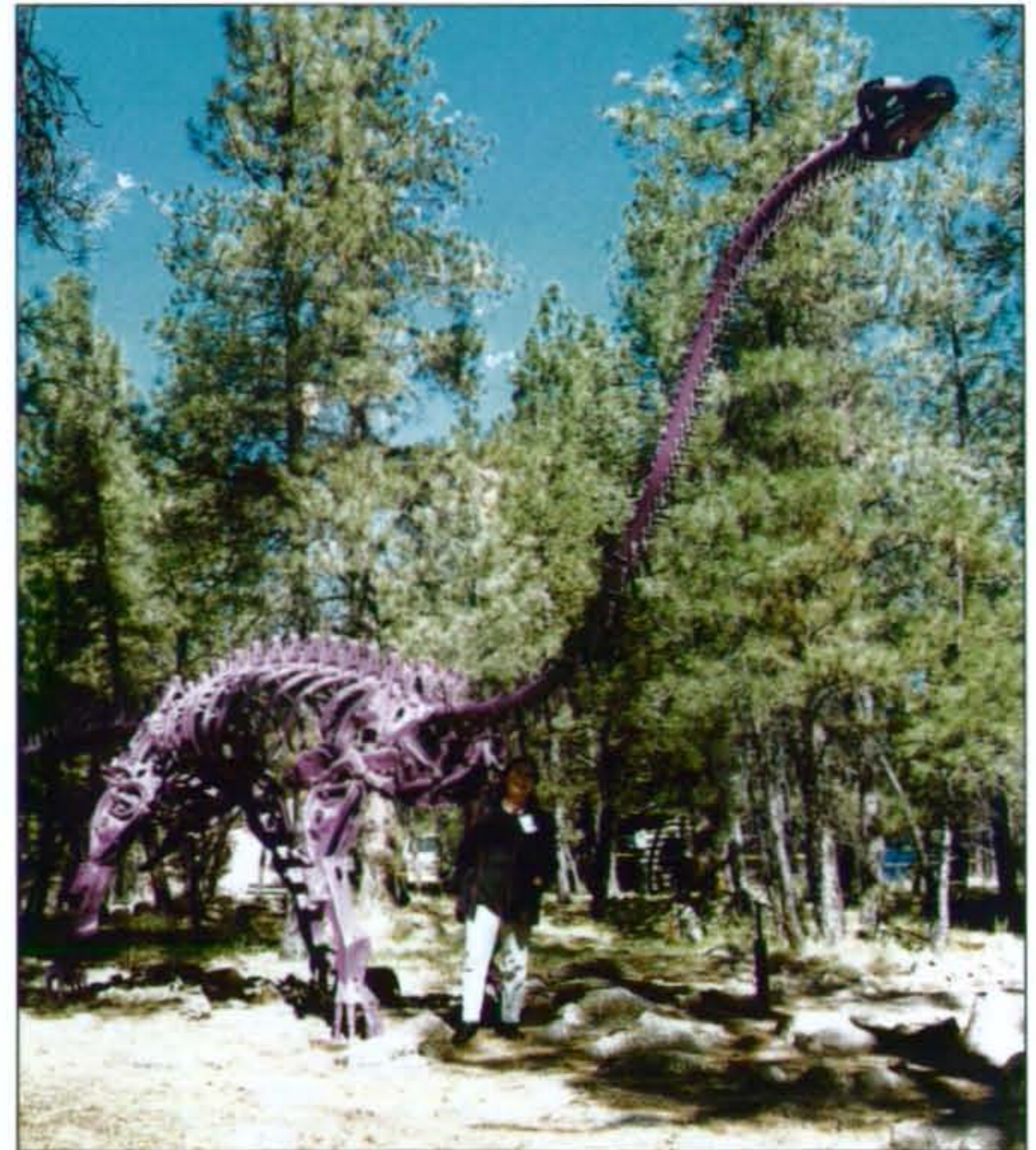


The Grand Canyon from the South Rim.

eponymous music of The Rolling Stones pounding in my mind and, no doubt, wearing a silly grin, just another ageing rocker with one foot in the grave and the other on a banana-skin! the pilots of America West and Mesa Airlines, who all seemed to sound like John Wayne and who inspired instant confidence, as did their cabin staff (no, I'm not a shareholder); being introduced to the Navajo detective stories of Tony Hillerman; the thrill of finding dinosaur footprints at a new locality in the Morrison Formation; the hugely imaginative and innovative projects of The Museum of Northern Arizona, and, above all, the warmth and camaraderie, even in the fiercest of debates, of geologists and paleontologists from all over the world; *mente et malleo* indeed!



Dinosaur sculptures beautifully made, using car-components. Stegosaurus (left) and a sauropod (below). Museum of Northern Arizona.



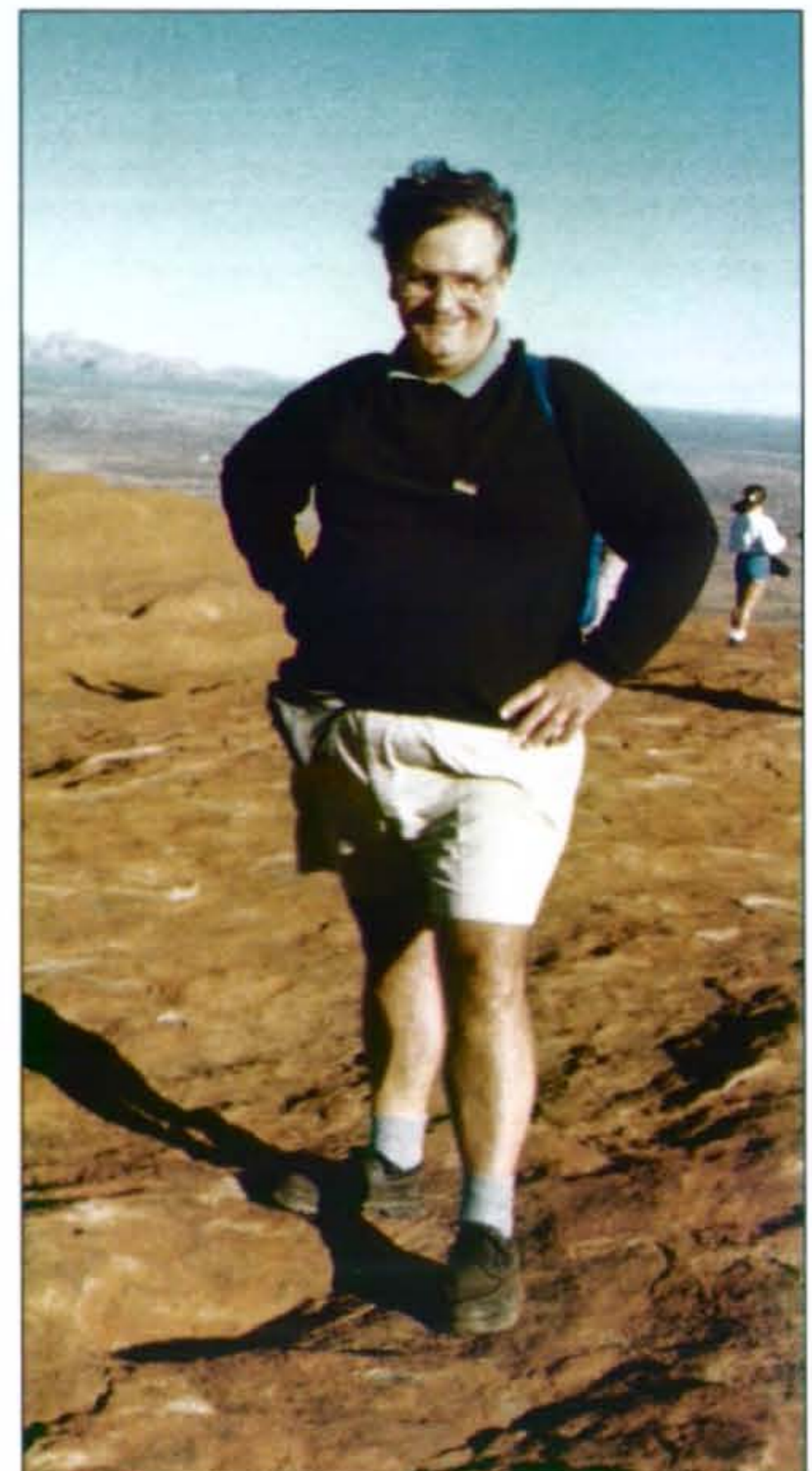
SOC, returned from a year's exchange in Australia, gives an insight into

THE RAMBLINGS OF A POM IN OZ!

“Was Australia as you expected?” “What surprised you about Australia?” “What will you remember about Australia?”

The exchange year afforded a wonderful opportunity to explore a very old New World, make new friends in the southern hemisphere and participate in another educational paradigm. (Pause to use jargon check on my laptop, but it only wants to correct that to notebook.) Ozzies love and embrace new gizmos (now the spell check does not like that word, but you know what I mean). It surprised us how suburban (95%) and urbane the Australians of Melbourne were. What happened to the male chauvinists, red-necks, and the outback spirit? (The Barries, Humphries and MacKenzie, and Crocodile Dundee have a lot to answer for in their overseas image!) We did find some eventually but we had to travel very far into North Queensland and the Northern Territory. (Wait whilst I run that last paragraph through the PC check (Political Correctness) on my PC - no worries!)

Australia is a treasure, the wild and remote scenic places, a fair swap for the usually overcrowded beauty spots and historical heritage of England, for a year at least! Our exchange year has certainly confirmed



SOC atop Ayer's Rock, Northern Territory

our belief, from our previous four years' overseas experience in the Philippines and Hong Kong, that travel with work can be one of the best forms of education. Victoria gave us a wealth of new experiences: the Ocean Road to Warrnambool and whale-watching of the Southern Rights, Spring walks in the majestic Grampians and cross-country skiing in the high country, unparalleled beaches at Wilson's Prom, Lakes Entrance and Philip Island – we came across four separate seventy mile beaches – swimming with dolphins from Sorrento (surely Melbourne's best kept secret) and the vineyards of the Yarra.

Extra-Victorian explorations started with the memorable school camp to Fraser Island, which whetted our appetite for more visits to World Heritage sites and flora and fauna spotting. Fraser's dunes, sandblows, rain-forest satinas, perched lakes and crystal streams running into blue in blue Pacific; the humpback whales, manta rays and reef sharks, brahminy kites and dingoes have touched our consciousness for ever. We hardly noticed that we had 40 pubescent Aussies in tow. They too responded brilliantly to our challenges, as we drove through Victoria, New South Wales and into Queensland in buses, then transferred into four-wheel drives to tackle the rigours of the world's largest sand island. Many beautiful clear nights were spent in a swag under the Southern Cross. It scarcely seems possible now that we were unsurprised to meet koalas, kangaroos, kookaburras, echidnas, possums, wombats, rainbow parakeets and sulphur-crested cockatoos! All these memories and more are melding to make a delightful vintage as they mature on the shelves of our minds!

And what of education? It is surprising how many issues and concerns are common across the hemispheres in excellent academic institutions. For example, IT implementation, external curriculum pressures (VBOS instead of the National Curriculum) for dilution and more accessibility, changing management models, building plans

etc. Founded in 1858, on the back of the gold boom, Melbourne Grammar school is essentially an Anglican boys independent selective school, but has always welcomed students of all faiths and races. It serves the metropolitan area mainly, but with 15% boarding capability also takes students from rural Victoria, out of state and overseas. The school exists on two campuses, the Junior separate from the Middle and Senior that are on one site next to the Botanical Gardens in South Yarra. The Senior section, years 9-12, is nearly 800 boys, and the remainder of the school from Prep to year 8 nearly 1000.

The aims of the school are to foster excellence in the academic and co-curricular programmes, "to instil the love of good learning" (in the words of the first Headmaster, Dr. Bromby), to encourage teamwork, especially through artistic and physical pursuits, and leadership into the wider community through a programme of service, to develop spiritual and moral values and to care for the human and physical environments. The famous granitic "bluestone" quadrangle, familiarly the quad, has produced Melburnian alumni including three Australian Prime Ministers, Antarctic explorers, over 100 Anglican clergy, the first Australian artist admitted to the Royal Academy, distinguished servicemen, academics, politicians and businessmen, notable actors and musicians and Barry Humphries! It was peculiar to be in the new world at a school that has a tradition 65 years older than Stowe's!

Trips to Sydney and Canberra enabled us to see some of their great institutions; Parliament the weekend after the "time for a change" election was exciting. But we were very happy to have chosen Melbourne and MGS, for it was the easiest of cities and schools for us to settle into, compared to our other overseas experiences. We valued the cultural life, excellent Arts, Concert and Sports Centres, the vibrancy of the cosmopolitan festivals and the matchless Botanical Gardens and National Herbarium, where we spent many easy hours exploring much of Australia's highly diversified flora, each maintained in its own climatic environment. All of these wonderful opportunities, within a 25 minute walk or 5 minute tram ride of the school and our Victorian terraced house. Without the ravages of frost, the Victorian buildings and façades in Melbourne are brilliantly preserved, and frankly beat our remnant heritage in this area. Sadly the suburbs of the city do go on for a surprisingly long distance.

The co-curricular diversity at Grammar is renowned, not just through the very com-



Kakadu: the wetlands world heritage area in the Northern Territories.

petitive and successful sports programme, where every participant represents a school team. The majors are Australian Rules Football, Cricket, Athletics, Swimming and Rowing and just about every other sport as a minor. I was able to help with a little coaching and management of junior hockey and senior badminton teams. The visual and performing arts are also well represented, but the other area where I could make a contribution was to the Outdoor Education programme. The aim here is to teach bushcraft, survival and care for the environment through a series of camps, hikes, biking, cross-country skiing, sailing, scuba, rafting, rock-climbing and other pursuits.

The Senior School (last four Secondary years, 9, 10, 11 & 12) is divided into years 9 & 10 when 90% of the curriculum is core and 10% elective. All study Creative Arts and Design Technology, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Physical & Health Education, Religious Education and Science (Combined). This with a LOTE (language other than English) taken from: Chinese, French, German, Japanese and Latin. EFL is available as an extra, and then students may take a second foreign language and one other elective or two elective subjects taken from a broad and interesting basket. Exams at the end of this course are internal only.

For the last two years, all students select a course of study that leads to the award of the Victorian College Entrance Exam (VCE). It is designed to have a broader base than A-levels currently do, but at the end of the course provides scores on which degree selection to tertiary institutions is based. MGS currently offers 25 out of 44 possible subjects, each of which is sub-divided into four units taken in years 11 and 12. Many are sequential, but not all, allowing considerable flexibility of choice within the following framework. The usual number of units studied is 24 over the two years, 7 subjects (14 units) in year 11 followed by 5 subjects (10 units) in year 12. Four units each are compulsory in English, any Arts/Humanities, and in Maths/Science/Technology, leaving a choice of a further 12 units.

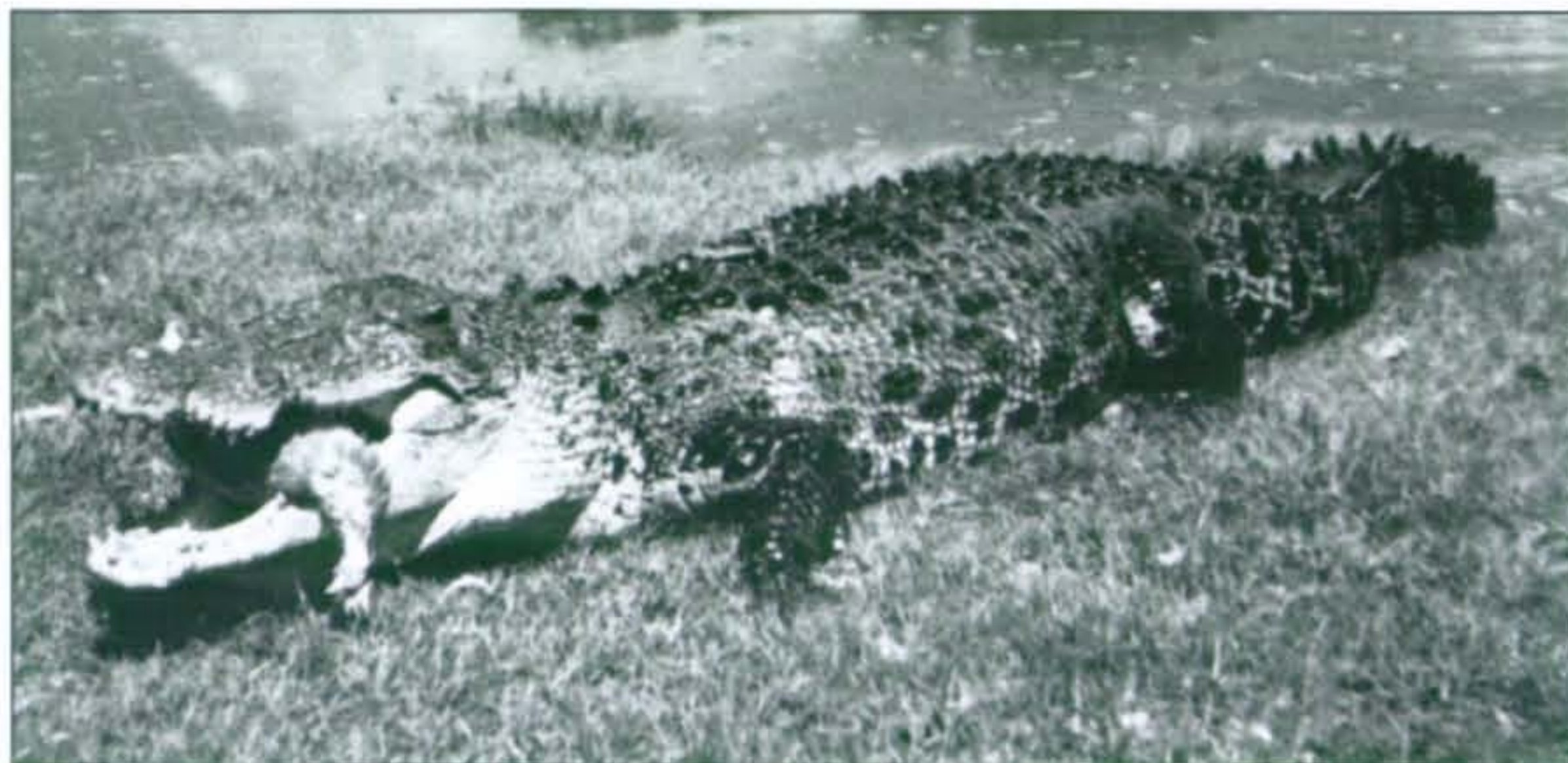
The influence of the Nuffield A-level Physics course in the early evolution of the VCE Physics course and its recommended activities and material is apparent. But it has since evolved, diluted in content and depth of study and been considerably chopped and some GCSE level material added. As here in the UK, changing political pressures have left a not particularly coherent course, in its present state of evolution. It is likely to evolve further, as there are

similar pressures to raise proportions entering tertiary education. Indeed the similarities in educational issues and values between the UK and Australia show many more similarities than differences. Certainly our broader based Dearing horizontal A-levels, if they arrive, will make our new system even closer in principle to the Australian.

Later in the year, just after Christmas (and a three week holiday touring New Zealand, but that's another story) we returned to Far North Queensland to Port Douglas, just north of Cairns to explore the tableland and rain-forest beyond the Daintree, then snorkel the Great Barrier Reef. We almost got as far north as Cookstown, but were cut off by the arrival of the Wet, and saw some spectacular rainstorms. Here we were able to see in their natural habitat green tree frogs, the ubiquitous crocodile, numerous multi-coloured birds, the deadly box-jellyfish and some very large orb-spiders and a boa constrictor. Finally at Easter we took a two week camping-coaching tour to the Red Centre and on to Darwin, passing Coober Pedy and visiting underground opal mines and homes, climbing Ayer's Rock (Uluru), seeing Alice and Kakadu, the amazing tropical wetland heritage area in the Northern Territory.

Here we were most dramatically exposed to the traditional lifestyle of the Aborigines: their survival skills in virtual desert conditions are legendary. We saw relics and site artefacts in the Northern Territory that have been carbon-dated to over 60,000 years ago, making theirs the oldest recorded society. Observing their rock paintings made tens thousands of years ago and covering the walls of many caves in Uluru and Kakadu was an inspiring and moving experience.

All we could then look forward to travel-wise was our journey home and a two-week rest and recreation in Bali! Clearly, we would thoroughly recommend such an exchange to anyone who has the opportunity; many thanks to the Stowe community for supporting us.



A croc in Kakadu National Park.



Stoics, porters and sherpas



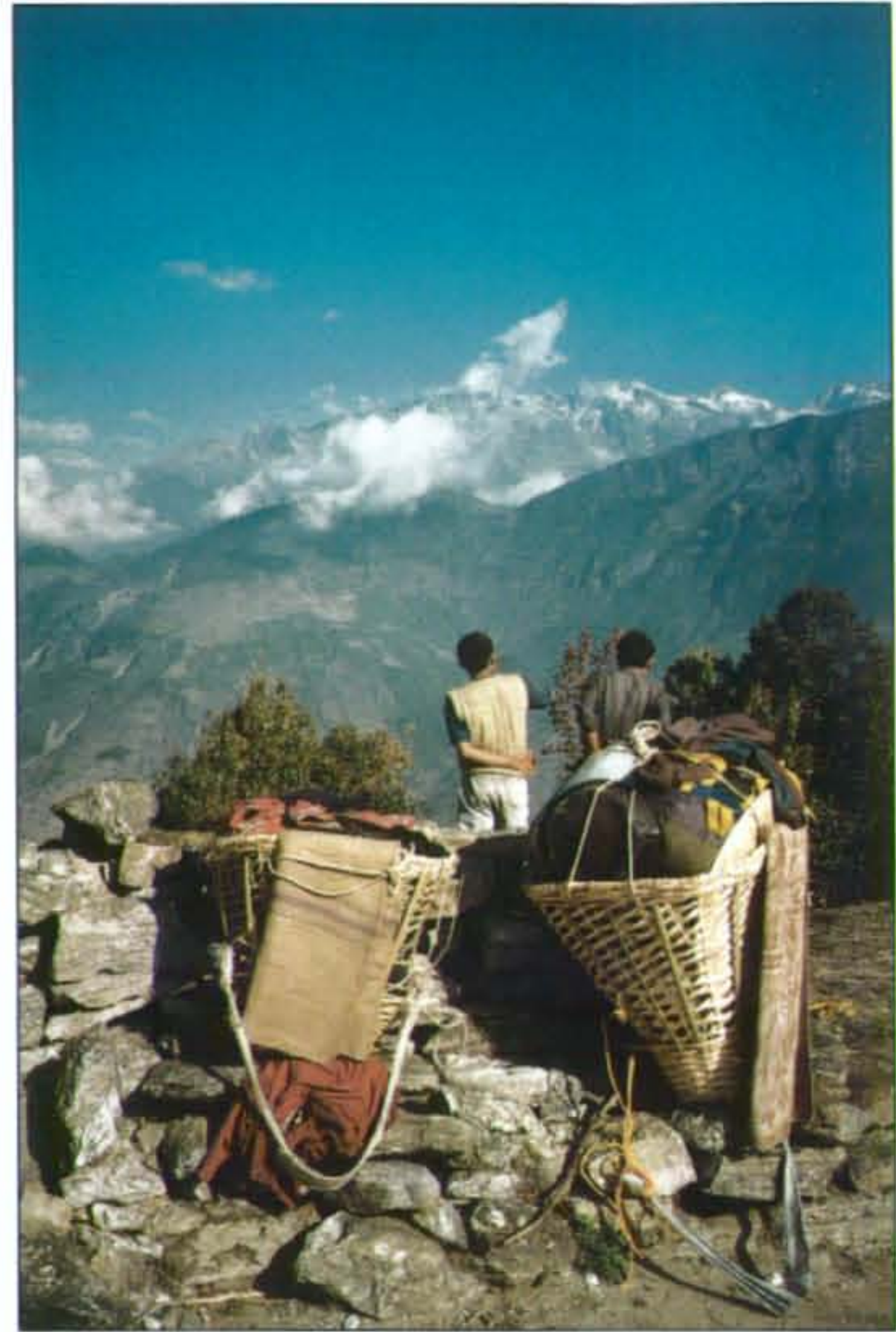
Evening meal



White water rafting



At 17,000 feet looking toward Mt. Langtang



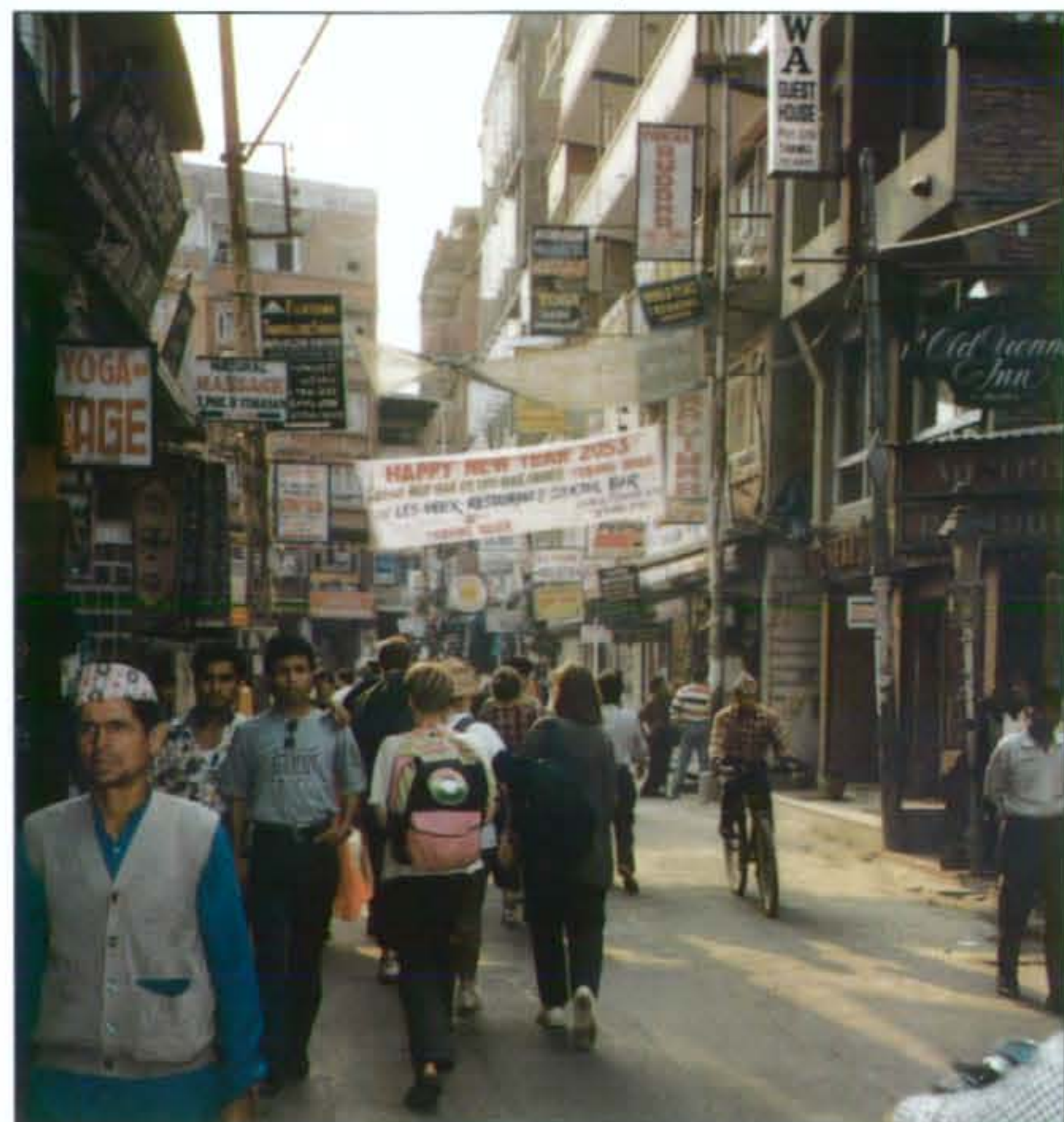
The route ahead



Karachi, Pakistan



Inquisitive local children



Kathmandu

Photos: GSR

James Cara-Southey writes of the latest visit to

NEPAL

As we left Kathmandu airport in minibuses we were all suddenly struck with shock. We were driving into a land of poverty. There were cattle grazing in the middle of the tarmac streets, and next to them were children playing in amongst the rubbish that littered the streets. Nearby there were some locals baking bread to sell to the public. The buses and the cars constantly hooted and drove on any side of the road that suited them. The word "pedestrian" to my mind was not recognised there! You would take your life into your own hands if you tried to cross a road.

There were many temples to visit. There is a hill that towers over Kathmandu where you can find the temple with Buddha's sacred eyes. He is situated high up so that he can keep a watch over the city. There is a squiggly pattern between the eyes which looks like an upside down question mark. Many people think it is a nose but it represents the number one, to mean that there is just one God. Not far from there is a square where all the tourists flock. There are the temples of sex which have erotic pictures carved into the buildings. People with infertility problems would go and visit these temples where they could pray to the God of sex. In the same square there was also the temple of the Living Goddess. A young child is chosen at the age of about two to become this Goddess. Only one extremely attractive girl can be chosen. She spends her life in the temple and obeys strict rules.

Kathmandu also has some extremely beautiful parts to it like its major park which has dashing colours given out by a large variety of plants; I almost felt at home when I saw the English rose garden. The Royal Palace with its modern architectural structure looks rather vulgar. The guards who stand at the gates are relatively slack compared to the ones at Buckingham Palace, as they have "freedom of movement". I was taken aback when I saw the gargantuan Prime Ministerial Palace. A whole battalion of the Nepalese army guarded it; I was curious to know if it was permitted to take photographs and go inside, so I ended up asking an army Captain. To my surprise he said that he would show me all the best spots for photographs and give me a guided tour. This is when I decided that the Nepalese must be some of the most good-hearted people in the world. He entertained me for a long time and he answered any questions that I had.

We were rounded up early in the morning to start our 15 day trek. Loaded up with two rucksacks and any other accessories, we plodded down the streets to the bus. A friendly driver greeted us and relieved us of our heavy bags, which were placed on the roof rack. We set off at

high speed in warm sunny weather; after forty-five minutes we arrived at the starting point and were introduced to our sherpas.

All the team members were astonished by the porters. They herded up all our bags and then each took three large rucksacks plus their own! What surprised me even more was that even I, James Cara-Southey, was taller than most of them! We started the uphill slog and were immediately confronted by Nepalese officials who demanded to see our trekking permits. One has to pay a small fee for the privilege to climb these mountains, so we had to produce the ticket at several check-points. After an hour of walking we reached our lunch spot where chips and tasty cheese sandwiches awaited us. Wild monkeys and donkeys passed us and appeared to be doing their own trek to a destination unknown to anyone. The path was uphill from there on for the next few hours.

Our legs began to ache and cry for a rest, but the trick was to carry on or otherwise you would lose your momentum and become disheartened when you were told there were a few thousand feet still to climb. The stop at the end of the day did not arrive too soon. We all clambered clumsily onto chairs around a table and bought a few cool drinks. Afterwards we were taught how to erect the tents and to carry out other necessary duties. It was quite a performance watching everyone putting up their tents and organising themselves.

The next day all the tents were away with one or two exceptions by seven in the morning. In fact there was always the same exception every morning! We walked for a few hours, then were confronted by an almost vertical hill with a tiny path that meandered its way to the top. Even near the start our calf muscles felt as if they were going to give way. Several times I got the illusion of being nearly at the top, but then there was another huge height just behind to conquer. The walks carried on through the hills for ages.

We got our first glimpse of snow on a distant mountain on the morning of day three. The trek that day dragged on for ages. Eventually we arrived at the stop where there were traces of snow. The next day the sun gleamed off a snow-tipped mountain straight into our eyes in the middle of a pine woodland. As a member of the team, it was my duty to write the day's diary which read something like this:

"The day started off somewhat disorganised with only two tents down by 7.00am. The nice flat walk we were promised proved to be a disappointment. There was a lot of upward climbing to be done which was quite tough on some people who were suffering from illness. Within 10 minutes of climbing we got a magnificent view of snow-capped mountains. We carried on ascending the mountains, and passed a lot of scenery which reminded me of Cape Town. There was the lovely aroma of pine needles

which for me brought back many happy memories.

We eventually got to the lunch camp where we were greeted with a warm sun shining down. Many were pleased with lunch as baked beans were on the menu. Afterwards, we carried on to our campsite which wasn't far away. First though, we went through some deep snow and then descended many icy paths. The walk then consisted of going up and down small hills which were lined with beautiful trees. A steep hill was next; this took a long time to conquer, but it was well worth it because we could recuperate for the rest of the day and drink Pepsi. Unfortunately thunder was present and large hail stones the size of polystyrene bubbles fell from the sky. We then had a mass snow-ball fight."

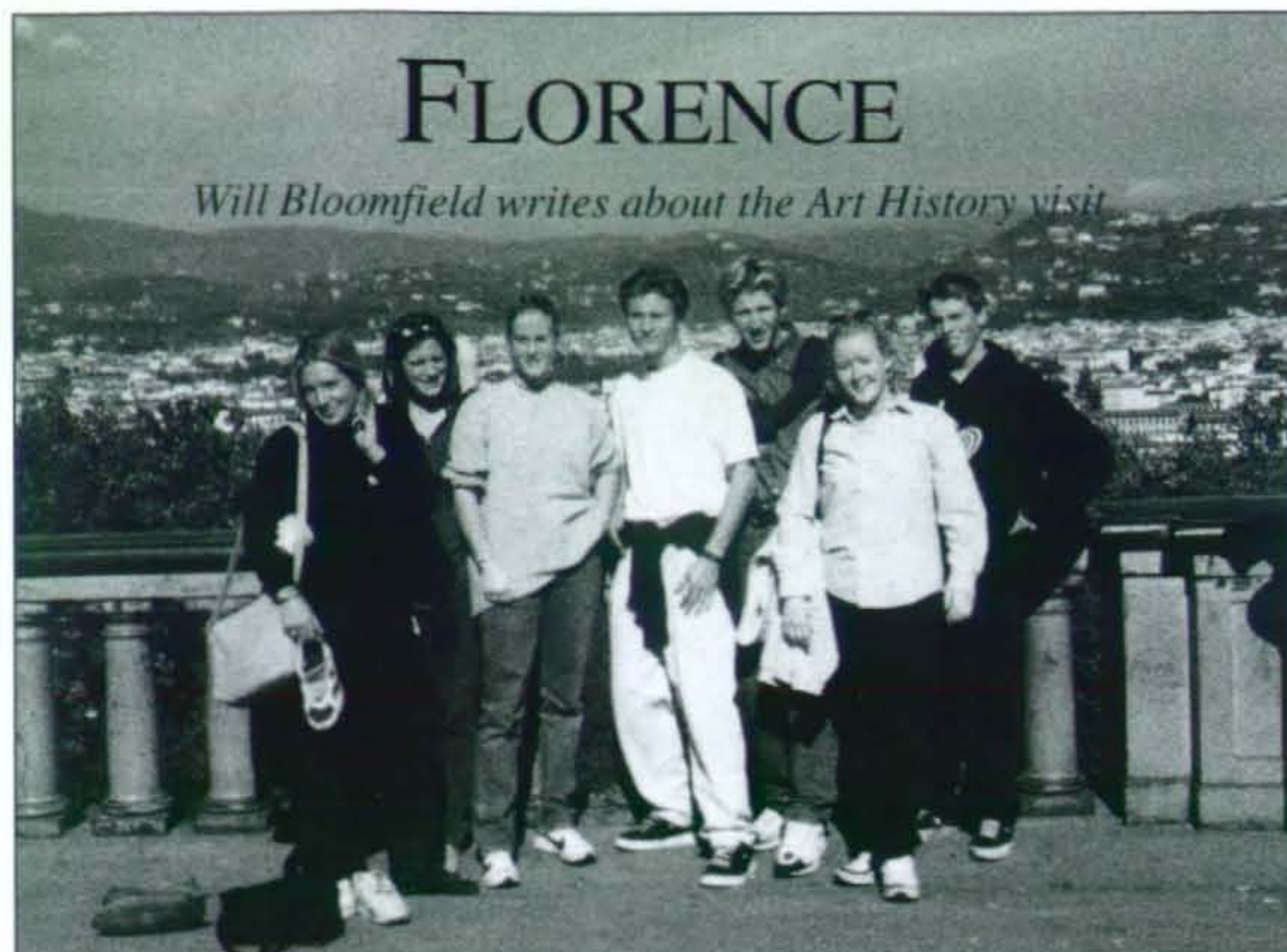
That night some of the team members were quite ill. Peter Mackay-Lewis suffered the most. He had to be given an injection to combat his fever. Anyway, being Stoics we carried on early the next morning. The only problem was that it had been so cold the night before that the metal tent-poles stuck together. We started again and climbed up to the mountain pass which held more snow than I have ever seen in my life. It was the most fabulous view with snow everywhere and other snowy mountains in the distance. At the end of the pass we saw a gigantic frozen lake with a layer of snow above it. We stopped next to it and had lunch. The walk then continued downwards for a bit, and then we arrived at our day's stop. I was another victim of Nepalese illness with all my energy completely drained and I ended up sprawled for the next three hours in the dirt, where I acquired a massive sunburn. The walk carried on winding up and down through hills and at points we followed a beautiful rapidly flowing river. We wove our way through several different types of vegetation which looked like jungle, barren land and many other types of scenery including pine forests. The few days passed without incident. There was a sigh of relief from everyone as we reached the end of the trek. We were all now completely exhausted and it was time for a holiday!

The next morning we got ready for a bus journey which I will never forget. We were crammed in with our sherpas, cooks and porters. We drove through the mountains back towards Kathmandu. The road was like a cycling lane; the bus could hardly fit on. At times I am sure that there were wheels going over the cliff's edge. You didn't have to look hard to find other buses that had met with grief. It was eleven and a half hair-raising hours. Our arrival back in Katmandu was welcomed with great sincerity. Hoping to warm up in a nice hot shower, I jumped around almost screaming as freezing cold water travelled down my neck and back. However this was heavenly relative to the trekking; we went out and had several cocktails that evening as they were only fifty pence each.

At the crack of dawn we went to the bus destined for the white water rafting and the jungle. We stopped off in a little village. After changing into suitable gear I made my way down to the river's edge with the others where we could see in the distance three large inflatable boats. Ground rules and strategy were explained before we hopped in for an amazing adventure. We rafted down the river for a while and then within the first five minutes there was an accident. The boat I was in hit a large boulder which cut a hole approximately one and a half metres long. Before I knew what had happened, I and two others were in the water. The guide instructed us to make for a beach where the boat was exchanged for a new one. With our spirits undampened, we paddled vigorously down stream. We hit several rapids where several were thrown out of the boat. There was sheer excitement and there was a great adrenaline rush just before we hit waves that looked like walls. For afternoon tea we were greeted by our sherpas once again. I almost committed suicide when I saw that I had to eat another meal prepared by them!

There were several more hours of bus travel before we got to the jungle. On arrival, some jeeps picked us up and drove us to the camp through rivers and rocky terrain. At first the camp looked like heaven until I saw my room. There were horrible large spiders crawling along the beds and walls which were covered with lizards. However, we were treated to some delicious food which was a nice change! The next morning we were taken for a walk to see the rhinos. First of all a river had to be crossed to get into the heart of the jungle. Three canoes took us across; there we split into groups. A large amount of walking and tree climbing was done. We saw only one rhino. It started charging at us, so as quick as lightning, I climbed up the nearest tree for safety. We walked back to the camp, which took ages. Later that day we chose to go by either elephant or jeep on safari. I chose to go by elephant. A gargantuan animal came round the corner picking four of us up. We went on a long, uncomfortable, jerky ride. It was fun though; we were able to go right up next to the rhinos and wild beasts. I got several photos of cute baby rhinos wandering around. When the elephant riding group arrived back, we stayed outside drinking beers and eating Mars bars as the sun slowly descended behind the veldt. After all of that excitement we sadly had to leave Nepal to go back to England. We spent a day in Karachi whilst waiting for our connecting flight.

When I look back at the holiday, I will always have happy memories thinking of what I did. There were some rough patches to go through, but I like to think that I am a better person for having done it. We were all very grateful to Mr Roberts for organising it all.



At Piazza Michelangelo.

Georgina Mackay, Emily Pritchard-Gordon, Alice Macfarlane, Toby Dixon, Will Bloomfield, Kate Pearce and Jamie Nairn

5.00 am, Tuesday 22nd October. Fortunately, early mornings are not a problem for me, but for other individuals who were supposed to be coming to Florence getting up was harder. 5.45 am, and Jamie Nairn has still not appeared; five minutes later we pull out of the Stowe gates...Jamie-less, (and also lacking Mr. Robinson, who, for reasons still unknown booked his flight a day early!).

At Gatwick, final pounds were turned to lire and we entered the boarding lounge, whilst Mr. Melber continued to laugh at Jamie's (or apparently, Jamie's alarm clock's) failure. It was at this point through a glass window that Jamie was spotted running at full pace (with a strange grin on his face), holding out his plane ticket and boarding pass. "I can't believe it! My alarm clock..."

We arrived in Pisa at local time 1.00 pm, and boarded our "Giotto" coach, (yes, VERY original!). I have to confess that I remember little of the journey into Florence from Pisa as the 5.00 am start was beginning to take its toll. However, I was woken up just as the coach crossed the river Arno and everyone sat up straight to see who could spot something that they recognised from a slide test! It was here that our Florence experience began....

During the days in Florence we (fifteen Stoics and five Tudor Hall girls) were given itinerary sheets and had to meet the staff at certain points around Florence. The deal was that if we were late we risked having to pay to see whatever it was we were waiting for. This proved easy until Toby Dixon decided to head-butt an iron window grill and pass out. The incident with the "fiesty" Italian window grill was one of those that is unfunny at the time, but hilarious several hours later. Over the five days there were several highlights for me. First, climbing to the top of the Duomo (the large Cathedral in Florence)

and also seeing Vasari's incredible frescoes on the ceiling of the Cathedral which show a horrific account of hell and heaven above it. Another highlight was seeing Michelangelo's marble David in the Academy. We also visited the Uffizi (seeing works like Botticelli's Primavera and Leonardo's Annunciation) and also visited the Bargello museum seeing works like Donatello's bronze David. Over the five days we did a lot of walking and another moment that sticks in my mind is the long walk up to the Piazza Michelangelo. The view from the top of the hill was truly remarkable and we sat up under a copy of Michelangelo's marble David and enjoyed the Italian sun before making our way back into the crowded streets of Florence. On our last day we were driven to the nearby city of Siena, where we saw Duccio's huge Maesta

Madonna and again basked in the sunshine of Siena's Piazza Il Campo. Siena, like Florence, is beautiful; however, it was much quieter, which made a nice change, if it was only for a morning. After Siena we drove to a small medieval town called San Gimignano. The main feature in the town are the towers which rival families built in the Middle Ages to protect themselves from each other. After about an hour we headed, exhausted, back to lively Florence. On our return to Pisa Airport we stopped briefly in Pisa to see the leaning tower which, believe it or not, leans!

In the evenings in Florence we would usually go out for supper all together and then split up into smaller groups to another bar or restaurant. I ended up spending my evenings, rather ironically, in an Irish bar which we were convinced was called "The Old Stowe", but on closer inspection and without the influence of the Italian air it appeared to be called "The Old Stove". I have to say that Florence possesses an atmosphere in the evenings that I will never forget, and wandering back to the hotel through the Piazzas and squares and being able to see works of art in the flesh was truly a great experience. Florence has to be seen to be believed, and my advice to anyone who is considering going is, to go, whatever it takes!

The five days we spent in Florence were truly brilliant and a special thanks to Mr. Robinson (aka Fra Angelico), Mr Melber, Mr Farquhar, Mrs Smith and the Italian bar lady at The Old Stove for all their effort and sacrificing some or all of their holiday for us. Also a special thanks to the lovely Tudor Hall girls for making the trip such fun and for their flattering comments about the exquisite dress sense of Stoics.

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working! A romance developed between a chemistry master, Mr Boyd, and the biology teacher of which the boys soon became aware. A certain boy in our form had a curious name and blinked a lot. This seemed to get this man on the raw and he frequently gave vent to "Winklebury! DON'T BLINK AT ME!" Unfortunately his innamorata taught her subject in the adjoining classroom and often as not the intervening door was left half open and she could hear her future-intended in his discomfiture!

JF was in his prime when I was at Stowe! He filled the role model of moral and academic excellence to perfection. He was the only academic I can recall who used his mortarboard and general appearance as an instrument of policy and not just for ceremonial occasions. He did not so much make an entrance as appear. He was liable to do so amongst a class unannounced in full regalia, long gown, mortar-board on, headmaster's reports under his arm, anywhere at any time .

At a humdrum class our form-master's eyes would glaze over as he saw the headmaster coming and he would slide unobtrusively from his desk to one at the back.

ROXBURGH

Illustrative play in one act.

Dramatis personae: Form-master: Todd, Hart-Dyke or some other. Boys: Baxter, Walker, Duck mi and other small boys.

Enter JF centre aisle in academic gown, mortar-board on head, some papers under arm, (form-master already at rear).

JF, declaiming: "Monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens!" (looking around)... "How does that translate into good English prose, and what does it mean? Tell us, Baxter!"

Baxter: "Sir, I...don't, can't..." etc, etc.

JF: "A huge and horrible monster! But what about informe?"

Baxter: "I don't ...informed, perhaps, Sir?"

JF turning around and seeing a fair haired boy at the back: "Ah! I see a species of Duck! Perhaps you can help us...!"

The studies at Walpole were very small. On one occasion I was alone reading in a chair with wooden sides and with my legs extended in the air resting somewhere near the ceiling when JF appeared at my side, unexpectedly, necessarily very close due to the confined space. I had some little difference of opinion with the school authorities at the time of which I was suddenly acutely reminded. He was very courteous but the real problem was that my posture and the confined space was such that it was impossible for me to get to my feet as I could not move the chair to get my legs down. I spent some uncomfortable moments trying to explain my position from all points of view.

I declined to join the OT, (which was probably the occasion of JF's visit to my study), and consequently was

put to cutting Kinvig's grass when the rest were on parade. His grass was largely on a slope at the back and there were no Flymos in those days. I cannot recall how I did it but during the exercise I was regularly used for target practice by the OTC, training outside Grafton .

I remember trying to play the trumpet in one of those little rooms at the Queen's Temple but soon graduated to the piano accordion which I played in a band set up by Charles Cullis. Jazz bands were frowned upon in those days and at first JF refused Charlie's request that we should give a concert. The following year, however, he reluctantly agreed providing a first half of classical music played by the school quartet. We gave an excruciating performance, as you might say, although I can remember Cullis improvising beautifully in 'Deep Purple'. David Duck's vocalisation in part of that number was not so happy. We recorded it onto a 78 the following day, a disk which is still in my attic. About the only part of the recording which is at all audible is his despairing shriek on the high note in the solo.

Our maths master, a Mr Todd, inspired great enthusiasm in us for the subject by his digressions into its philosophy, (are we measuring anything when we measure the speed of an arrow in flight?) and indeed into any other subject he felt we ought to know about. We spent an entire unexpected double maths period with him reading *Red Gauntlet* to us, the delightful ghost story by Scott, although it was many years before I read for it myself.

Todd lived at Chatham House and was fond of making elderberry wine which he stored around his bed. During the night these would explode with a loud report heard all over the House and his ceiling was pitted with the depressions of these accidents. He remarked that it was not just the cork that had been expelled by the contained gas but the glass neck of the bottle itself which had been fractured by the pressure. This led of course naturally to the mathematical treatment of gaseous expansion and the pressures which could be built up in closed systems.

Miss Quennel was the matron of the school sanatorium, a formidable dispenser of aperients for any 'measly or mumpish' boy who happened to fall into her hands. She would stand at the foot of the bed after breakfast carrying a tray of various bottles and although she never actually asked you the question, by her demeanour, the inclination of her head, the lifted eyebrow, she made it quite clear as to the question to which she demanded an answer.

The War was not yet over when I left and we had no Speech Days. Our life must have been to some extent austere but I do not think we noticed it much. I have always regarded my period at Stowe in those far-off days as among the happiest of my life matched only perhaps by my present condition as a retired gentleman of leisure. That it is so must be due in great measure to the inspiration and dedication of JF and the masters of the time in being able to instil into a rather stubborn boy the possibilities open to him if he was to hope for some success in an uncertain world.

The Competitive World of Petrol Allowances

One of the less serious sagas of wartime Stowe

Petrol rationing posed real difficulties for a community living four miles from the nearest town. Nowhere is the problem better illustrated than in the crisis facing Ivor and Barbara Cross. Ivor Cross, a former pupil of Roxburgh's at Lancing, had been with him as Housemaster since the founding of the School, first in Temple and then in Chatham. A man of strong moral convictions and much efficiency, he had a reputation for being fierce and unyielding. As Roxburgh's most senior master, he would have viewed with dismay the petrol allowances which two more junior married housemasters, Clifford and Kinvig, had apparently obtained.

The Divisional Petroleum Office, Reading, however, was not particularly interested in the niceties of public school pecking orders. In June 1942 it sent bad news to Chatham: "Your application for a supply of petrol has been carefully considered, but it is regretted that supplementary coupons cannot be released for the purpose stated in your claim. Your Registration Book is returned herewith."

Barbara Cross wisely took the matter out of her highly irritated husband's hands and referred it to Roxburgh. They had, she told him, no means of transport for essential shopping. There was a weekly bus from Dadford, but its nearest stopping place was half a mile from the house and it ran only once a day at an impossible time. With two very small children and no domestic help to look after them, Barbara Cross certainly had a problem. The butcher delivered once a week and the grocer once a fortnight. Without a car there was no possibility of getting paraffin or potatoes. "We asked for the smallest amount of petrol on which we thought we could manage (one and a half gallons a month) and if we don't get any I don't see how we can carry on!"

JF duly wrote on their behalf, pointing out that the present recipients of the extra allowance did not have children whereas the Cross family did. But the Ministry of Fuel remained obdurate:

"As two other masters already receive supplementary petrol rations for shopping purposes, it is suggested that arrangements might be made that would not necessitate the use of a third car. In view of present war developments, the need to conserve motor fuel becomes more and more urgent, and every effort must be made in this direction." The Registration Book was duly returned.

The Ministry had made a valid point. But it could not know that at Stowe in the 1940s strongly competitive inter-House feelings were not conducive to shared



JF Roxburgh and Ivor Cross (centre)
before the war

shopping expeditions. JF, trying to calm unnecessary internal friction, sent off an urbane letter, by return, on Chatham's behalf, enclosing the much-travelled Registration Book and politely urging the Petroleum Office to reconsider. It was too late, he hinted, for the other two masters with a petrol allowance to alter their present arrangements. Could not the office allocate an extra allowance this time to Ivor Cross and then, when the time came round for new applications, perhaps the three housemasters could make do with only two cars between them, or even one?

This attempt at a compromise (which seems a somewhat flawed

delaying tactic) was rejected. The Registration Book was again returned by the Divisional Petroleum Officer (one HB Hermon Hodge). "Coupons already released for domestic use to Stowe School is [sic] considered more than sufficient," he explained.

It was Barbara Cross who undertook the next communication with Hermon Hodge. She thanked him for his explanation that he considered coupons already released for domestic purposes to Stowe School more than sufficient, but pointed out icily that "there has been no issue to 'Stowe School' for domestic purposes. The coupons have been issued to individuals for their needs and they are using them for their own needs and not for our convenience." Clearly feelings on the campus were continuing to rise. "If there was a limited amount of petrol to be used by people resident at Stowe," she wrote, "I suggest that a much more equitable distribution should have been made. At present one householder without children appears to have a considerable amount of petrol, while we, who have two children and no domestic help, have none."

She ended with the telling statistic that there were another twenty-seven people on the campus who relied on the three Housemasters' cars for transport into Buckingham! She would, she said, be compelled to order a weekly taxi. She spelt out to Mr Hodge the implications: "It will consume twice the amount of petrol that my journey would use in my own car. It would no doubt be cheaper for me than running a car and in many ways easier, but I do not feel it would be making proper use of the country's resources."

Unfortunately history does not relate the ending of the saga. But within a year Ivor and Barbara Cross had moved to Wales to found their own Prep School. At least there they would have been out of the jurisdiction of HB Hermon Hodge.

Al Bianco

Chandosian Memories

Dick Musgrave (Chandos 40) remembers what it was like in the early years of the war

I left Stowe twice! First at the end of the summer of 1939, when I was sent as an apprentice to Dunlop's. We had been expecting the war and I had hoped to join an Indian cavalry regiment. Dunlop's did not match these dreams and when my father offered me another year at Stowe I went back with thanks and pleasure. It was a generous gesture, as my younger brother was in Chandos, father had joined up and a Captain's pay was little enough.

The Home Guard was soon in operation. The papers were full of reports that German parachutists disguised as nuns or priests would soon be arriving. So the Stowe Home Guard (or was it LDV?) patrols were out at dusk with .303 rifles and live ammunition. We lurked up the Grecian Valley, lying in ambush on the branches of beech trees and longing to see a nun. They would have received short shift. Not much work was done in those early days of the war and none expected. I had already failed my university entrance. One highlight was the occasion when JF was asked to dine with us in the Temple Prefectory. The menu: roast duck; the cooking fairly simple. JF was his polite self and we only discovered later that he

himself had released the ornamental duck on the lake. They made easy targets, but tough eating.

Memories of those days include sitting on the Chandos Wing one summer evening and seeing the glow of London being bombed and burning. Then there was the Sunday morning when we were walking down the South Front and met JF. "Don't bother to take your hats off, gentlemen!" Did he know we were returning from a poaching mission to Woody Park? The next weekend the gamekeeper was waiting for us and one of our number (was it Ripley?) took a blast right in the back; he was later laid out on a table and had the shot picked out with a pen-knife.

There was also the excitement of David Niven coming back. He visited Chandos before looking in on Grafton. A maid was so overwhelmed at seeing him she dropped forty plates! There was also the famous occasion of Leonard Cheshire returning as a young RAF officer and crashing his open sports car on the North Front.

I left to join my Indian Cavalry regiment. I was very lucky to experience a safe and enjoyable war...

Sir Philip Duncombe (Chandos 45) writes of some

Wartime Memories

Several incidents come to mind. First there was the bombing of Stowe, in the middle of the night in May 1941, just after the start of the summer term. A stick of some eight bombs fell between the bottom of Chatham Field and a point about 150 yards from the bottom of the South Front steps. Every pane of glass along the South Front was shattered and the whole school had to eat breakfast standing up because of the broken glass. There followed some intensive souvenir hunting and I collected a small piece of bomb casing. The only casualty was one boy who leapt out of bed to get under it, forgetting that his tin trunk was there and cracking his head open. Another bomb fell nearby (I think it was later the same year) and a hay elevator on a farm at Dadford was the only casualty.

The Stowe Platoon of the Buckingham Battalion of the Home Guard used to have two targets for their Sunday morning route marches led by the late Lieutenant Freddy Archer, the rather eccentric Maths master. These were the Lone Tree near Thornborough and the Robin Hood on the Brackley road. Arrival was timed for twelve noon, the drink pint shandies, and we got back in time for school lunch.

Then there was a story about Humphrey Playford, the Housemaster of Bruce. It was said - and I am not sure whether it is true - that in 1939-40 he was so upset at all the "slackers" in the country that he went off to France, without leave from JF, to drive an ambulance for several months.

Meanwhile at Stowe the quest for food was constantly on our minds. Brewing up on a methylated stove, either in Plug Street or one's study, was a vital supplement to school rations. I remember frying a rabbit's back leg which had been used in a Biology class (by Billy Barr). We had only studied the muscles and veins and, unlike the dogfish, it had not been immersed in Formaldehyde. On Sundays, after lunch, there was a mass exodus to the Nevillery (Neville's Farm by the Corinthian Arch) where we enjoyed eggs and bacon, cooked under very primitive conditions and washed down with Cydrax.

Fire-fighting drill on the roofs seemed a good excuse for a cigarette and it was quite obvious from the amount of cigarette ends up there that this was almost an acceptable "perk" for doing one's bit for Civil Defence.



**PICTURE
QUIZ
ANSWER**
(page 45)

Rae Matheson stands beside the Formula Ford she was driving at Silverstone

Verses by Geoffrey Heron

*(Bruce 42)***Forty two**

I left my school, Stowe, in Forty two,
 The war was on, a backward glance,
 For a last sight of the buildings.
 I heaved a sigh, the future before me.
 No point in thinking, or time to reflect.
 A sense of freedom,
 Yet I always found pleasure in the memories,
 So often shared, in chance meeting with old boys,
 Here in England, in the army, or even later in South Africa.
 It had been my place of learning, so much
 Of books, of English and French, maths and science,
 And most of all, how to live with others each and every day,
 In Life and games, moulding me to be someone.

Nearly fifty years of my life were to pass,
 With still only memories, until that moment,
 When on a cool summer day my wife and I went to Stowe.
 As we turned a corner, the years rolled away,
 There was that straight grey road, stretching like a ribbon
 Over the three small hills to the school gate,
 Across the Ha-Ha, and round to the North Front
 With its majestic Grecian Colonnades
 Leading to well-worn steps, up through giant doors,
 To that first time remembered, when I was afraid,
 Of the newness, of size, and the sound of many boys.

Herein were four of my years, locked in a very special time.
 Inside we talked with boys and masters, walked,
 Looked in at remembered rooms with classic murals.
 To a quiet moment in the Chapel,
 Reading the names of those lost in the war,
 Friends, and heroes, of mine and our Country.
 Seeing the organ over the door with the special flute
 Brought memories of majestic sounds echoing round the walls
 Mingling with clear boys' voices.
 We walked then, around the familiar grounds,
 Through stands of trees, with paths
 Leading to remembered places, and on to playing fields,
 And the place of my first fifteen colours. That was a day!
 Then on to the old Palladian bridge, still astride the stream,
 Leading to the lakes used in earlier times for swimming.
 And back by Temples to past glories, to say goodbye.
 A lingering glance at the Headmaster's door as we passed
 Brought a final rush of memories. Ah! JF Roxburgh,
 What a man he was, and how much he helped me
 in many ways!
 I stood for a moment and remembered him and Stowe,
 with much affection.

To JF

I often wish I had said this to you:
 Read me books or papers of yours,
 Take hold of me and put me in your ways,
 Give me an insight of your knowledge,
 And nurture it to grow in your image.
 Show me your thoughts on life and love,
 Right and wrong, talk to me about them,
 And let me see the way they lead.
 Let me listen to your wisdom,
 Give me your interest, make me more than I was,
 Send me away in the end a better man,
 A man to think clearly, understand with patience,
 and give to the world your knowledge,
 As my gift to you, because you did and I am.

WORKING IN FASHION:

an interview with Kate Reardon

Kate Reardon, a member of Nugent House under Ian and Alison Small, left Stowe in 1987. She is now Fashion Editor of The Tatler. Kate Chambré travelled down to Vogue House in London to interview her.



Photo: Camilla Hicks

Vogue House is impressive. Large, modern, smart and glossy. What you would expect, really! As we waited in the reception hall, with its white marble floor and gold decor, everyone who passed by seemed dressed very elegantly! There was a certain aura about the place, something exciting and glamorous. Sitting on a sumptuous sofa, opposite huge mirrors, we felt conspicuously underdressed!

However, any anxieties were quickly dispelled by the arrival of Kate Reardon, who spirited us up to her office most cheerfully and made us feel as if we were not interrupting her busy day (which we probably were!) but that we were her most vital appointment of all!

We began talking inevitably, about Stowe. She had taken Art, English and Design at A-level (2 Bs and a C) and said she had loved every minute it. "At the end of my first half-term I came back two hours early because I couldn't wait to get back!" She had been at Cheltenham Ladies College and after a school of 800 girls she thought a school with 600 boys and 60 girls heaven! "I had a boy friend in the 1st XV. I mean, life didn't really get much better than that!" The teachers "treated you like a human being". She particularly remembered William Dady and Guy Scott in the Art School.

She also remembers with misgivings that at the time she was here she was not aware of the cost. "I had no comprehension of however much the school fees were, because I'd never earned anything myself. The enormous sacrifice parents make is not fully understood at the time. They give up so much. The quality of parents' life is very drastically affected by what they're giving up. It's something I had absolutely no comprehension of."

We asked her what she enjoyed most about Stowe. "The boys!" came the swift response. She thought for a moment. "No, ... I liked the atmosphere. When I was there it was a very happy school. A lot of people said at school, not in a nerdy way, 'we are so lucky to be here'. It is so beautiful. You make so many friends, you meet people, you're treated with a decent amount of respect by the people in charge so you tend to respect them more. Part of becoming more of an adult was because one was treated more as an adult."

She grinned again. "Of course, it was appalling in preparing me for when I left in terms of the ratio of boys to girls! Now, when I go to a party if the ratio is not 10-1

in my favour I sulk and want to go home because I used to be surrounded by boys at Stowe and be the centre of attention. Then suddenly there are hundreds of girls out there, it's a level playing field and you're not particularly special! But, yes, it did prepare me for when I left."

Stowe had certainly influenced her career choice. "The Design Department didn't give you the idea that a design-related industry as a career choice was any less prestigious or important than an academically-related career. They were very non-judgemental. They encouraged you to have the courage to do something... I'd always been interested in fashion but mildly. I never ever believed that you could possibly have a job doing this work. I couldn't believe that people got paid for saying 'Gosh, I like that jacket. Let's photograph it!'" If she hadn't gone to Stowe she firmly believes she would have ended up being a banker "or something in the city." She grinned. "It's probably because there's a lot of blokes there!"

For her Design A-level Kate Reardon designed some clothes. She screwed up her face at the memory. "It was the most hideous thing you've ever seen in your whole entire life! It was quite monstrous! But the masters let me and were very encouraging. I'm sure they knew that the clothes I was making were hideous – I mean, they had eyes, they could see. But they were still very encouraging and that gives you a lot of confidence to go on."

We asked her about her gap year. "I made curtains and dresses for silly Sloanes in Fulham, or whatever, and made enough money to take myself to New York, where I got my first job." She used to advertise her skills in shop windows. "It was remarkably simple. I was a dress-maker and people came and said 'I want a pink party dress' and I would make it!" She smiled at the recollection. "I was pretty terrible at it and I charged them a fortune! Asked if she had always had a flair for making and designing things, she replied modestly that she was not aware of any flair but used to make clothes at school for herself. "Buying skirts at £30 a go was quite expensive whereas you could go to Peter Jones and buy the fabric and then it took you an hour to do it – it was really no problem."

She had a place at Exeter University to read English or Art (she was no longer quite sure which) but decided not to take it up. "At the age of nineteen I just knew I didn't want to be a student. I knew I didn't want to wake up to baked beans and ash trays. I just wanted to go to New York and be glamorous. I mean, who wouldn't? I couldn't understand how people would want to go to a strange south-western town and spend three years sitting in pubs."

While in New York she wrote to Conde Nas, the

company which owns *The Tatler*, *Vogue*, *Homes and Garden* and *Vanity Fair*, saying that she was crazy about fashion and wanted work. "I went and had an interview and they gave me a job as fashion assistant on *American Vogue*. Luckily I was born there and had an American passport. The Americans seemed to think the English were all terribly smart and wanted to employ lots of English journalists because we could all talk poshly. I could sit out there and say 'Hello, *Vogue Fashion*' in a posh voice and they liked that! Having a work permit had been a big help."

She stayed on for two years. "After a while I thought 'Done this! Got the tee-shirt, been to enough parties. Time to come home'" and luckily at that time *Tatler* were looking for a new fashion editor. I was fairly lucky. A lot of people took a big risk on me because I had no proper experience for this. I wasn't fully qualified for the job and I really didn't know what I was doing. I made it up as I went along!"

She obviously made it up very impressively because she was subsequently promoted to Fashion Director in charge of all the fashion department. "It means that all the fashion pages in the magazine are my responsibility. A group of us – the editor, the editor-in-chief etc – decide what stories we're going to do, what looks good – pink mini-skirts, little black dresses – and what month that's going to go into and how we're going to shoot it. We imagine a fashion spread – eight pages of fashion pictures – like a small movie, as though it's a story. I produce it and work out the budget. We bring everyone together, choose the model and the photographer, the hair make-up artists, we decide what shoes go with that skirt, whether she should be standing in the studio in London or on a beach in Barbados or whether she should be looking happy. There's lots of "move your leg over there" and "lift your arm up" and generally making sure the clothes look good. *Tatler*, unlike other fashion magazines which use models, use real life people or celebrities. Occasionally we use professional models but it sells more clothes and it's more interesting for the reader to see Jodie Foster modelling than a model you've never heard

Some of Kate Reardon's A-level designs, photographed at the time by visiting photographer, Richard Bierman.



of. It gives you the edge. I shoot about half of the pages myself and the other half I commission and oversee."

It all sounded extremely hectic! We asked if it was tiring. "Twice a year, perhaps, during the collections, when you go to Milan, Paris or New York, then it's very tiring. And when you're doing a fashion shoot you're starting at 5.00 in the morning to get the good light, and you're on your feet all day, and running around and you've got to make sure there's never a crease on the dress, then it's tiring."

On the whole, however, she reckoned it was probably not more tiring than most other jobs. She was not complaining, as she loves her job! "I mean, who wouldn't? I think it's fab. I think I'm very lucky to have it."

We asked if the fashion world was ultra-competitive and "bitchy". She paused. "I suppose it's fairly 'bitchy'," she conceded, "but if you can survive a girls' public school in England, you can do anything!"

The conversation returned to Stowe. "I haven't been back for ages," she mused. "I gather it's all been done up since I've been there." It was, she thought, a most beautiful place, a wonderful place to do part of one's growing up in. "At the time, apart from beautiful summer's evenings I didn't feel privileged to be there, but now I feel privileged to have been allowed to spend two of my formative years, or whatever, in such a beautiful place. Having grown up in London and Cheltenham, I was essentially a city girl...." Although she had loved being at Stowe, she said, she had been unaware of its importance to her at the time. "Love it while you're there! I loved it. It gives you great bondings. You're more socially confident. You're able to work through all your hang-ups in a place where it's reasonably safe. If you do run into trouble, it's such a supportive place and you have your friends around you to get through the tougher times." Stowe, she declared finally, had been a great source of inspiration to her. "It's only when I look back and try and work out why I made decisions which I made that I realise quite how Stowe gave me the confidence to do what I'm doing now..."



*“I know now
what I wish
I’d known then”*

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THE GENTLE STEAM HAMMER: G. WILSON KNIGHT AT STOWE

This year sees the centenary of the birth of the distinguished English critic G. Wilson Knight, who taught at Stowe for five years during the war and wrote *The Dynasty of Stowe*, perhaps the most original of all Stowe books. Tony Meredith explores the book's background.

Fighting Hitler

When war broke out 'Dick' Wilson Knight was Professor of English at Trinity College, Toronto. Born in Surrey, the son of an Insurance Company manager, he had been educated at Dulwich College and Oxford. He was the author of many books on English literature and a devoted Shakespearean actor. He had served in the First World War as a young man and now, fired with a patriotic fervour, he returned to England. He had always believed that literature could fill human spiritual needs. He now took this further and saw it as the platform for the survival of democracy at war with fascism. The poetry of Shakespeare and Milton, he believed, could help fight Hitler!

So in the summer of 1940 he started a series of recitals on Shakespeare and England. For this personal crusade he also devised a dramatic presentation, *This Sceptred Isle*, which was first given at the Tavistock Theatre, London in collaboration with Nancy Price, and ended in July 1941 with a short run at the Westminster Theatre. It was very much a one-man show, Knight performing a series of Shakespearean speeches, linked by commentaries from his own writing. The distinguished actor Henry Ainley was persuaded out of retirement to read the latter for the Westminster run. Support in various forms also came from notable theatrical personalities like Cyril Maude, John Martin Harvey, Violet Vanbrugh and Nigel Playfair. But the swift closure of *This Sceptred Isle* brought an abrupt end to Wilson Knight's theatrical foray. He was forty-three years old, low in funds and in need of employment. It was then that a friend mentioned Stowe.

Joining Stowe

The Headmaster, JF Roxburgh, was intrigued by his application, for he knew several of Wilson Knight's books. TS Eliot had championed his first volume on Shakespeare, *The Wheel Of Fire*, back in 1930. Most recently a book of studies in poetry, *The Burning Oracle*, had presented lively debate on Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Pope and Byron. "Frankly I do not think that the temporary job that is vacant here is quite in your line," JF wrote cautiously. "There is a saying about a steam hammer and a nut!" The job, he warned him, was a very junior one, involving some geography. However, the undeterred Knight still visited JF at Stowe. He at once came under the spell of both. Although offered an acting job by Nancy Price, he opted for Stowe: "The London



adventure," he wrote later, "had left me drained of energy and cash alike, and I felt safer in a school."

He arrived in September 1941 and was given a couple of bachelor rooms in one of the Field Houses. He discovered there was no running hot water and no heating. But as he walked to and from the South Front on his first day, he found compensations. "It was a pleasant start. You felt free up here. The wide spaces, when they opened to the view, were fresh, and the sky belonged to them." As he explored the grounds he felt the place weighted by mystery. "It was hard to make out whether it was a mystery of old-world remembrance or of half-fledged newness."

Knight was quickly a success in the classroom and he and JF were in happy accord. "He is not a conventional schoolmaster," JF was to comment. "He does not, for example, play games." Wilson Knight's views on English Literature, still today widely respected, were fresh and original and JF (brought up in a different tradition and unsure even that English was a proper subject in its own right) confessed privately that he found them "somewhat strange". Nonetheless friendship and mutual respect quickly grew.

The war with its human losses and material privations was taking a heavy toll on JF. From the amiable and

cultured Wilson Knight he drew considerable comfort. Great was his alarm, therefore, when he learnt that Knight was reading his own book, *The Poetic Procession*, which dated back to some talks on poetry he had given at Lancing. "I cannot help feeling rather sorry," he wrote to Knight, "that my youthful indiscretion has come under your scholarly eye. It was fun putting it together at the time, but in recent years I have felt no pride in it."

JF was soon to meet the entire Knight entourage. Wilson Knight's dominating and neurotic mother, who had suffered a small stroke, moved to the White Hart in 1942 and stayed for over a year. Every week her son would cycle to Buckingham to see her. She was soon holding court with the many Stowe parents who stayed there. She became a valued friend to JF who would visit her for tea. Her other son, the distinguished classics don Jackson Knight, would also stay with her for long periods.

After two terms at Stowe on a temporary basis Knight was offered a more permanent arrangement with some teaching of English in the Upper School. His finances were still precarious and he confessed to JF that the deduction of £100 a year for his rooms from the salary of £450 left him unable to pay his way. Writing had yet to bring him much financial reward. "My books, though beginning to get a lot of attention, can scarcely be said to make money as yet – proof-corrections, tax and preliminary typing leave only a small sum every year. I have hopes of my new Milton doing fairly well, with a more popular sale, since it is topical." JF's reaction to this *cri de coeur* was immediate. A salary of £540 without deductions was miraculously provided. "I hope that this will enable you to stay for a time," commented JF, tactfully asking him to keep the pay rise confidential! "I am very much looking forward," he added, "to the appearance of your Milton. I have just been reading Macaulay's essay on him with combined amusement and amazement."

Chariot of Wrath, "the message of John Milton to Democracy at War", came out in April 1942, with a preface written from Stowe and a quotation at the front from a recent speech by Churchill. Something of Wilson Knight's intentions can be seen from the conclusion of his first chapter:

"Against the spiritual powers of Nazi Germany storming across Europe and Africa with Saracen fanaticism we must either weaken or pit some greater strength. That strength is not to be found by thinking and a host of good intentions profit us nothing. Where there is no vision the people, very rightly, perish. In our poetry alone resides the one authentic and authoritative virtue..." It was a powerful message. "It may do a bit," he told JF, "to rejuvenate the sense of purpose and positive direction which I think is rather lacking at the moment, or anyway weakened." On publication, the critics agreed. Wilson Knight's Milton, said *The Times Literary Supplement*, was "a living champion, a national oracle, whose voice his countrymen of today will do well to remember". The reviews were uniformly good. "I do not know whether the success of your book is going to make you rich," commented JF, "but it should certainly make you proud."

Beginning Dynasty

It was at this time that thoughts of *The Dynasty of Stowe* began to surface. "I have been roughing out some preliminary drafts of my proposed (entirely personal) meditations among the buildings and scenery of Stowe," he told JF, "and I think something may eventually come of it." He wrote large parts in the summer holidays of 1942, sometimes combining its composition with his fire-watching duties. It was part of his wartime crusade to alert Britain to her spiritual needs and opportunities.

Stowe's importance in the eighteenth century, Knight thought, gave it an extra dimension as a school. "We are in a backwater existence," he wrote, "and yet close in touch too with 'the dark backward and abysm of time' in dimly felt relationship with forgotten things: Stowe is a hole, a window, in the opaque surface of contemporary Britain through which one might sink shafts and see visions." He saw the present too as an opportunity for inspiration. He admired Stowe's freedom from religious dogma and pressure; in the Chapel he found an all-embracing, all-forgiving Christianity: "The Chapel reminds us that Christianity is an acceptance of God's creation, not a critique of it." In Stowe's natural and man-made beauty he found great inspiration; of Stowe in autumn he wrote:

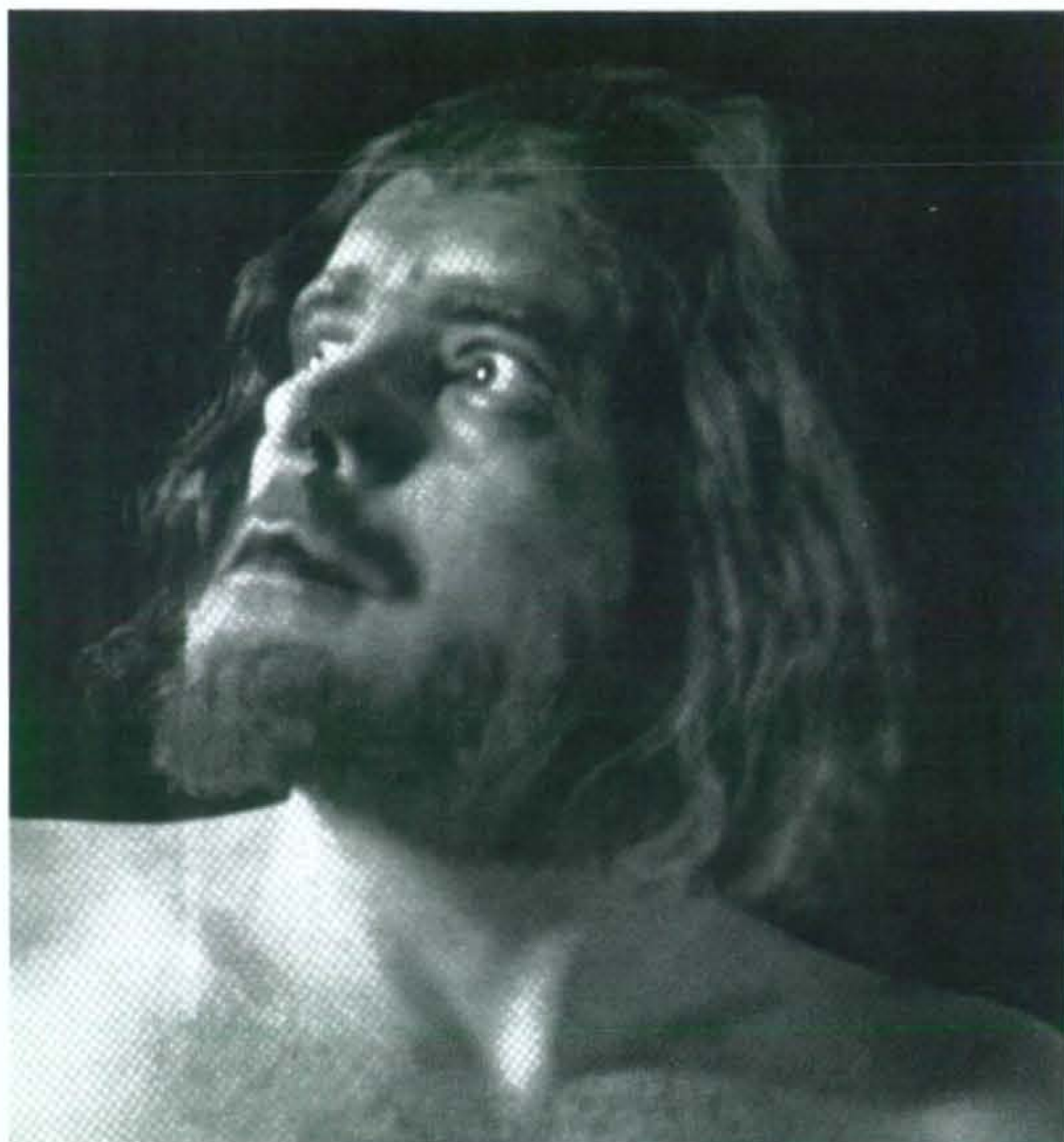
"Now, when a sharp earthy smell of sodden leaves reminds you of the turning year, when the floors of the Chestnut Avenue are paved with brown and gold... you feel into the meaning of autumnal existence, the ripeness of nation or building, dynasty or tree; the cycle of life and death, mysteries of the past and of the future; the mystery of Stowe, now a school, a palatial death more richly living than ever in its history."

So strongly did Wilson Knight view the combination of Stowe's past and present that he believed "if it made the best of its chances" it could become the leading school in post-war Britain.

Acting and Directing

Although writing whenever he could, Wilson Knight still was involved in several school activities. He became President, for example, of a discussion society, which was very popular. The Symposium, declared Roxburgh, was a society of "youngish but intelligent boys who discuss all subjects in heaven and earth under Knight's kindly chairmanship." The club met in the Aurelian Room. *The Stoic* reported that one paper, on hypnotism, ended "by a rather unsuccessful attempt at a demonstration on the President". Another was given by George Melly, the future jazz singer, on surrealism. It proved "extremely provocative". The next paper, "Jazz is Doomed", was presumably aimed at provoking George Melly still further. Wilson Knight was also Vice-President of the élite XII Club and gave a "colourful and erudite" talk on Persia.

But it was the theatre which had always chiefly interested him. He had written a book on Shakespearean production and had himself acted leading roles in Canada and England. At Stowe he carried on these interests. He



Left: Wilson Knight as Timon of Athens (1939)
Below: As the Duke of Buckingham in Henry VIII (1932)



played the Inquisitor in Peter Dams' production of *St Joan* and, in the Chapel, the Madman in John Masefield's *Good Friday*. "The speaking and acting of the Madman's central speech," he later wrote, "I look back upon as the most rewarding of my stage experiences." He also directed *Macbeth*. Wartime shortages plus the unsatisfactory setting of the Old Gym militated against great success. Nonetheless, the strong criticisms of it in *The Stoic* come as something of a surprise. The reviewer was Tony Quinton (the future Philosophy don, Lord Quinton), then a sixth-former. Quinton admired certain aspects: the blocking, the smooth flow of action, the technical arrangements. "Yet the performance was lacking". Most of the actors, he said, *Macbeth* apart, did not understand their parts. There was too much restraint from the leading actors. *Macbeth*, moreover, suffered from an unfortunate nodding of the head and convulsions of the left arm. Lady *Macbeth* (played by George Melly) moved gracefully and spoke expressively, but "her head-dress made her appear as if she had a fractured jaw". *Macduff* was taken to task for taking in big breaths before beginning his speeches and for the propensity for looking at the roof and "demonstrating his neck". *Siward* would "only be remembered for an argument with his sword about going into its scabbard." Quinton concluded that "Mr Knight had stubborn material to deal with and the result was patchy".

Clearly the acting left something to be desired and it may be that Wilson Knight's idiosyncratic Shakespearean style met opposition from the Stoics. Knight had visited *Her Majesty's* as a boy when Herbert Beerbohm Tree was popularising Shakespeare there with his sumptuously

mounted productions. He approved of Tree's declamatory methods and saw its synthesis with a freer, less realistic stage setting as the ideal production method. It was not a popular view. In the utility world of the 1940s Beerbohm Tree tended to be ridiculed. At all events, Knight's methods, so successful when interpreted by himself, seem not to have been effectively transmitted to his cast! Quinton in his review calls for more "ranting" rather than less. This would suggest that the Stoic actors had resisted the best urgings of the Shakespearean expert directing them! Although flirting with the idea of *Twelfth Night*, he never directed at Stowe again...

Roxburgh's Anxieties

With *Macbeth* behind him Wilson Knight began to cast around for a publisher of *Dynasty*. John Murray showed some interest, but, as Knight reported to JF, "they clearly wanted something more archaeological and less personally artistic." During the summer of 1943 he began writing an account of his memories of the last war, with travels in India, Iraq and Persia, and OUP confirmed they would go ahead with a new book on Shakespeare and England. Eventually a publisher was found for *Dynasty*, the Fortune Press, "a small 'artistic' firm", as Wilson Knight explained cautiously to JF. The latter would seem to have been beginning to have some doubts about the book. The publishers, Wilson Knight assured him, "do not go in for large sales or violent publicity." It was in fact a one-man firm which concentrated on modern poetry. JF, worried that the book might be interpreted as advertising, consulted the Chairman of HMC:

"Knight has taken it into his head to write a book about Stowe. He says that it is one of a series of books with a national theme (following on his books on Milton and Shakespeare) and that he has felt impelled to write it by the central position which the Stowe of the Eighteenth Century takes (as it seems to him) in the history of the Empire. If Knight confined himself to eighteenth century Stowe no problem would arise. But he doesn't. His book contains a number of impressions of the School and it is about these that I am perplexed. The impressions are mostly favourable though some of the compliments seem to me a bit left-handed, but they are certainly not all favourable. However, on balance the book would appear to praise the school."

JF ended by declaring that he himself had not the slightest wish to see the book in print! "I doubt whether it would do the school anything but harm though actually I do not imagine many people will read it. But I like Knight and some of his historical chapters are excellent. If he wants to publish his book I feel I ought not to stop him."

The Chairman of HMC reminded Roxburgh that "if a man wishes to write a book about Stowe, nothing can prevent him from doing so." He suggested he ask for a preface in which the personal nature of his book was stressed. This JF did, also saying that he would be asking for certain changes. The even-tempered Knight seems to have remained unperturbed by it all.

Corrections and Dedication

But the book's smooth progress was now interrupted by another hitch, a bout of pneumonia which put Wilson Knight in the San, dangerously ill for a while. It was thought a Home Guard exercise might have precipitated it. During this period JF, although not well himself, did much to abate the anxieties of Knight's mother and brother. "The exquisite thoughtfulness of your letter to me," wrote Jackson Knight from Exeter University, "explains the success and happiness of Stowe. This friendly care in little things is delightful to see and to admire." Jackson Knight had just published his major work, *Roman Vergil*, to which JF, a fellow classicist, had responded in most enthusiastic detail. "I have had kind letters about my all too imperfect book," wrote Jackson Knight to JF, "but I think no-one cited page numbers except you!"

JF clearly approved of Jackson Knight and thought him "incredibly learned". He probably approved less of the brothers' growing interest in spiritualism. When Jackson Knight came to write his famous Penguin translation of Vergil's *Aeneid*, a medium made regular contact with the poet (who had died two thousand years ago). Vergil, wrote Wilson Knight later with no hint of irony, had been very helpful to his brother over some of the more ambiguous passages.

By March 1944 the final proof pages of *Dynasty* were ready and Wilson Knight sent them on to JF with the invitation to cut as he wished. A close-typed, four-sided letter from Roxburgh followed, with several suggested changes, but all of a minor nature. If JF still disliked the book, it did not show: it had given him great pleasure, he

claimed, "even greater than I felt at the first reading."

His "trifling points" were all conscientiously met by Knight. JF, for example, disliked Knight's criticism of the removal of columns from the Temple of Concord to the Chapel: "the loss is serious". JF responded: "No doubt it is. But the boys of today do not realise that the Temple of Concord was almost collapsing at the time, and that the substitution of brick walls saved the building's life." Wilson Knight meekly accepted the need for revision; the "serious loss" was removed. The columns, he now noted, were taken from the temple "where they had ceased to serve their purpose" and replaced by brick. "They look well in their new home."

JF objected too to a reference to the boys coming into class bandaged after being bitten by horse-flies whilst sunbathing at the lake. "True enough, but it will produce a deplorable effect on potential parents!" Another change saw "rotunda" replaced by "rotundo" ("I think that this was the XVIIIth Century practice here"). It is hard to equate these trifling corrections with the concerns voiced to the HMC's chairman. JF now left unchallenged several potentially embarrassing themes: Knight's reflections on the joys of sunbathing with the boys by the lake, for example, or Platonic theories of education which would certainly raise eyebrows today. He had possibly been won over by the insistent theme of Stowe's beauty, so finely articulated.

JF was also very moved by Knight's wish to dedicate the book to him: "You speak of a possible dedication to me. Of course I should be proud to accept the book if you thought it right to offer it to me in this fashion. But my only claim to such an honour could be that I have fought to preserve the freedom and kindness, which have struck you in the place, against the encroachments which masters brought up in another tradition and the herd instinct of the boys themselves have from time to time threatened. I realise after reading your book that even this, which I have always believed to be my sole merit, is really owed to the spirit of Stowe itself, which only an unimaginative die-hard would have attempted to combat. So 'the sole merit' has gone! – but I have seen it go without regret."

Wilson Knight courteously demurred: "There was, of course," he replied, "never much doubt in my mind as to the share you have in the atmosphere of Stowe! Even if my own imaginative reading of the grounds' influence were alone in question, I should say that the art of creative living is always mainly the art of submitting to, or interpreting, something outside oneself – making oneself, as it were, an instrument for a purpose; and I feel you have, in your creation and control of the school, instinctively interpreted what I have rather daringly tried to define in my book – the whole atmosphere of Stowe."

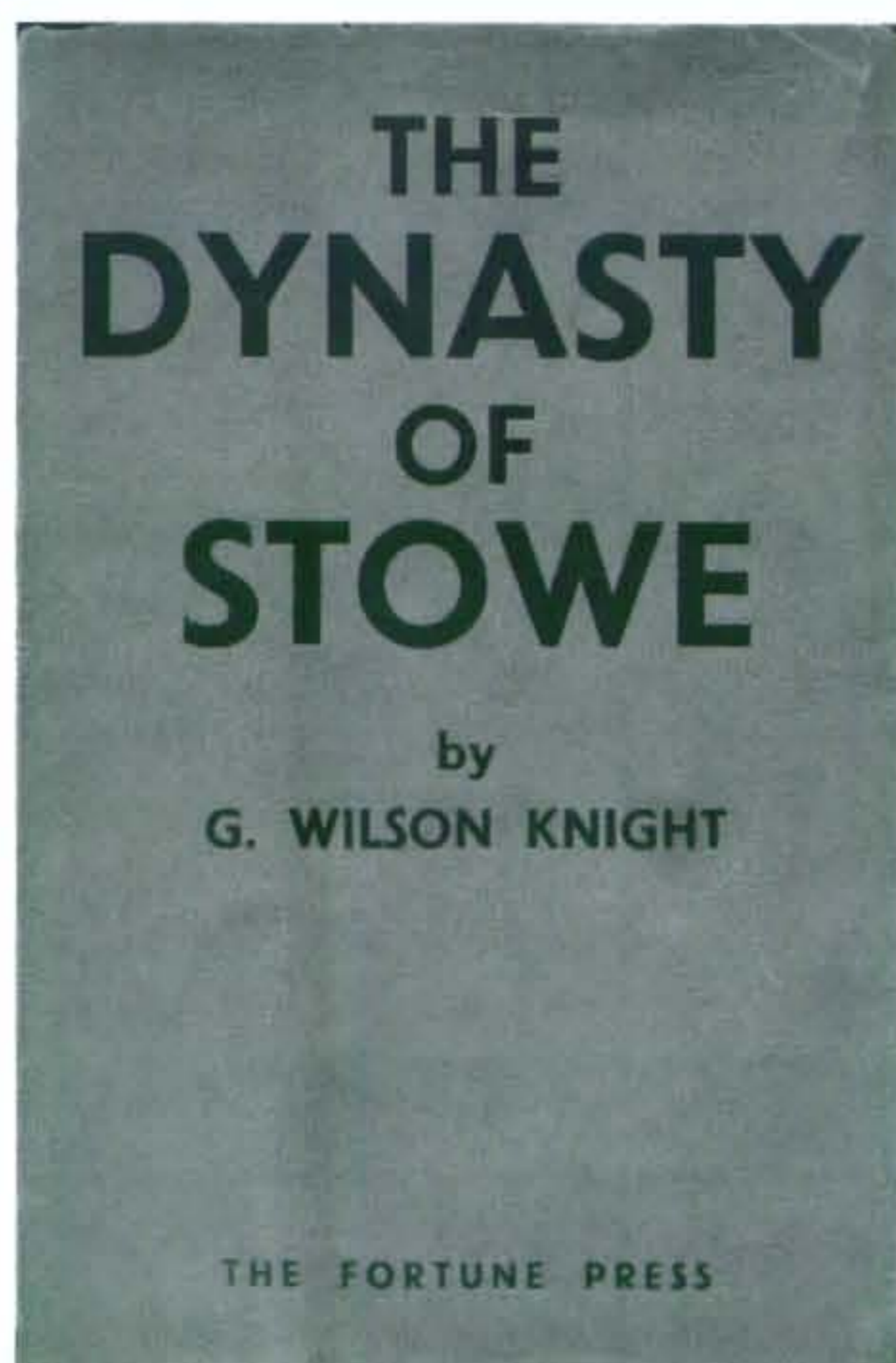
As regards the dedication Wilson Knight suggested: "For JFR, who has made Stowe to prosper in our time." He explained: "I want unobtrusively to make clear it is your work that exists today and yet to preserve the feeling of 'Stowe' as something that has lived in the past and will continue."

Publication

In the summer of 1944 Knight's new book on Shakespeare was published, but *Dynasty* was still making slow progress. Wilson Knight fussed over minute, expensive extra changes, whilst "Mr Fortune" (as JF had dubbed him) clearly took things at a steady pace. It was not until May 1945, the very month in which Germany surrendered, that publication finally occurred. The book met with mixed reviews! AA Milne, a Stowe parent, wrote sympathetically in *The Observer*. "In these days, when everybody is rushing to climb into the Left Luggage van of any train going no matter where, so long as it goes without class distinction, it is well, even at the risk of being called a crypto-Fascist by "Pravda", to remember that the life we are leaving behind has still something to teach us." The political climate, to which Milne referred, was not appropriate for a book about a public school in a stately home. *The Times Literary Supplement*, reflecting this new climate, ignored the quality of the writing and damned with faint praise:

"Mr Wilson Knight, a master at Stowe School, does not dig very deep and drags the reader along from dukes to bathing schoolboys, from scholarly librarians to masters doling out nibs at the beginning of term, and from noblemen dancing with servants to boys grubbing around the remnant of an enemy bomb. The whole is superimposed with some rather obvious and wistful moralizing, but the book makes pleasant reading for anyone interested in political and public school life."

Despite such carping the book sold faster than the Fortune Press could produce copies (unsurprisingly, as Mr Fortune was only binding *Dynasty* at the rate of 20 a month). The first edition of 1,000 copies was sold out and a reprint commissioned for 1946.

*Departure*

By then it was time for Knight to leave Stowe. Many former masters were now returning from war service. JF had no alternative but to make space for them. "He has become a great friend of ours," Roxburgh wrote, whilst recommending Knight to Leeds University. "If we could possibly have found room for him on the staff we should have besought him to stay here indefinitely. But we have from eighteen to twenty men returning from the Forces and we cannot keep any of the 'duration' masters." To another enquiry he wrote: "Personally Mr Wilson Knight has won the regard and affection of us all and I myself feel that I am losing not only a colleague but a friend." He was "an extremely human, sympathetic and understanding person." After Knight left, the two kept in touch. When, for example, JF was taken ill in 1947, he received solicitous advice: "Since my own pneumonia bouts I have taken Crookes' Halibut Oil Pills and feel much better and warmer during the winter..." Knight grieved deeply at JF's death seven years later.

But the move from Stowe had proved a good one. He had gone back to university life, spending sixteen years at Leeds, first as reader and then as Professor of English Literature. Not only did it allow him to inaugurate a course in World Drama and to be associated with the Union Theatre Group, it gave his whole academic career a fitting acclaim. He was widely celebrated and read and was given the CBE for his services to literature.

In addition to literary criticism he had published plays, poetry and biography. He had even written for television. When he died in 1985, at the age of eighty-seven, *The Times* wrote of his "burning faith in literature as one of the great needs of man as a spiritual being". He was, it added in summation, "the most modest of men".

In the overall context of his life the five years at Stowe seem little more than a diversion. *Dynasty* too seems something of a damp educational squib, published far too late to make any impact on wartime thinking. For Stowe, however, it remains an inspiring book, not so much for its fine, poetic descriptions as for its provoking challenge to succeeding generations. For Wilson Knight sees (albeit through a glass darkly) visions of future greatness.

His final section on the Chapel is typical. It is Sunday. He is standing in a stall towards the back. The congregation is lustily singing *St Patrick's Breastplate*. Wilson Knight's imagination takes flight and he sees an ideal school world of deep spiritual enlightenment:

"A great wave of sound surges, like blood to the head, towards the chancel; and I half hear, half see, as through a golden mist, the distant generations, in ghostly companies as yet unborn, at some new ritual earthed in many such emblazoned halls as this, whose song sweeps up as a tongue of fire, rose-incensed, beyond my understanding."

HENRY STANTON: INTO FORMULA THREE

The acknowledged stepping-stone to motor racing stardom is Formula Three; and the most prestigious Formula Three championship of all is the British one. It attracts aspiring Grand Prix drivers from all over the world. It also attracts Old Stoics! A few years ago Charles Rickett (Chatham 81) won the Class B category. And this year Henry Stanton (Walpole 92) is planning to try his luck in Class A. Henry, who comes from Solihull, was racing karts from the age of ten. At Stowe he was keen on rugby and swimming, but karts were his priority. Having left at sixteen to further his ambitions, he was soon out on the circuits testing single-seaters. Only two days after his seventeenth birthday Henry entered his first car race, at Brands Hatch.

In 1993 he raced regularly in the Formula Vauxhall Junior Championship and did remarkably well to come sixth. The next year he returned to the same championship, driving for former Grand Prix star Martin Donnelly. Henry won several races and was lying second in the championship when he crashed in qualifying at Brands. An enforced convalescence destroyed his championship hopes.

Suddenly things were not so easy. In 1995 Henry lost that most vital of ingredients for success, sponsorship. Nothing daunted, he worked as an instructor at several racing schools, including Silverstone. Meanwhile he planned a new campaign in a higher category.

In 1996 Henry drove in Formula Vauxhall for Zenith Motorsport, based in Norfolk. His team-mate was Irishman Warren Carway, his sponsors Barnard Pipeline. The Zenith Vauxhalls not only did the British series (in

which Henry ended a highly creditable seventh) but also some rounds of the Formula Opel European Union series. It was a chance to race with some of the brightest young talents emerging in Europe. There were the inevitable frustrations! At Oulton Park in August, for example, he decided to overtake on the outside going into Old Hall. "Unfortunately the plan didn't quite work!" Ahead of him Nakano had run wide into the corner making contact with another car, which pushed Henry off the circuit. On a soaked Thruxton he qualified for the front row; yet his fine race ended in a contretemps with a Brazilian at the Chicane: "I tried to go around the outside of Losacco. He closed the door and ran out of space!"

Henry attracted much attention at Silverstone, taking a strong fifth place in the European series at an International meeting in August. Another productive race came at Donington Park in September when he stormed through the field to fifth and later coped brilliantly with a damaged front wing. At Brands he was awarded the Talking Pages Driver of the Day Award for a particularly good fourth place.

It had been an encouraging season, one in which he had shown he could compete at the front in exalted company. Formula Three, therefore, was the next logical step. The winter has been spent assembling a budget and a competitive outfit (a Dallara car with Mugen-Honda engine). Those going to Silverstone this year should look out for him! If anyone knows how to take Stowe Corner, it should surely be Henry Stanton!

Ray Singh



Henry Stanton and his Vauxhall Junior, 1994

“OCCUPYING THE HIGH MORAL GROUND”

Kate Chambré writes of George Monbiot, featured in an article last May by Andy Beckett in The Independent on Sunday. She explains the background:

On thirteen abandoned acres by the Thames George Monbiot was taking a stand. The land, owned by Guinness, was once the site of a distillery. It had lain derelict for eight years. Now it was being seized by George Monbiot's team, a six month "occupation" by The Land Is Ours organisation, which he fronts. The assault had attracted much media attention and George was giving Sky News the background: "Derelict sites actually reduce people's sense of community... We want to make one an asset. We've got the energy. We've got the enthusiasm... The government's failed us, the business community's failed us. This is DIY Britain at work." Within a matter of hours George Monbiot's ideal village was taking shape as the community of three hundred young people settled to their tasks, putting up shelters and tents, digging gardens and latrines.

Channel 4 decided to give it a daily news slot. *The Pod*, a direct action journal, was ecstatic. "For the second year running George has kicked off the summer protest season with a wicked idea," wrote its editor.

It may look like a jolly romp, a naughty, juvenile prank. Yet behind all the fun in challenging the establishment by direct action there is a seriousness of purpose.

The land occupation campaign demands public access to all uncultivated land, decent travellers' havens, sites in city centres reserved for cheap housing and a curtailment of the considerable advantages land developers at the moment enjoy over the private individual. "The direct action movement is always in danger of sounding negative - We don't want this! We don't want that! - It's a lot more fun and exciting to be campaigning for things that you do want. People see young people getting off their arses!" George Monbiot brings useful academic skills to the protest movement and a wider vision than the climbing up of trees or the sitting in front of bulldozers. For he is articulate and, being of the media, knows how to handle it. He waxes lyrical on how the countryside has become a desert of industrial farming, owned by a few and, outside national parks, accessible to even fewer. Meanwhile in cities, he points out, much-needed social housing cannot

be built because land is too expensive. It thus becomes derelict or, at best, the home for yet another super-store.

"Land use is the most important form of democratic control. It decides how we live. Development determines the national character, the sense of nationhood."

Andy Beckett in his article, meanwhile, temporarily diverted from the thirteen acres in Wandsworth to give *Independent* readers the background to the leading figure: "At 32, Monbiot is a professional campaigner, an author, an academic and a journalist. He has written three praised anthropology books, risen fast at the BBC, and, earlier this year, received a UN Global Environmental Award."

It was particularly interesting to see what the article had to say of his Stowe roots. He arrived, wrote Beckett, in bad shape, having had five agonising years of being bullied at his previous school from which he had run away and which left him with a stammer. He was forced into a "private world of tadpole-catching and mole-saving." He joined Lyttelton House in 1976: "At 13 he was packed off for another five-year dose, this time at Stowe. There, however, his enthusiasms began to be recognised as more than eccentricities. He won a minor scholarship, became captain of the fishing club, was even

appointed deputy head prefect." He won a scholarship to Oxford to study zoology.

After charting George Monbiot's subsequent career, the article returned to Wandsworth and those thirteen seized acres. Would there be a permanent settlement? Or would the village be a week-long symbol, a brief hint at what could be done with derelict land? Andy Beckett inclined towards the latter view. He was wrong! It was not until over five months later that the bailiffs were sent in (three hundred of them!) with bulldozers to clear the site. "It was very worthwhile," reflected George Monbiot recently. "It raised the issue of land ownership, which was not on the political agenda. It highlighted the desperate need for affordable housing and community projects in cities." Meanwhile the bulldozed area again lies empty, enclosed by new security fencing. An anniversary reunion is planned there by the protesters for May



George Monbiot, as featured in Andy Beckett's article, "Occupying the High Moral Ground".

GEORGE RESEATED

The last issue of *The Stoic* contained three snapshots of work being done with the equestrian statue of King George I. Readers were invited to proffer more details. We are grateful to Major Duncan Hyslop for the following information.



If you turn to page 23 of last year's *Stoic* you will find an error! For the caption accompanying John Bloomfield's snapshots says that they were taken in the 1950s when George and his mount were being removed from their plinth for restoration. Moreover, to add to the confusion, if you turn to page 7 of *Templa Quam Dilecta*, Number IV, there is a photograph of George's horse returning by lorry whilst a large crowd watches from the North Front steps. It is dated 11th December 1957. May a pedantic old soldier be allowed to attempt to put the record straight? First of all, the snapshots in last year's *Stoic* are of the return of George, not the departure! Secondly, the dating. The lead statue was removed for restoration on 31st March 1957 and not returned until the summer term of 1960. It is all in *The Stoic* of July 1960. The return was a very big school occasion. The editorial of that issue is entitled "A King Returns To His Own" and it is pointed out that only 150 of the current 608 members of the school had ever seen the equestrian statue. It relates, moreover, that such had been the distress on his departure that, on April 1st, the very next day, Stoics woke up to discover an impostor on the plinth, a scarecrow straddling a bicycle!

The writer in 1960 is unclear as to the exact nature of the restoration work in its long eleven terms of absence and hazards a guess that the statue has been "recast". This sounds somewhat drastic, even though it dates back to the 1720s. Perhaps another reader knows the precise answer to this? But there was certainly a sense of rejoicing at his return and the occasion was honoured by a poem in Latin elegiacs in *The Stoic*. Perhaps the editors of this issue will offer a prize to the first Stoic to translate it? *

*Rex sedet ante fores in equo defixus aeno:
 Laurea victrici tempora fronde premit.
 Gramineum campum caecis perlustrat ocellis,
 Fertur ubi quondam lata fuisse palus.
 Qua quondam dominus pisces captare solebat,
 Certatim pueros ludere folle iuvat.
 Sed licet interdum clamoribus otia turbent,
 Non agitat regis saxea corda fragor.*

The editorial of 1960 ended with the general hope that the "Restoration heralds a long and prosperous reign". It is an admirable sentiment and one which an old soldier feels privileged to endorse thirty-seven years on!



* Major Hyslop's challenge is accepted. Would-be prize-winners should offer their versions to MJB.

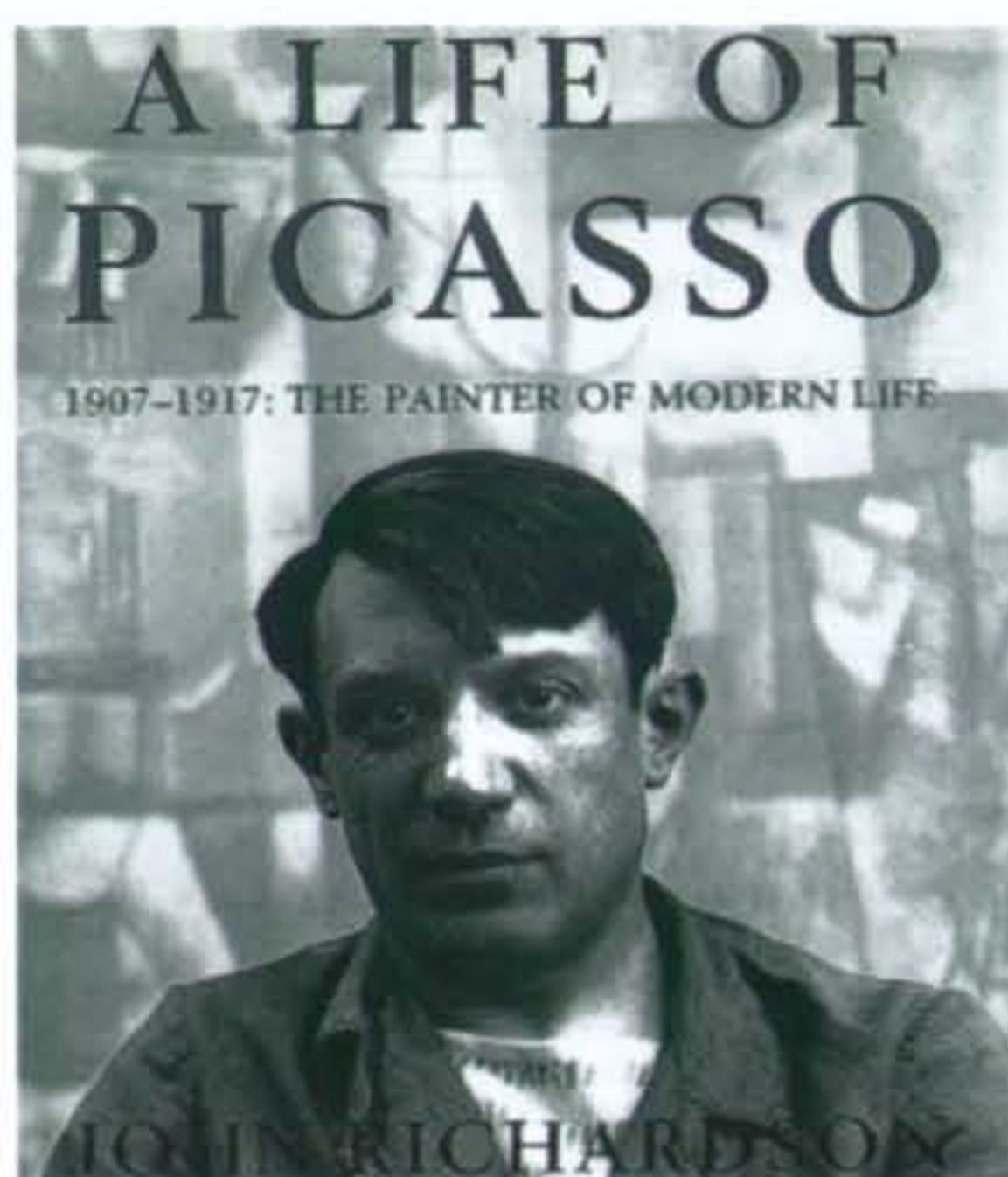
JOHN RICHARDSON: A LIFE OF PICASSO

Crispin Robinson reviews the latest volume on Picasso by John Richardson (Chatham 39)

With two of the projected volumes published so far, Professor John Richardson's magisterial biography of, indisputably, this century's greatest and most important artist, is well underway. In the light of the recent and very disappointing film starring Antony Hopkins as Picasso and Norman Mailer's derivative account of the artist, Professor Richardson's lucid and readable prose (too rare in much art historical writing) has earned him high praise from all areas of art historical scholarship and more generalised writing. Indeed, Volume I was awarded the 1991 Whitbread Book of the Year Award and, to my certain knowledge, has been enjoyed by many who would not normally read a book on Picasso. Nor is it the salacious details of Picasso's complex love life which engrosses so many readers – they may look at the awful film for that – but, rather, the penetrating insight into the artist's working methods and ideas which the author elucidates and teases out of even some of the most daunting of Picasso's works. The reader benefits not just from the author's incisive eye and deepest knowledge of Picasso's oeuvre, but also the knowledge which arose from Richardson's own close friendship with Picasso, the artist's widow and many friends as well as prolonged access to both the studio and the archive.

The first volume traces the roots of the young artist's early works in Andalusia and his Catalan and Barcelona experiences which so profoundly coloured the rest of his life. In *La Celestina* (1904; Musée Picasso, Paris), one of his most famous early paintings and one central to his 'Blue Period', we see a wall-eyed procuress, both sympathetic and menacing at the same time. As a literary figure and *leitmotif*, she reappears throughout his work to presage death or to develop those themes so dear to Picasso: money, love and betrayal. Small black and white illustrations of paintings, sketches and photographs frame the relevant text and reveal just how often these Spanish themes recurred in his later work.

His move to Paris in 1904, which would become his home for the rest of his



life though 'he remained a Spaniard at heart, a man of the Mediterranean', opened up new avenues and new circles of important friends and patrons, whose names - Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein (for whose 'monolithic portrait', as Professor Richardson memorably terms it, she claimed she sat ninety times) – resonate even today. Dependent on friends and mistresses, particularly, at this stage, Fernande Oliver, Picasso plundered the artistic past and also broadened his current aesthetic so that aged only 26 he was already conscious of being the 'most revolutionary, inventive and disturbing artist of his generation'. With the briefest of references to *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907; MOMA, New York) that most disturbing and Dionysiac of his early works, this first volume ends, thus exorcising Picasso's earlier demonic spirits and tantalising the reader with a promise of a fuller account of this most important of his early works in the following volume.

It was with some excitement that I opened the second volume, subtitled 'The Painter of Modern Life', as I can still recall my own thrills on seeing this major painting for the first time in New York (a thrill surpassed only by being permitted to sit alone in front of *Guernica* for a few precious minutes when it was being installed in the new museum in Madrid). Art historians intone monotonously that experience of the actual work of art is the key to any approach to the work of art and readers should arm themselves with a

colour reproduction (frustratingly, though understandably, only black and white illustrations are used) in lieu of a ticket to New York. With that and Richardson's account in the opening chapter, the seeds of Picasso's cubism are explained more clearly than before – certainly more than the huge two volume French catalogue of this painting and related works written some nine years ago. The primitive Iberian and negro sculpture which Picasso quoted, the provocative and disturbing subject – prostitutes in a brothel – form a (temporary) rejection of the classical canon of western art and reflect Picasso's own interest in getting us to see anew. This picture, as Richardson points out clearly, is also a lesson in how even the words and interpretation of the artist himself need not necessarily be accurate. Picasso could be 'as economical with the truth' as indeed Michelangelo was, if it served his current needs or agenda and it is hard to believe that he ever denied the influence of African sculpture; but he had reasons of his own.

The other point of great interest covered by this volume is the beginnings of Cubism and Picasso's work alongside Braque. Although this latter is not as well-known as Picasso whose appetite for publicity and fame was insatiable, Braque deserves more recognition as a true partner in the discovery and exploration of the possibilities of Cubism. While even experts struggle with the allocation of paintings to either Picasso or Braque in some years of this period, Richardson's clear distinction between their approaches makes it certainly easier to grasp at least some of their challenging abstractions.

It should be understood that Professor Richardson's volumes are biography and not art history and perhaps the better for it. They are readable and, in many ways, quite un-put-downable and fascinating accounts of the momentous life of this century's most important and prolific artist. There are hundreds of books on Picasso but Professor Richardson's volumes are a must and I recommend all serious students of this passing century's cultural and artistic revolutions to read them.



VICTORY AT LE MANS!

The Racing Whiteheads

In 1951 Peter Whitehead (Grafton 32) won the Le Mans 24 Hour Race in a Jaguar. Tony Meredith writes of that famous victory and some of the other exploits of Peter Whitehead [pictured left] and his half-brother, Graham (Grafton 40).

Peter and Graham Whitehead are the only Old Stoics to feature in *The Grand Prix Who's Who!* Graham only just qualified for inclusion, competing in a single world championship event. This was the British Grand Prix of 1952 at Silverstone, in which Peter used his own Ferrari and Graham drove Peter's Alta. Peter, however, entered another eleven world championship races and would have won the French Grand Prix at Reims in 1950 had a gearbox problem not dropped him to third only six laps from the finish. Despite many stirring single-seater drives, the brothers are chiefly remembered today for their exploits with powerful sports cars. Above all, for his victory at Le Mans in 1951, Peter Whitehead has a secure place in motor racing history.

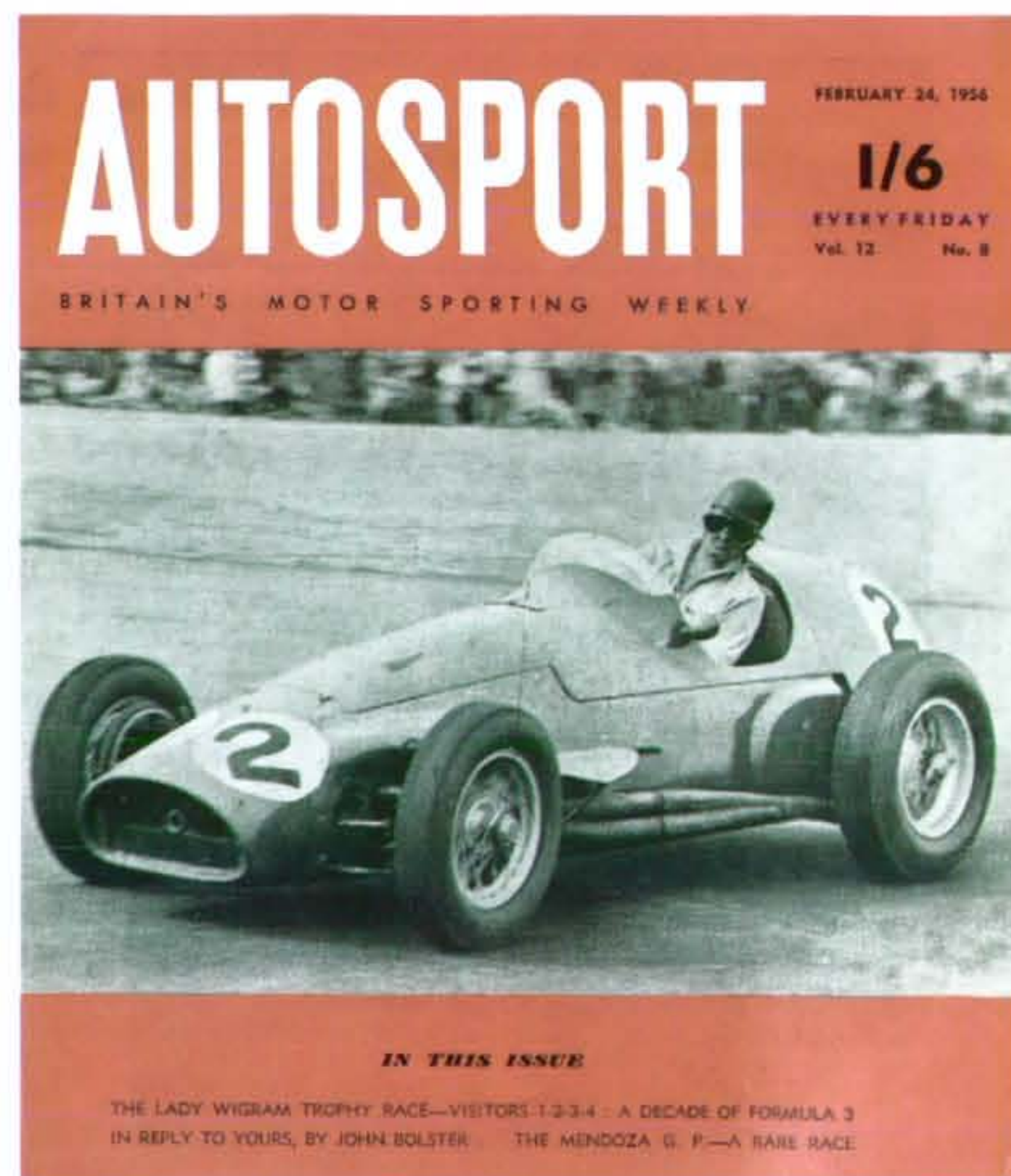
By 1951 the thirty-six year old Peter was already very well known, having started racing at the age of twenty before the War. He was born in Yorkshire and it was there his family had made their money in the wool industry. In

1946 he had bought a farm south of Reading, where he installed a manager to run things, so he could race his cars. He also acquired a garage at Chalfont St Peter where the cars were prepared by his own mechanics. Race tactics were often worked out in the pub next door.

In the 1940s and 1950s most racing drivers had other, full-time jobs (with the exception of the exceptional Stirling Moss). International motor racing was still a sport not a business. That it was a highly dangerous one only seemed to make it more attractive to men like the Whiteheads. Crash hats were not made compulsory until 1952. Seat belts were not worn. Roll-over bars were unknown. If a car turned over, the driver hoped to be thrown clear. Circuits did not have run-off areas, armco barriers or gravel traps. The odd straw bale in front of a tree was the only concession to driver safety. In Britain racing on public roads was forbidden and the new airfield circuits, like Silverstone, were considered artificial and a little tame. Road races, however, were allowed on the continent and it was to these that the Whiteheads, like all real racers, were drawn.



Peter Whitehead winning the Jersey Trophy of 1950 in his own Ferrari.
From: *The Motorsport Art of Michael Turner*



Peter Whitehead and his winning Ferrari at the Lady Wigram Trophy Race, New Zealand 1956.



Winners First Time Out by Alan Fearnley

This recent print commemorates "the sensation of 1951 when the new Jaguar XK120C made its Le Mans debut winning the 19th Le Mans 24 hour race on 23-24 June at an average speed of 93.495 mph driven by Peter Walker and Peter Whitehead under the supervision of team manager Lofty England."

Film of the Le Mans race of 1951 reveals this lack of emphasis on safety. The track was dangerously narrow in places. The speed differential between large and small cars was very great. Spectator areas were protected by the lowest of banks. Trees lined the sides of the fast Mulsanne straight. But film also conveys something of the happy, carnival atmosphere. Vast crowds attended this, the most important race in the motor racing calendar and it all looks wonderfully French! The competing cars are mobbed as they drive through the pavé streets of Le Mans before the race. Everywhere one sees Frenchmen in berets; one can almost smell the ubiquitous Gauloises, as clouds of smoke spiral skywards; and maybe there was even a glimpse of an onion-seller on a bicycle?

Peter was part of a new Jaguar works team. They had brought over three cars, all C-types, racing versions of the XK120 with engines of three and a half litres. Favourites for the race were the 4.1 litre Ferraris; other tough opposition was expected from the American Cunninghams, the French Talbots and the British Allards and Aston Martins. There were over sixty starters. Several Grand Prix heroes, like Fangio and Gonzales, were competing. Peter's co-driver was the extrovert Peter Walker, Lancing-educated and a Herefordshire farmer, whose daring exploits had earned him the nickname "Skid". Friends for many years, they made a good pairing.

Whereas Walker was a hard-drinking practical joker, tough on his cars yet sometimes even quicker than Moss, Peter Whitehead was more level-headed. On rowdy evenings he would leave the pranks to the extrovert Walker, Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt, though he himself became famous for an occasion on which he had attempted to untie a pig's tail. Very reserved by nature, Peter nonetheless enjoyed the good things in life. At Le Mans, for example, he would always stay at the best Michelin-rated hotel, even though it was far from the town.

The race began with the traditional Le Mans start, the drivers sprinting across the track. The combative Peter Walker took care of the start for Jaguar number 20, but it was a blue Talbot which led for the first three laps before Stirling Moss, Jaguar's leading driver, overtook it and quickly raced away from everyone, breaking the best Ferraris as he did so. The third works Jaguar fell out early with engine problems and when, after only 92 laps, Moss pulled out of the race with a broken engine, it was left to Peter Whitehead and Peter Walker to uphold the Jaguar challenge.

As dusk gathered, so the rain began. A torrential downpour was to keep up for much of the night. It did not deter the huge crowd around the railings. "Conditions underfoot are appalling", commented one reporter from

Autosport, "and most people are covered with yellow mud up to their knees." In the open Jaguar cockpit, the drivers were soon soaked and frozen. But the two Peters led the race throughout the night and next day the sole surviving Jaguar in British Racing Green continued to dominate. Mid-afternoon, with twenty-three hours gone, it had set a new record for distance covered. It was now a full ten laps ahead of its nearest rival. It simply needed to stay on the road! The dangers of tiredness and the treacherous conditions were all too apparent. One Ferrari driver, failing to negotiate one of the sharp bends at the end of a long straight, had been killed, whilst with a mere fifteen seconds of racing left a Renault had overturned. Peter Whitehead, however, as calm as ever, brought the lone Jaguar home to a famous victory.

For Jaguar it was the beginning of what was to become a historic winning streak. In 1951 it was unheard of for a British car to win an international motor race. It was the first big British win since the war and the resultant publicity for Jaguar was enormous. "The money we spent on the race," wrote their team manager Lofty England, "was chicken feed compared with the publicity we got and overnight Jaguar became a world-famous name. Winning Le Mans really put Jaguar on the map."

Peter Whitehead's success story is instructive. For his schooldays had been a terrible struggle. Constant illness had affected him so much and such was his academic backwardness at thirteen that it had been deemed pointless for him to attempt Common Entrance. But a clear rapport had developed between Peter's mother and Roxburgh. Stowe's headmaster accordingly guaranteed Peter a place at the age of fifteen if he was still unsettled elsewhere. Peter duly joined Grafton House in January 1930 and stayed on until Easter 1932. Remarkably, after a year of personal tuition, he passed into Cambridge! At Stowe Peter was comfortable in the country environment. He was a good shot and he gained his House colours for golf. He was useful at sport, when fit, and featured with the future poet John Cornford in one Grafton cross-country team!

Peter's half-brother, Graham, seven years younger, followed him to Grafton. Graham's school career was much more successful. Work posed no problems. He was good at games, became a monitor and was even in line to be Head of House. Temperamentally he was very different from the docile Peter. Graham was highly volatile. As a racing driver he was always at a fever pitch of excitement. But by the time he left school, in 1940, there was no opportunity for Graham to go racing, for war had intervened.

Peter too had reluctantly put aside his cherished ERA which in the past four years he had raced wherever he could. (He had even won the Australian Grand Prix of 1938!) Now both brothers replaced racing cars with tanks! Officers in the Royal Tank Corps, they survived much active combat. Peter fought long in Italy and the Middle East. But Colin, a third brother, a year younger than Graham and also a member of Grafton, was killed whilst flying with the RAF in 1944.

The racing cars came out of storage when war was over. Soon Peter flew over to Modena and acquired one of Enzo Ferrari's early single-seaters. With this he won several important road races (the Jersey Trophy, the Czechoslovakian Grand Prix and the East Switzerland Grand Prix) and was awarded in 1949 the prestigious British Racing Drivers Club's Gold Star.

But the 1950s was a time when high-powered British sports-racing cars offered the rich amateur the greatest opportunity of winning. Driving together in their own Cooper-Jaguars, Lister-Jaguar and Aston Martin DB3S, the brothers achieved much success. They were also good enough to be offered works drives. In 1953 in a D-type Jaguar Peter won the Reims 12-hour race with Stirling Moss and the Hyères 12 Hours with Tom Cole. Next year he and Ken Wharton triumphed again at Reims.

In 1958 the two brothers very nearly won Le Mans when sharing their own Aston Martin. Second at the end of twenty-four hours, they were urged to protest the winning Ferrari over a technical infringement. Mike Horton, a young Old Stoic, who had stepped into the breach that year as Team Manager, recalls how furious Peter was at this suggestion. "It offended his deep sense of sportsmanship. For Peter the winning had to be done on the racetrack."

It was to be the brothers' last success together, for tragedy was to strike at the least unlikely of events, a rally. The Tour de France appealed to the Whiteheads. It was a week-long rally, which took in the whole of France and which featured speed sections at all their favourite French circuits. But on the sixth day, whilst leading their class in their 3.4 Jaguar, they ran into mist in the mountains of Provence and plunged down a ravine. Peter, who was not driving at the time, was killed. Graham carried on racing for a few more seasons, notably with a Ferrari 250GT, but was never the same again and retired at the end of 1961. He died in 1981.

"Peter was a quiet man," wrote Gregor Grant the founder-editor of *Autosport*, "with an impish sense of humour. He raced because he had a genuine love of the sport, and financed his own racing organisation. He was often referred to as 'the last of the amateurs.'" The editor of *Autocar* saw Peter as "a true countryman" and a gentleman-sportsman of the old school. "Peter took his motoring in the same enthusiastic manner as he did his shooting and boating - as a sporting recreation; and, like most countrymen, he was an uncomplicated character."

In the competitive, thrusting world of motor sport Peter Whitehead stood out for his modesty, calm, sportsmanship and courage. His death was widely mourned, though not a national grief, like the loss of Peter Collins and Mike Hawthorn, the Grand Prix drivers who died within months of him. Peter had brought employment, excitement and entertainment into many lives. He had made the very most of his talents and opportunities. And he had enjoyed himself hugely.

WORKING IN JOURNALISM:

Leo Brown took a train
down to London to
interview the journalist
Rory Knight Bruce (Chandos 75)



Rory Knight Bruce is a contracted journalist. This means he has to produce a set number of pieces a year for the newspapers and magazines which have contracted him. He actively writes for the *Evening Standard*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Sunday Telegraph*, *Harper's & Queen's* and *The Spectator*. As an independent writer he enjoys the benefit of writing only what he wants to write and not simply at an editor's request. He has also written with success for radio but believes himself less at home with television.

His job has the benefit of much travel. He likewise has to focus carefully on current affairs, politics, art, sport and cultural things. On the whole he limits himself to Britain and Ireland, only writing occasionally on European matters. He specialises in feature articles. He was the first person, for example, to interview Imran Khan after the Pakistan bombing.

Rory Knight Bruce, himself the son of an Old Stoic, came to Stowe in 1970. A member of Side 3, studying English, History and Ancient History, he ended up as Head of Chandos and an editor of *The Stoic*. We discussed the teaching staff and found there were few left from his time: MW, CGJA, GMH and AGM. He spoke with affection about Brian Stephan, "a great inspiration" and "a complete genius". He had saved him from "the pitfalls of politics". Stowe, when he arrived, had no girls and about 600 boys. However, by the time he left there were five day girls! "They were a lot brighter than most of the boys and all very nice."

Interested in writing whilst at Stowe, he contributed towards the (fairly scurrilous) satirical magazine *Middle Voice*, which had been started in 1969 by Mark Samuelson. He also edited *The Stoic* for two or three years with a group of friends, but thought it "of no exceptional calibre"! His work on the magazines helped keep him interested in everything in the outside world. "I was both at liberty and under an obligation to do this. It was great fun!" He was very busy at Stowe, running the Historical Society and the Corkscrew. He was a member of the XII Club (now the XX) and played and enjoyed a lot of sports and represented the school at rugby, hockey, athletics and soccer. He claims he was not "bright" until classes became voluntary at University, but this seems hard to believe!

Although he had to admit in all honesty that his schooldays were not the greatest days of his life, he believes that he achieved a lot in them: "Stowe sets you up for life. It set me up in human and individual terms, if not academically." We suggested to him that he was

remembered at Stowe very much as a powerful personality, someone with strong, even radical views. Was that how he saw himself? He shrugged his shoulders with a smile and steered the conversation to more general terms. "I was phenomenally happy at Stowe. I cried when I left, though that was partly due to my fear of the outside world." He felt it had been helpful that he had been able to see both sides of the British education system. "I was a pupil at a state school in Devon before I came to Stowe."

After Stowe Rory Knight Bruce took a gap year, working on a building site. "It was either a question of doing that, washing cars, cleaning horses or being a cement mixer!" Then followed undergraduate life at Edinburgh, where he took a degree in English with specialisation in drama and where he also ran a newspaper! He began writing for *The New Edinburgh Review*, the oldest political review in Britain, started in 1704. "Other editors of this newspaper have included Gordon Brown." In 1981 he started the *Edinburgh Voice*, a midweek newspaper. He went on to edit the *Scottish Portrait* for two years, which he does not see as one of his greatest successes. He then became editor of *The Spectator*.

Not surprisingly, Rory Knight Bruce is a strong believer in the value of university education. He states there are no excuses for not going to university! But he is a firm critic of the so-called student rag newspapers, which he claims bring a bad name to journalism. He also strongly condemns the way the media lionise personalities who have done wrong. He cited the West case and Nick Leeson scandal. "It is absolutely craven that people who are guilty can make a profit out of being so." He does not want the media to turn away from reporting such things. He simply wants them to report things from a clear moral standpoint.



Photos: Hilary Masey

GRAFTON LOG: 1926-1928

The David Niven years

Some extracts follow from the Grafton Log Book, dating from its opening in September 1926. One of its first fifty-nine pupils was the future film star David Niven, who moved into the new House from Chandos and at once became a Monitor. The entries in the Log Book are mainly by Grafton's first Housemaster, P.B. Freeman, with a few by the Underhousemaster, Humphrey Playford.

September 21st 1926

The House was started to the sound of the hammer and chisel and a maze of scaffolding. One of the first features was the cheery way in which one and all put up with the many "minor inconveniences" which were slowly remedied day by day.

The occasional crash of falling trees heralded the gradual opening up of the East end to the Grecian Valley.

With 52 juniors in the House, there were only 7 seniors left of the 59 entitled to have studies. Gadney, Steavenson, Blair, Niven and Renny occupied single studies and Taylor and Wolfe shared another.

The remaining five studies were used as follows: Library, Billiard Room, Writing Room, Sewing Room, Box Room & Wireless Room.

Oct 1st 1926

The 4 dormitories have been called after names famous in the Grafton family: Arlington, Euston, Ipswich and Sudbury. For the Library the most easterly of the studies was chosen, and shelves put up to hold about 1,000 books. Many authors were purchased, almost complete, notably Dickens, Scott, Stevenson, Kipling, Merriman, Ian Hay, Buchan, Conan Doyle, Mason and Jacobs...

Oct 15th 1926

A small billiard table, the gift of the Bursar, was installed in the study next to the library...

Oct 16th 1926

A clever exhibition of conjuring was given in the Houseroom, from 9.00 to 10.00 pm by Professor Ali-Caliph (Mr JT Hankinson) much to the enjoyment of all, and especially of those juniors who were near enough, or high enough, to spot some of the tricks.

Oct 25th 1926

A Wireless Club was started, under the leadership of JWT Lilley and AWR de Horsey. Temporary headquarters – half the trunk room!



November 1st, 1926: The House A League rugby team at half-time in their match with Chatham 1926. L-R: Sconce, Taylor, Wolfe, Blair, Beech, Ferrier, Renny, Lorimer, Niven, Head, Linnell, Steavenson, Salamon, Cochran. (Photo: PBF)

Nov 1st 1926

A League v Chatham: Chatham won 26-6. "Mention should be made of Niven, Steavenson and Blair who set a splendid example."

Nov 5th 1926

Rugby House A League: Grafton 0 Chandos 36. CWG Cochran taken off "officing" for his performance in the above match.

Nov 24th 1926

North front of Grafton clear of scaffolding. Prefects and Monitors boards put up in houseroom. 500 Grafton Xmas cards sold in 24 hours.

Nov 26th 1926

Temple 38 - Grafton 0 (A League) All the forwards were prominent, especially Blair, Niven (who must use his voice even more and inspire his side and not only advise), Taylor and Lorimer.

Dec 6th 1926

Squash racquets 1st round Grafton v Grenville: JDG Niven beat JB Charles 3-1 HE Raphael beat R McD Barbour 3-1 CJD Renny beat ER Williams 3-0 Niven won comfortably...

Dec 10th 1926

Squash racquets semi-final: Grafton (Niven, Raphael and Renny) were easily beaten by the holders and ultimate winners, Chatham (Dawson, Carr and Silcock).

Dec 14th 1926

Complete clearance of East end and considerable part of South front relieved of scaffolding.

Dec 17th 1926

Term ended uneventfully.

Jan 19th 1927

Beginning of term very cold and frosty. Owing to the ravages of 'flu only 44 of the 59 were present at the first stance of the term.

Jan 21st 1927

A heavy snowfall made rugger impossible, so snowballing and tobogganing were the order of the day.

Jan 30th 1927

171 cases of 'flu in the School: only 9 in Grafton.

Feb 14th 1927

1st House match: Cobham 17 Grafton 6 After the match House Colours were awarded to BC Gadney, CNM Blair, PD Taylor, JDG Niven and SP Steavenson.

Feb 21st 1927

The rugger XV boldly faced a bevy of photographers, both amateur and professional.

March 17th 1927

Library Committee: it was decided in future to open the library for the issue of books for a quarter of an hour daily.

March 19th 1927

Grafton Hunt: 38 of the House followed.

March 24th 1927

The 7th day of Sports. In the Inter-House tug-of-war Grafton lost to Temple after a good show.

March 25th 1927

Lantern lecture in the Houseroom by Professor Stebbing, Professor of Forestry at Edinburgh University on "Tigers and Tiger-shooting in India".

April 2nd 1927

Relay Races. 100 yards (Steavenson, Deakin, Niven and Sconce) Place: last

April 4th 1927

Singing Competition: Grafton 3rd, equal with Bruce

May 6th 1927

Term began in glorious summer weather. 56 back, 3 absent.

May 14th 1927

School 2nd XI v St Paul's: JDG Niven made 27 and took 1 wicket.

May 16th 1927

JDG Niven secured 6 wickets for 42 against the XI and gained his "oligoi".

May 21st 1927

In the 2nd innings of the match v the Masters BC Gadney made his 50, having succumbed to his Housemaster in the 1st innings for 13. PBF made 24, JTH and he putting on 51 for the 4th wicket.

May 28th 1927

JDG Niven takes 3 wickets for the School 2nd XI v Eton Middle Club.

June 4th 1927

Prime Minister passes Grafton while spending afternoon at Stowe.

June 13th 1927

The Queen lays the Foundation-stone of the Chapel in ideal cloudless weather. BC Gadney was presented to Her Majesty. The Earl of Mornington was also presented.

June 18th 1927

BC Gadney and JDG Niven played for the 1st XI v Trin Coll Oxford. The latter took 2 wickets.

June 29th 1927

Total eclipse of the sun in England. A party of 26 from Grafton proceeded by special train to Prestatyn in the Totality area, leaving the School at 10.30 pm on the 23rd. BC Gadney and JDG Niven slept out on the roof, and the rest of the House rose about 5.30 to view the eclipse, either from the roof or the Bourbon.



February 21st, 1927: The Grafton XV Seated: Niven, Blair, Gadney, Taylor, Steavenson. Rear: ?Wells, Salamon, ?Wolfe, Ferrier, Lorimer, Kitchin, Cochran Front: ?Linnell, ?Coward, Baker.



July 1927. JDGN out for 33 in the 2nd innings of the House match v Grenville (Photo: CAP Trippe)

July 4th 1927

1st day of House Match with Grenville. 4 Grafton wickets were down for 83 but close of play was reached without further loss, the score being 120-4, Gadney 63 not out.

July 6th 1927

2nd day of House Match. Gadney was unable to continue his innings, having gone to Oxford for Responsions. The tail, thanks to Niven and Taylor, added 32 in an hour and were all out for 152. Grenville were disposed of in an hour for 79 (Niven 4-25). Close of play Grafton were 47-4.



July 1927. 2nd day of House match with Grenville. Niven and Head continue their innings (photo: JN Woodbridge)

July 8th 1927

3rd day of House Match. Our innings finished for 75 of which Niven's share was 33, leaving Grenville 149 to win. Grenville played out time at 33-2.

July 9th 1927

4th day of House Match. Grafton won by 75 runs. Grenville collapsed (Niven 5-20).

July 11th 1927

Grafton beat Grenville at lawn tennis 4-0 (Gadney and Niven winning both their matches and likewise Renny and Myers).

July 12th 1927

Senior swimming heats representatives: 50 yards: Niven. 100 yards: Taylor. 50 yards breast stroke: Niven. 25 yards back stroke: Niven, Gadney.

July 13th 1927

1st day of House match (semi-final v Temple). Temple all out 205 (Niven 4-77) and Grafton 10-1 at close.

July 14th 1927

Only quarter of an hour's play was possible and that in steady rain. The score was advanced to 20-0.

July 15th 1927

3rd day of House match. Grafton all out 97. Blair, Cochran, Niven and Taylor all lost their wickets "having a go" too soon.

July 16th 1927

4th day of House match. A very poor performance. No one seemed to have the patience to watch some perfectly harmless bowling.

July 17th 1927

JDG Niven was second in the breast stroke final. The rest unplaced.

July 26th 1927

Glorious summer's day after long dull month. Aeroplane display on the obelisk field.

July 27th 1927

End of term. 7 to OTC camp, the rest home.

Sept 27th 1927

The numbers of the House were increased to 60 by the arrival of the first "new boy" JJ Lilley.

Oct 3rd 1927

Fire drill. The new chutes in Sudbury and Ipswich being used for the first time.

Oct 15th 1927

BC Gadney & PD Taylor played for the 1st XV v London Scottish and JDG Niven & CNM Blair for the 2nd XV v Wellington 2nd XV.

Oct 19th 1927

BC Gadney & JDG Niven played for the 1st XV v St Edward's, Oxford.

Oct 27th 1927

BC Gadney, CNM Blair, JDG Niven HBP and PBF saw Oxford University beat New South Wales at Oxford by one try to nil.

Nov 10th 1927

The very cold spell continues. The daily

"yule log" for the Houserroom fire keeps all warm and cheery.

Dec 2nd 1927

Fencing match v Temple in Concord: Foils (PFI Reid & HE Raphael), Épée (PFI Reid), Sabre (JDG Niven). Lost.

Dec 3rd 1927

JDG Niven and CNM Blair played for the 2nd XV v Radley which won 30-5.



July 1927. Carpet beating on Sunday. JDG Niven in foreground, with HW Norman, AR Litton and CM Baker. (Photo: RHD Kitchin)



July 1927. Grafton Cricket XI, Niven seated, 2nd from left.

Dec 10th 1927

600 Grafton Xmas cards now sold. BC Gadney captained the XV v Radley, which won 16-0. Blair, Steavenson, Niven & PBF were among the spectators at Radley, motoring over in the latter's Fiat.

Dec 12th 1927

Squash v Chatham Lost 0-3. JDG Niven beaten by JFN Rowlatt, CJD Renny by FJ Walter, EPW Stebbing by HV Kemp.

Dec 16th 1927

Performance of *The Tempest* in the Houseroom by Lower 5A.

Dec 17th 1927

The Importance of Being Earnest, in the Houseroom, performed by Sudbury Dorm. The play was witnessed by an audience of about seventy.

Dec 21st 1927

End of term in intensely cold weather. The wet froze on the frozen ground, and no traffic could move till after midday. Many walked to the Station. Pemberton & others skated!

Jan 24th 1928

The numbers in the House increased to 61.

Jan 25th 1928

The first dancing was held in the house, in Arlington, from 5.00 to 6.00.

Jan 26th

Promotions in the OTC: JDG Niven to Corporal. The first meeting of the Modern Play Reading Society was held in the President (PBF's) rooms. *Tilly of Bloomsbury* by Ian Hay.

March 1st 1928

Blair & Niven played for 2nd XV v Eton 2nd XV. Result: Stowe 53 Eton 0.

March 3rd 1928

Senior House run: Niven 3rd

March 4th 1928

Wonderful cloudless day: Grecian valley full of Grafton and gramophones. Temperature 67!

March 7th 1928

Inter-House Cross-Country: Grafton 2nd; senior team scorers: PD Taylor (5th), CNM Blair (6th), PR Head (25th), TGW Ferrier (26th), JDG Niven (35th).

March 10th 1928

Gadney, Steavenson, Blair & Niven made 4 of the Hoxton party for the weekend. Very cold day: drop of over 30 degrees from last Sunday!

Meet of the Grafton Hunt at Stowe at 12.00. 25 of the House followed.

March 12th 1928

1st day of Sports. Track swept clear of snow.



February, 1928. Gadney, Niven and Housemaster PB Freeman (Photo: GRW)



March 7th, 1928. The start of the senior cross-country: Grafton towards the camera, David Niven 6th from end, Blair and Taylor beyond him. (Photo: PFI Reid)

March 14th 1928

2nd Day of Sports: 100 yards senior: Niven, Ferrier, Steavenson & Trippe passed.

March 17th 1928

Blair, Gadney, Niven, Steavenson & Taylor went up to Twickenham to see England beat Scotland by 6-0.

March 22nd 1928

7th day of Sports: Tug-of-war: We were beaten by Chandos after a short struggle. Team: Niven, Lorimer, Steavenson, Kitchin, Wolfe, Linnell, Ferrier, Taylor.

March 26th 1928

Summer's day. Fire drill 12.15-12.30.

March 27th 1928

"March Past" with first OTC band: Niven played the big drum.

March 30th 1928

Performance of *The Private Secretary* given in the Houseroom before an audience of 88 including 21 masters and the Headmaster.

April 2nd 1928

Illness of mumps, chicken-pox and 'flu attacked the House sadly at the end of term. 100 yds relay team: Niven, Sconce, Kitchin, Doble. Grafton last. Niven & Wright were prominent in the dramatic side of the School Concert.

April 4th 1928

End of Grafton's fifth term. The following members of the House developed mumps in the holidays: Blair, Chidell, Kitchin, Prittie, Stansfeld, Wolfe, Thompson, Niven, Ferrier, Lilley, Reid, Trippe C & G.

May 4th 1928

Numbers up to 62. Owing to the ravages of mumps only 40 were present at the first Stance of Grafton's 6th term.

May 5th 1928

Glorious summer weather: 70 in the shade. Promotions in the OTC: Niven to be Sgt Niven.

May 12th 1928

BC Gadney made 70 for the XI v Old Stoics and JDGN took a wicket.

May 15th 1928

JDG Niven took 5-87 v the Crusaders.

June 5th 1928

Field Day at Stowe with Rugby and Radley.

June 7th 1928

JDG Niven playing for the 2nd XI v Eton. Middle Club took 5-36 in the Eton innings of 79. Stowe made 176.



March 8th, 1928: David Niven acting as linesman in a Masters v School soccer match. (Photo: CAP Trippe)

June 12th 1928

Ceremonial Parade as practice for Inspection on the 26th. Niven & Myers in the band.

June 14th 1928

The present order of the 1st 6 in the Tennis Ladder is Renny, Gadney, Steavenson, Myers, Niven, Lilley JG.

June 22nd 1928

In the Colts v JDG Niven's XI, Niven's XI made 69, the Colts 143-9 declared.

June 23rd 1928

Niven & Blair played for the 2nds v Welsh Guards. Niven took 5-43.

July 10th 1928

Gadney & Niven passed through their heats of the Back Stroke in the Swimming.

July 12th 1928

Swimming: Gadney & Niven passed through in their heats of the Breast

Stroke. Heat wave continues 87 in shade.

July 15th 1928

Another entirely cloudless day: 90 in the shade! Swimming: Grafton 2nd in the Seniors: Niven 1st in the 25 yards Back, 2nd in the 50 yards Breast.

July 26th 1928

Tennis Final; 1st day. v Chatham: BC Gadney & JDG Niven beat RHG Carr & M Gowing. 6-3, 11-12, 6-3.

July 28th 1928

Speech Day. The final of the tennis was concluded, Grafton winning the cup.

July 29th 1928

Tennis colours presented to Lilley, Gadney & Niven

31st July 1928

End of term. Valet: JDG Niven, SP Steavenson, PD Taylor, CJD Renny. JDG Niven passed into Sandhurst.

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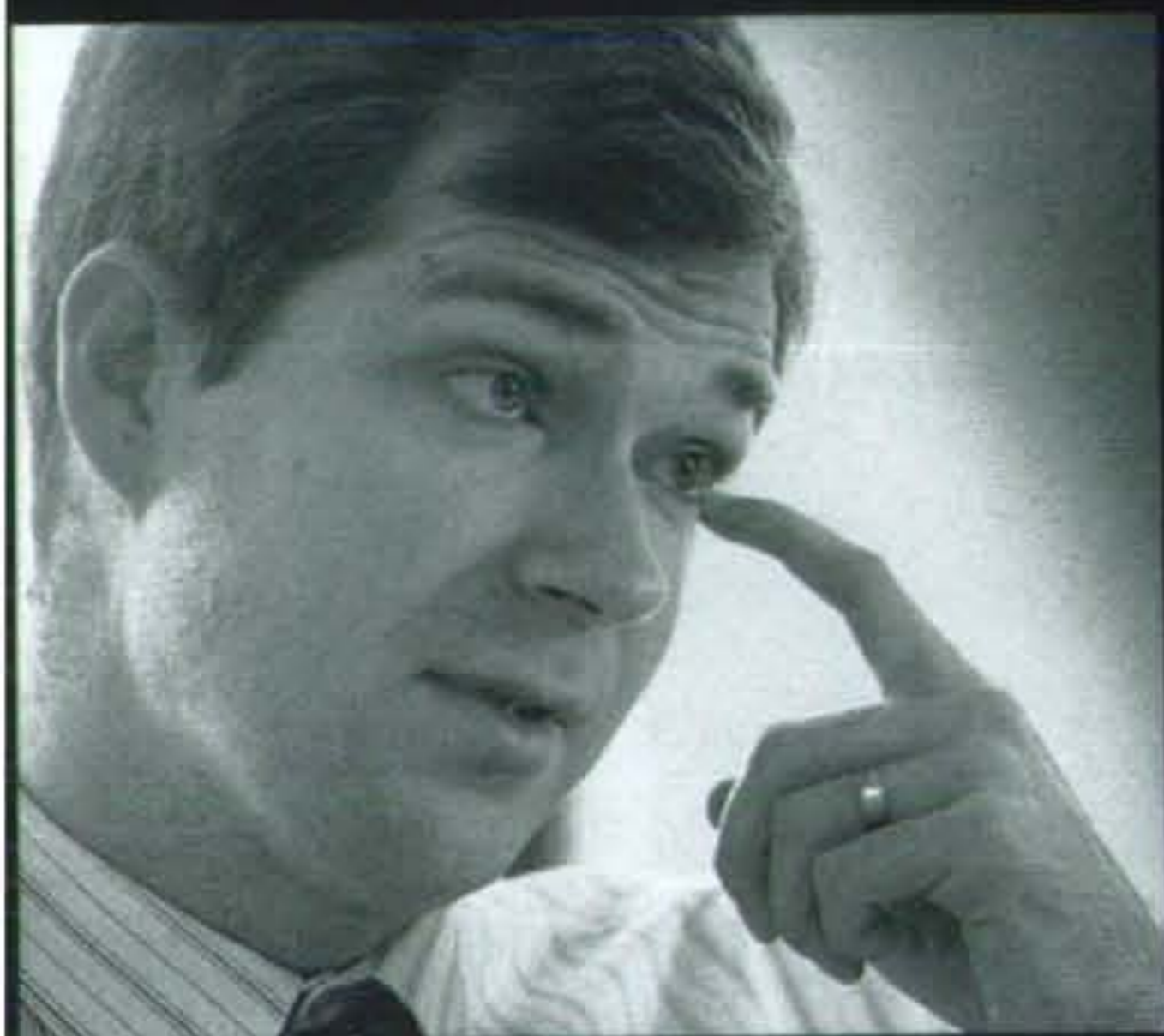


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