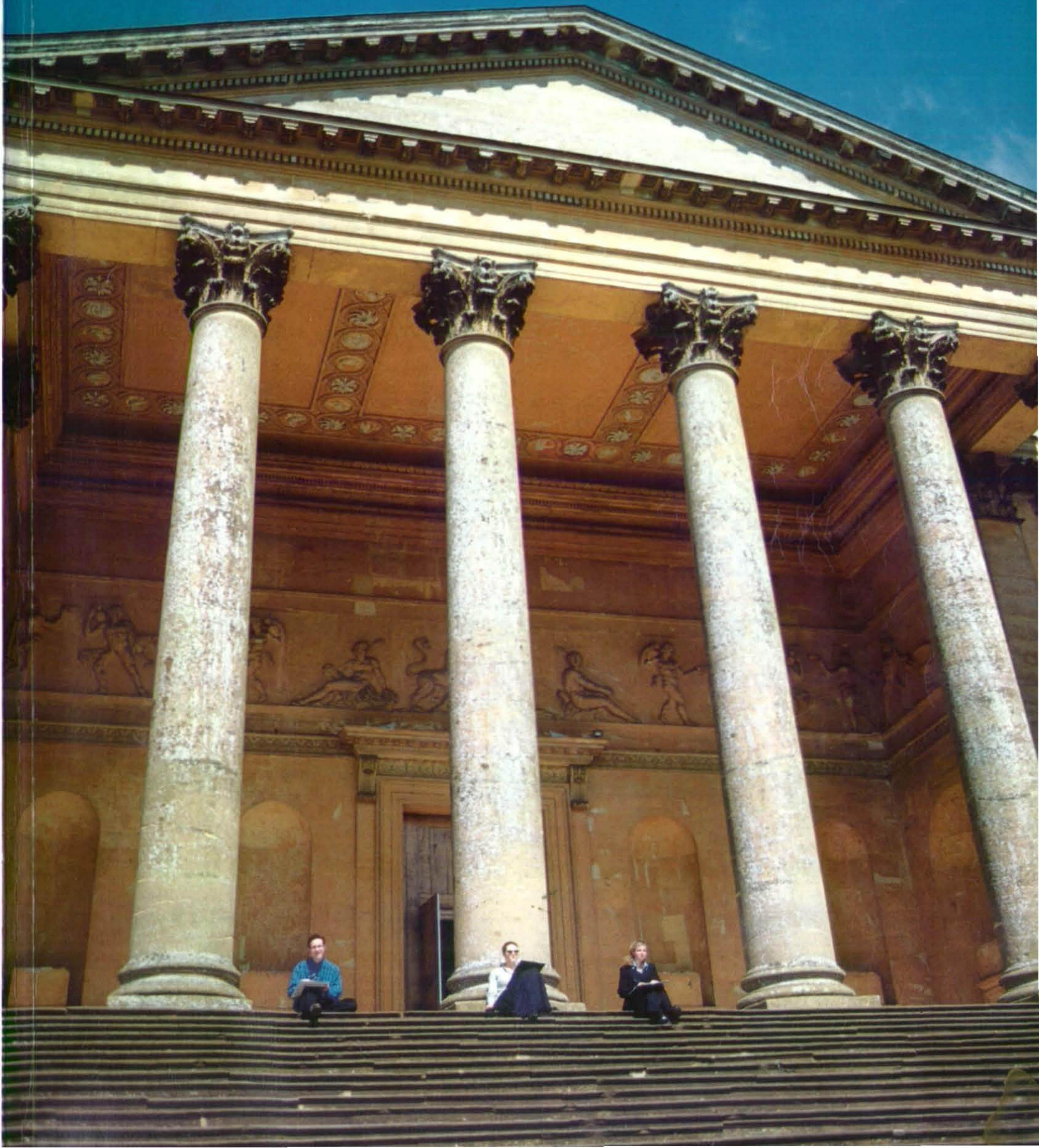


THE STOIC

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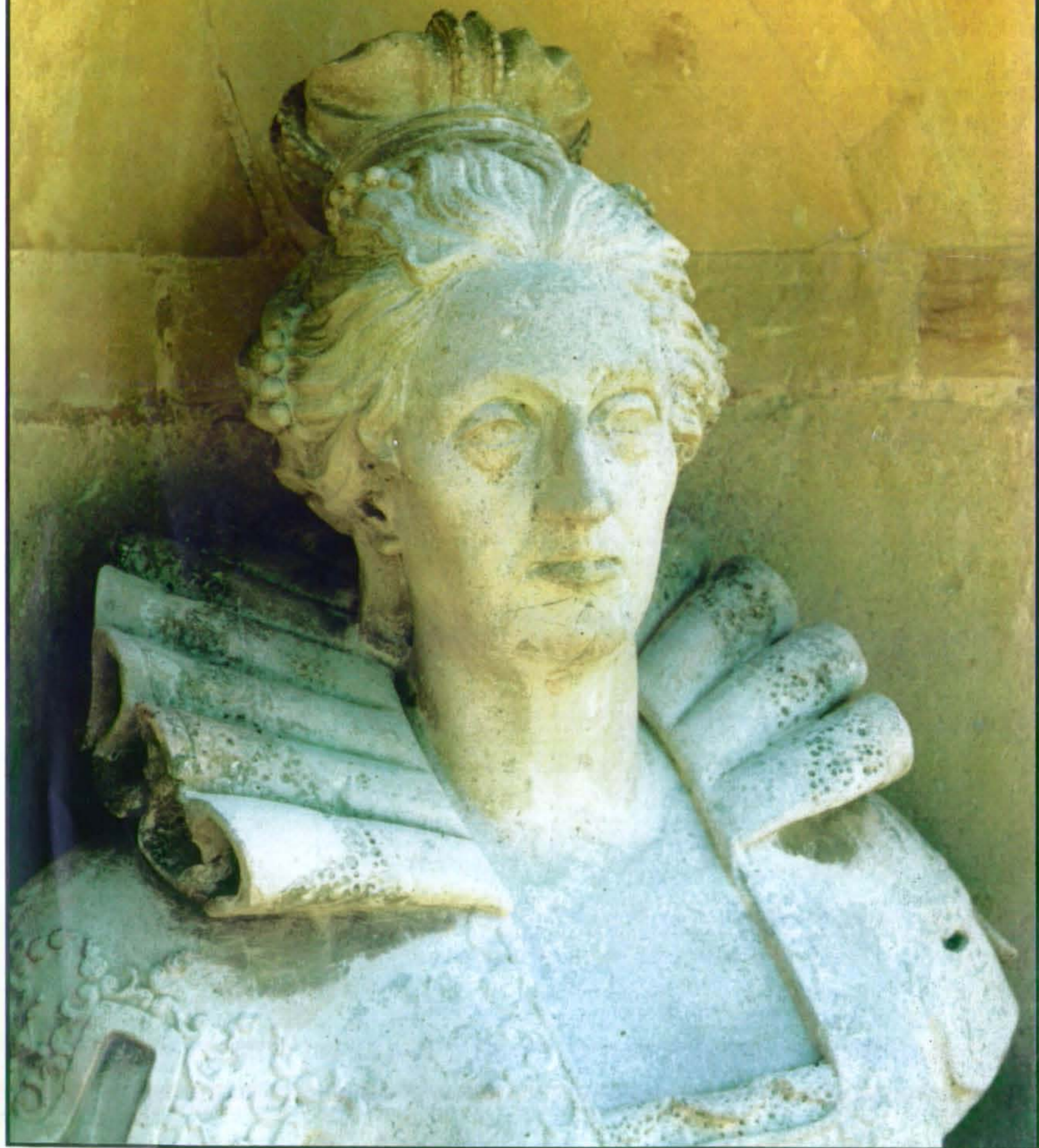




THE STOIC

No. 198

September 1999



Editorial

With this September issue *The Stoic* completes its scheduled change from calendar to academic year. This issue, then, covers events from the start of the autumn term 1998 to the end of the summer term 1999. It is a good moment to remind contributors that deadline for copy for next September's issue will be the end of June, but, as always, early contributions are welcomed, indeed urged.

Last March's issue contained a big feature on the twin trusts, for House Preservation and School Foundation. This issue offers a further feature on the latter. The campaign now in place for the Academic Resource Centre and separate Endowment Fund is probably the most exciting and certainly the most ambitious in the School's history.

Other features in this issue include a detailed look at a golden age in Stowe drama, the Joe Bain years, with insight too into those fabled Historians' plays of Bill McElwee and the foundation of the Congreve Club in 1941 by Peter Dams. This feature is by way of a celebration of the first forty years of the Roxburgh Hall as the School's theatre, 1959-1999.

The editing of the annual *Stoic* may not have the immediacy or the glamour of that of *The Voice*, but the contribution of Stoics to its editorial board is crucial to its success. As this year's editors prepare to move on to a new life outside Stowe they urge all Stoics interested in journalism and photography to consider helping with the next issue. It is simply a question of making arrangements to take the Tuesday afternoon *Stoic* option...

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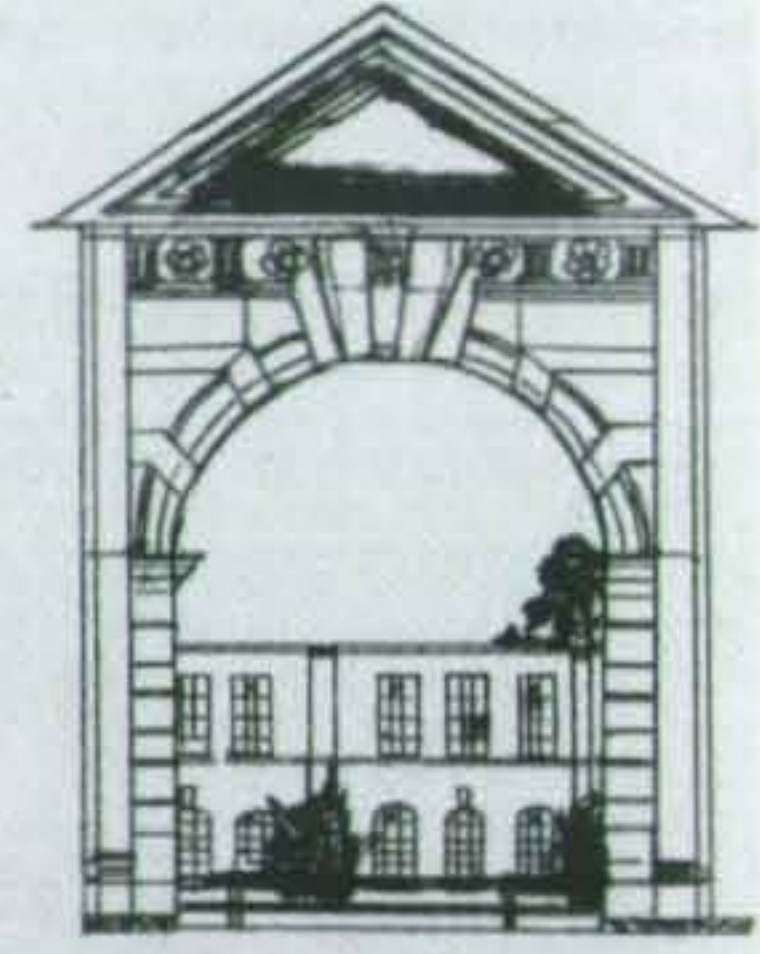


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Launch of the Campaign for Stowe



The Millennium Britannia Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London, was the venue last May for the launch of The Campaign for Stowe, hosted by Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, President of the Campaign.

Lord Sainsbury and the Headmaster both spoke eloquently about the need for the Campaign and the progress made so far, and were followed by an exceptionally moving speech by Bill Shand Kydd (Cobham 1950-55) who encapsulated with anecdotes the essence of Stowe and why the place and the School mean so much to him.

A month after the event Anthony Shillington, Development Director, confirmed that on top of the magnificent grants totalling over £6 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the Getty Grant Programme, for Phase 1 of the restoration of Stowe House,

The Campaign for Stowe had raised, via donations and pledges, over £2 million – partly for The Stowe School Foundation and partly for The Stowe House Preservation Trust – towards its target of £15 million to be raised by the end of 2003:

“It has been an encouraging start; we have an enormous mountain to climb and gradually we shall be asking more and more people connected with Stowe to support the Campaign as generously as they possibly can. Work will begin next year on both the restoration of the North Front and the first building works associated with the Academic Resource Centre. The momentum is beginning to gather towards the achievement of this great endeavour that has such exciting and far-reaching implications for the future of both the School and the House.”

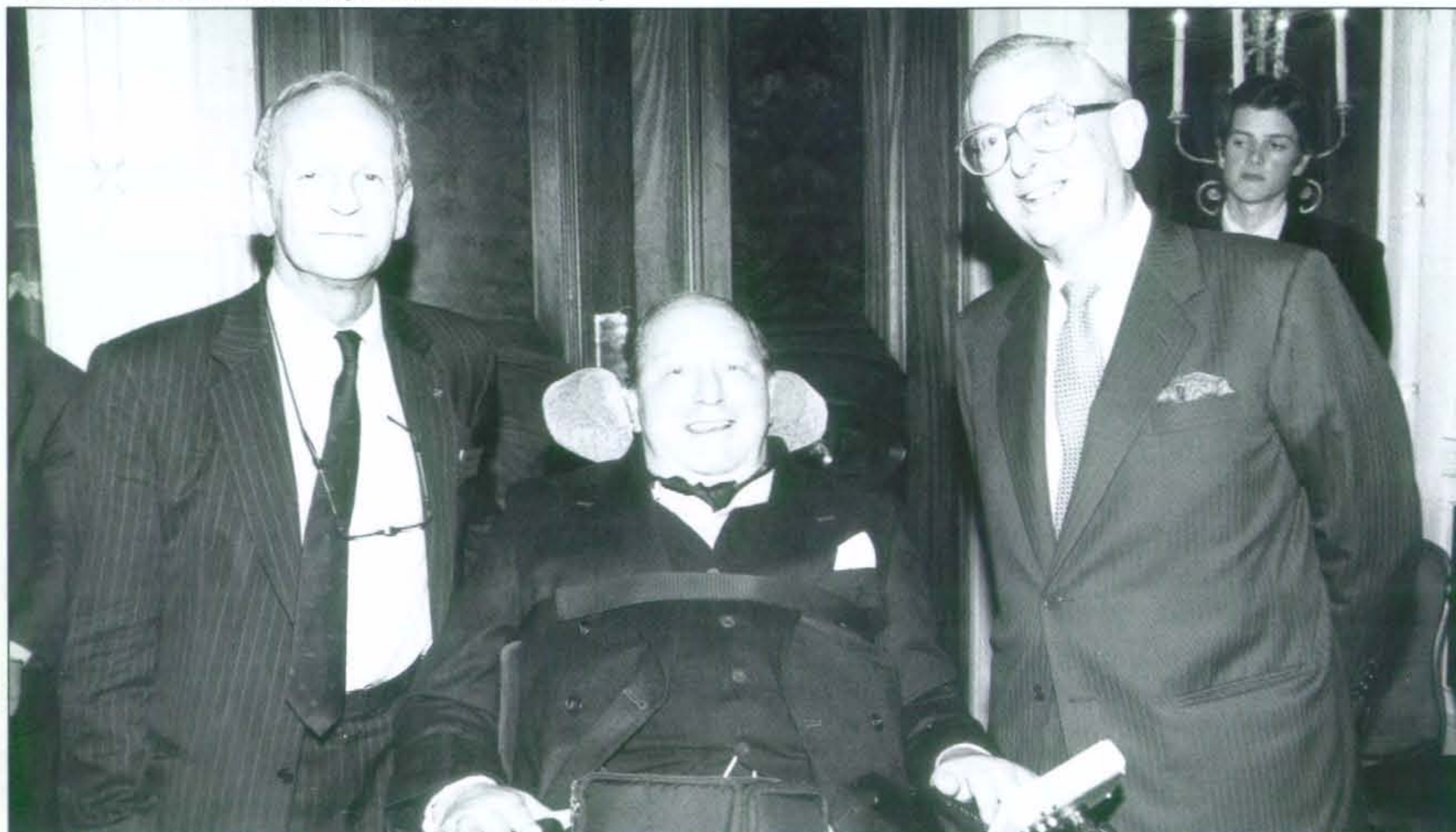


Algy Cluff, Chairman of The Stowe House Preservation Trust, with Lord Sainsbury



Desmond Fitzgerald, The Knight of Glin, and Mark Girouard, two of the Vice-Presidents of The Campaign for Stowe, with Sir Peter Leslie (centre)

The Headmaster, Bill Shand Kydd and Lord Sainsbury



THE HEADMASTER ON THE ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTRE

Extracts from 'Minding the Magic of Stowe', a personal message to mark the launch of The Campaign for Stowe



"...The scheme we are proposing will remove the 1960s Modern Languages Block, a building of no architectural merit but at present the northern link between House and School, sending out messages to the North Front of mediocrity, in its materials and design, and deep insensitivity to our heritage. It bullies and blocks the façade of Vanbrugh's Orangery. The scheme will also re-site the squash and fives courts and sweep away all those one-storey carbuncles. The new building will thus be in direct relationship with the west Leoni Arch and Vanbrugh's Orangery. It is one of the key sites at Stowe.

The Stowe Framework Conservation Plan of 1998 suggests: "the significance of the west Leoni Arch should be reinforced by re-establishing an appropriate route through it". We shall be doing that. The Arch will lead directly to the entrance of the Academic Resource Centre, the new focal point for all the School's intellectual endeavour. The Arch will symbolically link the eighteenth and twenty-first centuries and highlight the harmonious co-existence of a modern public school and a major heritage site.

The development site, though a comparatively small one, is of considerable significance in its relationship with a monument of international importance and it is our hope and belief that it will attract architects as distinguished as those who worked and advised here in the 1920s. We are not in the business of replacing one piece of mediocrity with another. Whilst maintaining an open mind at this stage as to the style most appropriate to the new building's setting and function, we are very clear on the high quality of exterior and interior



design needed. The new creation must be completely harmonious (in the widest sense of that term) with its surroundings, a building truly worthy of the School's privileged setting.

As part of a tour on my very first visit ten years ago I came to the Library. Like everyone else I loved the musty ambience, the marble caryatids on the fireplaces, the intricate plaster ceiling, the original grills fronting the bookshelves, the sense that nothing much had changed since its creation in Regency times by that keen bibliophile, the 1st Marquess of Buckingham. But I do remember asking whether the twentieth-century library was close at hand and could I see that too? Another area in which I lingered was the IT Room. The big computer revolution in schools was just underway a decade ago, so it was pleasing to see that there was a little room set aside for computers in the Maths Block. The School clearly had its computer thinking-cap on.

It was a starting point from which we have been able to build very strongly over the last few years. Few people these days need convincing that computer literacy is a key part of any educational programme. For the diehards one can fling out the powerful statistic that by the year 2010 90% of all jobs are likely to require computer know-how.

We now have two computer centres and shortly will have three. But the old library is still our only library, it is too small for our purposes and, being grade I listed, quite un-suitable for conversion to cater for hi-tech developments which are now dramatically redefining the word "library". Worse still, the old library is far away from the School's academic centre.

"Academic Resource Centre", of course, is not a term coined by Stowe but one already in use in America and Europe to describe a highly sophisticated, computerised library, where books and computers co-exist in close harmony along with all other modern educational aids. It is something which will immediately, at one stroke, revitalise and reinforce the Stowe work ethic. I am sure such computerised libraries in a very few years will be considered a necessity in all schools.



With the advent of new technology things are changing very rapidly both inside the classroom and the examination room. Education is becoming less didactic. There is a growing emphasis on individual research and group discussion. This can perhaps be seen most clearly in the proliferation in many subjects of project work both at GCSE and A-level, where pupils are, in effect, being asked to write research papers. Examinations are becoming less and less interested in well-argued recitals of taught information and more and more in the presentation of self-acquired knowledge. This change of emphasis means that schools need a particularly well-stocked library with easily accessible data-banks close at hand. Further, the building which houses both of these must also be a place where pupils can search through different media – books, CD-ROMS, the Net, appropriate videos, CDs, magazines or audio-tapes – and, having obtained the information necessary for the project, have somewhere to assemble it in as clear and sophisticated a way as possible. The value of such an Academic Resource Centre to each and every Stoic will be enormous.

Our Concept Leaflet explains the kind of three-storey building we have in mind. One of the important requirements is inbuilt flexibility of design, to allow it to accommodate the advances which technology will make in the coming years. The top two floors will house the wide, differing resources of the computerised library. On the ground floor, alongside refreshment and audio-visual areas, will be the re-sited Common Room, moved from its present remote position at the far end of the mansion. This move is not prompted by any

external factors. Just as we shall continue to use the old library – using it both as a reading room and an archival and heritage library – so we shall be re-using the vacated Common Room space. We are moving the Common Room because we see the staff as the greatest academic resource of all and feel it will be placed to its best advantage, for all concerned, staff and pupils, in the new location. Situated at the base of the Academic Resource Centre the staff will be able to reinforce the work of the duty librarians and be at the heart of the whole enterprise.

The new technology needs to be handled with care. The computer can so easily overwhelm the pupil with its massive array of information. With the staff on hand, backed up by the librarians, there will be ample guides through this modern maze. By moving the Common Room into the ARC we will not only be increasing the daily informal interaction between Stoics and staff but ensuring the right balance between people and machines in the new building. More and more the national media are trying to tell us what to think. In the Stowe Academic Resource Centre the guidance of the staff will play a crucial part in developing in Stoics that ever-more important human activity: the ability to think independently...”

Copies of 'Minding the Magic of Stowe' can be obtained from: Deena Tomkinson, Development Office, Stowe, Buckingham, MK18 5EH. Tel/fax: 01280 817818 email: campaign@stowe.co.uk



EXPLORING THE ARC

A group of Stoics – Simon Creek, Charlotte Devonshire, Philippa Newman, Tom Furse-Roberts and Stefanie Woodward – in a conversation with Stephen Hirst, the Deputy Headmaster, and Anthony Shillington, the School's Development Director, about the Academic Resource Centre, one of the first targets of The Stowe School Foundation...



Simon Creek: To most Stoics The Stowe School Foundation has appeared to emerge suddenly "out of the blue". How and why did it evolve?

ADGS: It has been the subject of discussion and planning for a few years. Its purpose is to provide the School with additional funding, over and above that which is available from school fees, to ensure we are ahead of the field in terms of facilities and the range of scholarships and bursaries we offer. As a relatively young school we have no substantial endowment. There have been previous campaigns during Stowe's 76 year history and many of those who are being approached in this campaign have given before. The Foundation has been established as a means of permanent fund-raising via annual donations (particularly covenants) as well as substantial "capital" gifts. It is a concept which is well established in the USA and is gradually being introduced, successfully, into a number of UK universities and schools.

Stefanie Woodward: How do you feel that the Academic Resource Centre, so very modern in its focus, is going to affect the image of Stowe as a traditional country public school?

ADGS: The inference of the question, that public schools (especially those tucked away in the country) are too traditional to be forward looking, is somewhat harsh! Stowe has always been seen as one of the newer and more progressive public schools, so in that respect the more "modern" our facilities, the more it will be in keeping with our image. But I take the point that Stowe is widely known for its gracious eighteenth-century surroundings and that the only computer Lord Cobham had at his disposal was the brain in his head. Yes, computers and Ionic colonnades are a strange mix. But isn't this what people expect of today's Stowe? A modern school in a heritage setting? In this context the building of a high-tech computerised library is very much in keeping with our "image".

Charlotte Devonshire: Will the new Academic Resource Centre lead to a switch in emphasis away from sport to work?

SGAH: If you mean "Will the sport suffer?", I'm sure the answer is a resounding "No". But it's not an either-or situation. Yes, the Academic Resource Centre will bring about a change of emphasis and "work" will benefit enormously, but we are essentially talking about quality rather than quantity, (though the quantity should also increase, given the improved facilities

and atmosphere). The sport should enjoy a spin-off effect from all of this. The more on top of their work people are and the more they are enjoying it, the better they are going to perform at all their out-of-class activities. So, no, the ARC is not going to be an academic prison and, no, there will not be a switch away from sport to work! But, yes, we should see the work improving dramatically both in quality and quantity. And, yes, we should see the sport actually benefiting too!

Tom Furse-Roberts: What do you see as the main educational benefit of the Academic Resource Centre?

SGAH: A fully computerised library, with provision under the same roof for individual research, small tutorials and class teaching both formal and informal, will revitalise our work ethic. Within its walls scholars will find much wider horizons, the less able much greater support. In providing all possible academic resources for meeting the demands of GCSE and A-level studies it will cater for the needs of the present and the immediate future. But it will also ensure that, in the longer term, as ever-improving technology allows pupils to take more and more responsibility for their own work with the teachers becoming primarily their guides, we shall have the facilities to be at the forefront of important changes in the whole learning process.

Tom: The ARC, in other words, will encourage the concept of self-education?

SGAH: Yes, amongst other things. Self-education is undoubtedly the way of the future. More and more the emphasis in the examined curriculum (particularly on the arts side) is on individual research leading to analysis and a written synthesis. This is building on the immediacy of information retrieval which modern technology has brought to the education system and will continue to bring to it. It is an emphasis which will encourage self-reliance.

ADGS: Cynics might say that we can teach the concept of self-reliance without the expense of a new building. And that we have various libraries and computers around the school already and lots of classrooms of different shapes and sizes. But it's dispersed around a very large campus. Thanks to a lot of dedication and effort, it all works all right for present-day Stowe. But it lacks cohesion and the capacity for proper

development in the future. Moreover, as already discussed, the role of the teacher is going to be more and more crucial in extracting the greatest benefit from modern technology. The ARC brings everything together under one roof: books, computers, CDROMS, videos and all other modern educational aids, space in which to research, space in which to think and write, and, above all, the key human resource, the librarians and the teaching staff.

Tom: I am concerned that we shall be losing three of the rooms that are most symbolic of Stowe – the State Dining rooms, the Library and the Gothic Library.

ADGS: This is a misunderstanding which is currently going the rounds. Meals will, in fact, still be in the Dining Rooms. And the existing school library will still be ours to use, its books included in the new computerised library system. It will be a specialist library, concentrating on Stowe, its archive and history, as well as the eighteenth century more generally.

SGAH: I guess it will still be a popular place to work in the evening for those Houses which are close to it.

ADGS: Although the Headmaster's study will eventually move out of the Gothic Library, to allow it to be included in guided tours at set, limited times, we shall still have the room at our disposal, using it for a different function. Parents visiting the Headmaster will still be visiting the House.

SGAH: The amount of access by the general public to the House will increase substantially, on a gradual basis, but it will be restricted to certain times of the day and certain days and months of the year, and it will be carefully managed.

ADGS: The School will continue to use the House in much the same way that it uses it at present. The State Music Room and the Blue Room, for example, will continue to be used for things like concerts, meetings and debates. Stoics can rest assured that they will continue to feel that the School is based in Stowe House, even though the Academic Resource Centre will become the academic heart of the School.

Simon: How do you think that the staff will feel about being moved to a place where they are more accessible? I sometimes feel they go to the Common Room to escape from Stoics!

SGAH: We all, pupils and staff, need some kind of bolt-hole on the campus. So the staff will continue to have the same kind of privacy they at present enjoy. Today's Common Room is quite a distance from the central teaching area, so everyone will appreciate the centrality of the new setting. The greater accessibility will be a two-way thing with two-way benefits in staff-pupil interaction.

Philippa Newman: How are you going to measure the level of success of this whole endeavour?

SGAH: Not by League Tables! As the Headmaster says, we try to educate for Life, not League Tables. Nonetheless, although we may not take much notice of them, I'd be very surprised if we didn't make strong upward moves once the ARC is in place. For it will sharpen the intellectual curiosity of all, offering the joys of scholarship in a sympathetic, stimulating atmosphere.

Perhaps a better measure of success will be that of time spent within it by the average Stoic. A comparison between time at present spent by the average Stoic in the Computer Room and

School Library and that spent in the ARC. From morning to evening in a seven-day week. Such a study could be subdivided into time spent formally, by whole classes, and that spent individually. The ARC should encourage a greater purposefulness and commitment towards work. The plus and minus scores on our Three Weekly Orders reflect purposefulness and commitment (or the lack of it). A comparison of TWOs, before and after the ARC, would therefore also be a fruitful measure of success.

Tom: How will you ensure that the Academic Resource Centre, as a building, will be a success both architecturally and functionally?

ADGS: By getting both the outside and the inside of the building right. A lot of research has gone into the project already and is continuing to go into it. Visits to existing Academic Resource Centres have been helpful. Bob Sharp, the Estates Bursar, is spearheading the building works side of things. We have yet to put out a brief to architects, but it will surely contain the need of the building, externally, to relate much more sympathetically to the Leoni Arch and Vanbrugh's Orangery than the present Modern Languages block.

Tom: There are a number of buildings, such as the extension to the V & A Museum in London, which have used top architects to achieve both their aesthetic and functional objectives. Would Stowe use a top architect and might we have a competition for architects as with the new Reichstag in Berlin?

ADGS: The Modern Languages building will be demolished and there will be a clear view through the west Leoni arch from the statue of George I, thus linking the twenty-first-century ARC to the eighteenth-century magnificence of the North Front. Lord Sainsbury, the President of The Campaign for Stowe, is very committed to this concept and is closely involved in ensuring we involve top class architects in finding a solution which meets successfully both the functional and aesthetic requirements. We will probably start off with a short list of about six architects. We do not regard a competition as the best way forward as there are some architects whom we would like to have on our short list who would not wish then to take part.

Charlotte: There will clearly be a strong focus on Information Communication Technology in the ARC. Lots of Stoics are not very good on computers. Will there be lots of help for them?

SGAH: Yes. It would be foolish to create a wonderful high-tech computerised library and then not have it at every Stoic's disposal! We do operate a programme for third-formers in computer literacy and this will be beefed-up with provision for all those joining us at sixth-form level. Librarians, clued-up in computer technology, will be on hand at all times on each floor of the building. Initially we may need to increase their numbers whilst the School gets used to the new facility. A bit like what happened at the new British Library when the searching and ordering of books was suddenly transferred to computers. Library staff were on hand to show those readers who were in a panic that it was all, in fact, very simple!

And then, of course, with the staff in the Common Room within the actual building and the ARC central to most teaching programmes, there will be no shortage of academics on



The site of the new Academic Resource Centre,
an area in need of development and aesthetic improvement



hand. This is crucial, indeed, to the whole academic atmosphere of the place. Sometimes librarians of Academic Resource Centres already operating elsewhere complain that it is hard to get the academics into, and involved in, the building. This will not be a problem here. And it is an important issue.

ADGS: If a Resource Centre is nothing more than a place for "information retrieval", it is generating about as much excitement as the process of locating a tin of baked beans in an empty Superstore. A Resource Centre will only liberate, challenge and inspire if the teaching staff are committed to it, enthusiastic about it and playing a key role within it.

SGAH: Sorry, we've gone rather a long way from your original question!

Simon: You say that the fund-raising target is £15 million. What is the time-scale for raising it and how will the work affect the lives of present Stoics?

ADGS: The time-frame for the £15 million is by the end of 2003 and so far we have raised £2 million, either by donations or written pledges. Of the £15 million, £7.5 million is for The Stowe School Foundation and £7.5 million is for The Stowe House Preservation Trust. The latter figure is for the ARC and an endowment for Scholarships and Bursaries. As for worries about work disrupting the lives of present-day Stoics the restoration and building projects will be very carefully phased and controlled, so that the situation never becomes intolerable. Stowe is such a vast place and the use of the different buildings and different parts of Stowe House by each pupil is so wide-ranging that inconvenience to individuals should never be acute.

SGAH: The restoration of the North Front, lasting from 2000 till 2002, will be done section by section, so there will never be a time when the entire North Front is covered with scaffolding.

ADGS: The £4.9 million received from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the £980,000 from English Heritage (for Phase 1, i.e. the North Front and colonnades) for The Stowe House Preservation Trust, are both additional to the £15 million which The Campaign For Stowe is seeking to raise. The £7.5 million that The Campaign For Stowe is seeking to raise for The Stowe House Preservation Trust is to meet the outstanding cost, after funds have been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage. The £7.5 million should go a long way towards covering all six phases of the Stowe House restoration project. Phase 1 (total cost £6.56 million) is already secured and £300,000 has already been pledged towards both Phases 2 and 3.

As for the Academic Resource Centre, the aim is that the enabling work i.e. the transfer of the squash and fives courts to the Drayson Hall area, will take place in the autumn and that the building of the Academic Resource Centre will start in 2002 and take about fifteen months.

Stefanie: How are you going to handle the fact that many present Stoics will not see the results of all this activity and yet they are having to put up with the inconvenience?

SGAH: We've talked about the fact that inconvenience will be minimised and although the Academic Resource Centre will not be built before a lot of current Stoics have left the School, the building of the new squash and fives courts, and the addition of new scholarships and bursaries, will happen more

quickly. Also it is a tradition in most schools that each generation benefits from past fund-raising activity and, in return, plays a part in generating funds for generations of the future.

ADGS: You will get pride as an Old Stoic in the fact that the School is going forward and competing with the very best, rather than stagnating.

Charlotte: Is the Vanbrugh block being replaced and is there going to be a reduction in the amount of classroom teaching?

SGAH: No, the Vanbrugh block will stay and there will be no significant reduction in the amount of classroom teaching. Classroom teaching will continue to be a key part of the learning process at Stowe.

Tom: Are we going to be besieged by tourists from around the world?

ADGS: There were those who worried about this in 1989 when the School gifted the Landscape Gardens to the National Trust, but Stowe is such a vast place that it has never been a problem. With the restoration of Stowe House, the peak visitor times will tend to be during the holidays and visits during term-time will be carefully managed so as not to disrupt the working life of the School.

Stefanie: How are you going to integrate all the different uses for the Academic Resource Centre?

SGAH: It is going to be informal but purposeful. Much of it will be open plan but there will also be quiet rooms, tutorial rooms and even classrooms. The different functions will have clearly defined areas. Each subject will have its own clearly defined area for ease of use. There should be no problems about it being used formally, by a class, or informally, by individuals, at the same time.

Tom: In summary, is it correct to say that there is going to be an increase in the amount of academic tuition that Stoics get, once the ARC has been built?

SGAH: It depends on the definition of "tuition". If it is defined as formal or informal classroom staff-pupil interaction, then I guess the tuition level will stay pretty constant. But there will inevitably be more interaction outside the classroom scenario and to this extent there will be more "tuition". What will happen, I am sure, is that the quality of both learning and teaching will be greatly enhanced.

Philippa: How will the Academic Resource Centre at Stowe be distinctive and different from other Resource Centres elsewhere?

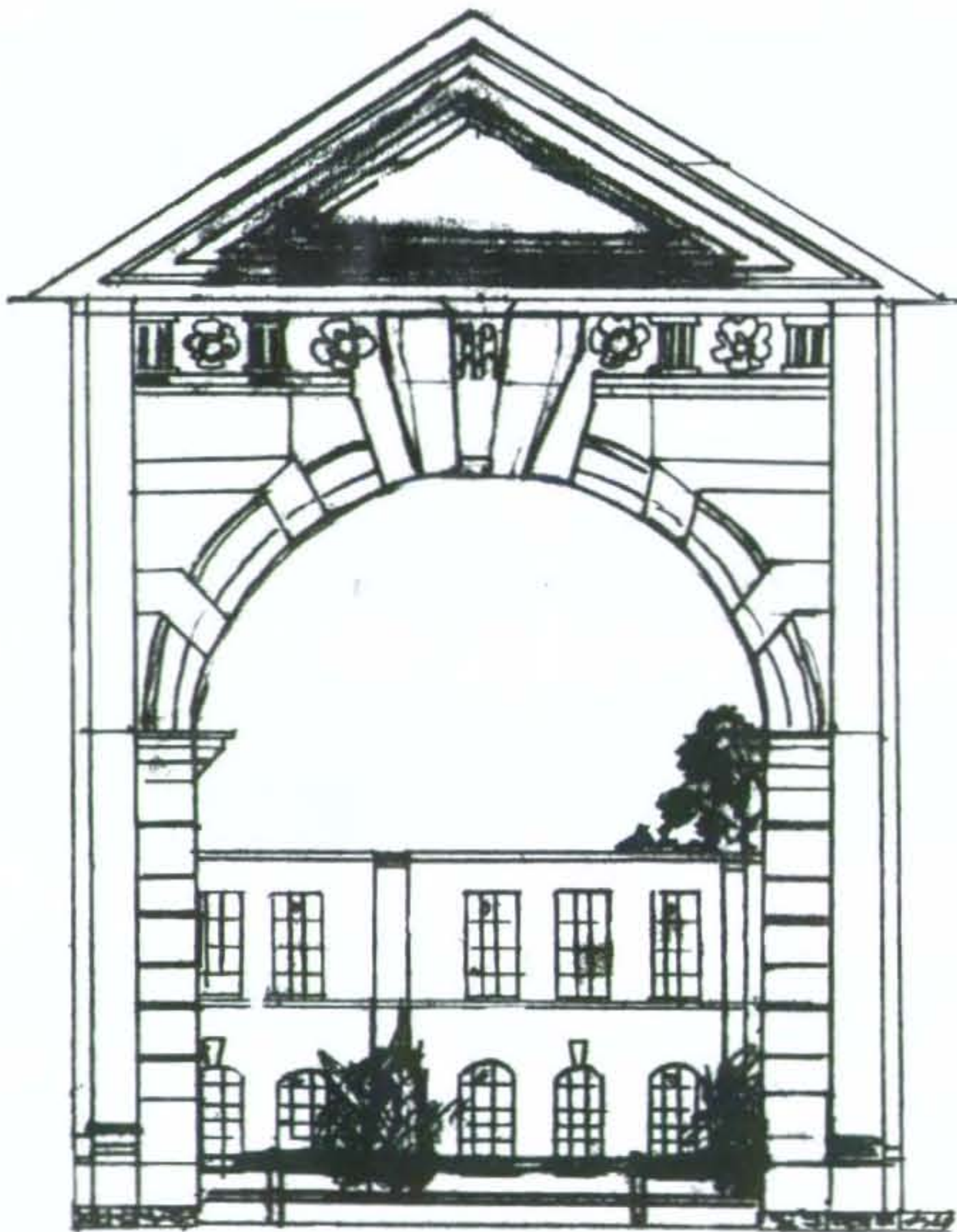
SGAH: Its greatest difference will be in having the staff common room based within it. That's a totally original idea. It's based on the feeling that of all "academic resources" the teacher is Number One. To have the whole staff "belonging" to the building is to ensure that it will be used to maximum effect.

ADGS: Its setting will also be distinctive, the close relationship of a building for the twenty-first century with its eighteenth-century neighbours. You only have to walk around Oxford or Cambridge to realise what a difference a sense of place can make. Old buildings and the not-so-old, informing and inspiring each other. The ARC will distinctively exemplify Stowe's special quality, a modern school on a heritage site.

SOME THIRD FORM VIEWS ON THE ARC DEVELOPMENT SITE

There could be no greater help to the development of Stowe's Visual Education programme than the schemes to conserve the mansion and embellish the Academic Avenue with the building of the Academic Resource Centre. As regards the mansion, a pilot sixth-form Visual Education course begins in the new academic year on the mansion's conservation. As the contractors' work develops, so too will the course. It is intended to keep a full photographic record of all phases of the restoration programme; the resultant archive should offer rich illustrative material for the future development of courses of all shapes and sizes and for all manner of customers. It is a wonderful educational opportunity.

The scheme to revitalise the academic area also offers excellent practical material for visual education. Already, last summer, some third-formers explored the site where the Academic Resource Centre will be built, as part of a Visual Education project on modern Stowe. It is a fascinating experience to look at the challenges and opportunities facing the architect.

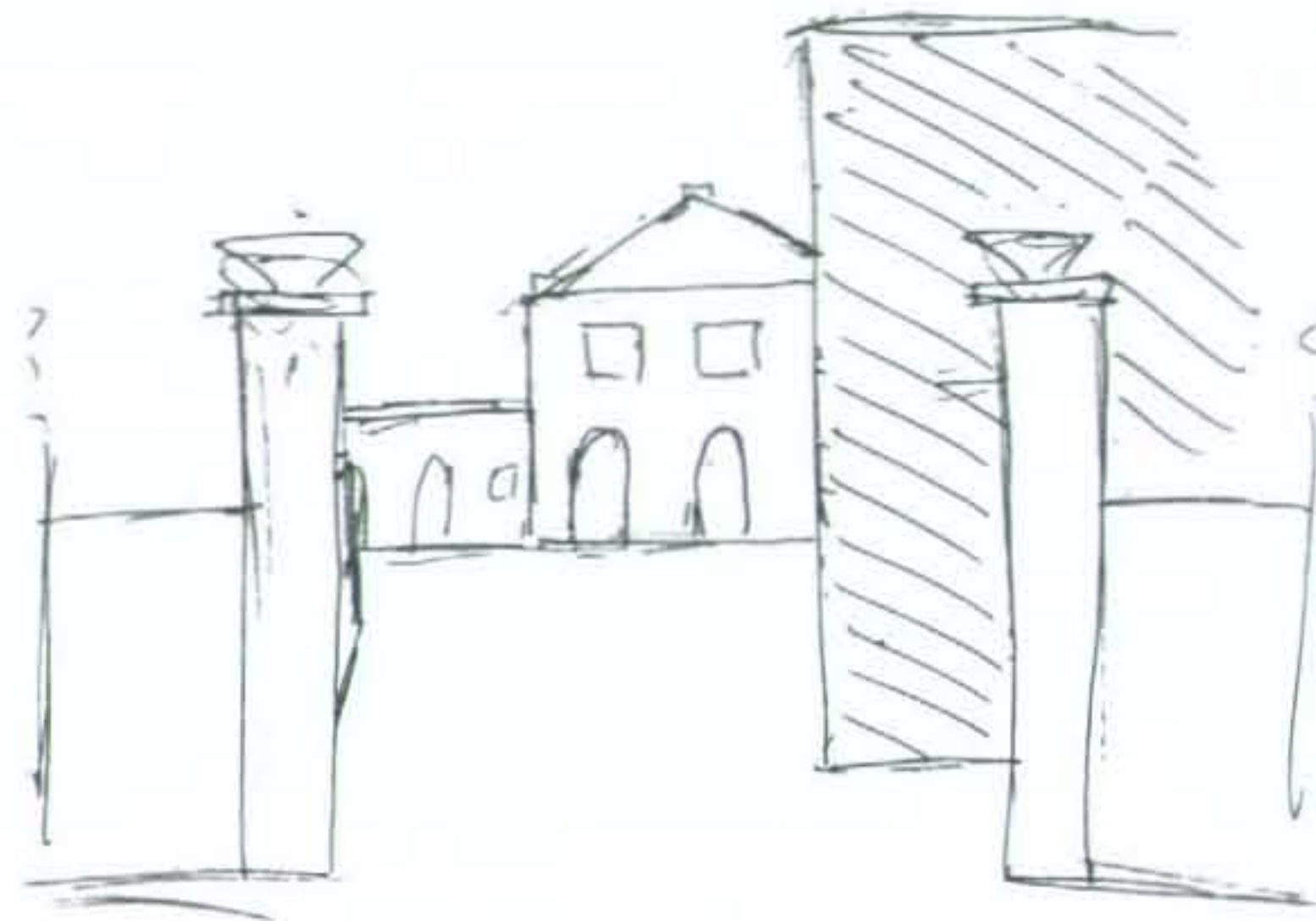


The view through the arch as it is at the moment
by Christopher Dalton, 3A.

The third-formers began their exploration by examining the views both ways through the Leoni Arch, noting how in one direction there is a clear vista to the equestrian statue of George I and the Leoni Arch beyond and how, in the other direction, there is no vista, just a sombre classroom block. They saw how the architect of the Modern Languages Classroom block did his best to pick up the horizontal lines of the eighteenth-century screen wall, but few third-formers reckoned he succeeded, declaring in the main that the classroom block takes away much of the arch's distinction. It



was agreed that the arch would be most enhanced by a new building whose design "suggests a vista or at least has an attractive focal point, catching the eye through the arch". Another view of the site the third-formers considered was from the old gateway near the entrance to the Modern Languages block. Drawing this view helped emphasise how badly the Language classrooms block the façade of Vanbrugh's Orangery (the present Classics department).



A third-form sketch
showing the blocked façade of Vanbrugh's Orangery.

The majority of third-formers preferred the new building to start further back than the present one, to allow the view of the old Orangery to be reclaimed, but others (nearly 50%) felt that precious space could not be wasted. It is an important decision. It was also discussed how best to embellish the area between the Leoni Arch and the proposed ARC and, in particular, its effect on the Renée Emery memorial plantings. Various species of formal gardens were popular suggestions, some even with fountains and statuary, with (in two notable cases) a pathway leading to the ARC, whose main entrance was to be approached by steps.

Discussions took place on the right architectural style for the ARC. 60% of 3E voted for a neo-classical building, justifying this choice on the grounds that "it will fit in better with its surroundings" or "that's what Stowe is all about". 30% wanted something modern "because it's going to be a building for modern technology" and "it will show that the School is forward rather than backward looking". 10% (clearly inspired by the Gothic Library and Temple) voted for a Gothic construction "with lots of pinnacles and towers" and, in one case, gargoyles of famous Stowe personalities.

Finally the third-formers stood on the top of the steps looking down the Academic Avenue and were asked to make suggestions as to how to improve it. Initially there were some puzzled faces, but after permission had been obtained to knock down the one-storey accretions faces began to light up and there were two main camps: those who wanted to introduce shrubs and flower-beds and those who preferred a covered walkway. With Stowe gargoyles, of course.

AGM

18TH CENTURY LOVE AND DRINK AT STOWE

Michael Bevington on the restoration of the Rotondo
and the Marchioness of Buckingham's Seat

Unlike more recent times, no doubt, love and drink played an important role at Stowe in the 18th century. This can be seen in the two garden buildings restored by the National Trust over the last two years. One is almost the best known of Stowe's temples and the other is one of the smallest and least known.

With its graceful dome capping ten tall Ionic columns, the Rotondo complements its magnificent setting and has a key role in the garden vistas, but one which has changed radically over the years. It started as the hub at the focus of three formal straight walks. Thirty years later, when the old geometrical vistas and ha-ha bastion gave way to naturalised landscape, it provided a different emphasis, as an eye-catcher sited atop a sea of undulating grass. All this can now be appreciated with renewed pleasure.

In addition, the Rotondo is of considerable architectural interest for three particular reasons. First, it is probably the earliest surviving garden building, although much altered. Secondly, it is significant for being probably the first of the unique collection of neo-classical buildings at Stowe and one based at first on literary rather than archaeological evidence. When designed in 1720 by Vanbrugh, fresh from his masterpieces of Castle Howard and Blenheim, it could be seen as an attempt to recreate from Vitruvius' prescriptions one of the most famous temples of antiquity, Venus' circular shrine at Cnidos, a Greek town on the west coast of Turkey. No doubt Lord Cobham enjoyed his tribute to the goddess of love soon after his marriage in 1715, aged 40.

There were serious mistakes in the classical accuracy of the building, however, and Earl Temple soon sought to rectify them after he inherited Stowe in 1749. Rigaud's engraving of 1739 shows the original steep hemispherical dome with its Baroque ball finial. This was softened into a

more classical appearance by Borra's rebuilding of 1752-54.

The next architectural change to the Rotondo provides its third reason for significance. Following Le Roy's publication of his archaeological studies of the Erechtheum in 1757, there was a change in the understandings of the Ionic order, as used for the Rotondo. By 1764 James 'Athenian' Stuart was using anthemion or acanthus leaves on the necking of Ionic capitals for a new building. Earl Temple, perhaps with Pitt's help, introduced them onto the Rotondo in 1774, the first such use at Stowe to enhance the accuracy of an existing neo-classical building.

Once this new archaeological accuracy was accepted, it became obvious that the statue of Venus was out of place. Praxiteles, the sculptor of the original, was famous for his work in marble, of course, and the ungainly excesses of Lord Cobham's gilt bronze copy would have looked out of keeping with the building's Greek appearance. Earl Temple, therefore, replaced the Venus, the inhabitant for 50 years, with a Bacchus, the god of wine, which lasted 70 years. This new iconography, in fact, was and is the predominant one at Stowe, since he frequently used Bacchus elsewhere, such as on the contemporary Blue Room and Music Room ceilings, South Portico frieze and State Dining Room chimney-piece. The reason is not difficult to understand: Earl Temple was fond of his wine and, as the letters from this period tell us, it was to the medicinal powers of Bacchus that he attributed his recovery from his near fatal illness. Moreover Bacchus was identified with the god Liber, who would have appealed to Earl Temple also as a patron of political liberation.

The National Trust's excellent and thorough restoration of the Rotondo conserves it in its third phase, with Earl Temple's neo-classical changes introduced in 1774. The lead on the dome has been relaid to its state at the end of the 18th



Vanbrugh's Rotondo before its alterations in 1752 and 1774, as engraved by Rigaud (and as printed in 1739)

century and painted a stone colour. The two surrounding steps, dating from 1898, have been replaced by the original arrangement of three. The stonework has been repaired and painted with limewash. Inside, the 1870 wooden seat has been conserved.

Since we do not know the whereabouts of the Bacchus which was in the 1774 Rotondo, a gilt copy of the Venus de Medici has been substituted, taken from Massimiliano Soldani Benzi's 1717 version at Blenheim. The new plinth, of Kilkenny blue limestone, was copied from one at Castle Howard. Thus Venus has a second opportunity to lay claim to the building, but will perhaps again have to make way for Bacchus to ensure historical accuracy when new evidence again becomes available.

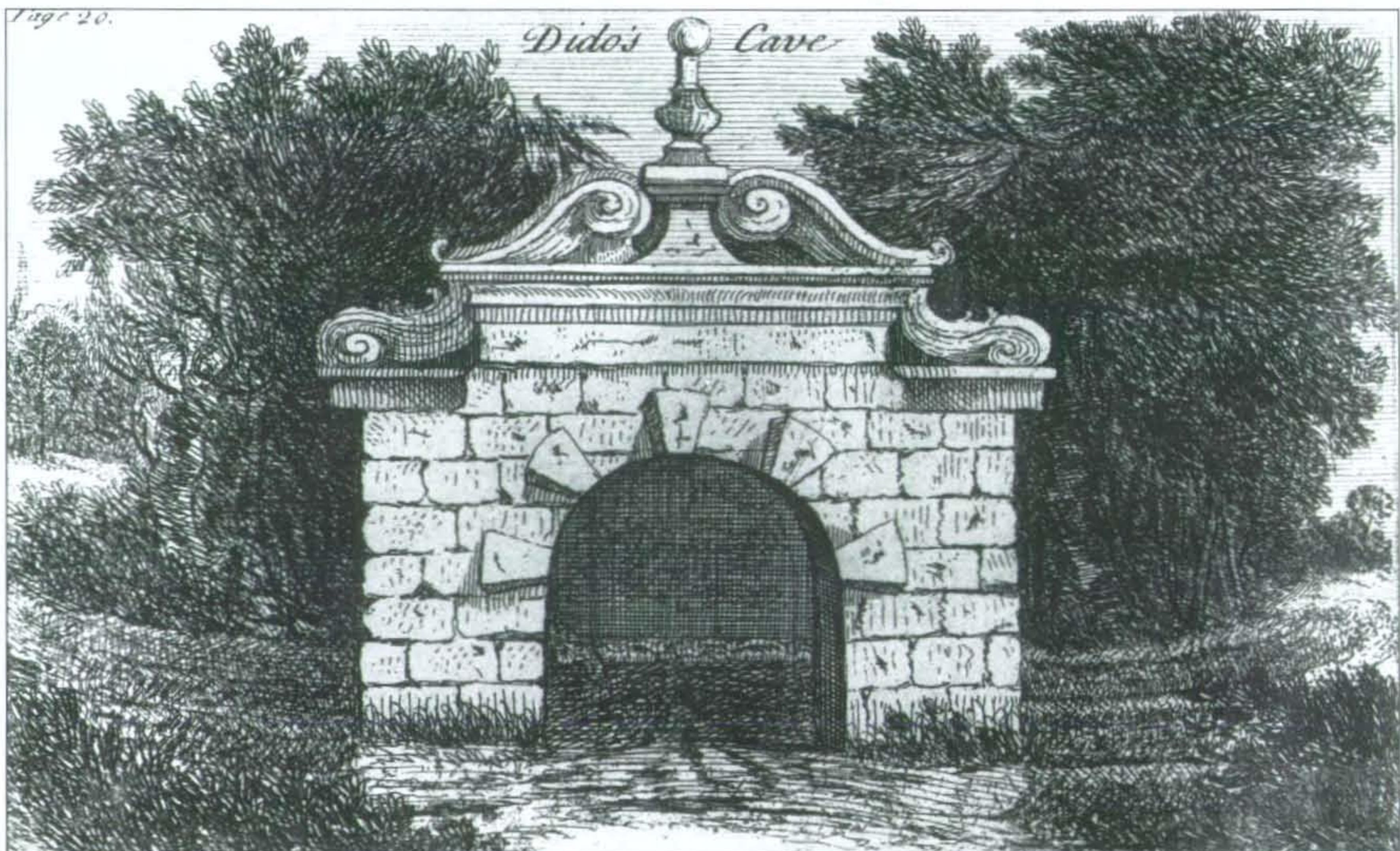
In the shrubbery nearby lurks a small rectangular stone alcove. It has had at least six different roles. It started as the *Pavilion* at the head of a small open grass theatre, probably a Vanbrugh design of the early 1720s. By 1732 Gilbert West's poem named it the *Randibus*, in memory of the exploits, some eight years before, of the Revd. Conway Rand, the local vicar and one of Lord Cobham's regimental chaplains. He had chased a maid there, after seeing almost too much of her while she was on a nearby swing; later, aged about 42, he married her. The fame of this incident was preserved by means of a wall-painting of Dido and Aeneas' marriage, also in a cave, with a suitable inscription from Virgil. Fragments of the inscription and painting, including trees and towers, have been found and conserved. The painting and the new name, *Dido's Cave*, were first recorded in 1738.

Its fourth role came in 1774, when the building was dedicated as the *Memorial to Sir John Vanbrugh*, supposedly by Lord Cobham, according to the new Latin inscription carved that year. In this respect it replaced the Pyramid, the former memorial to Vanbrugh, which was demolished three years before. At about the same time, and by 1777, the grass theatre in front was removed and replaced by shrubs.

Between 1788 and 1797 the landscape around the building was again changed, when the building was excluded from the visitor circuit. Instead, it was built into the south-east corner of a walled enclosure to the south of Lady Buckingham's Menagerie. The rest of the wall has mainly gone, but it is just possible that the side walls owe their origin to this stage. This allowed Lady Buckingham to convert it into her private *Grotto* (perhaps in 1805, if Nattes' drawing of a grotto at Stowe is a possible plan for its alterations). From the top were removed the baroque finial and the scrolled broken pediment. Tufa was added on iron spikes to the dressed stone exterior and side walls. The inside was covered with tufa too, along with some shells and mirror fragments, and a rough niche was hacked out in the south-east corner. This was 'entirely executed' by Lady B., the *Description* of 1817 tells us, and it was 'her favourite seat'.

Finally, soon after her death in 1812, her son, the later first duke, turned it into the *Marchioness of Buckingham's Seat*, adding the surviving inscription over the doorway as a dedication: *MATER AMATA, VALE!* (Beloved Mother, Farewell!). A Roman column took up residence in the Marchioness' Seat until its removal in 1843. Probably at the same time, and between 1809 and 1827, the walled enclosure was removed and a new path laid from in front of the Marchioness' Seat to the Rotondo, as survives today, thus enabling the Marchioness' Seat to return to the visitor route. This is essentially the building we now see and the form that it has had for its longest period.

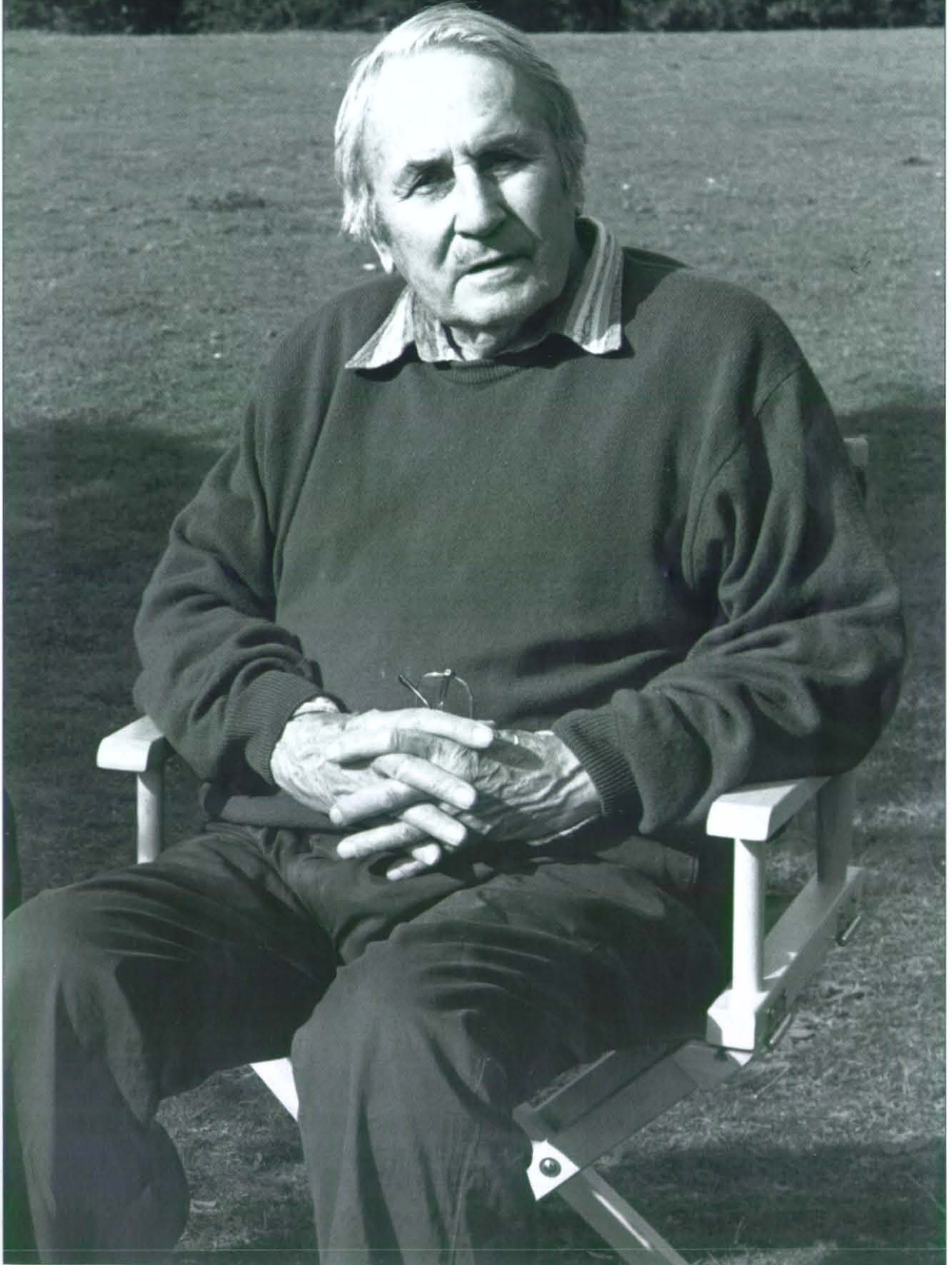
The National Trust has undertaken a detailed and sensitive restoration. After careful consideration, it was decided to preserve the mixture of the Grotto's tufa and the dressed stonework or paintings below, to allow visitors a feel for the various stages in its history. A wrought iron gate has also been reinstated, helpful in keeping out vicars and maids, and a slatted wooden seat has been replaced for the use of others.

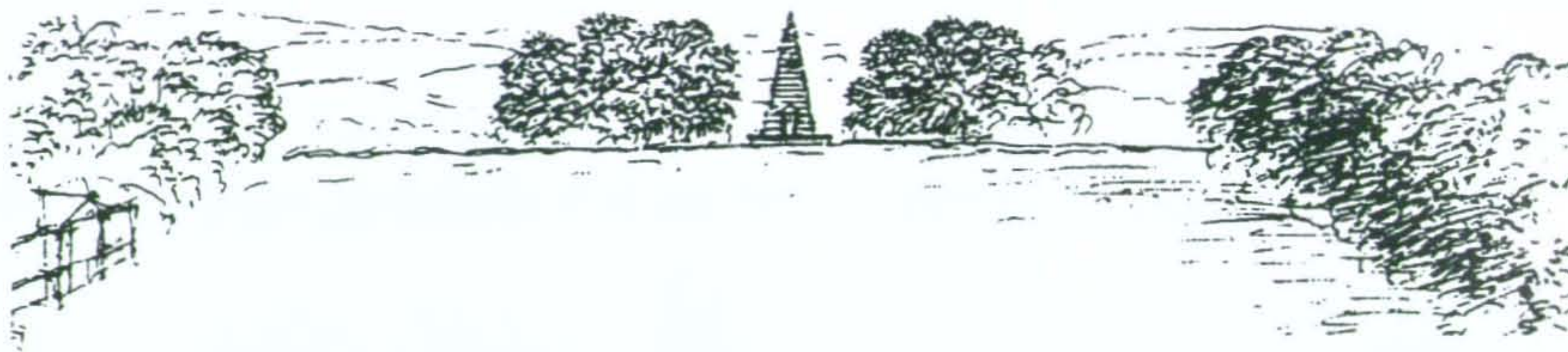


Dido's Cave, in Bickham's engraving of 1750, before its conversion to a Grotto as the Marchioness of Buckingham's Seat

Laurence Whistler (O.S.) offers some thought-provoking ideas on the future of the landscape gardens.

PAST LOOKS TO FUTURE





In May 1926, a new boy arriving at a public school all-but-new itself, I wandered off through the Elysian Fields, when free, and suddenly saw far off the top half of a bridge rising in delicate columns, almost blue by contrast, out of a whole hill of cowslips. Frank Thomson, the National Trust's head gardener, tells me they are growing round the edges still. I beg him to renew that vision for Spring visitors.

But stay! Did Lord Cobham and his sophisticated circle care at all about wild flowers? Shakespeareans did. And we do, since the Romantic poets. But is that relevant?

This personal memory points to the big question. Should the National Trust do nothing but carry out, when known, original intentions? Or may it, with the utmost tact of course, invent what is in tune with these days and not out of harmony with those? The answer is immediate. Houses stay put, given care – gardens flow. Trees and shrubs have to be renewed in different places, to give the same effect. Stowe gardens may seem to be luxuriously spread-eagled in a trance of all the aesthetic, idealistic, political, patriotic, satirical ideas that reinforced or sometimes replaced each other during its making. In truth it is footing a very slow waltz of trunks and foliage, only sometimes perceptible to the eye of a returning visitor.

The purist's edict, "nothing now that wasn't once", is untenable. And the Trust is already working on this principle. Go first to the eastern corner. In woods close to the Palladian Bridge now stands the Chinese House, recently returned to Stowe. Because it cannot be replaced where it originally stood, it has been given this new setting.

Westwards, far away at the opposite corner, stands the Temple of Venus by Kent – in my time the Bursar's Pig Sty and desolate then for more than a century – now accurately restored by the Trust. Inside where once there were un-wholesome murals on a theme from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, painted by the Venetian, Francesco Sletter, we have at present an elegant bare room. Lord Temple had grown tired of his uncle's sense of humour, illustrated elsewhere in the grounds. What can be done now with a neat Kent hat-box? To reproduce the murals is out: no record exists. Paint new ones? My brother Rex could have handled the theme, not salaciously but suggestively – as in his mural of the Prince Regent arousing the Spirit of Brighton, (now in the Pavilion there). I think a purist would sanction Kent's own engravings of the same story, pedestrian though they are, and allow them mural frames in his style.

Yet why not add appropriate meanings to this Temple of Aphrodite Antheia? Sacred to her were doves, also fragrance. Behind the building is an ample, restored corner of the ha-ha. Why not, out-of-sight there, a Kent-style dovecote, perhaps

circular on a column, and radiating beds of richly scented flowers? Then myrtles, also sacred, might be introduced into the splayed foliage each side of the front façade. None of this would alter the distant views of Venus in the least – except that sometimes a skein of wings might be seen floating across her pediment like sly ideas.

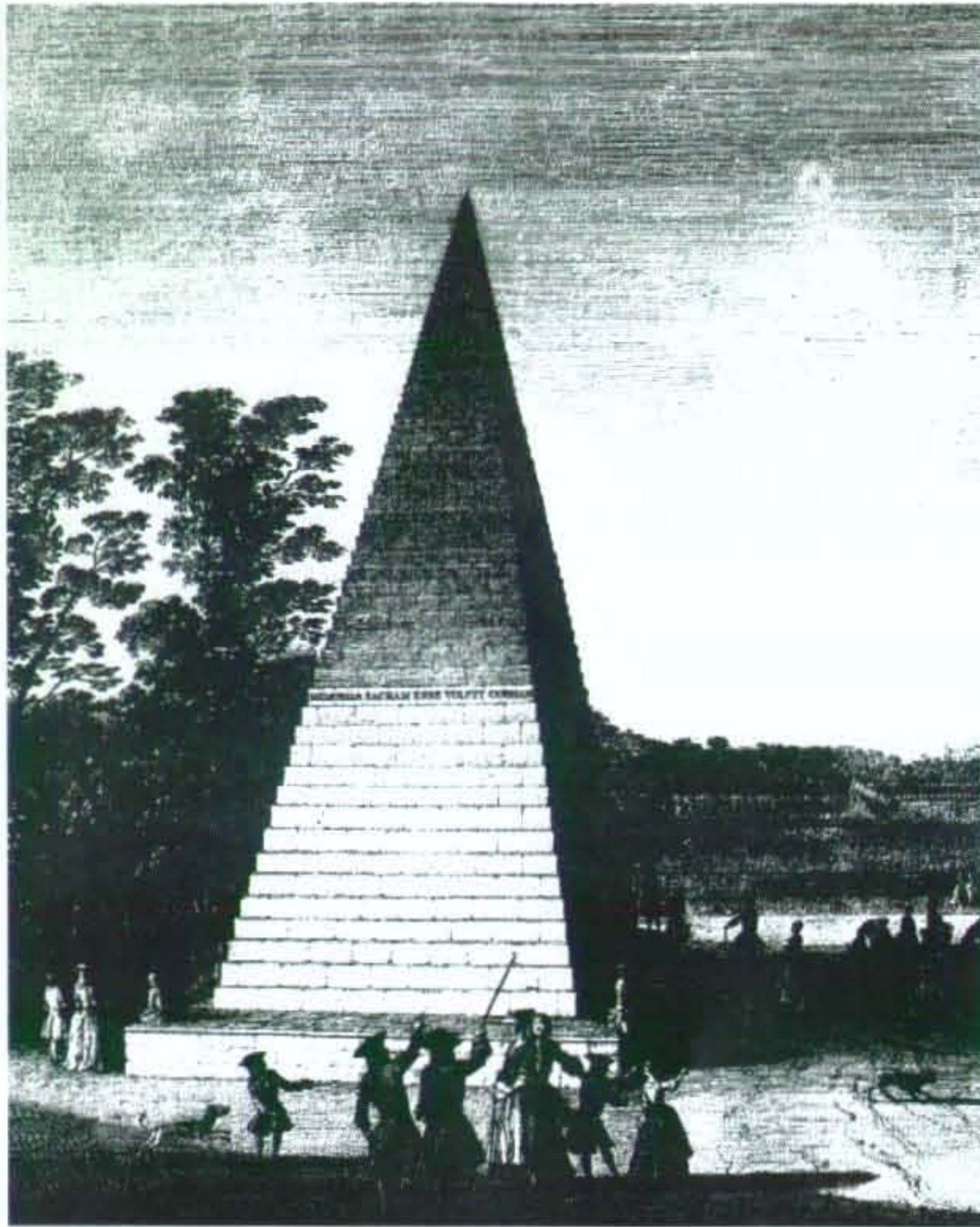
Then there is the shameful case of Vanbrugh, Cobham's friend and architect, who peopled the first-enlarged garden with temples, three of which survive in altered form. His final design, a narrow, stepped pyramid with potent doorcase, was in 1726 dedicated to his memory in Latin, but demolished forty years later. It was too assertive for the new classical tranquillity demanded – like the semicircular dome of his Rotundo, replaced by a more serene curve, (each right for a different conception). Thus for a while he had the grandest memorial ever bestowed on an architect, 60 feet high, and since then has had none at all, not even a headstone. Other countries are more mindful of their great architects.



The back of Venus. Why not a dovecote?



"...sometimes a skein of wings might be seen floating across her pediment..."



Rigaud's drawing of Vanbrugh's pyramid positioned in the top corner of the western gardens, where it stayed just forty years

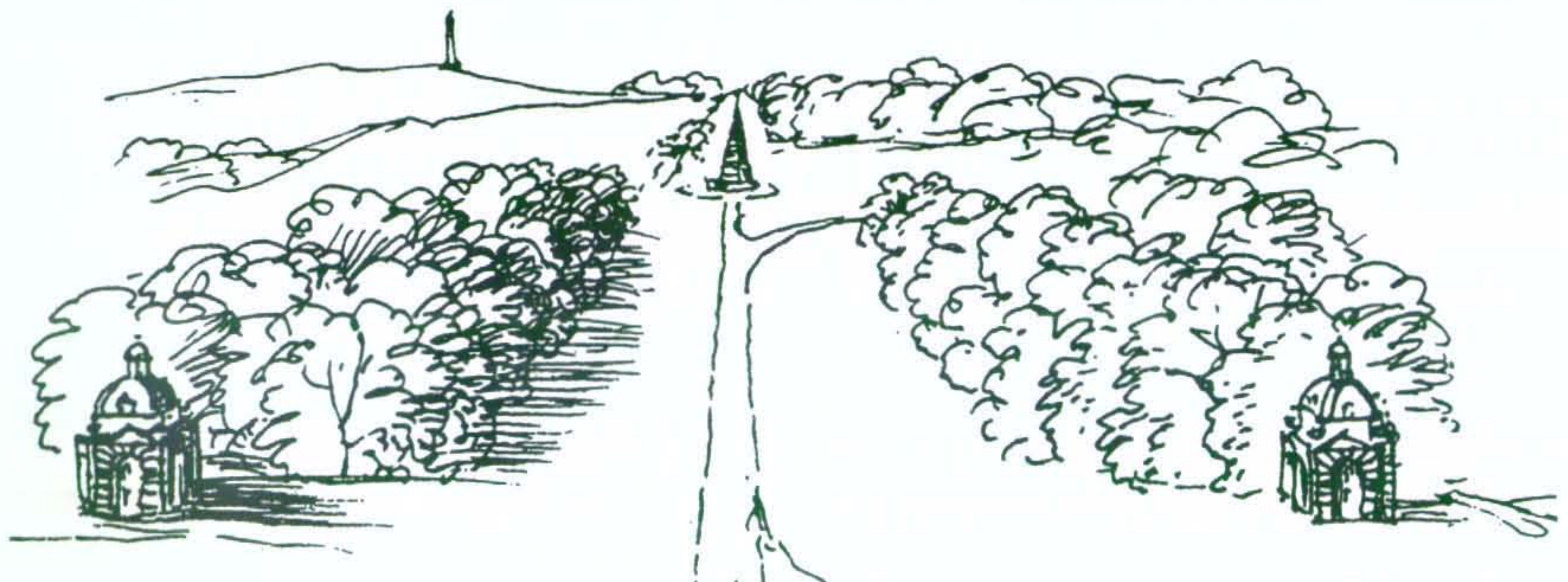
It would be absurd to rebuild the Pyramid within yards, now, of the last house in the School's brick ribbon of Field Houses. Is there no other site where it might be revived in the same bold way as the little Chinese House? There is. Let us place ourselves in the North Portico of the house (designed, probably by Vanbrugh, but finalized after his death by Leoni). Each side of us the curved arms of the Colonnades seem to spread wide in recognition of something far away. But what is there to recognise? – A tame skyline with a patchy row of trees. Nevertheless, exactly in the middle, out there, is the main node of the whole vast design, where one axis – through avenue, arch and house, intersects with the other – following the line of a Roman road through Oxford Lodge and Boycott Pavilions. At that prime focus for many view-points, Van, we may be sure, would eagerly have sharpened his 9H Pyramid. (Hawksmoor, after him, provided a blunter one at Castle Howard, also centrally placed). But by the time he got to Stowe this was not an option. George I,

who had made Cobham a Baron in 1714, had just made him a Viscount, and had to be honoured at that very point with an equestrian statue, targeted by a straight canal. Moved into the forecourt later in 1803, 'George' is now part of school life: and anyway, with a playing field beyond and no canal, it would lose interest and look ineffectual back there on the seldom-visited skyline – should that be proposed. Thus a vacancy invites ... Who shall say the cost would rule it out, when one superb anonymous gift of nearly two million pounds secured the whole garden for the nation?

Last, to the Grand Avenue, a mile and a half long from Buckingham to the Corinthian Arch. Becoming dangerous in my youth, it was beginning to be felled and replanted in sections; later, elm disease put an end to the remainder. Ever to recapture the regularity needed by two ranks of trees, so extended, is hardly possible. But Castle Howard in Yorkshire offers a dramatic alternative. There, the long central section of avenue between arches was planted in clumps: that is, divided on both flanks, symmetrically, into sections, each 64 yards long. Alternate, but opposite sections on each side were then planted with sixteen beeches in a block 32 yards square, (thus leaving 16 yards unplanted on each side of the trunks for the crowns to grow out into). As they matured the intervening sections were treated in the same way and the older squares felled – in due course. The benefits are spectacular. Age can be replaced by youth, painlessly, and for ever! Seen in perspective, the massed crowns advance, one beyond another, each different, into theatre-scenery, of no trumpery sort. It might be thought a demerit that, looking sideways, one can see what stage has been reached in bringing up the



The Grand Avenue with its double row of trees, before the founding of the School



young – if that matters. But who would look sideways approaching Stowe down an undulating avenue, with a great arch ahead vanishing and reappearing, and through it, something – is it a portico? – rising and sinking, as far away again?

This treatment could be introduced at any time, once sectioning were done on paper, by planting forward from every block on both sides: it requires no more trees initially than a straight row, as at present. Perhaps the foliage might change from lighter at the Buckingham end to darker, even evergreens, at the summit, assuming that, when restored, the Arch is given a lightish rendering.

Of course everyone hopes that it may be possible, one day, to drive through the Arch to the Boycott Pavilions and the house, with a delightful side-view, missed at present, of the Oxford Bridge. Or better, perhaps, to leave Stowe by that route and approach it, as at present, by the public road.

You have to imagine the situation after the first world war, when the whole of Stowe, not excluding a house too big and remote to find a likely use, so nearly fell to a waiting demolition firm and a disrespectful builder. There was great excitement in the new school, our young headmaster, J.F. Roxburgh, claiming high-mindedly that "every boy who goes out from Stowe will know beauty when he sees it all the rest of his life." The school struggled, with limited resources, to keep two of the three main vistas intact, and might have kept the third free from intrusion had there been an imaginative master-plan at the outset, such as Lutyens could have provided; but he was too playful in discussion ever to have been engaged by the unamusable Chairman of Allied Schools. Today, there would be no permission to demolish the Temple of Bacchus, the one Vanbrugh building to survive unaltered (to which Kent's Temple of Venus gave answer, far off). I watched it come down – to be replaced by the school chapel – thinking at the time there was surely room for that

between Bacchus and the west end of the house. And, indeed two quadrangles of Oxbridge type, divided by chapel, would have brought in a pleasant academic element, invisible from any vista. Then, away to the north where the drive sweeps round to the house... If only – at the outset – that master-plan?

The beauty of England is full of retreat, – which can be dated from crass failure after the second world war to site factories beside railways, and inject high speed into freight-conveyancing. Motor roads multiply. Town centres are deserted, while the suds of urban development feel out into the fields. Any unspoilt valley may be just right for an



The romantic, overgrown Stowe which Laurence Whistler knew as a boy



"...surely rescue-and-renewal can work in harmony with nature conservancy..."

installation. Add to this dismal catalogue a fifty-years felling of woods, and grubbing up of hedges. Add, then, chemical sprays which, dealing with weeds, deal with flowers, insects, and thus birds. Still beauty remains, and must be fought for wherever this is feasible. And some sanctuaries will survive anyway. Stowe for example. With its 700 acres now presumed to be inviolable.

Here surely rescue-and-renewal can work in harmony with nature conservancy, operating on a different scale. Stowe, for all its period connotations, became slowly the embodied ideal of an imagined classical world, as depicted by painters, chiefly Poussin and Claude. With garden flowers elsewhere, Primavera could have felt at home. The curve of the Grecian Valley, with the Temple of Concord, now restored to pristine elegance, leads nowhere but to itself: it could offer an Arcadia which might go some way to satisfying even Keats.

For cowslips were not unique in those first summers. Around Ancient Virtue yew mixed with fragrant mock orange (old in England) struck a contrast as exhilarating as yew-and-blackthorn over downland roads. Where the slow river meets

the lake, marsh marigolds grew. (A plea, here, for some bogland to survive). Bird-life and insect life would do well; a kingfisher, up from lake or river, might again dive for minnows in Chapel Court pool. Dog roses, spotted orchids, cuckoo flower, lady's smock... Flora which I have forgotten I read of in the record kept by masters and boys. But all depends on enough areas surviving of long grass and tangled undergrowth. Reopened glimpses of far temples are a joy, but if every boscage became see-through the poetry of Stowe would evaporate, with suggestions of a trim municipal park. All this our wise guardians know. We must trust the Trust.

It is now seventy years since I set out – at lengthening intervals – to measure, research, publish and print, and sometimes scratch on glass, certain aspects and ideas of Stowe: I am sad that it is having to stop.

* *Natural History of Stowe* (1950) Printed for the School by Hillier & Sons, Buckingham.

I thank Mr Roy Maycock of the County Record Office for giving me his wide knowledge of Stowe flora; and Mr Stuart Palmer, the Head Forester at Castle Howard, for details of the avenue.



"Reopened glimpses of far temples are a joy but..."

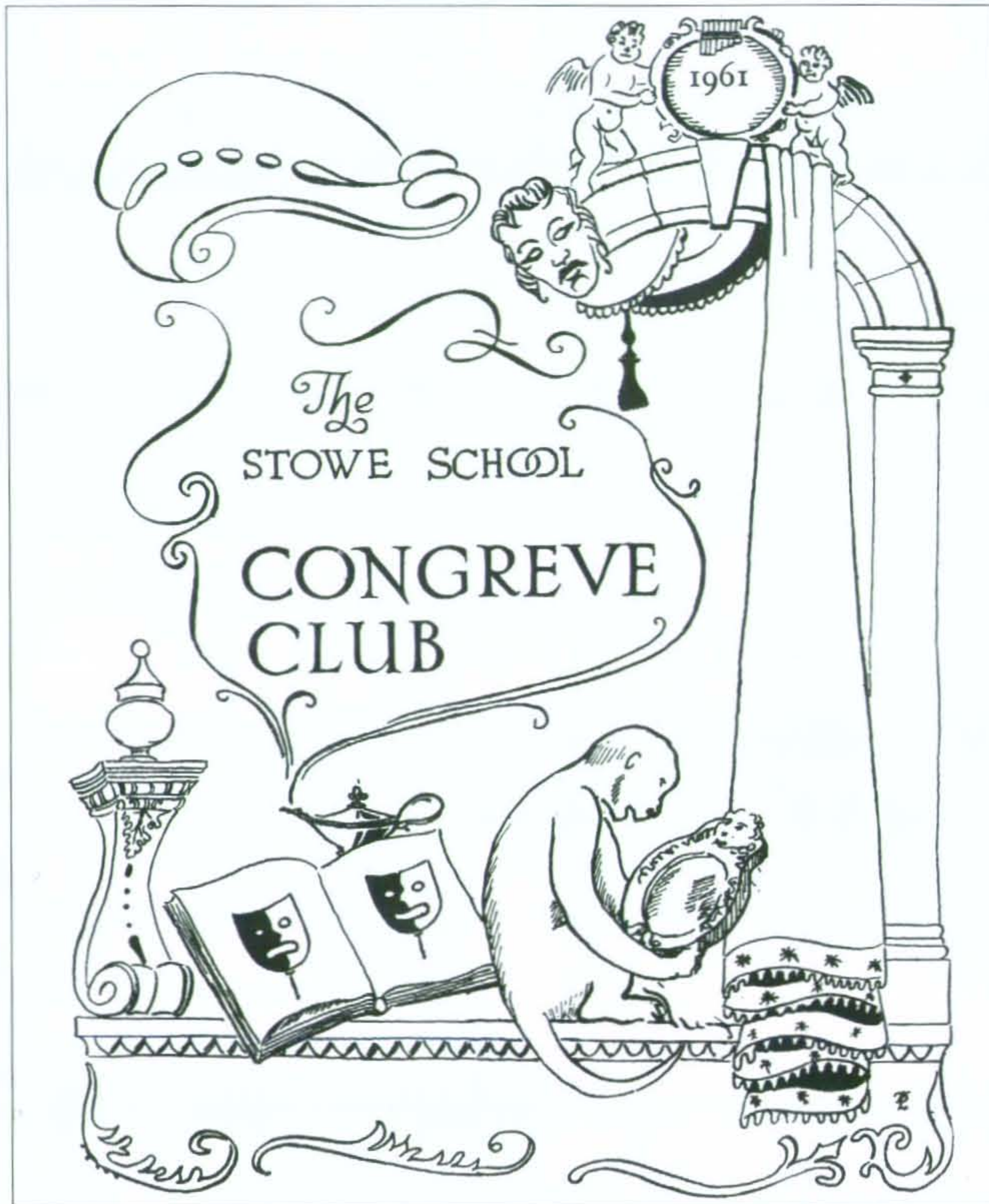


"if every boscage became see-through the poetry of Stowe would evaporate, with suggestions of a trim municipal park"



Close-clipped grass in today's Elysian Fields. Inset: A wilder view from the 1920s.

STOWE DRAMA: THE FIRST ACT



A retrospective look at the beginnings of the Congreve Club and the first fifty years of drama at Stowe (1923-1973) with particular reference to the work of Joe Bain, Peter Dams and Bill McElwee.

We are very grateful to the Old Stoics and former members of Common Room who have contributed to this feature, which is offered as a celebration of the first forty years of the Roxburgh Hall as a working theatre (1959-1999) and a belated tribute to Peter Dams, who died two years ago.



Peter Dams



Bill McElwee



Joe Bain

George Clarke: The First Fifty Years



Anyone reading recent issues of *The Stoic* must be aware how much theatrical activity takes place at Stowe and in what esteem Drama is now held. The School has two well equipped theatres; the Congreve Club presents a major production in the Christmas term, followed by a junior play later in the academic year; there is an annual drama festival, professionally adjudicated, in which most of the Houses take part; and, in addition to all this, several other productions are put on each year at various venues in the mansion and gardens. In 1998 the Third Forms played scenes from *Julius Caesar* at the temples of Ancient Virtue and Concord, a modern adaptation of Euripides' *Electra* was performed in the Dobinson Theatre by the Classical Society, and as part of the Jubilee celebrations Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, itself inspired by Stowe, ran for a short season on the South Front portico, with a cast of Old Stoics and their friends. Seventy-five years after the foundation of the School the status of Drama is very high. But it was not always so.

In the chapter surveying the School's early days, with which he began his memoirs, Brian Stephan devoted just two sentences to the subject 'Drama,' he wrote with careful understatement, '...was not so prominent in the pre-war years.' My guess is that in the ethos of Roxburgh's Stowe, play-acting was considered more suitable for an end-of-term House romp than as a serious educational activity, but perhaps that does Roxburgh an injustice. Every activity in the new school had to start from nothing and be kept going by the leadership and energy of those in charge of it, and it may be that no one was available to take drama on. So Stowe's theatrical tradition took a long time to mature. Many more people had a hand in building it up than can be mentioned in a short article, but there were four, it seems to me, who stand out as having made a major contribution.

The first was Bill McElwee, who was asked by some senior boys in 1936 for assistance in staging an outdoor performance of *Richard II*. T.H. White had curtly declined to help them, but McElwee agreed. And so began the tradition of the Historians' play, which was performed every year until his departure in 1961, except for some of the war years. Always a Shakespearean play, it took place on two nights at the end of the summer term, almost always at the Queen's

Temple. This suited some plays well – there was an outstanding performance of *Coriolanus* and more than one of *Julius Caesar* – but for others it was less suitable, and it was never easy for the audience. Seated below most of the action, so that they had to look up at it, bitten to death by midges and at the mercy of unkind weather, they were at some disadvantage. Only McElwee's magnetic leadership could have kept the tradition of the Historians' play going so successfully for twenty-five years. The quality of his productions may have been uneven, but it was never his intention just to stage a slick performance. Rather he hoped to give a wide variety of boys an educational experience, and this he triumphantly achieved. There were murmurs in some quarters that the Historians had hijacked the school play, but this was hardly fair. Without Bill McElwee the annual play would never have got off the ground at all.

What was needed, of course, to complement the Historians' Shakespearean productions was an active school dramatic society. This was created by Peter Dams, who joined the Staff during the War and founded the Congreve Club in 1941. Peter was a keen, almost fanatical, lover of the theatre, whose enthusiasm tended to neglect practicalities, but he was steadied and supported by his wife Marjorie. She had trained professionally as an actress, winning the gold medal for girls at the Central School of Speech and Drama in the same year that Laurence Olivier won it for boys, and she went on to act at the Old Vic and Stratford. With her assistance in the wings Dams built up the Congreve Club over a period of fifteen years, starting with play readings in the wartime days of self-help and going on to producing plays, until the annual Congreve Club play in the Christmas term became an established tradition. The finest of his productions was perhaps *St Joan*, though my own favourites were the small-scale musical pieces he put on in the more intimate setting of Walpole house: *Trial by Jury*, for instance, and *The Two Bouquets*. Marjorie died, tragically early, in 1956, and Peter produced nothing else for the Congreve Club, though he continued to direct Walpole's plays until he retired in 1964. What he had achieved was to create a thriving school dramatic society which presented its annual play in friendly rivalry with the Historians.

My third hero is Eric Reynolds, Roxburgh's successor as headmaster. He was a keen and experienced theatrical producer, who directed the school play at Rugby when I was a boy there, and I recall him playing D'Arcy in a staff production of *Pride and Prejudice*. But when he became Stowe's headmaster, he gave up directing plays himself and threw his energy into trying to improve the conditions for theatrical production at Stowe. If the Queen's Temple had its limitations as a theatrical venue, the makeshift stage at the end of the long, wooden, temporary,



Richard III performed by the Historians on the steps of the Queen's Temple, 1949.

George Clarke, the leading authority on Stowe House and Gardens, was Housemaster of Grenville and Senior Tutor during a Stowe career which stretched from 1950 to 1985.



Gym was just as inadequate. John Saunders, who directed two distinguished operatic productions there, of *Carmen* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, commented that 'the uniquely exasperating quality of the Gym stage induces ingenuity', but there was not a lot that could be done. Reynolds set out to provide something better. Beset by cash-strapped Governors on one side and a sceptical Staff on the other, he courageously bought a second-hand aircraft hangar. Its wide central span would provide an auditorium with an uninterrupted view of the stage, and the workshops down each side would normally be music practice rooms and double as dressing rooms during stage productions. Add a stage at one end and a façade, foyer and gallery at the other, put in some second-hand seats from a bombed-out cinema, and Stowe would gain a useful hall-cum-theatre. But in the financial desert of the 1950s, it required magic to raise a worthy theatre out of the wreckage of war, and the only name to conjure with at Stowe in that decade was Roxburgh's. So it became the 'Roxburgh Memorial Hall', with an elegant dedication to JFR above the proscenium arch. Pevsner dismissed its architecture as 'in an odd, timid 1950 style with Georgian hankerings' but the enterprise itself was heroic, and the credit should go to Eric Reynolds.

Joe Bain, who took over the Congreve Club from Peter Dams, promptly and irreverently christened the new hall the 'Roxy' – there was always something impish about the youthful Bain, who enjoyed tweaking the tail of Authority. But he turned his independence of mind to good effect when selecting plays for the Congreve Club. The plays which Dams had chosen were theatrically efficient, well-made plays, by writers like Shaw, Galsworthy and Rattigan. They were often thoughtful plays, controversial even – but never challenging. Bain set out to change all that. He fired a warning shot with one of his earliest productions, *The Bald Prima Donna* by Ionesco. Then in rapid succession came a string of difficult Modernist dramas, first in the Gym then in the Roxy: plays by Pirandello, Anouilh, Ibsen, Max Frisch, Durrenmatt and others – a series of raids on the impossible. He can never pull that one off, we said, when we heard what he was planning to do next. But somehow he did, every time.

Among the most memorable were *Hedda Gabler*, which seemed to me to compare well with the professional production running in the West End at the same time, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, performed under the cedar on the South Front, with Puck swinging down by rope to take part in the action with mortal men, and the mechanicals entering erratically across the South Lawn in a donkey cart. No other open-air production which I saw at Stowe had the same magic.

Those who took part in rehearsals directed by Bain witnessed 'the play within the play', as one of them described it, watching him demonstrating what he wanted, and then coaxing, bullying and cajoling his young cast into a performance that transcended their limited experience. And he did, habitually, choose very difficult plays. The reviewer of *The Cherry Orchard* in *The Stoic* commented that many in the audience were bewildered by the play and did not know what to make of it. On another occasion Bain gently chided me for wasting a couple of paragraphs of my review discussing the play itself rather than the production. The truth was that he made us *think*.

The Cherry Orchard, one of his last productions, broke new ground in another way. The leading part was taken by Oriel Arnold, another Staff wife with professional theatrical training, and this was the first time in a Congreve Club production that the cast included masters and masters' wives as well as boys; a few years before, Bain had brought in two girls from a Buckingham school to play the leading female parts in *Othello*. These innovations, which could not have taken place a generation earlier, effectively broke the long tradition of girls' parts being played by boys.

Within eighteen months of Bain's departure girls joined the Sixth Form at Stowe and took the female parts as of right. Somewhat later, a new intimate theatre was carved out of the redundant space in the old science labs. And a whole theatreful of aspiring directors emerged from the Staff, ambitious to scale new theatrical heights. By then the tradition of challenging plays and polished, penetrating performances was firmly established, the legacy of Joe Bain more than any other single person. By the time he left in 1973 Drama at Stowe had come of age. It had taken exactly fifty years.

Othello in the Marble Hall, 1965. M.J. Avory as Cassio (centre).



Toby Robertson Drama in the Forties: A Letter



When you asked me if I would write about drama at Stowe in the '40s, I thought 'twould be a cinch: but, mulling over your request, I find my mind "a blank, my lord". I remember almost nothing about auditions, rehearsals, performance or the plays themselves. If I had gone for an architect or banker in later life, I might have remembered the thespian delights of Stowe more vividly: but I am satiate with theatrical memories elsewhere. It is doubtful, however, whether without J.F.'s encouragement, my fascination with the architecture and landskip of Stowe – now as ever before "a place to wonder at" – would have led me from Vanbrugh the architect to Vanbrugh the dramatist: thence to the whole corpus of his contemporaries: thereafter to the pursuit of theatre, opera, television for forty-six years, including directing revivals of a number of Restoration plays unperformed since the late 18th century.

House plays were the stomping ground: the Fringe to the big world of The School Play. My first school play was a *Macbeth* directed by Wilson Knight, an eminent Shakespearean critic whom J.F. had lured to Stowe. My "lily-livered" messenger, bringing news of Birnam Wood, was promptly and painfully hurled off-stage by the disintegrating Thane played by a rigger-playing Head of Walpole. Young George Melly played Lady M: "Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here."

There was no production of *The Admirable Crichton*, my Housemaster cancelling the production because he objected to Crichton asking me, as Lady Mary, "Will you mate with me?" (or was it the other way round?). It was no comfort to have it explained that I had lost my first leading role because I was too young and it was for my own good. I had already gone "to the bad" down Dunsinane way. There was a *St Joan*: somewhere along the line a *Duke in Darkness*, a *Man in Shadow*, with the charismatic Lyndon Brook, son of Clive, timing his lines with professional adroitness. Finally a *Richard II*: "From the opening moments," wrote Beverly Baxter, critic of the *Evening Standard*, "it was clear that this was to be Shakespeare on quite a grand scale." He went on to eulogise the actor playing RII, to my embarrassment, as "moving and speaking like a young John Gielgud". I had seen his Hamlet at the Haymarket in 1944. His legendary Richard I saw in 1951 at a private run-through before he took the production to the Bulawayo Festival. The company were

in every-day clothes save for Gielgud in flowered, flowing dressing-gown. He wept copiously in every scene and the play ran for four hours. Six years later I was to understudy him as Prospero at Stratford and Drury Lane: he was still crying; still incomparably great.

Peter Powers (to be General Counsel to the Smithsonian Institute) from Boston played a tall and commanding Bolingbroke. He was at Stowe as a result of a visit to the eastern seaboard of the USA of five Stoics, under the guidance of Peter F. Wienck, an unconventional protege of J.F.'s. It was all arranged at the highest level (Ministries, Ambassadors etc) and our hosts were the Roosevelt family (both Democrats and Republicans – how they disliked one another, the Republicans describing FDR contemptuously as "that cripple"). Ostensibly there to debate the future relationship of US and Europe, whenever we had the chance – and Peter was generous in conniving at our disappearance – we would make for the dives and bars of whatever town we were in – in New York Muggsy Spanier and Miff Mole were playing the blues – unable to believe our luck after five years of black-out, rationing and restrictions. The whole episode deserves a chapter to itself. Julian More, the author and lyricist, kept a diary, which he still has.

The guiding light of Stowe theatre during my time was Peter Dams, who founded the Congreve Club to fill the gap caused by the demise of the Historians' Play when Bill McElwee went to war. Peter had little of Bill's vanity or flamboyance. He was neat, compact, unfussed, precise but never prissy, lucid and enthusiastic. He directed, initiated, supervised, and had a wife of rare charm and two young daughters. Bill's family was different – their house at Dadford was run by his wife Patience (with daughter Harriet in attendance) on somewhat Bohemian lines: they were the Blisses – we the conventional visitors. I suspect Brian Stephan fell into the trap when he felt, on being invited to dinner, that he was treated as a second-class guest because he was served rook-pie. Rather it was a privilege high: and took hours to prepare. "First shoot 24 young rooks; pluck them,

Toby Robertson (Bruce 47) has been for many years a distinguished director in the professional theatre.

Toby Robertson as Richard the Second in the 1947 production, in the Old Gym.





reserving only the breast”: followed by instructions for eggs, sauce, pastry. It couldn’t have been a very jolly party with the blessed Brian sulking.

Peter chose “Congreve” because of the dramatist’s association with Stowe, where he often stayed. Wilson Knight in *Dynasty of Stowe* (does anyone read it? I still have my copy printed on greyish wartime paper) thought his monument on Monkey Island “the only ugly thing in the grounds” – a monstrous ape eyes itself in a looking-glass, holding the mirror up to nature – a symbol of comedy; or as a symbol of the vanity of Stowe itself? There came a time when the beauty of Stowe’s Augustan splendour palled; gardens overgrown, buildings crumbling. Et in Arcadia ego? Stowe was isolated, remote from the sterner realities met with in the holidays. Talk of the Hellenic continuity and challenge (Wilson Knight again) seemed fantastical. Once, out of doors on convalescence from the San, I tried to clean the mildewed marble of the Seasons Fountain with my toothbrush. It summed up the sense of futility and near despair.

Then 1945: halcyon days and war was ending. John Forbes Sempill and I absconded from the school train at Euston on VE Day and after hectic celebrations finally returned to a Stowe now set on mock elections. For all Whig tradition, the Tories won. As Head of the School, I got permission from J.F. for the prefects to give a party for the staff on the Bruce Colonnade. We only asked those we liked: masters sans wives, wives sans husbands – the rare House Matron. For this solecism, permission was withdrawn. I sought out J.F. on the South Front. “Sir, my study is full of cases of whisky, gin and rum. Why would I have asked permission in the first place if we were merely going to offer temperance beverages?” A pause too long for comfort. “My dear fellow, tell your successor this is not to cause a precedent.” J.F. came: I left for National Service and an eventual KAR Happy Valley posting.

It was ten years before I returned to Stowe, driving over one evening from Stratford-upon-Avon. The Historians were again in full play and in tip-top form: a *Twelfth Night* on the Queen’s Temple steps, a magical evening as night fell. I sat in the car park afterwards with Brook Williams and others, talking theatre. Brook, that night a notable Aguecheek, was a son to Emyln Williams, dramatist, actor and director – in whose honour, years later, I was to be instrumental in naming a theatre in Wales. Another small wheel had come full circle.

Later I was to see my nephew, Titus Forbes-Adam, in *Enemy of the People*, as a mature and Lenin-like Hovstad, and later still my son Bash played in *What The Butler Saw*, one night ad-libbing for three minutes, according to his Housemaster Doc Waldman, “more brilliantly than Orton”.

Is this what you envisaged? Some Stowe dramas if not much drama at Stowe. “No matter if it be true” (and it’s probably wildly inexact), “’twill do for news into the country” (Etheridge: *Man of Mode*).

Michael Ridley and Brook Williams in *The Government Inspector*, 1956.



Piers Plowright (left) and Brook Williams (centre) in Pirandello’s *Henry IV*, 1955.



Brook Williams

The Early Fifties: When We Were All Young and Easy in our Minds



I was lucky to be asked to join the Congreve Club in my first term at Stowe, October 1951. This came about because the play chosen for that term was *Escape* by John Galsworthy, an old-fashioned and rather boring piece about a convict who escapes and takes refuge in a house on Dartmoor. One of the minor characters is an ancient maid-servant who cleans the house. Not unnaturally no-one wanted to play this old crone. Boys dislike playing girls, even pretty ones, so there were no takers. I, on the other hand, saw the situation quite differently. The play opens with the old girl sweeping the sitting-room floor, and then the convict appears and hides, unknown to the maid. I thought there was much to make of this situation. Tripping on the carpet, getting caught up with the broom, and generally milking the situation for every laugh, none of which were in the script or intended. But the audience laughed, and I was made.

The Congreve Club at that time was run by the much-loved Peter Dams, but his ideas were becoming old-fashioned and I think he was getting tired of running everything himself.

The production of *Escape* had one dramatic consequence. It had long been an accepted tradition that after the last performance of the play a party would be held for all those involved and the many helpers. And at this party it was officially permitted for beer to be provided. Unfortunately this was too good a chance for some senior boys who had nothing to do with the Club. They gatecrashed the party and liberally provided it with gin, whisky and cigarettes. I, of course, took liberal advantage of this unexpected bounty and was fortunate to make it unscathed to my House. Some were not so lucky. The next morning all hell broke loose. Those opposed to the Club could smell blood. After an investigation it was established that the perpetrators had nothing to do with the Club. But the damage was done. It was decreed that never again would alcohol be available at any function held at the School. The investigation hadn't touched me, but, imbued as I was with the public school ethos of honour and truth, I went to my Housemaster and confessed my part in the affair. The Housemaster thanked me politely and dismissed me. I heard later that it was said that as a new boy I could not possibly be involved and, even if I had, I had obviously been led astray by wicked senior boys who ought to have known better. I fear the opposite was the truth...

The next play I did was *The Winslow Boy* in which I had the wonderful part of Sir Robert Moreton, the famous KC. A word here for present-day Stoics about the conditions in which we put on the plays. They were performed in the Old Gym. This had not been designed as a theatre. (In fact, I doubt if it had been designed at all). There was a stage at one end but this was normally used by the Headmaster to address the boys at the beginning of term. The size of the stage made it virtually impossible to move at the side or back of the stage once the set was in place. There was, for instance, no room for costumes or make-up. These were housed in a small, damp, freezing Nissan hut separated from the back of the Gym by a muddy track. As Sir Robert Moreton, at one point I had to exit on one side of the set and reappear later from the other side. Of course there was no space between the back of the set and the rear wall of the Gym. You had to go outside and cross round the back of the back of the building and

re-enter on the other side. On top of this it was pitch dark and generally raining. The thought of this eminent KC, dressed in frock coat and striped trousers, floundering around in the wet dark and finally entering the drawing room, immaculate and uttering the line "I came straight from the House", can scarcely be imagined.

About this time the Congreve Club was to be shaken to its foundation by the arrival at Stowe of a new master, Joe Bain. Joe had taken an active part in the theatrical life at Cambridge, and in fact I heard later that it was a toss-up as to whether Joe or Peter Hall would become a schoolmaster. We all know the answer and, in my opinion, having been directed by them both, Stowe was the winner. I think Peter Dams was pleased to hand over most of the work to Joe. Joe's first play in charge was an extraordinary choice. It was the little-known Pirandello play, *Henry IV*. It was an incredibly difficult play to produce, and even the leading theatrical companies fought shy of it, though its central character is a wonderful acting part. It is the story of an eccentric character who pretended he was the Holy Roman Emperor, *Enrico Quarto*, and surrounded himself with courtiers and servants. At a Ball a cruel trick is played on him and as a result he has to pretend to be the Emperor till the end of his days. That is an immensely simplified version of the plot. In fact it contained all kinds of questions about the nature of perception, and the blurred image of imagination and reality. The boys immensely enjoyed it, and I'm sure they didn't understand it at all. But they took something valuable away from the experience and it gave them considerable food for thought. The day after the first performance I had an Upper School class taken by that great and saintly Churchman and brilliant teacher, the Revd. Colin James. Colin devoted the entire period to a discussion of last night's play. The boys advanced all sorts of highly original theories as to what it meant and its relevance to them and to our perception of reality. It was one of the most stimulating classes most of us could remember. I made no contribution until near the end when Colin said "We have here the actor who played the part. Brook, what are your thoughts?" I was dreading this, but managed to offer some trite observations on structure or something, and then, mercifully, the period was over. I was walking languidly across the Quad with one of my best friends, towards our next class. He said nothing for a while, then stopped and gave me a knowing smile. He said, "You've no idea what that bloody play means, have you?" I have often thought of my friend when faced with playing an impenetrable part. It is not always necessary for an actor to understand everything about his character, or the play.

Since I left Stowe I have appeared in numerous plays and films, often with some of the most famous actors in the world. The films have been seen by millions in virtually every country. Famous directors have argued over their merits in glossy magazines and in the pages of "serious" newspapers and reached no conclusion. But nothing I have done since those days has been quite so much fun. And it never will be.

Brook Williams (Chatham 56) has had many successes as an actor in theatre and films.



Piers Plowright

Temps and Thesps: Some very personal notes on acting at Stowe

There's no doubt in my mind that the peak of a not very distinguished Stowe career – “Why didn't they make you a prefect, darling?” “Simply not the type, mother” – involved a dramatic fall in full Roman armour from the top to the bottom of the Queen's Temple steps in the summer of 1955. The occasion was the open-air production of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* by the Stowe Historians, produced with his usual panache by their tutor, Bill McElwee. It appears to have been a hot summer and, according to the Bucks Advertiser, “the audience had the experience of being able to dispense, for at least the first part of the performance, with overcoats and wraps.” It went on to praise my performance saying that “...the Historians were fortunate in the possession of a player of the calibre of O.P. Plowright, whose every mood and moment were convincing and forceful and deeply moving in the closing scenes.” *The Stoic* was slightly less complimentary with “...on the whole Plowright moved rather better than he spoke... and tended to take the verse too fast ... he did not always avoid monotony...”

What I chiefly remember trying to avoid were the midges and flies that clustered round the shadowy cows in the field beyond and spread to engulf the audience and cast; Bill's wife, Patience, and daughter, Harriet, were, I think, in charge of the peculiarly powerful insect repellent that was supposed to deal with this army. The smell certainly lingers on.

Those open-air Shakespeare productions seem in retrospect, though, idyllic. I was in three of them: *The Merchant of Venice* in 1954, *Coriolanus*, and *Twelfth Night* in 1956. Rehearsals seem to me to have been leisurely affairs, Bill presiding in one of his yellow shirts, red bow-ties and battered Panama hat, and Patience providing pins and

sympathy aided by Harriet and, as opening night approached, Mrs Baughan of Buckingham, responsible for togas, doublets and feathers. The atmosphere was easy-going, gossipy and a glorious escape from the more hum-drum activities of the curriculum. The weather, of course, was always radiant – well, nearly always. *Twelfth Night*, rechristened *Squelch Night* by The Advertiser, opened in a steady drizzle which increased to a downpour when Feste got to that song. I was Malvolio in this one, rather outclassed by M.K. Ridley as Sir Toby and Brook (son of Emlyn) Williams as Sir Andrew. The letter scene went rather well “...in spite (*The Stoic* again) of Malvolio's tendency to recite the letter as if he knew it by heart” and *The Times* was good enough to call it “...a most happy performance which enshrined much of the gay spirit of the Christmas festivities of 1602...”.

My memories of *The Merchant of Venice* are rather hazier, though they include an unsettling titter after Portia's first line (I was fifteen and a half, five feet eleven, with a voice beginning to plummet): *By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world...*

I also remember one nightmarish performance when Shylock and I got locked into a kind of “word-trap” so that we went round and round the same lines in the trial scene as the Duke and his court grew evermore frozen-faced and a whole new meaning was given to the term “cross-examination”. But it was the most enormous fun: smells, spills, sighs, and a little touch of sublimity, particularly after the interval when the lights began to turn the Temple gold and the stars came out in a clear night sky. What better setting for: *How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.*

The Beggar's Opera, 1954 with David Rowe-Beddoe as Macheath





Glorious evenings, on one of which the young Richard Burton took time off from the Old Vic to see Brook Williams give his Aufidius and I was allowed to shake his hand.

If Bill McElwee meant summer and starlight on classical temple steps, Joe Bain meant winter and high drama in the shabby gymnasium that passed for an indoor auditorium in the 50s – it stood near where the sports hall now stands. Here in the Christmas term of 1955 this recently arrived Diaghilev swept us through the mysteries of Pirandello's *Henry IV* and nothing was quite the same again. Madness and the uncertain nature of reality were new concepts to me then. After all, I'd only just recovered from Elvis Presley's *Blue Suede Shoes*, floating out of a study window the summer before. Joe was young, witty, slightly dandified – ran to coloured waistcoats – and “experimental”. Brook Williams played the “mad” king and I played the Doctor with a pronounced stoop, spats and a lisp. I remember feeling more than mere stage-fright as I stood backstage each evening in a pool of sweat and creosote and the opening bars of Gustav Holst's *The Perfect Fool* brought the house lights down; it was as if a very dangerous magic was about to be unleashed, a magic that might, if we didn't get it right, turn very black indeed. Brook certainly got it right, giving an astonishing performance for a schoolboy actor, and holding in so much suppressed violence it was quite terrifying to be on stage with him. To this day I dream about this production and the sparks that were lit in the whole group of us, for although only Brook and Joe Tillinger, who played one of the courtiers, went on to be professionals, nobody in the cast could have remained indifferent to the power of the theatre and the thrust of this very great play.

Henry IV was certainly my “Great Gymnasium Experience” but I have good memories of two Temple House plays in the same venue: *The Monkey's Paw*, a splendid piece of Grand Guignol, and *The Pirates of Penzance*, in which I played Dick Deadeye and painted the scenery. Both were directed by Temple's Housemaster, the Revd. Windsor-

Richards, known as “Windy Dick”, who nursed a secret longing for the boards and is rumoured to have arranged for the Pirate King to be rushed to the Sanatorium one evening so he could take over. The Gym was also home to a romping production of *The Beggar's Opera*, directed by Peter Dams, in which I played Mrs Peachum with a wicked cockney growl and my father's sock suspenders. I have a recording of this on an early home-made LP. The less said about my vocal performance the better, but David Rowe-Beddoe's beautifully sung Macheath sounds as dashing as I remember his performance being. Joe Bain also made a Hitchcockian appearance as a particularly repellent beggar with blackened teeth, eye-patch, and a lot of saliva, and the musical direction was by the loveable, if eccentric, Ainger Negus, whose wife Kitty had flaming red hair and played the fiddle. I'm told she's still going. Hurrah!

I have one other theatrical memory of Stowe in the fifties. Open-air again, this time on and around the Temple of Ancient Virtue in high summer. It was my last summer, July 1956, Suez on the horizon and the prospect of being sent to Egypt with real bullets (National Service was still compulsory). But this is where my memory goes hazy again. Was it Auden and Isherwood's *The Ascent of F6* or James Elroy Flecker's *Hassan*? Or both? And was the director Bill or Joe? Or both? I know I could find out but I rather like leaving it vague, misty, unresolved. A bit like my feeling for Stowe itself. Certainly those Thespian nights on temple steps and gymnasium rostra have been among the best in my life – so far. In a way they were a prelude to life which began proper in October 1956 when I walked under the portcullis of The Tower of London to join Her Majesty's Forces en route not for Egypt but Malaya and another kind of theatre.

Piers Plowright (Temple 56) has been a BBC Radio Producer for over thirty years

David Rowe-Beddoe: More on the Fifties

To write about the same era of Stowe drama as that wizardly raconteur Brook Williams is somewhat daunting. Brook and I started at school the same time and appeared together in all the Congreve Club productions during our era except for the Pirandello *Henry IV*. The first piece in which we performed was Galsworthy's *Escape* – if my memory serves me rightly I played a farm labourer and he a type of maiden aunt! The production was of course directed by Peter Dams – thus we were introduced at the outset to the infectious enthusiasm that over many a year had established theatre as a dominant force in Stowe's environment.

The school not only attracted children of theatrical families but also nurtured and developed a supply of boys for the profession. An illustrious Chandosian forebear David Niven was, of course, the pathfinder, then around my time there was Toby Robertson, Eddie Hardwicke, Joe Tillinger and of course Brook Williams. Dams always demanded a high standard and boys could quickly fall into that amateur trap of considering themselves “professional”. I recall, however, much intensity but much fun.

In 1954 Dams teamed with the Director of Music to stage John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, an ambitious and challenging project for a boys-only cast. The outcome met with approval, even from Brian Stephan, and the evening was

distinguished by some enlightened casting. The recently arrived young master Joe Bain gave us an unlikely vagabond chorus figure. Bill Shand Kydd provided a Peachum of propensity whilst Piers Plowright was a Mrs P of true matronly quality. With this band of brothers we braved the good gymnasium stage. I was Macheath. (Five years later I found myself playing Mac the Knife in *The Threepenny Opera* at Cambridge – an infrequent double, I am informed).

Midsummer Madness, poetry, drama and music on a mid-summer evening, was the invention I believe of Peter Dams, vigorously supported by Joe. At last, the Congreve Club's riposte to Bill McElwee's blockbusters? We used the Temple of Ancient Virtue as the setting. I recall *X=O* and *Birds of a Feather* directed by Joe performed by Brook and myself in front of an audience which included one Richard Burton. That certainly sharpened the mind. I well remember the comments afterwards about Richard's obvious predilection for coffee as he liberally used his accompanying thermos flask throughout the evening. Surely it wasn't dry martini in disguise!

David Rowe-Beddoe (Chandos 55) is the Director of the Welsh Development Agency



Peter Yapp Dramas at Stowe: Excerpts from Letters

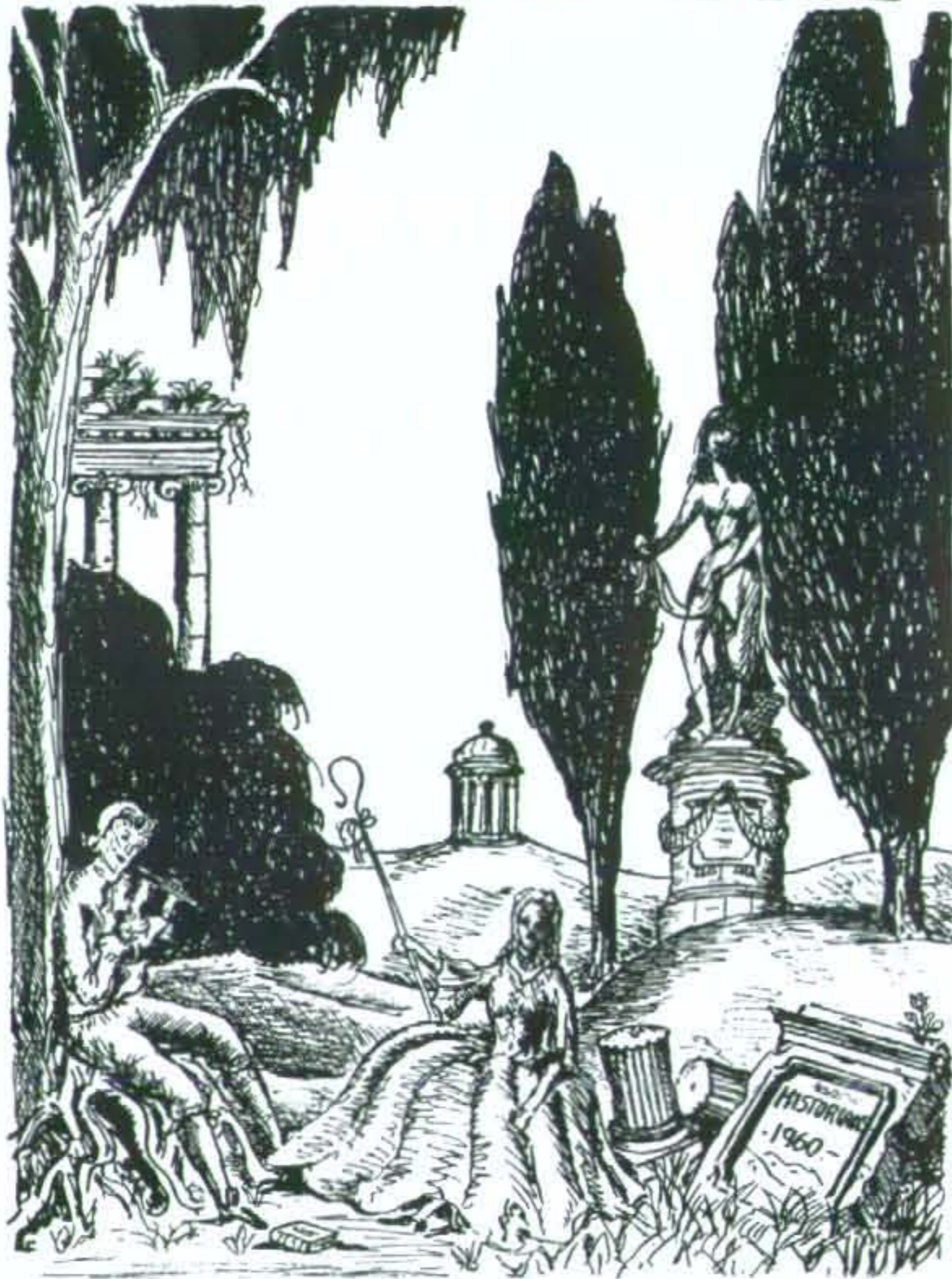
1959: Temple House's *Baa Baa Black Sheep* by (Ian Hay & P.G. Wodehouse), the first House play in the Roxburgh Hall:

Friday 27 February: "... Once again I went down to the Memorial Hall today by way of an activity and I spent a messy hour splashing green paint all over the scenery flats. The set is scheduled to be erected on Sunday and we have been divided up into working parties, so that they have a steady stream of free labour all day to get the thing erected on time. It will be rather a pity when the play is over..."

Tuesday 3 March: "... On Sunday the set was put up and it looks very effective indeed... When the set was more or less erected eight of us went down to Mr Windsor Richards' house to bring up some furniture. Surprise! When we got there the proud father announced that the baby was on view.... I am not an expert on week-old babies, and I will only say he had about as much brown hair as Windy has white and a good many more wrinkles than his father..."

Saturday 7 March: The dress rehearsal took place on Wednesday and went with a swing despite one or two hitches. The curtain was brought down a few lines too early in Act 2 and one or two other slips occurred but, as dress rehearsals go, it could have been a whole lot worse. Last night we gave the first of our two performances. It was a rollicking success, and today everyone is saying that it is the best House play that they have ever seen. We all feel very gratified! Owing to the absence of one member of the cast, due to 'flu, Windy took a part himself. We all have a feeling that he had been hoping for sickness somewhere all along, but when he told us that he intended to take the part we were certainly surprised. With make-up and a wig he looked entirely different..."

A WINTER'S TALE



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1960: The Historians' *The Winter's Tale* at the Queen's Temple:

9 July 1960: "...My part [Dion] consists of a large amount of standing around looking ornamental. This I shall do with my accustomed brilliance, I hope. It is all the greatest fun with Bill, who apparently leaves everything till the last minute, going steadily up the wall – a thing which he apparently does regularly..."

21 July 1960: "...The dress rehearsal last night went like a bomb – if the play goes as it went then it will be "good with hitches". If it is improved it will be very good. Parts of it are wildly funny. The play starts at 8.30 on the Saturday... wrap up well – it gets quite cold later on, and in case of rain you had better all have umbrellas..."

1960: The Congreve Club's *The Strong Are Lonely* (by Fritz Hochwaelder) in the Roxburgh Hall:

8 October 1960: "... At the moment I am cast to play the lead part in the play.. It is rather strong meat – all about a Jesuit settlement in Paraguay. The part on which I have a precarious hold is practically without end..."

12 October 1960: "I am afraid I can only be with you on Saturday, as I am only off the stage for three pages or so in the whole play, and there is a rehearsal I must attend on Sunday..."

5 November 1960: "...We have five weeks to go from yesterday: we still haven't been able to get hold of the stage in the Hall, and the Headmaster is apparently adamant about not letting us rehearse after Prep in the evenings. All of which is very sad..."

27 November 1960: "...Mr Bain tells me I am going to be a neurotic Father Provincial rather than a strong one... Still, whether or not it comes off, I shall have had a lot of fun with it.... Today being Confirmation Sunday, there's no evening chapel, so we can start rehearsing at two, carry on until seven, and start again after supper. By the time I come to the death speech for the last time tonight I shall mean most of it..."



Peter Yapp (left) in *The Strong Are Lonely*, 1960.

4 December 1960: "...With a bit of luck it won't be too awful. Most of the scenery is now up...Next week we have two days' dress rehearsals before the actual thing. I think it may well be quite good but Stowe audiences tend to find something to laugh at when they are supposed to be glued to their seats..."

Peter Yapp, 1999: All I now recall is that a famously hard-bitten house matron was observed to be weeping by the curtain calls; whether the tears were catharsis or hysteria was never known.

1961: The Historians' *Macbeth* at the Queen's Temple:

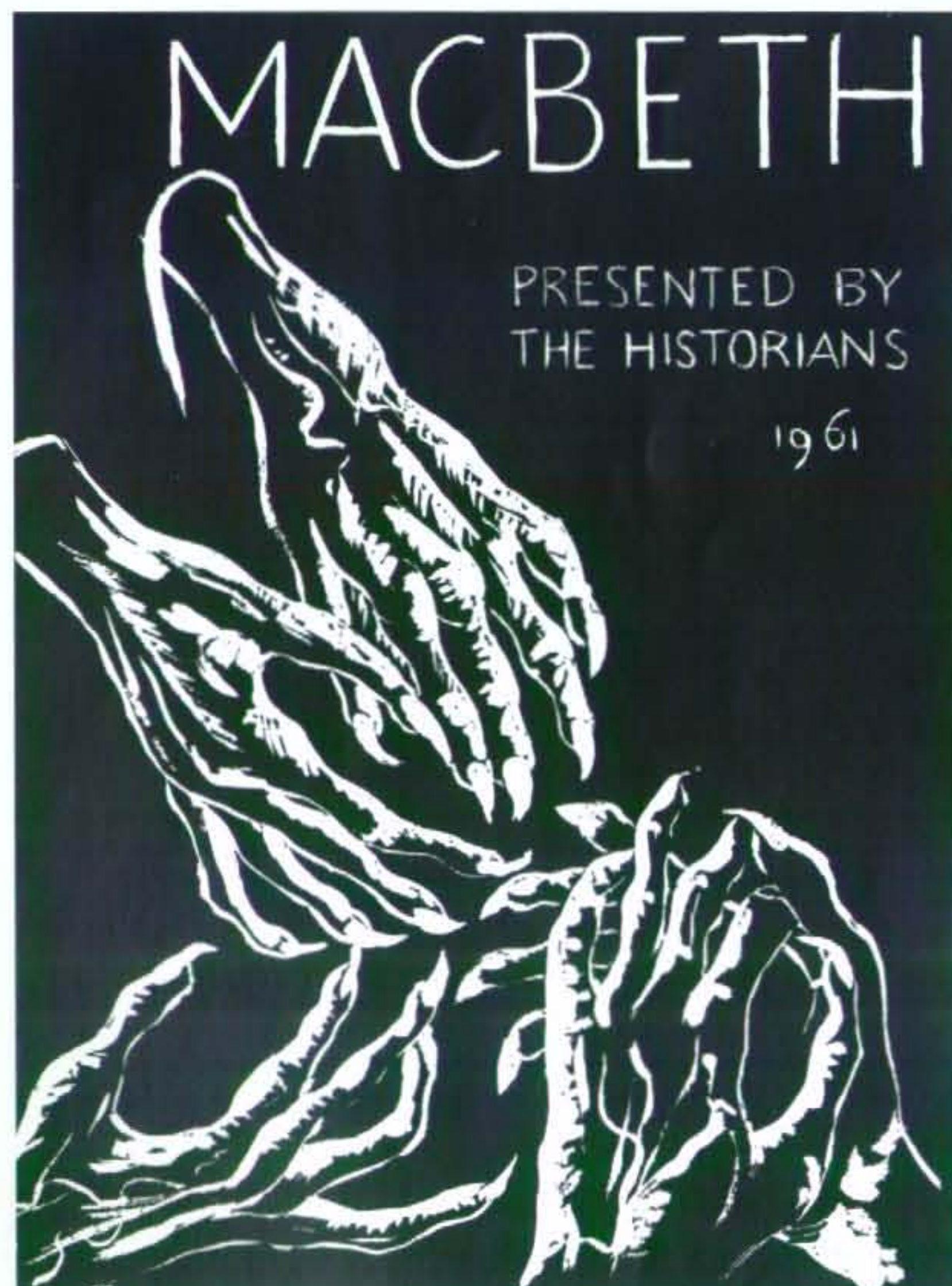
Peter Yapp, 1999: I thought I had not expressed my disappointment at not being cast as Macbeth following the reasonable success of *The Strong Are Lonely* but Bill McElwee was on to me. He leaned across the arms of the two crashed leather armchairs side by side under the dim window of his subterranean, arched-ceilinged room under the colonnade: "I know you think you should be playing the lead, dear boy, but Tommy Wayne needs it more than you do. There's plenty of time for you later." It was not a secret that Historians' plays were meant to be character-building. Congreve Club plays were art. And anyway, Tommy Wayne was far better equipped to play the part...

It was during this production that Bill had a major brush with the powers-that-be, and he set us all to write a topical verse, with the quatrain:

The Lodge is quite deserted now
For reasons which are terse.
Either the Side's got better
Or the History Tutor worse.

Sunday 28 May 1961: "...Yesterday we cut and cast *Macbeth*; at the moment I'm doing Lennox which is very short, but rather hard to do well..."

Sunday 23 July 1961: "...As usual at the end of the summer



term the historians are living mainly up at the Queen's Temple. I spent most of yesterday there, for instance, when I was not waiting for paper or paint, or hitching lights to ropes for hauling up trees, papering and then painting the screen which hides the Temple's main doorway. It is now ready for one of our more gifted artists to begin its conversion into a piece of convincing scenery... Today, in the afternoon, we go through the whole play. This means that Bill, and, then or before, everyone in the cast, will become short-tempered and contemplate throwing the whole thing over..."

Thursday 27 July 1961: "... As Tuesday was a fine evening I stayed up until about 1.30 "assisting" at the lighting rehearsal: this was dark and chaotic... the ghost of Banquo wearily entered and re-entered; half of those present retired to bed, and I was left sitting on a chair on the steps, representing Duncan on his throne, and attempting to untie a tangled climbing-rope in the light of half a dozen flood-lights, with Bill yelling at me to skip around and represent the whole court draped down the steps. Talking of drapes, there was pandemonium at the dress rehearsal. All the kilts were sewn together with their plaids. One just dived into the middle, and fiddled, and tied and untied things and threw them across one's shoulder and yelled for Bill who had seen nothing like it, even in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. We had a crisis over our leading lady, the Prince, who didn't know his lines, at least not when on stage, and tended, when wanted for rehearsal to be "last seen on the road between Bicester and Oxford, heading for Oxford on his bicycle". Then he went ill and Bill started rehearsing an understudy. However, a combination of Miss Q and Rex Warner, who rehearsed him solidly all yesterday afternoon, had him on his feet in the evening... What happens on the night is in the hand of God..."

The Times, July 1961: "Oddly enough, considering this is a boys' school, it was the female characters that were played the best, with Prince F.M. von Preussen a fine, fiery Lady Macbeth..."

1961: The Congreve Club's *Ring Round The Moon* in the Roxburgh Hall:

6 October 1961: "...To choose a play by Anouilh is ambitious – to alter the proposed dates of the production so that I can play the lead part of two twins is little short of foolhardy..."

14 October 1961: The play now begins to get hotted up, and Joe Bain is either inordinately cheerful or entirely wrathful at rehearsals. We now have the incidental music, reams of it, all very light, cheerful or sentimental stuff..."

22 October 1961: "Rehearsals... Joe Bain in a medium mood this afternoon but very happy this evening... I sit in the gallery and watch Joe cheerfully pirouetting on the stage acting someone's part..."

9 November 1961: "Prune [Housemaster's nickname] has been making it quite clear he thinks I was a fool to act in the play; thank heaven for a tutor who, though half crippled with bronchitis, exercises a greater say in my way of life..."

18 November 1961: "...Mr Hunt is having scant success at teaching me to dance..."

The partner I have is even worse than me, which is strange as he is a music scholar..."





30 November 1961: "I think the true thunder of all the character parts may be stolen by dear Charles [son of Ralph Richardson] as Joshua... We are all set for what will be a resounding success, or a great flop. One thing I can say with complete sincerity: the play has certainly taken my mind off my work."

1962: *Historians' Twelfth Night* at the Queen's Temple:

Peter Yapp, 1999: We came back for the summer term to find that Bill McElwee had departed for Sandhurst. What would become of the historians' show? Joe Bain happened to be between engagements..."

Peter Yapp (Temple 62) is a professional actor who has had many credits on TV and in the West End.



Ring Round the Moon, 1961:

Madame Desmormort (Robert Rayman), Joshua (Charles Richardson) and Capulet (Michael Shearing)

John Hunt: The Sixties – The Grafton House Play Cycle and Under the Cedar of Lebanon

The 1960s saw a spate of Grafton House plays, which I was lucky enough to produce, in the demanding surroundings of the Roxburgh Hall. The enthusiasm of the boys was memorable and demonstrated the value of drama as a personality-developing outlet. Each production consumed an immense amount of time in rehearsal, often late at night, and not every Housemaster shared our enthusiasm for the performing arts. Before the days of co-education at Stowe there were some very creditable female impersonations. In all the plays the house matron gave unstinting help as wardrobe mistress.

The first production, in 1961, was the Naval drawing-room comedy, *Off The Record*, by Ian Hay and Stephen King-Hall. Other plays included *Out of Bounds* by Arthur Watkin, *The Admirable Crichton* by J.M. Barrie and *Bonaventure* by Charlotte Hastings. This was an eccentric choice for an all-male cast as the play is about nuns; yet the atmosphere on stage was convincing. Also produced was Bernard Shaw's New England drama, *The Devil's Disciple*, and *Charley's Aunt* by Brandon Thomas. This play was chosen because there was a character who was tailor-made for the Aunt. The garden scene from Act 2 brought out talent from among the artists and designers in the House.

The last play in this particular cycle was in 1968 with a production of *Men in Shadow* by Mary Hayley Bell. Set in a disused mill near the French coast in 1942, it was concerned with British soldiers escaping from the Germans. All access to and from the stage was through a trap door which necessarily posed certain disciplines on the actors, as did the

need for good accents in spoken French and German.

Experience in acting in House plays has often been a training ground for school play talent. The cast of Anouilh's *Ring Round The Moon*, produced by Joe Bain in 1961, was a case in point when actors from Grafton and Cobham led the cast. This production caused audience reaction when a housemaster commented loudly that the leading lady had legs just like his mother's. Sitting just behind him was the parent in question who replied "How the hell do you know?"

A House play was not only a training ground for the cast and stage team. On the strength of it I found myself being hauled in as choreographer for *Ring Round The Moon* to arrange the tango and other dances in the play.

Another production shared with Joe Bain was *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the end of the summer term 1964 under the cedar tree on the South Front. It proved to be an ideal natural focusing on the massive trunk of the tree with plenty of space for cast and audience. A dish of smouldering incense cubes at one side enhanced the scent of the cedar. The play was lit by a slightly precarious supply of electricity from Stowe Church; nothing failed on the night and the weather was good.

John Hunt came to Stowe as Head of Geography in 1958, leaving in 1969 to become Headmaster of Roedean.

David Temple "To Play The Fool At Large on Life's Great Stage"*



When I arrived at Stowe in 1968 there was no such thing as a drama department. Drama in the classroom did not exist and altogether it was regarded as a poor relation to music, which had, under the redoubtable Angus Watson, built itself into a mighty empire. But the Congreve Club did exist and was flourishing, and when as an eager young beak I asked colleagues whether I might be involved in producing plays they all with one accord pointed to Joe Bain, who had become by his own art and enormous ability the *de facto* boss of almost anything dramatic that occurred. Thus began what was, for me at least, a very happy partnership, and no colt could have had a better breaking-in than I had under Joe.

The Roxburgh Hall over the next five years saw some spectacular plays, into most of which Joe, with his wicked sense of humour and gallant determination to strike a blow against Puritan fustian, managed to introduce clouds of fragrant incense. *Caesar and Cleopatra* was spectacular in the extreme, with a ghostly sphinx, a complicated machine for lowering Cleopatra into Caesar's camp, and a wonderfully decadent banquet scene, set against the imaginative backdrop of the fabled towers of Alexandria, and complete with two braziers hired from Stratford debouching the incense. Most spectacular of all, though, was *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*. Peter Shaffer's stage directions would be demanding enough even in the professional theatre: the opening of an enormous petalled sun onto Atahualpa was beautifully designed and executed by Johnny Dunn (Temple), who worked day and night to produce a contraption of strings and pulleys which he alone knew how to operate. It worked wonderfully and Atahualpa's first appearance was heightened by the use of a new, complex lighting system, which had been installed a couple of years before, with the latest technology – preset dimmers and master control systems all done by means of thyristors. The new lighting also enabled us to convey the ascent of the Andes in the most threatening way, for the Spanish soldiers entered through the auditorium, under ghastly strobe lighting to the accompaniment of live, and thoroughly weird, music, played on improbable instruments such as saws. Such a spectacle as this, in a play about the destruction of a beautiful civilization by the evil Spaniards, naturally called for plenty of incense during the blessing of the Spanish banners.

Royal Hunt of the Sun was unusual in its inclusion in the cast of staff and Old Stoics. We had done the same with *The Cherry Orchard* some years before. It caused some raising of eyebrows but, as Joe rightly saw, it was hard to expect a Stoic to play Firs or Madame Ranevskaya. The move allowed Peter Dams, doyen of the Congreve Club to die most beautifully as Firs only to be resurrected as the sinister inquisitorial priest Valverde in *Royal Hunt of the Sun*, so that he rounded off his career as one of the lynch-pins of Stowe drama in a way which would, I think, have been dear to his heart.

An expansion of activities unconnected with the CCF or games gave an invaluable opportunity for drama workshops to be established. These, it would be fair to say, brought out the dramatic interests of many boys, some of whom later appeared in major productions. One might think of this

innovation, previously unheard of at Stowe, and probably in most schools at the time, as being the forerunner of the modern perception of drama as being central to education and the development of young people. The workshops were not designed to produce plays but to show boys how the theatre worked and was organised, from designing and blocking out a set, with lighting, effects and all, to the finished production, and how they as actors might be trained to move and speak, and what the demands of being in a play in any capacity were, whether in a major part or a member of a crowd scene (and how difficult they can be to control!), or someone behind the scenes. It was natural in a way that such endeavours should lead to a special junior production, again something of an innovation for the time, and I was encouraged by Joe to produce Act III of *The Insect Play* by the Brothers Capek, a piece about the horror and savagery of dictatorship, authoritarianism, militarism, the evils of uncontrolled science, and the eventual destruction of any society which embraces these false values. The two villainous, dictatorial engineers in this piece were horrifyingly stationed in control of the activities of everyone else (on stage) on a scaffold which Brian Martin had let us have on the quiet. It was not a piece for the squeamish.

Nor were members of Common Room and their wives neglected, and two of the most memorable evenings were directed by Joe in the Roxy consisting of one-act plays. The most effective of these, to my mind, were *The Browning Version* and *Harlequinade*. Muir Temple was extremely moving in *The Browning Version* and as Crocker-Harris gave us what must have been one of the finest performances on the Stowe stage. But also memorable were Coward's *Hands Across The Sea*, and an odd piece by Michael Frayn, *Chinamen*, in which Muir and another most distinguished Thespian, Sue Morris launched into illicit love and a hippy world which at that time seemed extremely remote, at least from Stowe, but provided excellent drama. On this second evening John Mortimer's *Dock Brief* also saw the light of day, with Christopher Mullineux and the present writer playing a failed barrister and a failed criminal...

The Roxy was not the only venue. *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial* was presented in the newly-restored Queen's Temple, which proved to be the ideal place for an intimate courtroom scene. This was psychological drama at its best.



Kenneth Henderson (Katherine) and Martin Llowarch (Bianca) in the 1949 production of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

*The last line of the Epilogue to Sheridan's *The School For Scandal*



The cast, entirely of boys this time, fully understood the implications of the text, and the downfall of Captain Queeg worked its way inexorably, line upon line, as the full enormity of his mania unfolded. I was later to use the Queen's Temple for a couple of House plays (Bruce), when we were generously provided by a parent with plenty of Jewish chopped liver for Wolf Mankowitz' *The Bespoke Overcoat* – another example of intimate theatre which the venue suited admirably.

Properties such as Jewish chopped liver are not easy to come by. Between us Joe and I went to Herculean efforts to make sure that the stage looked right for any production. The RSC at Stratford proved an invaluable source of costumes and props, and we raided the Northampton Rep for some lovely furniture for *The Cherry Orchard*. When I came to my own swan song with Stowe drama, the needs were perhaps unusual in any production. *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, by John Patrick, which Bruce and Temple produced together, demanded: an oriental teahouse, which could be dismantled and reassembled in thirty seconds; camouflage netting which could be made to look like a clearing in the steaming Asian jungles; a jeep; and a goat. The military list of items could be obtained through the good offices of RSM Paddy McEwan, who had an astonishing knack of "liberating" (as he put it) practically any kind of rifles, uniforms, even the jeep. He also found some camouflage netting, which the boys filled with bits of trees collected from the grounds. They worked endlessly on this and produced a marvellous jungle setting. A local farmer provided the goat, which I collected in a pick-up truck. She was stationed in Brian Mead's garden, where she did admirable service by eating all his weeds.

Perhaps the most surprising and most valuable aspect of drama at Stowe was the loyalty which all those involved in the plays had to the play itself and to each other. It would be hard to imagine a greater team spirit than we had at Stowe in those high and far-off times, and although it could be maddening to have to go down to the Roxy at four in the morning to make sure that the set was painted on time, it was all worthwhile *sub specie aeternitatis*.

David Temple taught Classics at Stowe from 1968 to 1973 since when he has combined work in education and the media with world-wide travel.



A fine set for the 1958 production of *The Importance of being Earnest* (Roxburgh Hall)

Joe Bain: A Spot or Two of Time Regained

There are in our existence spots of time
Which with distinct pre-eminence retain
A fructifying virtue, whence, depressed
By trivial occupations and the sound
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
(Especially to the imaginative power)
Are nourished, and invisibly repaired.

Wordsworth *The Prelude* (1799 version)

Looking back over that famously "foreign country", the past is like trying to read a map under flashing strobe lighting: certain quite arbitrary scenes stand out with startling vividness in a landscape otherwise at best jumbled, at worst misleadingly obscure. This may be what Wordsworth had in mind with his "spots in time" and Joyce with his "epiphanies" and Proust with his "unconscious memory". It is some of these moments in my long association with amateur drama that I shall try to capture. Whether they bear any relation to things as they really happened is more problematic.

The village of St. David's in remotest Pembrokeshire was in the '30s when I grew up there a sort of unreformed Barchester-on-Sea. In the little Church primary school they decided – it must have been about 1934 – to celebrate St. David's Day by putting on a play about the life of the Saint. All I remember of the event is that I, aged about 6, kitted out with a broom-stick crozier, a paper mitre and a cope confectioned by my mother from a green baize table-cloth and all copied from an engraving of William of Wykeham that hung in our dining-room, played the part of the rather ungracious saint. The only line I remember speaking is

Bydded i chwi oll eich taro gan dwymyn
(may you all be struck with the plague).

Whether the production was a success or not I don't recall, but the experience seems to have put me off acting for some fourteen years.

My next epiphany sees me as an RAF National Serviceman playing a part – I can't now remember which – in Emlyn Williams' *The Late Christopher Bean*, produced in the NAAFI by a friendly Marxist NCO. Then Cambridge, where I had a very active time for four years, playing minor lords and serving-men, and sometimes reasonably serious parts in every society that the University had to offer, and there were many in that drama-besotted period. My high-spot was probably to produce the future novelist and critic Frederic Raphael as Samson in (of all things) Milton's *Samson Agonistes* in St. John's Chapel, where the orchestrated screams of a posse of Girton girls accompanied by a fearsome discord on the organ brought the Temple of Dagon and almost the Chapel crashing to the ground. Even then things didn't altogether go well. We had a production of Patrick Hamilton's *Rope*, which the Cambridge Mummies took to Cheltenham College, with me as the sinister Rupert, only to find that the Headmaster had forbidden all but the Sixth Form to attend, they apparently being the only ones not open to suggestion of motiveless murder. Such were the susceptibilities of those days.

Then in 1954 came Stowe. I was lucky enough to arrive at a time when the Headmaster, Eric Reynolds, was, as George Clarke has mentioned, rather more benevolently

inclined towards the theatre than was usual in those days. Stowe already had a couple of thriving troupes: the Congreve Club under the enthusiastic leadership of its founder, Peter Dams (though the name is puzzling in that it wasn't, as far as I could see, a club – at least it wasn't in my time – and never put on a play by Congreve). In the other corner, and at that time in slight opposition, was the Historians' Play, which meant Shakespeare outside the Queen's Temple at the end of each Summer Term. The difference in style and ethos of these two groups has already been amply illustrated by other contributors, so I shall not elaborate. Peter was eager to hand on the Congreve to somebody else, and that somebody happened to be me, who was then and for some years to become a sort of a theatre maniac. Surprising as it may seem now, nobody at that time appeared to want to do the job; so for the next twenty years I became an immovable object, increasingly helped and challenged by bright young colleagues with flair and enthusiasm for acting and producing – later more pretentiously known as “directing” – plays.

Peter Dams and I collaborated on several occasions. I appeared in a very minor part in his production of *The Beggar's Opera* – in which David Rowe-Beddoe was a dashing and mellifluous Macheath – and in Masefield's *Good Friday*; and he was a notable Firs in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* which I did with David Temple. He was also the narrator in probably the most elaborate of the productions I did with D.T., *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, which was to celebrate Stowe's 50th Anniversary, with every conceivable technical and theatrical device: it was technologically our *Star Wars*.

Bill and Patience McElwee were great friends of mine and I owe them endless hospitality and my most happy early memories of Stowe. They made life for me in those days not only bearable but hilarious. When invited I used occasionally to turn up as a spectator at their rehearsals – themselves dramatic events – and Bill and I, neither of us averse to a spot of theatrical aggro, used to agree to put up with each other's conflicting methods. When he left for Sandhurst he bequeathed to me his (as I remember already cast but not rehearsed) *Twelfth Night*. I remember a peculiarly dramatic performance of *Julius Caesar*, when the lightning played through the nearby trees: Shakespeare never had it so good! I seem also to recollect Lady Macbeth in (I think) corps boots, but then again they could have been Wellies. There was, as Piers Plowright suggests, a good deal of tumbling around in Elizabethan kit, and everybody hugely enjoyed themselves.

Education is a notoriously tricky concept: it seems (with boys, at any rate) to be best acquired unawares and I think, in



Sue Morris and Muir Temple in *Chinamen*

retrospect, that the curious status that drama had in schools at that time, in that it was no part of the curriculum and even thought in some quarters to be a hindrance to one's chances of success – unlike sport, music and art, which were rightly treated as respectably academic and/or health-giving – enticed unsuspecting pupils into a highly educational pursuit which, had it not been considered slightly outré, they would, with good old-fashioned schoolboy bloody-mindedness, have shunned. I remember being agreeably surprised when a duo of “difficult” subjects, whose housemaster had to agonise over before allowing them to perform very minor non-speaking parts in the School Play, came up after about a week of rehearsal and said, “Would you like a wine-gum?” I took that as a significant indication of good-will. Their housemaster later freely admitted that both boys had never been so well-behaved in the House. Negatives are impossible to prove, but I can't offhand think of a single instance when it could be shown that taking part in a play had made any change, except possibly for the better, in academic matters. I remember that Peter Yapp (Peter Phillips as he was then) would, without his parents' sensible decision, have been prevented from taking the exacting part of the twins in Anouilh's *Ring Round The Moon* on the grounds that the best he could expect was an Exhibition in History at Trinity, Cambridge. He acted brilliantly on the Saturday, was whisked off to Cambridge on the Sunday, took his exams on the Monday, and... (but you are way ahead of me!). I'm sure that there were other significant but less startling results.

Oddly enough, personally I didn't think of the plays at that time as being educational (otherwise than to myself) except when I was trying to make a plea to higher authority. Now I'm convinced that this rather duplicitous special pleading was no more than the truth. From what I remember from my reading of *Murder in the Cathedral*, the Catholic Church rightly regards martyrdom as a reward not a goal. There are some ways in which education is equally elusive. It has become fashionable to talk about Education in triplicate, as though “What I tell you three times is true”, or as though it can be collected like air miles. As Brook Williams and Piers Plowright suggest, it is possible to enter fully into a profound play such as Pirandello's *Henry IV* and give superb performances, as they did, without being able to give simple answers to the complex questions the play raises. Which is better informed? the actor who portrays Hamlet's uncertainties, or the woman in Thurber's story *The Macbeth Murder Mystery* who, having explained Macbeth under the illusion that it's a second-rate whodunit, intends to go off and solve *Hamlet*? Education, it seems to me, is rather a matter of apprehending the right questions, and not in accepting other people's answers, however apparently well-informed. Having taught English, French and German Literature for thirty-five years to sixth-formers, I am totally convinced that, however hard one tries in class, the experience of impersonating a character on stage gives one a far profounder understanding than even the most careful reading. This is an enriching experience shared by all the cast in different degrees, and doesn't necessarily work only with the “great classics”. Oddly enough, though, I've found that with, say, Shakespeare and Ibsen, one doesn't tire of the play even after long and often exhausting rehearsal: rehearsal is in fact a cruel searcher-out of the quality of a text.

Still, school drama has its perils. I remember that when





the Roxburgh Hall opened (I suspect George Clarke is being too charitable in fathering the name "Roxy" on me – I think it was, as usual, ANON) I was unwise enough to kick off with Ionesco's *The Bald Prima Donna* which I'd seen during its *Mousetrap*-length run in Paris. We'd practised for weeks holding the long, long pauses, only to find that not only did a respected colleague refuse to review it for *The Stoic*, but the powers that were jumped to the conclusion that the cast had forgotten their lines. I was under threat of losing my drama job, and only relieved by my successor's crying off. We all thought the play was very funny and hadn't any (or very little) intention of causing shock. However, one of my "spots of time" is of Michael Lewis playing the maid in a greenish make-up, rushing to the front of the stage and confiding to the audience, "This morning I bought a chamber-pot." Perhaps it was that that did it. The "orgasm" line in N.F. Simpson's *One Way Pendulum* also caused trouble. The cast, on orders from above, omitted the word at dress-rehearsal, but the temptation was too much on the night. In Arnold Wesker's *Chips With Everything* too the delicate euphemism "bloody", which the author had substituted for the more usual F... word to which Wesker, as well as I, had become over-accustomed during our National Service in similar circumstances, caused a frisson in some sections of the audience, even, I gathered, at the time, to the extent that some wives were hustled from the auditorium by solicitous husbands. How times have changed! not necessarily for the better. Drama has always liked to shock the audience, but it's getting increasingly difficult. I remember an Old Stoic saying to me as we watched an enormous queue for *Rosemary's Baby*, "It isn't the film that frightens me: it's the audience."

There had, of course, been a number of notable productions before the Congreve Club and even perhaps the Historians' Play came into existence. Charles Spencer's production of Milton's *Comus*, done, I think beside the Worthies on – or even over – the Styx, is only one of several that had been much admired and talked about, and the number of Old Stoics who made a name for themselves on the stage and screen, and in show-biz generally, testify to a tolerance at least towards plays: David Niven is only one – though an early and prominent one – of many. Perhaps it's the dramatic landscape of Stowe that helps. The Congreve Club in my time used the inside of the Queen's Temple (*The Caine Mutiny*), the space between the cedar and Stowe Church (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*), the Marble Hall (*Othello*) and, in the wake of the Historians, the Queen's Temple portico and steps (*Twelfth Night*). One of Peter Dams' most attractive and evocative events was the *Midsummer Madness*, an informal afternoon entertainment of readings, music and one-acters (Drinkwater's *X = O* was a favourite; but also Fry's *A Phoenix Too Frequent* and J.O. Francis' *Birds of a Feather*, a Welsh frolic featuring David Rowe-Beddoe, Brook Williams and me.) This was on the lawn beside the Temple of Ancient Virtue late in the summer term – the grass I seem to remember had to be specially scythed for the occasion, I think by Peter Dams himself, but this perhaps is too pastoral to be true.

By the way, my apparent addiction to incense was not the result of religious fervour, or even (*pace* David Temple) an act of aggression against the audience, but a sort of olfactory version of the dry ice that was so popular at that time and also, in the open air, a powerful defence against gnats and

midges. I admit that it had its disadvantages, particularly painful to those wearing contact lenses (I wonder whether the Pope is aware of this). Although all this happened a long time ago, it isn't as far back as the Crusades, and this may be an appropriate moment to make a retrospective apology to any sufferers who still harbour a grudge. Anyway, it wasn't, as far as I can recall, a very frequent feature of productions. I had always hoped to do a performance of *Love's Labours Lost* in front of the Temple of Venus, but even the most powerful resin would not have stopped the mosquitoes who infest (or infested) the Eleven Acre Lake from making a hearty meal of the audience, and the project had to be dropped. Just as well probably, though tough on the mosquitoes.

House Plays have been mentioned by John Hunt and David Temple, and they were always very entertaining. Some Houses had specialities – I think particularly of Brian Gibson's Grenville thrillers and David Brown's Cobham house-room romps. Some productions produced remarkable moments such as "Windy Dick"'s shattering appearance as the Pirate King in the *Pirates of Penzance*. Often they reached real heights of excellence, as for example in David Temple's Bruce/Temple's joint production of *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, Peter Dams' *Trial By Jury* and *The Two Bouquets* with Walpole and perhaps especially for its power and expertise Brian Stephan's production of Charles Morgan's *The River Line* with Chandos. I much enjoyed doing plays with Bruce, especially in their old House-room (now the Music Room) and, in collaboration with George Clarke, Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* and among others Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound* and Shaffer's *Black Comedy* with Chandos.

The Junior Congreve did some fine work with David Temple. This was altogether a most profitable experiment, giving juniors a chance to play major parts in their first years. Perhaps our most enjoyable venture was the series of staff plays. Schoolmasters have to be natural actors in order to survive, and of course pupils hugely enjoy seeing their



Chris Mullineux in *Harlequinade*



teachers with or without their consorts making fools of themselves on stage. I particularly remember Terence Rattigan's two one-acters, *Playbill*, largely because of Muir Temple's quite outstanding performance as Crocker-Harris in *The Browning Version* and Christopher Mullineux's show-stopping performance as Chudleigh, the aged actor, a virtuoso study in timing (or mistiming) with his "Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone". Douglas Marcuse and Elizabeth Rawcliffe are not likely to be easily forgotten either. I think it was in this production that, making what I imagined to be a Hitchcock-like entrance as the Duke, I found that the ladies of the Stratford Theatre Wardrobe had thoughtfully pinned a bunch of violets to my cod-piece – an attention all too rare in these degenerate times.

For exactly forty years (1948-1988) including 20 years at Stowe and 14 years at Winchester, amateur theatre took, I nearly said, "centre stage". And then I put up my pipes and bewent, or whatever the word is. These are two very different schools but I was very lucky at both. Lucky to have met and worked with many who have remained friends ever since: set designers, who without exception leave everything to the last moment and produce wonderful results, sometimes literally overnight (Michael and Jane Mounsey) or put the finishing touches to a spectacular set as the first members of the audience filed into the auditorium (Bill Dady), electricians, painters, musicians (David and Sylvia Gatehouse's music for *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* in particular), wardrobe-mistresses, co-producers, actors and actresses, and even (now and then) audiences and critics. I've written, of course, as requested, only about the first 50 years of Stowe drama, the Prologue and First Act, as it were. The show goes on and looks set for a long and successful run.

There were plenty of high and low spots in the Stowe scene in my day, but what I remember when I think of those times and involuntary memory brings back a scene unbidden, and in no order of merit necessarily, are Brook Williams and Piers Plowright in Pirandello's *Henry IV*; the Historians

tumbling around the Queen's Temple under the amused, alert and watchful eye of Bill and Patience in their summer costumes; *Othello* in the Marble Hall with an inspired set by Anthony Doherty, with Clive Hershman as Othello and Gillian Shedd as Desdemona, the first of a line of female Stowe stars, in a most powerful and moving performance. Rupert Wood's Robespierre in *Poor Bitos* by Anouilh; Rodney Cottier's acting and superlative fencing as Hamlet – he was after all junior épée champion of the South of England; the tango in *Ring Round the Moon*, choreographed by John Hunt and danced with outrageous gusto by Dudley Howard and Richard Temple; Michael Avery as the young Henry VIII stabbing the table with his dagger in *A Man for All Seasons*; Charles Richardson and David Lewin as Judge Brack and Hedda, confronting one another over a bowl of grapes in the tensest moment of *Hedda Gabler*; Oliver Croom-Johnson as Apollodorus flying over the stage on a rope in *Caesar and Cleopatra*; and perhaps above all the beautiful summer evenings under the cedar for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, rehearsed in shift-work shared between John Hunt and me in fifteen days, with the lights in the cedar, the floodlights coming up over the Temple of Ancient Virtue and the torch-light entry of the Stowe beagles; and, above all, the rustics arriving up over the South Front lawn in their donkey-cart.

How long ago it all seems! But when I am nostalgic that is what I see. It seems to epitomize the education Stowe gave me and gave and gives us all: that one can educate oneself and each other without being too po-faced about it, and that however hard the effort, the rewards are infinitely greater. After all, well or badly, if a thing is worth doing it's worth doing for all *we're* worth.

And for those who took part wasn't it all great fun? I at least am naïve enough to think so.

I don't go to the theatre these days (well, hardly ever) and I don't think I miss it. I recovered from my theatre mania ten years ago. I can't see myself again at a school play, however expertly done. But the memory, as they used to say, lingers on.

Why I, neither a Lancastrian nor a cricket buff, am so affected by Francis Thompson's *At Lord's* I can only guess, but I am, and here it is:

It is little I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,
Though my own red roses there may blow;
It is little I repair to the matches of the Southron folk,
Though the red roses crest the caps, I know.
For the field is full of shades as I near the
shadowy coast,
And a ghostly batsman plays to the bowling of a ghost,
And I look through my tears on a soundless-
clapping host
As the run-stealers flicker to and fro,
to and fro:-
O my Hornby and my Barlow long ago!

Eheu fugaces, my Hornbys and Barlows, *labuntur anni*; but we really did hear the chimes at midnight, and that's a memory, my old friends, they can't take away.



Roger Potter and David Temple in *Harlequinade*

Joe Bain, former Housemaster of Chandos, spent 19 years at Stowe, moving on to Winchester College in 1973.

The People Pages

The School was deeply saddened by the death of Lyttelton's Yolanda Macpherson last summer. Words are inadequate. It sounds so trite to say she is very greatly missed. But she is. Enormously.

A party of seventeen spent eighteen days in Nepal last Easter, highlights being an eleven day trek in the Annapurna Sanctuary, white river rafting and a safari in the Chitwan National Park.

Edward Gambarini and James Nettleton ran 192 miles, across Cumbria, the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales, over ten days last March, raising over £3,000 for charity.

The latest staff play, *Up 'N Under*, was a comedy about rugby league rivalries, produced by LEW and most enthusiastically received by the Temple Room audiences.

A junior ski trip to Les Deux Alpes in France took place last Easter, led by Mr and Mrs JMT, RCS and PStJD.

Jaime Zaldua was erroneously reported last issue as being the holder of a black belt in Judo. He is, in fact, the holder of a black belt in Tae Kwondo. We also credited Will Monk as the hurdler photographed on page 60. It should have been Jaime.

Guy Pelly and Daniel Ferris are working on a book entitled "A Guide to The Shoots of England, Scotland and Wales" and the prospect of it getting backing from the British Association for Shooting and Conservation.

Thanks to the enterprising initiative of Richard Briggs, Lord Tebbit lectured at Stowe last Spring term.



Frances Morley-Fletcher in costume for a balloon debate

Many congratulations to EGJ of the Modern Languages Department who, since the past summer holidays, has become Mrs Emma Morton (alias EGM).

Sarah Parker and Yuki Soga have been awarded places at Oxford. Congratulations also to Laura McMaster on a conditional place at Oxford, and Charles Hart and Alexei Sorokin on conditional places at Cambridge.

Lester Smart has been selected to play for the Northamptonshire U19 cricket XI v Sri Lanka.



Coldstream Cup day: the Headmaster and Peter Mann



PASF sets the sartorial tone on Speech Day



PVC casts a Proctor's eye over the School photograph



The Headmaster and Sir Peter Hall at the latter's Jubilee Lecture

Mrs Haruko Ichinose has generously made possible the new "Scott Scholarship Fund", set up in recognition of the excellent achievements of the Stowe Art School under the leadership of Guy Scott.

The Headmaster's wife, Mrs Annie Nichols, successfully climbed Mount Kilimanjaro last December thereby raising £4,000 for a charity which helps disabled children to continue through mainstream schools.



Amelia Jackson-Gray and Samia Brahimi prove there is no sex discrimination in the Stowe CCF



Last December a highly successful cricket tour to Argentina took place, despite the fact that matches were played in temperatures exceeding 35 degrees centigrade...

During the year we were pleased to welcome a number of visiting teachers from abroad as our guests: Robert Flores from Markham College, Lima; Devendra Sharma from the Gandhi School, Kathmandu; and Michael Crampton from St Andrew's, Grahamstown.



Jonathan Dickens and Edward Prince who scored 304 for the 1st wicket in a Yearlings cricket match versus Akeley Wood on the South Front



The Admissions Tutor and the Development Director, Chris Edwards and Anthony Shillington

Valete

GSTJS

Meeting Guy for the first time, sometime in the early seventies outside Chackmore Primary School, my wife and I were struck immediately by the totally natural enthusiasm and friendliness which radiated from him, even at first contact. Our friendship continued over the years and we were delighted, therefore, when Guy and his family came to Stowe in 1982. He came with a great deal of experience, having had a wide and varied career in the art world, both in teaching and in the higher echelons of large art-material companies where he had been at the very centre of the use of advanced modern compounds, formulating and inventing special techniques, especially in the new area of acrylics, in which he was a considerable innovator and where he remains a published authority to this day.

When the Head of Art, William Dady, retired a year or so later, owing to ill-health, the Art School, already hallmarked with the quality of William's work, came under Guy's aegis.* The department became positively inspired by his tremendous enthusiasm, devotion to excellence and to the production of only the very best work, as well as attention to "the basics", which included such good old-fashioned ideas as working hard and not leaving the Art School until you had tidied up! A strong believer in the concept that talent (or even lack of it!) required the support of determination, organisation, tenacity and keenness, and that these and other qualities fed back into a continuously rotating cycle of enthusiasm and achievement, he and his team forged one of the benchmark departments in the School. Exhibitions of the pupils' work became unmissable events and both parents and staff continued to be amazed by the quality and quantity of work produced at all levels.

In 1988 Charlie Macdonald retired from Lyttelton to become Second Master and Guy accepted the housemastership, a post which he occupied with distinction until 1993, when the House was chosen for occupancy by girls previously located in Stanhope. He was an excellent Housemaster, known for fairness and justice and for demanding the highest standards of all the finest human qualities. Those in Guy's charge knew exactly what was expected of them and he was always aware of the importance of the consistent approach and the provision of secure care, treating those in his charge as members of an extended family, qualities greatly valued in a House community. "You always know where you are with Mr Scott," a member of his House once remarked to me; high praised indeed.

His trusty colleague in the Art School, Ken Melber, had taken over the running of the department when Guy had stepped into pastoral mode and now, five years later, he himself was to take that giant step (into Bruce House) while Guy slid easily back into his old role. That it all happened so smoothly and calmly was a great credit to both men.

We all know Guy as a considerable artist of huge ability, equally at home with pen, pencil or brush and one who has exhibited at many important venues including, notably and



recently, at the Royal Society of Maritime Artists in London. Nevertheless, we need also to realise and acknowledge his many contributions to the overall life of the School, including his excellent pastoral work as a Tutor, his first-rate presidency of the Common Room, the redesigning of the Art School to provide that vital mezzanine floor, the running of many successful School golf-teams, and his services to Stowe drama, where he has designed, built and painted sets for both student and staff productions, not to mention appearing in the latter in a variety of roles. Being a modest man, he has kept his prowess as an all-round sportsman well under wraps, but in his time he has excelled at golf, cricket, tennis, soccer and, no doubt, many other sports and games of which I remain in ignorance.

As he has often said, Guy regrets that two of his ideas have never been implemented. The first was that if we wore gowns "in public" at Stowe, a better image of professionalism would be presented to parents, both present and prospective, and the second that pupils should carry books etc in "carry-alls" of some sort, thereby helping to prevent loss or damage. Guy's presentation at a recent Vale dinner of a new gown to the only staff member to be an inveterate wearer of such apparel, one Charles Johnson, was, therefore, both heartfelt and heartwarming. Who knows but when the story gets around, a whole new trend may be set in motion!

Typical of Guy was the brilliant idea of opening the Art School on Friday evenings to staff and friends. The result was a delightful mixture of people of all ages and abilities experimenting with a diversity of drawing and painting techniques under Guy's benevolently expert (but never patronising!) care; a marvellously relaxing, constructive and morale-building weekly event, to which we all looked forward with eager anticipation.

Guy has been a staunch friend, colleague and mentor to so many in the Stowe community and stories abound of his innumerable kindnesses. His hypersensitive mental antennae seem to pick up distress signals almost before the person concerned realises that they have a problem and his kindness and empathy are a byword in the Common Room and local community.

Many years ago Guy asked me to sit for him in a demonstration to a group of how a portrait could be painted one general colour. The colour was green, defining exactly how deathly I felt, suffering from 'flu, running a high

temperature and being clad in tweed hat, waxed cotton jacket, etc! The exercise was a great success and Guy being Guy, gave me the painting to keep. A few days later I mentioned casually to him the comments of my children that: "Daddy isn't smiling in the picture". The very next day he appeared at the back door, and with a few deft strokes of his brush, placed a smile on the portrait and thereby on the amazed faces of my children. None of us will ever forget that day.

GStJS with the writer of this tribute, MW



It is a mark of the man that he donated a considerable part of the proceeds of a recent highly successful exhibition and sale of his work to the new charity formed by the admirable Sophie Watson. After the tragic and untimely death of Yolanda Macpherson, Guy had one of her paintings framed and inscribed, to be on permanent exhibition in Lyttelton, in memoriam, all part of his innate human kindness and thought for the welfare of others.

One of the most unusual dinners ever given in my time at Stowe took place recently in the Art School, a surprise occasion arranged by Guy's colleagues in the department. I have never known a celebration so filled with affection and respect, as that generated by the entire group of Upper School artists present; a fitting tribute indeed!

"It is hard to believe that Guy is leaving!" How often I have heard these words over the last few weeks and they represent a summation and euphemism for all our deep feelings for our friend and colleague. We will all miss you, Guy, but will gain some comfort from the knowledge that you will not be far away down in the valley at Dadford.

With more time for golf, drawing, painting, travel and following-up the careers of his three highly artistically-talented children, Adam, Daniel and Verity, Guy is going to be a hard man to find, but we will try, and we hope to see him on many a pleasurable future occasion.

MW

* Thus WStARD was succeeded by GStJS (St Aubyn by St John). Might all this canonization have something to do with all the heavenly work produced by the Art School over the years?

TFK

Tim Knight joined the Mathematics Department in September 1996 as a newly-qualified teacher, having graduated from Bristol University with a degree in Mathematics and having completed a PGCE at Oxford.



He quickly established himself as a very competent and demanding teacher who was never satisfied with work from students where they had given less than 110%. Those who have been taught by him will probably never forget his anti-clockwise clock, 'Clarence the Caterpillar', or the many other diversions on display in his classroom. His enthusiasm for Mathematics and his desire to stimulate interest in the subject in all of his students was always evident.

Tim has given wholeheartedly to Stowe during his three years here. He spent two years in Grafton House as a reliable and effective Underhousemaster to Charles Johnson. He has spent many hours coaching teams in both hockey and cricket, always willing to give of his free time for that extra goal-keeping practice or bowling session. He has also been in charge of the RAF section.

In the summer of 1998 Tim organised the hosting of the Stowe Putter, the prep school golf competition. It was one of the most memorable occasions of the year, attended by HRH Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, and which, thanks to Tim's usual attention to detail, went all according to plan.

It has been a pleasure to work with Tim in the Maths Department. Not only has he been both an efficient and hard-working colleague but also a friend and someone with whom to share a maths joke! He leaves us to join the Maths Department at Dulwich College and we wish him all the best for the future.

KFD

Salvete

SNA

Simon Austen was ordained in 1994 and for four years prior to moving to Stowe worked as a curate in Chesham. He has degrees from Warwick and Oxford Universities and also spent some time studying in London. Following graduation he was briefly Head of Science at Monkton Combe Junior School in Bath, a city to which he later returned to work as a church Lay worker before moving on to Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, where he trained for ministry. He is married to Fiona, who teaches the piano and harp. They have three children, Mark, Emma and David. In his spare time he enjoys painting, hill walking, sport and music.

DGB

Dan Brandt has joined the Geography department and is Underhousemaster of Grenville. Brought up in North London and educated at University College School, Hampstead, he read Geography at Exeter University. Heavily involved in sport there, he captained the University Rugby Club and was a keen member of the Ski Club. He did his PGCE at St Edmund's College, Cambridge.



JC



John Cassidy, who teaches in the Skills Development Centre and assesses GCSE and A-level students, was born and educated in South Africa where he read Psychology and Anthropology before coming to the UK to see the country of his forebears. He never returned. Life in London in the late 60s included setting up Steam

Records, a modern poetry label, freelancing on radio and working for the Central Office of Information. The 70s took him to the Colombian Amazon for a 2-year research project. Six years, a wife and two children later he returned, an experienced teacher of English and a postgrad of Bristol University. More recently he has taught EFL and returned to psychology via dyslexia.

JMC

Jim Cocola is this year's Stowe/Harvard Fellow. Born in upper New York State, near the Canadian border, he concentrated at Harvard on History and Literature of America, winning the Ralph Waldo Emerson and Helen Choate Bell Essay Prizes. Deeply involved in both the university's newspaper and literary magazine, Jim made a name at Harvard with his essays, poems, drawings, paintings and oratory.

Jim has been ubiquitous in his Stowe year, teaching English, History, Current Events and American Studies,



involved with the Art History and Theatre Studies departments, speaking in debates, coaching each of the basketball squads, sparking interest in baseball and softball, helping D of E and, not least, being Underhousemaster of Grafton. He has been a wonderful, joyous ambassador for his university and country. He will be much missed.

BGD

Barnaby Durrant came to Stowe in Autumn 1998, having taught previously at Sedbergh School, Cumbria. His parents living in Africa for the duration of his childhood, he boarded at both St Michael's School, Tavistock and Kelly College, Tavistock in Devon, before moving on to read Geography at University College London. After playing a great deal of sport and gaining a second class honours degree he studied for a PGCE at Cambridge University. His position at Stowe is as Geography teacher and Underhousemaster of Temple.



CJE

Chris Edwards, who teaches English, is the new Admissions Tutor and Marketing Director. After leaving Merton College, Oxford, he lived and worked in various countries as ranch hand, cocktail pianist, dish washer, tobacco picker and teacher before deciding to keep his hair shirt on and take a post at Merchant Taylor's School. From there he went to Sao Paulo, Brazil, as Head of English at St. Paul's, and has now moved to Stowe after four years of samba and carnival. He lives with his wife Karen, his dog Jude, and is sensitive to offensive jokes about Everton.

JCE

Julia Eastwood was educated at the Marist Convent School, Ascot and then at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge where she read Classics. While at university she enjoyed playing hockey for her college. Since arriving at Stowe to teach Classics Miss Eastwood, who is attached to Lyttelton House, has coached hockey and netball, and has been also involved in the Junior Congreve. Miss Eastwood strongly believes that Latin should not just be appreciated for the access to ancient literature which it allows, but that the study of the language itself offers much pleasure. Sadly, it is to be a case of "Ave atque Vale", as Julia has decided to move on this summer to pursue a career in accountancy. We thank her for all she has done in the year and wish her well.



TJE

Tim Ellis joined Stowe from Hereford Cathedral School where he taught mathematics and rowing for four years. He brings with him a wealth of experience, having been a marine engineer in the Royal Navy and a quality assurance manager in the building industry. In addition, he is restoring old skills as a Winchester fives player and adapting them to Eton fives. He is enjoying contributing to CCF, sailing and cross country (in the latter as an honorary associate only). He and his wife (whom he met playing in a wind band in Bristol) are living in Bell Gate Lodge.

**AH**

Alan Hughes, the new rugby coach, was a scrum-half right through from his Normanton Grammar School days to playing in the First Division with the Saints. He began coaching in 1993 and has worked alongside such as Ian McGeechan and Glen Ross. Besides coaching at Northampton Saints he has coached the East Midlands Colts to two consecutive county championships at Twickenham, the Midlands Colts to the Divisional Championship in 1996 and this season he has been appointed a selector and assistant coach to the England U18 club side. Not all Alan's life is rugby, although his wife Elena and daughters Alice and Yasmin may beg to differ.

KMN

Kim Noble, who has joined the Chemistry Department, was born in Sydney and graduated from the university there. She has taught in a number of schools in Australia and New Zealand and also lived in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. Her husband's work brought her to Britain in 1996, where she began studying for her Masters in Criminology. Her two daughters are currently at Thornton College.

KJS

Kerry Sumner arrived as Assistant Head of Maths and has been running the department during KFD's illness as well as being Underhousemistress in Nugent Annexe. Born and educated in Manchester, after her BSc at Warwick University she joined a top accountancy firm in London, before acquiring a PGCE and teaching for four years at James Allen's School in south London. A hockey and racket sports enthusiast, Kerry has been seen abseiling down the side of Lyttelton and performing aerobatics in a "Bulldog" plane as part of her CCF duties in the RAF section. A keen traveller, she recently went trekking in the Himalayas.

Greetings are also warmly extended to Brian Elfick (Chaplain's Assistant), Brendan Hogan (Physics) left, and John Moule (Head of History) right, who all joined Stowe in September 1998.

DAS

David Stephenson began his first teaching appointment at Stowe this year after taking his Masters degree at Durham. He is a member of the Classics Department and fifth form tutor for Chandos. As a Classicist he feels the need not only to consider recent trendy developments in teaching, particularly concerning the ICT revolution in which he is greatly interested, but to do so without losing sight of traditional approaches, particularly with Latin and Greek. He finds incorporating the two an invigorating challenge. David's contributions outside the classroom are mainly non-sporting, such as Community Service, and he has been delighted at Stowe's wide range of pursuits, which are not restricted solely to the games field. His passion is drama and he directed this year's Junior Congreve. He hopes that the choice of a classical play will highlight the prestige and accessibility of the subject.

**AJT**

Angela Thistlewood, who has joined the Physics Department and is Underhousemistress at Lyttelton, was at Lord Wandsworth College as a girl, where her interest in teaching science was sparked by giving help to a community service programme for physically handicapped children. Between her degree at Sussex University and PGCE at Oxford Brookes she taught Environmental Science and was Underhousemistress at St Swithuns School. She has also taught for a year in Woking. As well as loving science Angela has a great interest in "Carnival Glass" and helps a family team with a quarterly journal and video. She also helped edit a recent book on the subject.

AJW

Adam Wharton was educated at Laxton School and then Westminster College, Oxford, where he studied Theology. Schooldays included an expedition to the far reaches of Greenland. He became a Christian at school and after Oxford worked at All Souls, Langham Place. Here he realised his love of teaching and moved to Homerton College, Cambridge, to do a PGCE before coming to Stowe. At Stowe his passion for fly-fishing has been rejuvenated. His enjoyment of the sport, he says, has not been matched by the number of fish caught. His sagacious wife, not wishing to lose weight, doesn't rely on his catches for supper...



STOWE'S YEAR

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CCF and D of E



REVIEW OF SOME ACADEMIC MATTERS THIS YEAR

Last summer our examination results improved well in excess of national trends, and those interested in league tables will have noticed that our general direction was up. At GCSE level the percentage of results at A or * was up from 21.4% to 26.8%, confirming that the catholic mix of Stoics that we insist upon so often continues to include plenty of bright children being pushed hard and doing well. There were encouraging results of which we are equally proud at the other end too: the pass rate (C and above) went up from 84% of all exams taken to 86.4%, and the percentage of our fifth form qualifying first time for a three A-level course in the sixth form rose from 85% to 90%. At A-level 1998 was a better year than 1997 in every way, and at the top end (45.4% A or B, 69% A, B or C) as good as it has been for a very long time. Three of the top five results nationally for the AEB Art A level were achieved here at Stowe, and it is interesting to see how fond of the place the very brightest, in particular, become, and how keen to give something back: all those who achieved three straight A grades or better at A-level either stayed on into the summer holidays to involve themselves in the production of *Arcadia*, or have been back since to help out as classroom assistants – there is one exception, but she has been far away on an OS gap scholarship. These are bright young people who have done well and feel at home at Stowe. Two of them have places at Cambridge University, and two at Oxford University; we were grateful to them for their contribution as Stoics, and are delighted to be unexpectedly thanking them again for their further contributions they have come back to make as Old Stoics.

It is not only Old, but also current Stoics who are increasingly becoming involved in classroom assistance, and it is a particularly pleasing trend to see. Stoics like being helped by fellow Stoics, all quickly learn the difference between helping someone and simply doing it for them, and helpers learn good communication, patience, understanding of difficulties they themselves may never have encountered, and the importance of confidence. Classroom assistance contributes significantly to the whole school culture of appreciation of the individual, and helps promote the atmosphere of academic help and discussion between Stoics of differing abilities and ages that will characterise the Academic Learning Centre, and that is already a characteristic of the successful, happy House. ICT has also given this practice a significant boost, often going beyond the obvious idea of sixth-formers helping thirds, to the more radical situation where third formers have been known to help even some of the wisest of their teachers!

We have been watching carefully for white smoke on the various plans for changes to the A-level system, but at the time of writing it remains unclear exactly how the powers-that-be will play it, although the government's general idea is known. There is, within the general plan, a potential for a great increase in flexibility and breadth in return for a relatively modest upheaval and cost increase, but it remains to be seen how well it can be translated into specific proposals and action. In order to be well-prepared for what-

ever may be about to happen, we have been experimenting with running old and new style AS-levels alongside present A-levels this year – one intrepid set of Lower Sixth formers in particular has been doing a pilot AS-level entitled Critical Thinking. The course seeks to improve the student's grasp of the kind of logic that underlies most rational argument or discussion, and here's a taster – one of the straightforward warm-up multiple choice questions right at the beginning of Paper 1. You need to dispose of this in about thirty seconds to be on target for a decent performance...



Argument: There is a growing number of organisations which have been set up to deal with bullying. The only possible reason for this is that bullying is on the increase. Question: Which of the following is the best statement of the flaw in the above argument?

- A It gives no evidence as to the number and nature of organisations dealing with bullying.
- B It makes no distinction between bullying and childish squabbles.
- C It overlooks the fact that bullying is an age-old phenomenon which will never be eradicated.
- D It fails to recognise that increased awareness of bullying may have led to the growth of the organisations to deal with it.
- E It makes subjective judgements about the extent of bullying.

Perhaps such a course could form part of a core curriculum for all would-be politicians and journalists everywhere...

STEPHEN HIRST
DEPUTY HEADMASTER AND DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

THE TEACHING AWARDS

When the government first expressed its desire to celebrate teaching via an awards ceremony, inevitably dubbed "Teaching Oscars", Stowe applauded the intention but was deeply reserved about the means. Such reservations became outright opposition when the categories were announced – best this sort of teacher, best that sort of teacher – and we wrote to point out that teaching was too fine and private a web of human qualities and relationships to be ranked in this unsubtle way, and that far from celebrating good teaching, the awards would belittle it. There was, however, one category that avoided this pitfall of competitively assessing the quality of human relationships, namely "the most creative use of ICT", so not to appear too negative, we sent them a few pages of last year's *Stoic*, in which the Science Department had expressed their own interest in the creative use of ICT.

Despite being not a little miffed by our comments, and by our cheery use of a few pages from a school magazine instead of the official form, and by our nominating the work of a team instead of a particular individual, the judges were nevertheless impressed, came for a day in the Stowe Science Block, and left even more impressed. Actually we liked them, too.

James Tearle, the man so bitten by the bug of creative ICT use in the classroom that he has finally opted to give up much of his beloved Chemistry teaching in order to have time to specialise in the application of ICT at Stowe, was duly chosen to represent the Physics and Chemistry Departments, and was sent off to Norwich having won his way through to the regional final, where he was awarded a princely sum of money well in excess of the cost of a day-return to Norwich and lunch on the train. He would just like to thank everyone who has played their part and made this all possible...

SGAH



A LIBRARY VIEW

Kensa Broadhurst, the School Librarian, writes of the National Year of Reading

Last November I attended an Inset day on 'Boys and Reading'. They don't. Everybody knows that. One eternal pessimist told me that if a boy doesn't read and enjoy books by the age of two he never will. The papers are always full of statistics that boys are underachieving because of this. I have news for you. Boys, including Stoics, can and do read.

Boys are conformist, they like to read non-fiction, adventure stories, horror and some humour. They don't like tales dealing with social or sensitive issues, or which are moralistic. Most importantly, the book has to be well written and grab them from the first page. This immediate sense of immersion then needs to be followed by strong characters, intrigue, narrative drive and realistic dialogue.

1998-99 was designated the National Year of Reading with events being held up and down the country. To this end we celebrated National Children's Book Week in October with every teacher reading from his or her favourite book to all classes. Other ways in which we have been promoting reading at Stowe this year have included: running a survey on the Stoic's favourite books, holding a competition amongst the third form to design an advertising campaign for the library, and starting a book review folder which is kept in the library for reference. The best of these reviews will go forward to the National Association of Head Teachers 'Rave Reviews' competition. With World Book Day still to come the written word is certainly being promoted within the School.

Stoics can and do read, and the results of a survey carried out this spring show the depth and variety of their interest in books. The survey involved every pupil in the School who studies English, that is most of them, and the whole of Grafton. (Huge thanks must be made to the English Department and Matthew Cumani for helping me with all this.) Every pupil was asked to name his or her favourite book, and the results were collated according to year group to give an idea of how reading tastes vary according to age. The School's Top Ten Books were then determined. The results were as follows:

YEAR FAVOURITE BOOK

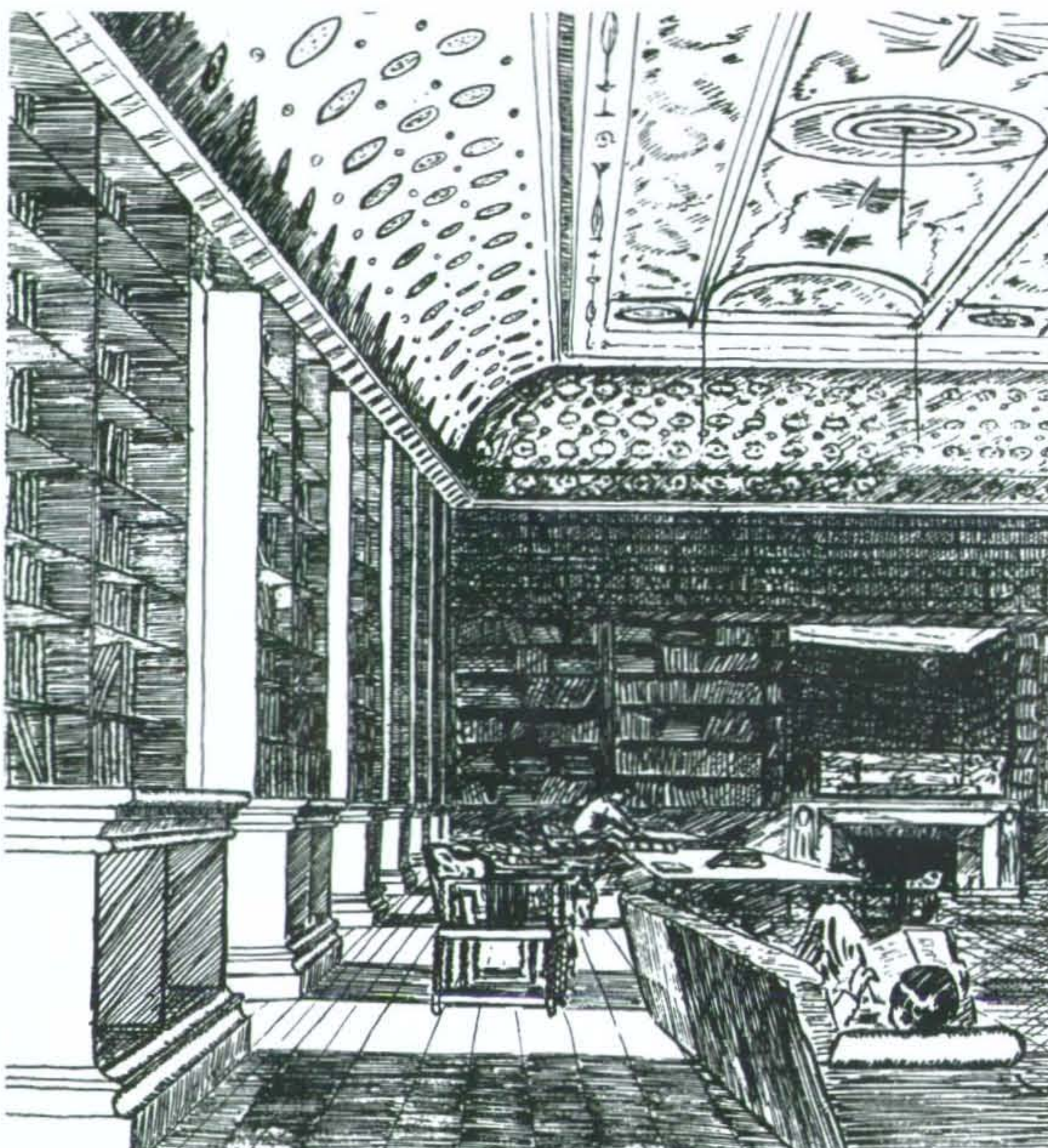
- 3 The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole
Machine Gunners
- 4 Notes from a Small Island
Huckleberry Finn
- 5 Hound of the Baskervilles
- L6 Pride and Prejudice
- U6 Birdsong

STOWE'S TOP TEN BOOKS WERE:

- 1= Birdsong
Lord of the Flies
- 3= Pride and Prejudice
A Clockwork Orange
- 5= To Kill a Mockingbird
Lord of the Rings
The Hobbit
- 8= A Catcher in the Rye
Popcorn
1984
Lies of Silence
Notes from a Small Island
The Hound of the Baskervilles
Bravo Two Zero
The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole

As you can see, there is a wide range of taste, with the favourites ranging from the classics right through to the present day. Some authors were more popular than most, with many of their books being nominated, especially Roald Dahl, John Grisham, Tolkein, Jeffrey Archer and Bill Bryson. The results for Grafton as an individual House reflect fairly well those for the School as a whole. The upper-sixth preferred *A Catcher in the Rye*, the fifth-form *Lord of the Flies* and the third-form Roald Dahl. The lower-sixth and fourth-form had no one favourite.

At Stowe, therefore, it is not a case of "Can't read, won't read". The book is alive and well, despite the onslaught of computer games.



The Library, 1931 (C.K. Adamson)

GEORGE MONBIOT (OS): A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

Extracts from the provocative Jubilee Lecture delivered by George Monbiot, one of the country's leading environmentalists.

...It wasn't easy for the townspeople who watched it go past to work out what the huge Countryside Rally in March 1998 was all about. The proposed ban on hunting with hounds was, of course, a major theme, but the organizers were at pains to explain it was about more than just that, that the very existence of the countryside was at stake. The rally, organized by such bodies as the Country Landowners' Association and the Scottish Landowners' Federation, had been called, we were told, to defend the countryside from the town, whose tyrannical and uncomprehending governance of rural areas was leading to the collapse of rural employment and the smothering of farmland by new housing developments. Deferential as ever, we townies were careful not to display our ignorance of rural life by asking who had sacked the agricultural labourers whose demise the landowners so publicly lamented, or who had sold the land to the housebuilders. If the rural environment has been destroyed, rural livelihoods lost and "country values" dissipated, then, our urban leader writers all agreed, it must be the fault of the cities.

Our culpability is plain for all to see. We are impertinent enough to spend only £10 billion a year in agricultural subsidies and price support. Single mothers in Bradford and Gateshead are so stingy that they donate only two and a half pence over and above the market price to the struggling landlords every time they buy a pint of milk. City people spent just £3 billion rescuing farmers from the BSE crisis which, of course, was entirely the fault of what the rally organizers so aptly described as "the urban jackboot"...

Some of us townies couldn't help wondering how representative of the concerns of rural people or even of farming people this rally really was. We couldn't help making unkind comparisons with the New Model Army, many of whose rank and file had joined up to fight enclosure, and whose officers included the nation's most rapacious enclosers.

For no one has suffered more from the depredations of maximised agribusiness than the conscientious farmer. Farmers who respect both their land and the rest of the community have been hammered repeatedly by both the lobbying power and the reputation of those who are unmoved by any consideration other than their profit margins. Subsidies, captured and colonised by rapacious agro-industrialists, systematically discriminate against prudent land use, small farming and robust rural employment. The BSE crisis, engendered by high-volume, low-care



agribusiness and the manufacturing industry associated with it, has hit the small, specialist livestock farmer hardest. Though conscientious farmers number among Britain's most ardent country lovers, they have been tarnished by the ill-repute that deservedly accrues to the absentee robber barons who now dominate the industry. It is a source of enduring mystery to us ignorant townies that good farmers continue to allow themselves to be represented by the National Farmers' Union, the Country Landowners' Association and the Scottish Landowners' Federation, all of which are controlled by predatory men in suits.

The distinction between town and country promoted by the organizers of the Countryside Rally is an artificial one, nurtured by a city-based squirearchy seeking to deflect attention from its own exploitative practices. Its conflation of the concerns of big business with the concerns of all rural people amounts to straightforward misrepresentation. The countryside is not, as some of the march organizers sought confusingly to suggest, against landscape protection. The countryside is not opposed to a right to roam; indeed vox pops I conducted for a television programme found far more vociferous support among country people than among urban people. It is hard to understand how one can campaign against a ban on hunting and for a ban on roaming, from any but the narrowest sectarian self-interest.

In truth there is a huge and growing gulf between what most British people, whether urban and rural, want to see happening in the countryside and what is taking place there. A tremendous public enthusiasm for landscape protection has failed to prevent the recent loss of most of our semi-natural farmscapes. In the past sixty years, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, 82% of the wet grassland in England and Wales has disappeared. We have lost 40% of our heathland since 1950, and our native pinewoods have declined to just 1% of their original area. The Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions calculates that 45% of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest have been damaged in the last ten years. Perhaps most distressing are the injuries inflicted on our definitely non-renewable resource: archaeology. No firm figures have yet been published, though Bournemouth University's forthcoming Monuments at Risk survey should help; nevertheless, archaeologists hazard that something in the region of half the historical record has been erased since World War II. New farming methods are responsible for the majority of the recent losses of both habitats and archaeology.

It is becoming hard to see what large-scale intensive agriculture in Britain is for. Land-based rural employment is collapsing. A smaller proportion of the population is engaged in farming in Britain than in any other agricultural nation; the city-state of Hong Kong has twice as many farm labourers per head of population. Yet, though large farmers' incomes are rising, we continue to shed farm labour at the rate of 10,000 people a year. There is a massive and widening disparity of wealth between surviving rural labourers and those who live in the countryside but work somewhere else.

Farm animals are treated abominably by agribusiness. Researchers at Bristol University found that 90% of the intensively reared broiler chickens they studied could not walk normally. 26% were believed to be in chronic pain and discomfort. The regulation battery cage is at no point wide enough for a hen to stretch its wing. One quarter of the dairy herd suffers from lameness; over 30% of milking cows contract mastitis (a cripplingly painful inflammation of the udders) every year.

Pesticide residues in fruit and vegetables have shaken consumer confidence in British food. In the latest report from the Ministry of Agriculture (MAFF) Working Party on Pesticide residues, 13% of UK winter lettuces were found to contain sufficient pesticide residues to indicate what MAFF calls "pesticide misuse". 46% of the potatoes they sampled contained organophosphate residues. The prodigious use of farm chemicals, as well as changing patterns of cultivation and the destruction of the marginal habitats, has led to an astonishing decline in the populations of farmland birds. According to the British Trust for Ornithology, woodcock and turtle doves have declined by 86% in the last twenty-five years, spotted flycatchers by 79%, grey partridges by 86%

and grasshopper warblers by 91%. Skylarks, song thrushes, lapwings and tawny owls are also in danger of disappearance.

To portray these, as the rally's organizers sought to do, as exclusively urban concerns is to plumb the depths of absurdity. It is rural people who all too often have woken up to find the downlands, watermeadows, barrows or heaths which surrounded their homes ploughed out for seamless monocultures of rape and barley. Changes in the quality of their surroundings exert an enormous impact on the quality of their lives. This is, in truth, a conflict not between town and country, but between impunity and accountability, between the attitude of many landholders - that the land is theirs and they can do what they want to it - and that of many of the rest of us; that the fabric of the nation is our common inheritance, in which we all have an active interest...

It is time to put the public back in the picture, to make farming reflect the wider public interest, rather than just that of the holder of the land. This necessitates the introduction of two things in which rural land management is particularly lacking: transparency and accountability...

All over the world the leaders of undemocratic states argue that good decision-making can take place only when the common mass of the population is excluded. With embarrassing regularity, the opposite proves to be the case. The same, of course, applies to land use policies in Britain. The wider is public involvement in decision-making, the better and longer-lasting the emerging decisions are likely to be. Without a role in determining the future of our most fundamental resource, we will continue to suffer from the justifiable impression that full citizenship is the preserve of the fortunate few.



Sir Peter Hall gave the final Jubilee Lecture to a packed Music Room, answering the question "Can Shakespeare survive in the next century?"

SCIENCE: "ADVANCING PHYSICS"

Stephen Malling, Head of Physics, writes on how Stowe is taking a lead in the new physics revolution.

Stowe School is one of the first schools in the country to take part in a new £1m initiative by the Institute of Physics to make A-level physics more up-to-date, exciting and relevant to all aspects of life and work today.

From September this year, Stowe will be piloting *Advancing Physics*, the revolutionary new AS- and A-level course developed by the Institute of Physics in partnership with OCR – one of the three main exam boards – and supported by UK science and industry.

"All A-level syllabuses have to change in September 2000," says Alun Jones, Chief Executive of the Institute of Physics. "By choosing to teach *Advancing Physics* a year ahead of these changes, the thirty schools and colleges piloting this course will be getting ahead of the game and demonstrating an innovative approach to teaching and learning physics that will dramatically benefit their students whilst still firmly complying with the Government's guidelines on content and assessment."

The new course has been developed after extensive consultation with teachers, academics, industrialists and students themselves. "The course will offer students more of what they want, universities and employers more of what they need and will reflect the variety and importance of physics as it is today," says Alun Jones. The physics taught

will include reference to how it interacts with such things as communications, engineering, materials science and medicine.

Not only is the content more relevant but the means of delivering it is right up to date. Traditional textbooks are being replaced by slimmer student books, in full colour. Both teachers and students will benefit from CD-ROMS with a wealth of resources and further support will be provided through a Web site, maintained by the Institute of Physics and linked directly to the examination board. The pilot schools and colleges for *Advancing Physics* will receive extensive support over the year and will further benefit from the opportunity to share their views, experiences and good practice with each other.

"On completing *Advancing Physics*, students will know much more about the excitement and relevance of modern-day physics and will be better prepared for future employment," concludes Alun Jones. Stowe's Head of Science, Simon Collins, has been involved in developing and writing some of the new course materials in units on Imaging and Communications. We are both looking forward to piloting the new course from September this year, and giving a generation of Stowe Physicists a chance to get ahead of the game with this innovative educational venture.

Drew Brennan on a scientific

JOURNEY TO THE ANTIWORLD

One dark Friday evening in the middle of March, a group of 5th and 6th form Stoics boarded a coach, destined to whisk them off to a black-tie event in an exotic location in the middle of London. A discourse was taking place at the Royal Institute, a magnificent old building that has to rub shoulders with some dodgy-looking restaurants, and some rather more upmarket ones, like the Ritz, in the maze of roads near Green Park. Here, Faraday, the great physicist, lived and worked. Presided over by the Duke of Kent, the discourses attract such notaries as Nobel Prize winners and Heads of industry. Each discourse is preceded by a dinner for the speaker and guests. There are always numerous displays to be viewed. Our visit was to see the lecture, given by Prof. Frank Close (Author of *The Cosmic Onion*), entitled "Journey to the Antiworld".

He commenced the talk as the clock gave a precise 'Tinnng'. He covered the Positron, the opposite of the

electron, and explained how nature has a profound symmetry, but the world is an asymmetric place full of structure. This was the main focus of the discourse. He also talked about the work carried out at CERN in Geneva, where they had, in the last year with great excitement, produced antihydrogen. Unfortunately, they only made nine atoms, which is hardly anything, seeing as 1 litre of air contains over 10²³ atoms. Having been submerged in a completely different world, on the hour, Prof. Close finished his last sentence and the clock again went 'Tinnng'. Perfect timing as we were instantly brought back to the real world again.

The talk was very informative, and gave us a good view into cutting edge experiments, explaining something that many graduates would find hard to grasp. Admittedly, few of us will be putting this knowledge and our experiences into practice, but it did broaden and stretch the mind.

GEOLOGY

The Department has been greatly privileged to receive the gift of a large mineral collection, amassed over a lifetime by Basil Sparrow (Walpole 1935-39). The collection is remarkable not only for the superb quality and range of the material, but also for the way in which it has been meticulously annotated and recorded by Mr Sparrow. It is hoped in due course to arrange a permanent exhibition with regular rotation of display specimens in the Science Block foyer. We are most grateful for this most generous gift and valuable educational resource.

MW

DESIGN: ARCHITECTURE WORKSHOP ON BRIDGES

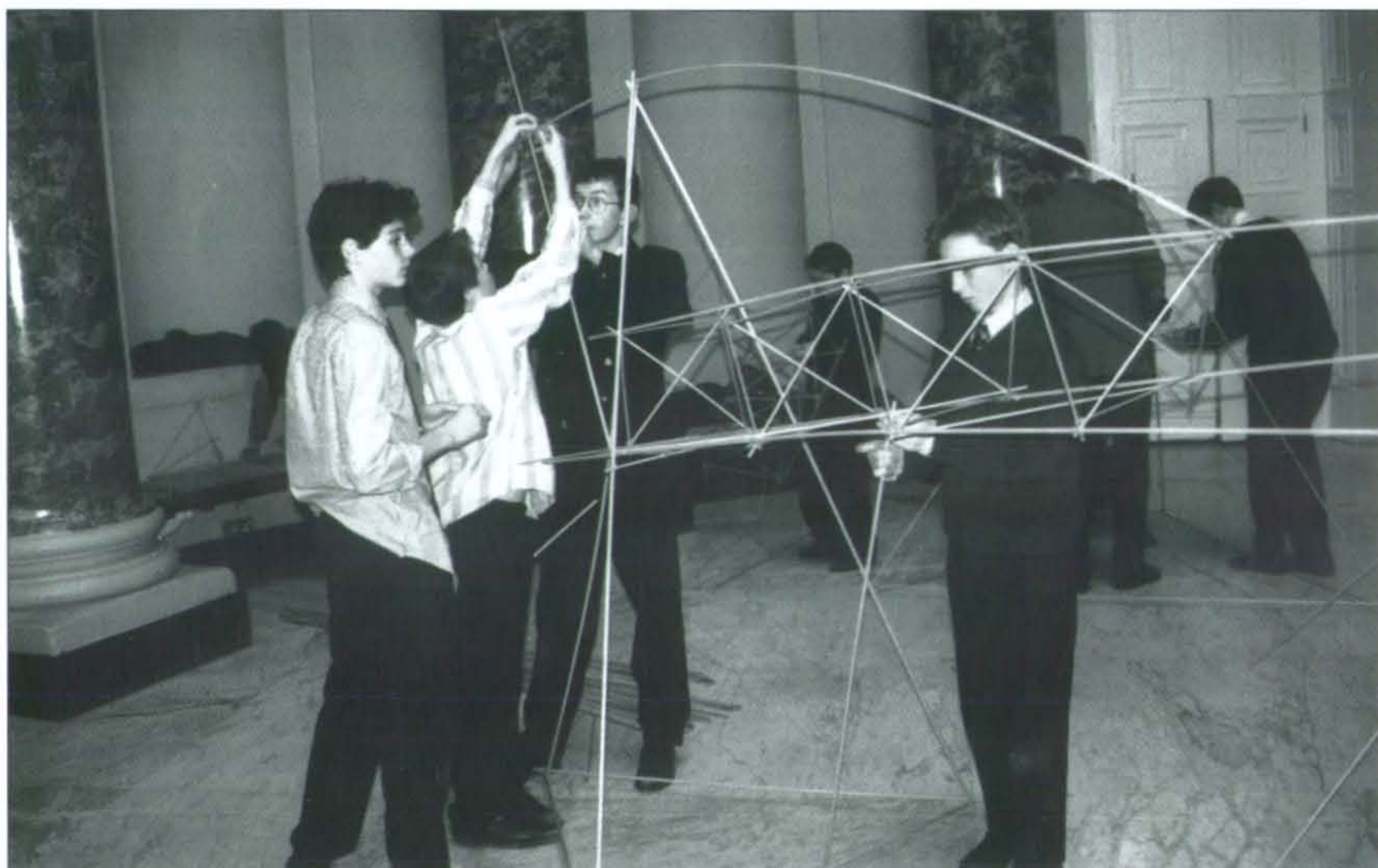
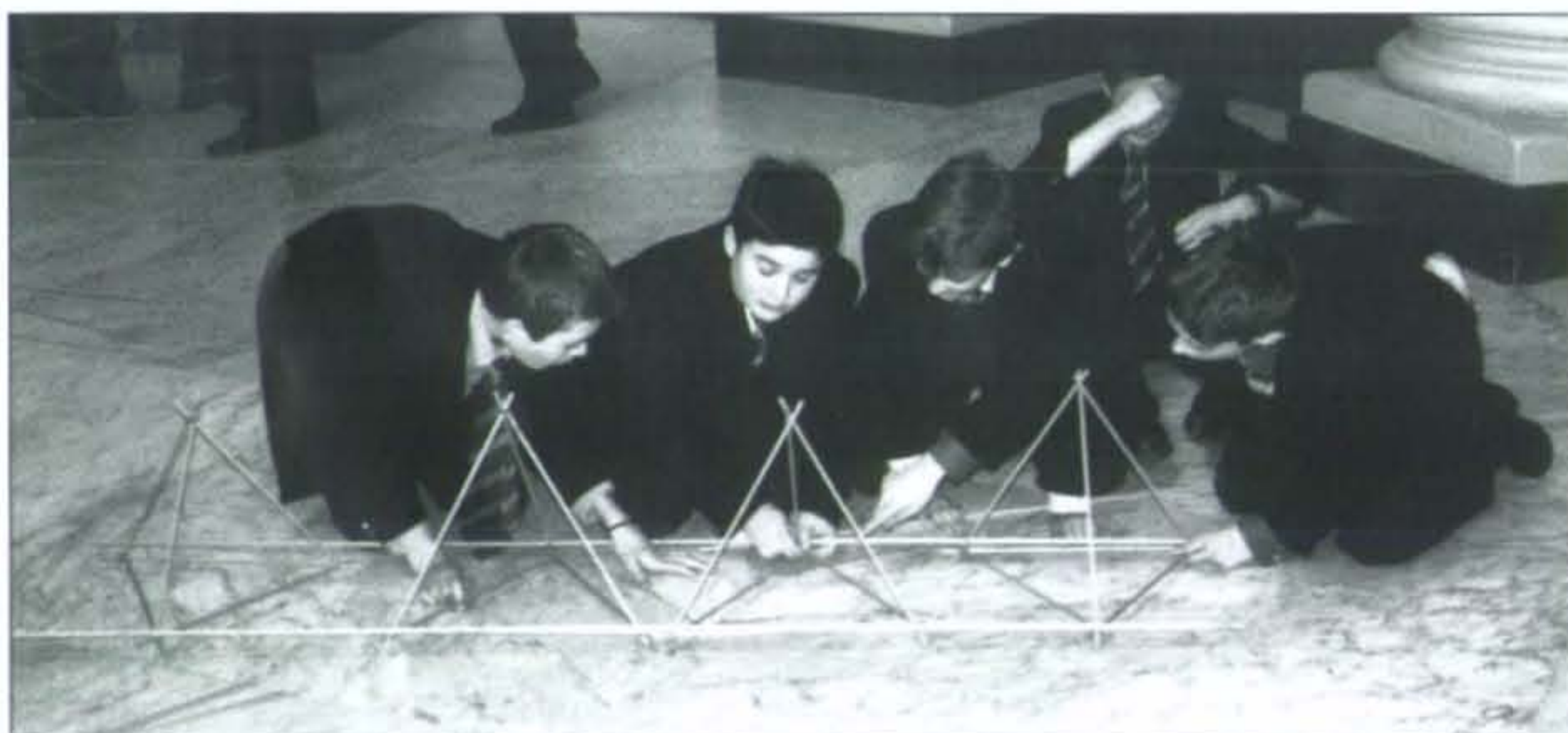
The Design Challenge took place on Monday 15th March. At two o'clock we assembled in the Marble Hall. By the door to the Music room were two tables and an easel with sheets of paper on it. One table had sticks of various sizes on it; the other had a vast array of elastic bands. The man who was to take us for the session introduced himself as Nigel (Frost). He started to talk about structures and how every building had some sort of structure to enable it to stay up. While doing this he took six sticks out of his back pocket and very skilfully assembled a pyramid using elastic bands to join them together. We then discovered that all 3-dimensional shapes had real names. (Like tetrahedron and decahedron). We were then set the same task. This proved not to be as easy as he had made it out to be, but everyone managed it, eventually! Using everyone else's pyramid in the group we then created a big pyramid using 4 little pyramids.

We had then to create a solid structure using all 4 pyramids and 3 long rods. Everyone was by now starting to see what this was leading up to. Using Chi Kavendele and Will Consett as posts he demonstrated levers and the energy needed to counteract the weight on one end of the structure.

Nigel explained all different types of ways to hold up the bridge using tension and compression. We were then set our final task. Using the platform we had just made and other rods and sticks, we had to create a bridge that stood up and was totally self-supporting. While all the other groups set hard to work, a big island was being assembled in the middle of the Marble Hall. All the bridges had to reach over the island and not touch it. This proved to be a great challenge. After 20 minutes of design, management and construction each member of the group had produced their section of the bridge. All that remained was to assemble them. To everyone's relief it fitted together perfectly. Nigel then went through each bridge and told us about its good and bad points. After which he told us about bridge design in the future and how people can design them to fit into their natural surroundings.

Everyone learnt a great deal from the experience and on behalf of the third form I would like to thank the Design and Technology Department for a really interesting afternoon.

J.H. FREDDIE VON SCHRODER



DESIGN: HELPING AT CHACKMORE

During April and May of this year pupils from Stowe helped pupils at Chackmore School with their Design and Technology project. The project involved 49 Chackmore pupils from years 2, 3 and 4 and many Stoic volunteers. The brief was the research, design and construction of bird, bat and dormice nesting boxes. It also involved constructing feeders to test the skills and intelligence of birds and squirrels. The boxes were then placed around the local area.

The Stowe Design and Technology Department helped by preparing the materials and providing expert help and tools for the practical work. Templates were made. Drilling, joining, cutting and finishing were all skills that had to be taught by the Stoics. The end result was a nesting box made by each of the Chackmore pupils. The Stoics also learnt a lot about patience and working with younger children.

MDGW

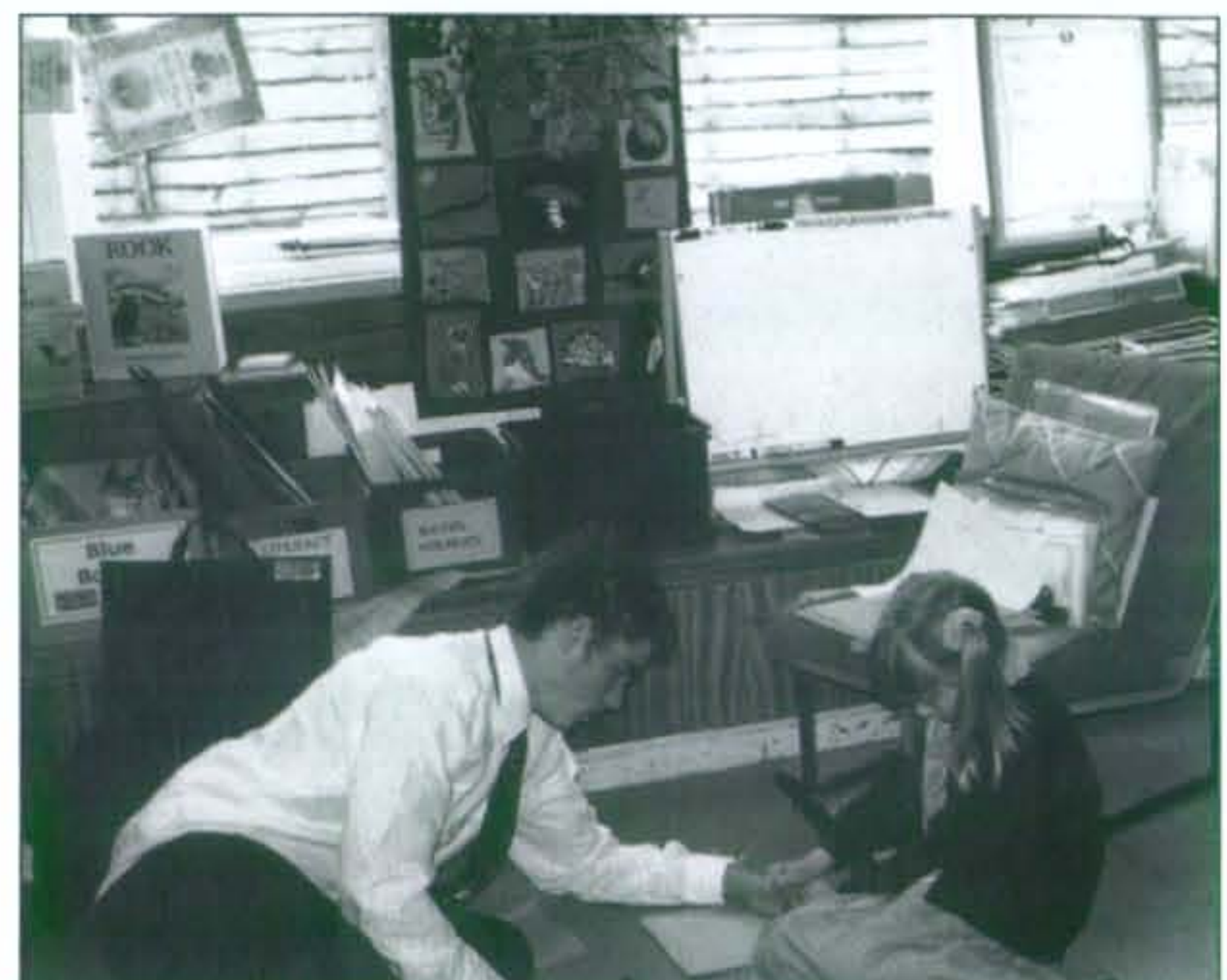


Chackmore CE 1st School
Main street
Chackmore
Buckingham
MK18 8TE

Dear Stowe DT Department

Thankyou for coming in and helping us with cutting the wood and helping us make our boxes out of cardboard. It is very kind of you to cut the wood for us. We couldn't do this project with out you. We are learning how to use wood and tools and equipment safely through this project

yours sincerely
Laura Kameischen



TECHNOLOGY TOURNAMENT

On 1st March 1999 Mr Wellington accompanied a group of fifth-formers to a Technology tournament at Aylesbury College. Ten schools from the area attended the event that was organised by the Rotary Clubs of Aylesbury, Aylesbury Hundreds, Buckingham and Thame Witchert.

Each of the participating groups were set a difficult task that was to be designed, constructed and tested during the day. Additional credit was to be given for the paperwork.

The task set was to design and build a vehicle, powered by an electric motor, to travel along the inside of a test rig pipeline and to clear a way through a simulated blockage in the shortest possible time.

We had the whole morning to finish the designs; they were then handed in. Construction had to be completed by 2pm. Our design worked on the tricycle principle and used a high gear ratio. When testing came, our prototype shot through the test rig with enormous speed. Luckily, Oliver Webb was there to demonstrate his incredible co-ordination and caught the buggy as it flew through the air towards the ground. We had achieved success.

The next target was to repeat this feat when it came to the actual testing. We were feeling confident! Unfortunately, unlike all the other tests, this time the buggy got caught up in the tube and we did not finish the course. The final results that included the paperwork meant that we were very close runners-up. We are now looking forward to greater success next year.

During the day Mr Wellington was allowed to enter the competition that was organised for sixth-formers and staff from other schools. He still has not let us forget that he managed to win this category.

JAMES JOHNSTONE



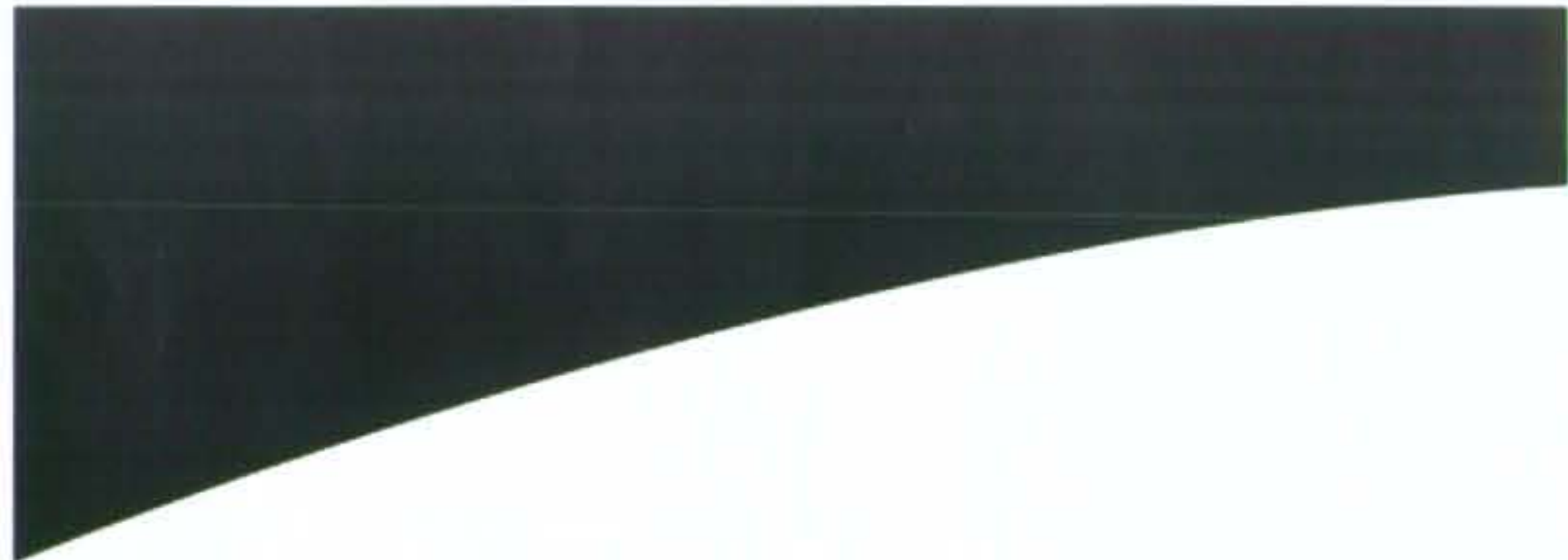
Planning stage



Oliver Webb, Philip Ashworth, James Johnstone and Theo Turner with the Mayor of Aylesbury



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THE LUFFIELD ARTS FESTIVAL (I)

The Luffield Group of schools, formed two years ago to foster and develop the existing partnerships and examples of co-operation between Stowe and its eleven fellow state and independent schools within ten miles or so, held an Arts Festival in the State Rooms at Stowe in the last week of term. Several different workshop groups were formed – Art, Creative Writing, Design, Drama, Music – each one containing as wide a mix as possible of staff and pupils from different schools. Each group had a base at one of the schools where it worked for two and a half days before moving with its “product” to Stowe for the finale: the Wednesday afternoon saw the sun shining on over 200 local schoolchildren chatting, taking in the scenery, last-minute rehearsing, setting up exhibits, being and working together happily, having dismantled and adjusted a few preconceptions about one another.

At 6.30pm about 200 sets of local parents arrived, attended exhibitions, listened to creative writing readings, the winning presentation from the Business Enterprise Challenge conference, some singing and instrumental performances, and witnessed a powerful dramatic performance. It was a great occasion that introduced a lot of new people and ideas and techniques and methodologies and cultures and backgrounds to each other, in an obviously positive and productive way. Long may we/they all stay in touch with one another! Joe Townsend, who was himself at the Royal Latin School in Buckingham before coming to Stowe, spent a couple of days visiting as much of the whole event as he could.

SGAH



Design and Technology at Buckingham Secondary School

THE LUFFIELD ARTS FESTIVAL (II)

The annual Luffield Enterprise Challenge ran alongside an Arts Festival this year, and between them they pushed people (both staff and students) to the limits of their intellectual stamina, and gave a good work-out to most people's socialising skills. The Arts Festival Theme – “1900-2000-2100”, an attempt to avoid the unavoidable millennium theme – was interpreted a little differently by each workshop.

The design group which was based at Buckingham Secondary School was comprised of six groups with each group containing only one member from each school. Their design brief: to design and build a time piece that could accurately time 2000 seconds and also note every 100 seconds, the means of power being only sand, marbles and water. Wandering through the workshop one got a great feeling of community. Everyone seemed able to put forward ideas without getting shouted down or laughed at, and the actual production of the pieces was also a team effort in most cases.

The art which took place at Stowe produced wonderfully varied pieces of work but the students I spoke with did not find the theme without its difficulties. Expressing the passage of time in a single piece of static work is never easy at the best of times. Add to this having to get to know over half the people you are working with and having to incorporate their ideas, and the task seems to be impossible. Large congratulations should therefore go to all those people involved as the final works showed none of this. I was amazed how quickly people seemed to get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses.

JOE TOWNSEND

National Youth Ballet

OF GREAT BRITAIN



1999 Season

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Gala Evening

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SPEECH DAY

29th May 1999

Art was very much to the forefront of this year's Speech Day. David Shepherd was distributing the prizes; and several tributes were paid to Guy Scott, retiring after a highly distinguished time as Head of Art. Amongst many good exhibitions the Art School's could not but catch the eye with the high quality of everything on display. And in the Blue Room there was a timely exhibition of Guy Scott's own work, including paintings and drawings from his recent visit to China.

The 1st XI were as usual playing the Templars on the North Front and the Junior Colts taking on a mixture of parents and staff on the South Front. Tennis teams of both sexes took to the courts against the Old Stoics and there were also the

traditional clay pigeon and golfing contests and a display of the beagles. It was a challenge to see everything: the music concert in the Roxburgh Hall, a presentation of A-level Theatre Studies practical work in the Paul Dobinson Theatre, multimedia Science presentations, the Cyber Cafe in the Science Block and, in the Marble Hall, there was the Campaign For Stowe exhibition on one side and a Visual Education display on the other.

The weather was generous. Thunderstorms did bring a dramatic close to proceedings but only after tea when many Stoics had already headed off with their families for Exeat. And although the sun did not exactly beat down on the assembled multitudes in Chapel Court listening to the speeches, it was warm and dry.



Sir Peter Leslie, Chairman of the Governors, began proceedings by referring to The Campaign For Stowe:

"A year ago I talked about our long-term plans for the School and the creation of The Stowe House Preservation Trust which is taking responsibility for the restoration of the historic mansion. And I'm very pleased that its Chairman, Sir Nigel Mobbs, our Lord Lieutenant, is here today. Since then there has come the welcome news that the Trust has received grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund of nearly £5 million which together with other grants and funds we have raised ourselves through The Campaign For Stowe will enable the £6.6 million restoration of the North Front and Colonnades to go ahead. And that, I must warn you, is only Phase One of the £30 million of restoration that is required for the mansion.

As I said last year, the obligations to maintain one of Europe's largest private buildings and heritage sites has been



a heavy responsibility on the School since its foundation and the transfer of that responsibility to the Preservation Trust will enable the governors to concentrate on our true role, which is, of course, the development of the School.

We have no doubt that the complex deal we have done is greatly in the interests of the School and will allow major developments and investments in our facilities and academic resources to take place. But it would be wrong to pretend that it will not also bring some major changes to this site and to the School. While the School will continue to have full use of the mansion, as it does of the grounds, there will henceforward be three bodies sharing responsibility for the whole of the Stowe site: the School, the National Trust and the Preservation Trust. There will be a gradual increase in public access both to the gardens and to the mansion which will need careful control and management. However, from my experience with the National Trust, which has been a marvellous one, I am sure this can be achieved without undue disruption to the life of the School. Now of course this time next year you can expect to see most of the North Front and the colonnades clothed in scaffolding. And while the final result will no doubt give us great satisfaction, there will be problems for all of us who are car owners on the alternative parking arrangements. And there will inevitably be some inconvenience to the School from the access point of view while the work is carried out. But I think what is really important is that the three partners of this site all recognise the key role of the School and the need to work closely together to ensure that these aspects can be minimised. Just as Stowe House, the park and the gardens are the very heart of this School, so too the School is the key to continued life on this site.

A week ago Lord Sainsbury formally launched The Campaign For Stowe, an ongoing campaign to raise funds both for the Preservation Trust and for the Stowe School

Foundation, the body through which our development plans will be funded. I would like particularly to pay tribute to his support and to the work of the two campaign chairmen, Algy Cluff and Adrian Evans. The Foundation will bring together all the various trusts through which funds have been raised in the past for the School and will seek to raise initially £7.5 million for The Stowe School Foundation. While some of this will be needed to increase the School's scholarship and bursary funds, the greater part will be used for the complete restructuring of our learning facilities, our most important educational responsibility of all, with the construction of a purpose-built Academic Resource Centre, an enormously exciting project..."

Sir Peter ended by rejoicing that on the platform with him, as chief guest, was his friend and contemporary in Chatham, David Shepherd:

"David, if I may say so, is in many ways typical of the secret of Stowe. Nothing in his life at Stowe, happy and successful though it was, presaged to his contemporaries the nature of the tremendous success he has subsequently made of his life in so many various fields. All of us know of his success as an artist and as an author, but what may not be so well realised is the enormous amount that David has put back into the community, not only this community, in extensive charitable work through his Conservation Foundation. It has benefited enormously wild life – particularly in Africa – and among other things he has been responsible for the restoration of some very impressive steam engines in this country. And that has all been recognised by the award of an OBE in this country and similar awards from many governments and learned bodies round the world. So, as his exact contemporary, it is a very great pleasure to welcome him here today..."

The Headmaster began by saying that on this, his tenth Speech Day, he would be changing the usual format. Instead of saluting all the achievements of the school year – great and impressive though they had again been – he would be exploring what was most important in a Stowe education and explaining why the planned Academic Resource Centre was absolutely central to the School's philosophy:

"Last month an Old Stoic writer, Frank Tuohy, died. His short stories are some of the very best to come out of the twentieth century and bid fair to live on, as classics of their genre. One particular short story recreated the Stowe of his boyhood.

It takes its title from its setting, the Palladian Bridge.

A quiet, shy boy called Page-Barlow has been told by a 6th-form bully called Walters to wait at the bridge to meet a young servant girl, with whom he has made a furtive assignation. A squash match is going to make Walters a little late. Page-Barlow is to hold the fort. The girl duly arrives. Page-Barlow is overwhelmed by embarrassment. He tries to adopt a position of nonchalance by sitting on the balustrade of the bridge, hiding his copy of a book of modern poetry by sitting upon it. As he squirms around trying to make conversation, it drops into the lake. He pretends it doesn't matter, but the girl makes him retrieve it from the water. Then Walters arrives and Page-Barlow is forgotten as Walters and the girl go off into the Japs. He begins to stumble over the cowpats back to school:

Through the back pages, through Ruthven Todd and Dylan Thomas as far as Louis MacNeice, the lake water had soaked into the Little Book of Modern Verse. Even if he dried it out, Page-Barlow knew he would always hate to read this book again. He threw it as far as he could across the reeds and lily pads into the lake...

This story of the Forties, written in the Sixties, has a clear message for the Nineties. It reminds us that life is a whole series of decisions which have to be made; and that school is the place where we can learn how to make good rather than bad ones. Page-Barlow in the story makes two bad decisions. He has allowed himself to be talked into playing the go-between in Walters' squalid encounter. And this bad decision has led to another one. He pretends that the poetry book – a symbol of civilised living – doesn't matter to him. And he hates himself for it all.

Decisions are with us every day. Learning to make good decisions at school is crucially important, because, in the words of Wordsworth (which I used on Speech Day ten years ago) 'the child is father of the man'. Our most important duty at Stowe is that of caring deeply what kind of men and women stride forth beyond the Oxford Water at the age of eighteen. And of trying to ensure that when the big challenges of life come along, Stoics will know the right thing to do. Frank Tuohy's story reminds us how important it is that we educate for life rather than just for short-term objectives, like league tables."

On the theme of good decision-making the Headmaster then read a poem which Frank Tuohy had written at Stowe over fifty years ago. It concerned a lorryload of apples in wartime. But the apples were really a metaphor for human existence:

"Tuohy muses on the various fates of apples. He gives us several alternatives, one as high as immortality through art, another as low as the gutter. It is a poem about what we can make of our lives. About decision-making... And it is another reminder about our duty at Stowe: to encourage independent thinking so that we make the right decisions..."

The Headmaster then moved on to The Campaign For Stowe and, in particular, the much-needed Academic Resource Centre. He was speaking from a decade of experience of Stowe's needs. Misquoting Alan Lerner and *My Fair Lady*, the Headmaster declared:

*I've grown accustomed to Stowe's face,
She almost makes the day begin.
I've grown accustomed to the tune,
she whistles night and noon,
Her smiles, her frowns, her ups, her downs
Are second nature to me now...*

And, this being the case, accustomed as he now was to Stowe's many-faceted face, he was convinced of the enormous benefit an Academic Resource Centre would bring, night and noon:

"New technology is revolutionising education and its materials, demanding new facilities. The book is now complemented by the computer. Hence Stowe's need for a computerised library, where book and computer, together with all other modern aids to learning, can be found under the same roof. The Academic Resource Centre is the most ambitious single new building in the history of the School. It will underpin all we do. It will be a dynamic aid to our most important duty as a school: to prepare our pupils for life..."

Headmasters are known as a breed, when Speech Day comes round, to haunt their local oculists searching for the very latest in rose-tinted spectacles. But I need no rose-tinted spectacles to see that a Stowe Education is, at its best, a very wide and liberating one. And in an age when education has tended to become a conveyor belt on which the consumers sit, eyes front, stonily facing the narrow goal of the examined curriculum, Stowe's adherence to a truly liberal education is as important as it is unusual.. Of course The Academic Resource Centre will be an enormous boost to the quality of our GCSEs and A-levels. But what delights me even more is that it will put the most modern, intellectually-liberating educational aids that exist to the service of the School's most important duty, getting Stoics ready for the challenges of life.

If Frank Tuohy's Page-Barlow had been lucky enough to have such a Resource Centre to hand, we can be sure he would not have rejected his book of modern British poetry. But even if he had, he would have been able to retrieve everything ever published by and about Louis MacNeice in the

Academic Resource Centre. The unsatisfactory Walters himself would probably have been much less unsatisfactory, spending his after-squash hours in the Centre, quietly researching problems of biochemistry from a CDROM rather than examining the flora and fauna of the Japs.

It is going to be a wonderful facility for Stowe. But it's the inspirational potential which excites me most of all. I mustn't go on till tea-time, but I'd like to highlight one particular comment about the Centre which comes from my Launch Statement:

We see its inspirational function as integral to the whole project. Hugo Morley-Fletcher once remarked: "Stowe flows out of itself into the gardens – and the gardens flow into the buildings". In this context we wish to see the spirit of Stowe's eighteenth-century pleasure pavilions flowing into the Academic Resource Centre; the very real pleasures of learning and research physically expressed in our new building. And we want it to tend not just the mind but the heart and soul..."

The Headmaster then moved from ARC to ART, prefacing his introduction of the guest speaker with a tribute to Guy Scott:

"He has made the subject one of the brightest jewels in our crown for so many years. Guy came to Stowe in 1982 and took over the department in 1987, and in between housemastering Lyttelton for five vigorous years has run it ever since. Exam results have been magnificent. But the Art School under Guy (and of course let's not forget Ken and Ian in this) epitomises what Stowe is really about which is so much more than success with the examined Curriculum. Art under Guy has been fun; liberating; inspiring; the Art School has had a special place in the heart of the community just as I believe it did when it first opened under the illustrious Robin and Dodie Watt. The wonderful sets Guy has created for so many plays over the years haven't just embellished those plays, they have liberated the spirit. And Guy has epitomised the

Stowe breadth of vision. An Upper School Tutor, golf supremo, President of the Common Room, and so much more. Guy's vision has ranged far and wide beyond the canvas and the easel..."

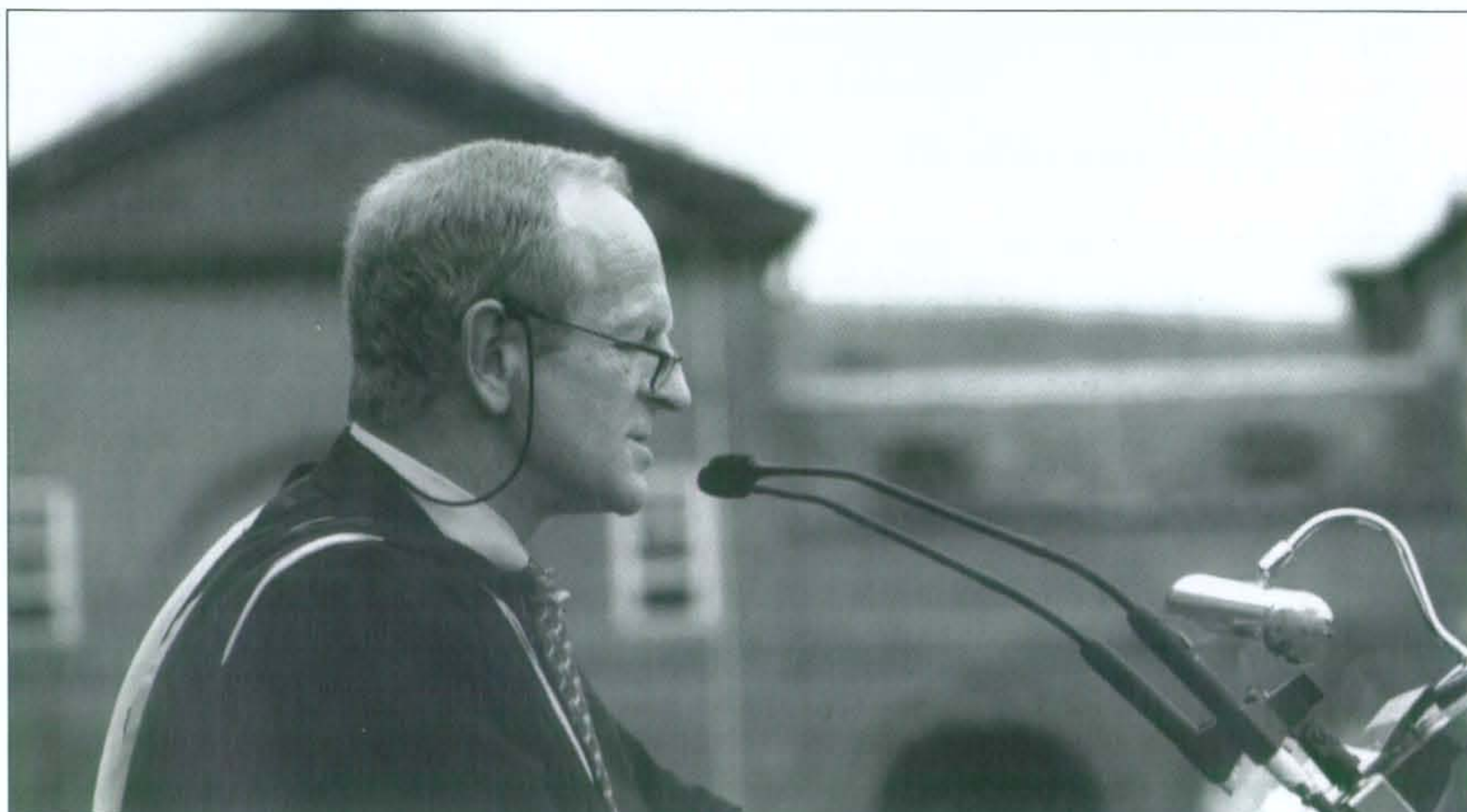
Finally, as an introduction to the prize-giving, the Headmaster paid tribute to David Shepherd:

"Being the modest man he is, David will (in very few words I have his assurance) say he achieved nothing here. But he was a monitor and on the cross country team. And if any of you were lucky enough to see his "This Is Your Life", a wonderfully happy, life-enhancing exposition of all the fine things that he has done, you will have witnessed a fitting tribute to one of Stowe's greatest sons. He himself is on record as saying he developed his eye for beauty here and his enjoyment of life, even though his artistic talents lay dormant until after he had left.

David's world-wide fight for wild life conservation together with the superb artistic talents he brings to this wonderful cause exemplifies the important contribution so many Stoics have made with their lives to ensure that this world is a better place. As such he is an inspiration to us at Stowe in our determination to do more than just prepare our pupils for exams. The acquisition of life skills must remain our mission. And, above all, the ability of Stoics to meet the challenges and crises of life in the most positive of ways. We must ensure that the future Page-Barlows drive out over the Oxford Bridge with the poetry of Ruthven Todd, Dylan Thomas and Louis MacNeice safely in their luggage rather than languishing beyond the reeds by the Palladian Bridge.

May I end with one final, short, challenging quotation, again from my Campaign Launch Statement, relating to the innovative nature of the Academic Resource Centre:

'Stowe was born to lead, and is needed to lead; schools like ours must be among the leaders if we are to have an education system worthy of the nation's past and future.'"





After distributing the prizes with great glee, David Shepherd crumpled up his notes and addressed us:

"It's always embarrassing when you get a clap before you've said anything. Have I really only got ten minutes, Jeremy? I'm very upset about this, you know, because when I'm in full flow I need at least three hours..."

Peter Leslie in his remarks reminded me that I was in the only decent House in the School, which of course was Chatham. We were a very exclusive little club in Chatham. There was a programme on the radio many many years ago when I was at Stowe in the war. (Those of you who aren't as old as I am, and there aren't many in the audience, can all go to sleep as you won't know what I'm talking about.) It was called Dick Barton, Special Agent – in the days when radio was the great thing to listen to before we were ruled by television – and this programme was a quarter of an hour of really dramatic stuff, all about Jock and Snowy and Dick Barton, terrific stuff, very exciting, much better than James Bond, and it was always on at 7.15 and Stowe evening chapel ended at 7.15. Being in Chatham we had our radios full blast ready to listen to the next episode and we had the advantage over the other Houses for we walked very sedately down the aisle, as we had to, and the moment we were down the steps we ran like the clappers into the House and we could then inform the rest of the plebs in the main building what happened (we never mixed when we were in Chatham. It was very exclusive).

Another memory is of many years ago when I was here raising money for the School – we auctioned one of my paintings and what have you – and David Niven, the much missed and celebrated Old Stoic if ever there was one, was signing autographs at a table and I was sitting alongside him (but nobody had the foggiest clue who I was) and he was very naughty and said "For God's sake do some of mine". So I was signing "David Niven" for a pound a time and we raised a heck of a lot of money for the School. I'll do anything for charity!

There was a reference just now to conservation and how important it is. As you came in today through the gates you got this piece of paper saying "Please take care of an especially beautiful and fragile environment". Isn't that nice? The School thinks of things like that and it is so important. It sets my mind thinking on how impressed I am – and that's an understatement – how hugely impressed I am about everything about the School today as we see it.

It was when I was asked to unveil the mural that the Stowe art students did for the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street that I began to realise just how magnificent the modern-day Art School is... I don't think I learned any art in the Art School... My reason for going there was that it was an opportunity to flee off the rugger pitch for I was one of those weedy, snotty-nosed little boys who couldn't understand why you played rugger, a highly dangerous game. I couldn't understand why you should have your neck broken under a writhing heap of bodies.

My reason for coming to Stowe was possibly rather an unusual one. The only reason my daddy and mummy sent me here in the 1940s was that they had this assumption Hitler wouldn't fly north of Watford with his Luftwaffe. An extraordinary philosophy and of course no sooner had I got here than they dropped a whole stick of bombs across the South Front. My God, it was exciting, it really was!

But I must now be serious for a moment. I want to talk about the arts in this computer age. If you didn't go to that concert this morning you missed something, you really did. I was sitting next to Jeremy and I said to him in the midst of those marvellous pieces they played, "How can it get any better?" There was nothing like this when I was at Stowe. The talent! Young people today. It is absolutely mind-boggling. The chorus was lovely, the singers, I shut my eyes when they were playing the jazz and I could almost have heard Glenn Miller (and I'm a Glenn Miller fanatic). I had tears in my eyes when Gene Kindell was playing that violin solo, I really did. I'm very emotional. That's what Stowe's done for me. I challenge anybody to find a more beautiful stately pile. This place is mind-bogglingly lovely. And I'm quite certain that all those wonderful musicians were inspired by it, as we all are.

You will all leave Stowe with memories of the place which you will treasure till you die. I have memories of this place which I will never lose...

I do worry about technology sometimes. I know you have to have computers and that they don't mean anything to me (windows are only something to open and let the fresh air in) but I do worry when I see my grandchildren at the age of six looking at screens all day. Computers mustn't be at the expense of painting, music and drama and architecture and the arts in general. Thankfully there are schools like Stowe to achieve the proper balance. I don't care about things like league tables but I do care about Stowe's long list of those who play the saxophone, get involved in plays and show an interest in art...

I'll end up with one funny story which illustrates the splendid informality of Stowe. Bob Drayson isn't here so he can't refute it. I was having breakfast one day at home when my youngest daughter, Wendy, said 'Daddy, I'd love to go to Stowe.' And I was thrilled skinny about this because I love the place so much, so I wrote to Bob Drayson and he wrote back, as he had to, saying 'Dear David, the fact that you were at Stowe won't pull any strings. Your daughter can get in only on her intellectual qualifications. Yours ever, Bob Drayson. PS The fact that you're going to paint my portrait might make a difference.'"



James Lyon, Head of School, then thanked David Shepherd and presented him with a memento of his visit. A witty, moving speech followed in which he also made presentations to James Elwes and Alexander Housley as winners of the Richard Branson Prize for setting up a company, Alpha Design, which creates and markets webpages on the internet. The Head of School also made the popular announcement of Raymond Santala as winner of the 1999 Stoic Award.

PRIZE WINNERS

Basil Williamson Memorial Prize: James Lyon. Drayson Prize: Caroline Sabberton; Quentin Bertram Prize for Latin: Alexandra Katthagen. J.F. Roxburgh Prize for Classics: Amy Gillam. Charles Loudon Prize for Greek: Edward Comber. Anthony Pearce Prize for Lation Oration: Alexander Perry. Peter Bone Prize for English: William Ritchie. Gavin Maxwell Prizes for English: William Ritchie (senior) & Benjamin Morgan (junior). Hayward Prize for reading: Shaun Gardiner. Harding Prize for Reading: Frances Morley-Fletcher. Bryan Henshaw Prizes for English Speech: Jerome Starkey (senior) & Louis Buckworth (junior). Euan Dawson Prize for English: Philippa Newman. Basil Aimers Prize for Reading: Piers Craven. Fraser Cup for Public Speaking: Oscar Humphries. Telford-Wardley Prize for Spanish: Laura Kaye. Capel Cure Prize for French: Max Lawrence. Scott-Gall Prize for History: William Ritchie. Syrett Prize for History: Sally Oliphant. Robert Barbour Prize for Theology: Charles Hart. Burroughs Prize for Theology: James Elwes; Wallace Prize for Geography: Sally Oliphant. Peter Bates Prize for Geography: Natalie Garthwaite. Robert Montagu Prize for Geology: Richard Briggs. Humphrey Foster Prize for Physics: Laura McMaster. W.D. Hards Prize for Chemistry: Evgeny Demchenko. Anthony Pedder Prize for Physical Science: Simon Creek. Choyce Prize for Biology: Kingsley Ford. Friends of Stowe Prizes for Natural History: Sarah Dalby (senior) & Henry Leon (junior). Stewart Prize for Mathematics: Evgeny Demchenko. Pearman-Smith Prize for Mathematics: Charles Archer. Barrus Prizes for Computer Technology: James Vane-Tempest (senior) & Philip Ashworth (junior). James Mayne Prizes: Alexei Sorokin (Economics) & William Ritchie (Politics). William Dady Prize for Art History: Flora Soames. J.F. Roxburgh Prize for Architecture: Ken Yuktasevi. J.F. Aimers Prize for Art: Shaun Gardiner & Charles Robinson. Anthony Howard Prizes: Shiho Ichinose (senior painting), Henry Leon (junior painting), Louisa Jones (senior printmaking) & Oliver Weston (junior printmaking). Richard McDougall Prizes for Watercolour: Frances Morley-Fletcher (senior) & Jeremy Bodian (junior). Simon Alper Print Awards: Daniel McCarey & Latifah Al-Said. Gillig-Lax Prizes: Alexander Medwall-Bates (senior

strings), Gene Kindell (junior strings), Rupert Burchett (senior woodwind), Gevork Anderyassian (junior woodwind), Alexander Lyall (senior brass), Jonathan Sayle (junior brass), Michael Jones (senior piano), Oliver Cullingworth (junior piano). Ian McCarey Prize: Ben Scholfield. Coxe Prize for outstanding progress in music: Gene Kindell. Worsley Prize: Alexander Prideaux. Friends of Stowe Prize for Design in Wood: Amy Stephens. John Holland Prize for Design in Metal: Rowland Plyer. Andrew McAlpine Prizes: Hugo Harrison (photography) & Toby Adams (technical graphics). Lower School Prize for Design: Oliver Weston. McDonough Lower Sixth Form Prizes: Marcus Williams (Economics) & Philippa Newman (History). Friends of Stowe Fifth Form Prizes: Benjamin Smith & Christopher Turner. Louis Strauss Prize: William Ritchie. Harvard Book Prize: Simon Creek. Dudley Baker Prize: Charlotte Lowe. Old Stoic Goblet: James Defty. The McDonough Prize for Service: James Pegrum. David Sandhurst Prize: Peter Mann. The Headmaster's Special Prizes: Gideon Ashworth, Matthew Cumani, Stuart Healey, Oscar Humphries, Christopher Johnstone, Robin Jones, Mugabi Kaijuka, Georgina Lee, Benjamin Morgan, Alexander Prideaux, Thomas Rundall, James Sleater & Catherine White. Brian Stephan Prize for Visual Education: Christopher Dalton. Friends of Stowe Prize for General Knowledge: Piers Craven. White-Smith Prize for Aviation Activities: Robert Prentice. Andrew Croft Prize for a Musical Performance: Alexander Winter. Burchett Prize for an outstanding contribution to Music: James Vane-Tempest. Aikman Cup for Drama: Ben Scholfield. Bell Quaich: Bertie Marsh.

Bene Prizes: Gideon Ashworth, Barbara Babei (2), Toby Barnett, Henry Bartlett, James Bowkett, Richard Briggs, Rupert Burchett, Rupert Burnell-Nugent, Richard Clapham, Edward Comber, Simon Creek (3), Adam Daines (2), David Hervey, Evgeny Demchenko, James Elwes (2), Kingsley Ford (3), Shaun Gardiner, Matthew Johnson, Alexandra Katthagen, Thomas Kemble, Henry Leon (2), Alexander Lyell, James Lyon, Benedict McCarey, Daniel McCarey, Laura McMaster, Benjamin Morgan, Edward Morley, Frances Morley-Fletcher, Anthony Offley, Alexander Papadopoulos, William Ritchie, Caroline Sabberton, Benjamin Smith, Alexei Sorokin (2), Jerome Starkey, Dominic Sullivan, Samuel Taylor, Ilya Temnianski, Christopher Turner, James Vane-Tempest, Harry Vere Nicoll, Nicholas Verney (3), Elizabeth Weston, David Widdick (2) & Alexander Wilson (2).

Alex Housley and James Elwes



Chapel

THE CHAPLAIN WRITES...

A friend of mine, also a school chaplain, wrote about his experience of moving from parish work to school chaplaincy. He wrote of swapping one set of frustrations for another and one set of opportunities for another. It is certainly true that ministry in a school is different from that of a parish and yet my experience thus far is of few frustrations and many opportunities. Stowe is indeed a great place to work as a minister, full of enquiring minds with a readiness to tackle the real issues of life, full of young people so willing to give a new chaplain their ear and engage him in conversation. I am indeed privileged, not least because of the chaplaincy I inherited and the work and prayer that many have given over the years.

The Christian life at Stowe is remarkably healthy. A good number come to Crossfire each week to hear a visiting speaker open the Bible and explain to them what it means to be a Christian, many come to year group or House Bible studies, a faithful crowd attend the midweek communion

service and almost forty Stoics have patiently endured the long (but I hope worthwhile!) Confirmation course. The mid-week chapel services have been well served by a number of staff who have graciously bowed to the chaplain's whims and accommodated titles such as 'The good, the bad, and the ugly – why the world is as it is.' And all of us have been privileged enough to sit under the teaching of those who have sought to open our eyes to God's great truths Sunday by Sunday.

Of course none of this would be possible without the help and support of those we so easily take for granted; the unceasing efforts of BRE and his utter commitment to young people and the Christian faith, the chapel prefects who ensure the chapel is furnished with hymn numbers and lighted candles (and who have coped admirably with sudden electrical failures during services!), JECH, whose brilliant playing lifts our singing and our hearts, those who prepare the chapel flowers, those who clean the chapel week by week. There are many, both staff and Stoics and parents who play their part in making Stowe's Christian life what it is.

But perhaps a final word should go to JCG. Not only does he provide us with such a high standard of singing week by week, but for many months he has tirelessly toiled over the compilation of the new *Cantata Stoica*, which was launched at the beginning of the Spring Term. My own involvement has been relatively small, but the appreciation of us all is enormous. SNA

A SERMON PREACHED IN STOWE CHAPEL BY PETER LEROY

(former Housemaster at Radley College and Headmaster of Monkton Combe Junior School)

29th November 1998; reading: Luke 12:13-21

I wonder whether you have sometimes had to face well-meaning relations, godparents or family friends, who insist on pressing you with all sorts of embarrassing questions – about what you're doing at school, your friends, what you want to be and so on. I guess you may have to cope with that kind of interrogation again this Christmas time.

I heard of a wise, kind godfather, who wanted to ask his two godchildren some important questions – a sixteen-year-old boy called James and a fourteen-year-old girl called Sophie. So he took them both out for a good lunch, which proved to be relaxed and fun. However, he thought he ought to take his godfatherly duties seriously, and not simply dish out generous bank notes for birthdays and Christmas. He was a bit worried that they were just going along rather mindlessly with the popular flow. And he wanted them to think seriously about their aims in life before it was too late.

"Tell me," he said, "As you look ahead, what do you really want in life? Sophie?"

"Well, I want to make some really good friends, to have a cool time and to get some good GCSE grades."

"James?"

"I want to get into the 1st XV and also to play county hockey."

"And then?" asked the godfather. "Sophie?"

"I want to get to a good university."

"James?"

"I want to get as far away from school as I can in my gap year, have a really good, fun time, mellowing out with the babes on the beaches of Australia."

"And then? Sophie?"

"I want to become a vet."

"James?"

"I'd like to play rugby for the Harlequins and get a well paid job, perhaps in the music business or film industry, or something."

"And then? Sophie?"

"I'd like to settle down in a lovely house in the country, practise as a vet, and finally meet a really really nice man."

"James?"

"I want to find a really attractive, fun-loving girl."

"And then? Sophie?"

"I want to make a success of my job and then have a family."

"James?"

"I want to earn enough money to really enjoy myself... with a performance car, an indoor pool – lots of Caribbean holidays, scuba diving, power boating, etc."

"And then? Sophie?"

"Well... I suppose I'll retire eventually – and I hope I will still be healthy, active and happy."

"James?"

"I want to give up work as soon as I can. You know, take it easy... sort of chill our generally."

"And then? Sophie?"

"I suppose I'll just get old."

"James?"

"I suppose I will too... become a wrinkly."

"And then? Sophie?"

"...Well... I suppose... I'll die."

"James?"

"Yes... well, I suppose it'll be curtains..."

"AND THEN?" said their godfather.



And for the first time they fell silent and seemed really quite thoughtful.

Although death, the great unmentionable, the unthinkable to young people, is a great conversation stopper, in fact a very open and interesting discussion of some vital questions followed. Like –

“Do you think you’ll be seriously happy if you have all the possessions you want?”

“Is success everything?”

“Can sex bring true fulfilment, or are caring committed relationships important?”

“And what if something goes wrong? You fail a vital exam? Your friends desert you? Someone you love dies? There are serious family problems. You have an accident. And what are we doing on this planet anyway? Is there a God? If so, how can I know him? And all this Christianity thing – is it believable? And who is this Jesus? And what does happen when we die?”

You would hardly be normal if you didn’t think about these crucial life-forming questions occasionally. Surely these are more important things to day dream about in chapel than ‘will we beat Bedbury or Haileyford or Oundingham? What does she or he think of me, my hair, my clothes, my posters, my CDs?’

Chapel isn’t a bad time to do some serious thinking. Before you get stuck on life’s non-stop, Chapel-free escalator. Where am I heading? What is really important? After all, it’s pretty mindless to start a key sports match without a game plan, which can happen if we haven’t got a good coach to guide us.

And would we start a long journey without deciding our destination? Without a route, a map or even better, a wise guide and friend to accompany us all the way?

And what better choice than a wise, kind guide and friend who says “I have come that they may have life and life in all its fullness.” (John 10:10)

Life with a PURPOSE, a living PRESENCE and PEACE of mind because of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I wonder what you thought of the Fenn Chapman story, if you read about it in the papers a year ago? Fenn was a sixteen-year-old boy who ran away from Rugby school, escaping his boarding house one night, last November, managing to take a charter flight to Barbados. Why? To think about his life, where he was going. Apparently he raised the money by selling his stereo system and CDs. Although he was back with his parents fairly soon, it brought him instant celebrity in the media.

Now this is not something I am recommending; even if late November at Stowe School is a shade less attractive than sunny Barbados.

The report in *The Times* continued like this:

“In November he explained why he fled Rugby: ‘I’m just a sort of teenager who needed to sort himself out – I don’t think what I have done is exceptional... I hope I haven’t let anyone down. My parents might have felt let down, though Mum said she thought something like this might happen. If I hadn’t gone I would have let myself down. I wasn’t getting on at Rugby. I just didn’t like it. I’m not saying it’s Rugby in particular, but it was more than that. I started thinking about my future; university, a job, buying a car, getting married, a mortgage, and then dying. I thought there had to be something more than this and got away to think things through. The first day was the hardest. I started to wonder what I was doing. But I phoned my parents and they were fine about it. I know what I want to do in life. I want to help people, perhaps in the field of psychology. I’m trying to sort out how to achieve this.’”

A young man who had begun to see through the pointless, purposeless lives of so many prosperous, professional people. He’d spotted that the secret might lie in a life lived for others, rather than for self. Perhaps he had heard the words of Jesus. “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a person if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 15:25, 26)

Finally, Peter LeRoy ended his talk with a modern parable:

"The business of a certain rich young Radlean (whom I had taught some years ago) produced a very great profit in the prosperous eighties. So Nick thought to himself: "What shall I do? My up-market ski holidays company is expanding so rapidly that I do not have enough chalets for the punters. This is what I will do. I will pull down all my old chalets at val D'Isere, Meribel and Courcheval and will build bigger ones. And then I will invest my lovely lolly from my fat profits. And I will say to myself: You have plenty of good chalets, with full occupancy, and a clever accountant who can maximize your profits for many years to come. Take life easy now: eat, drink and be merry."

But God said to Nick "You fool. This night, in the rain, on the M3, in your BMW, on your way back from London to your lovely home, wife and children in Hampshire, your life will be required of you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"

Jesus said this is how it will be with those who store up things for themselves but are not rich towards God (Luke 12:21).

And Jesus also said "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation Service took place on Sunday 9th. May 1999. The following Stoics were confirmed by The Right Reverend Mike Hill, the Bishop of Buckingham:

Samuel Allen, Hickman Bacon, James Bowkett, Thomas Campbell, Simon Creek, Thomas Daniel, Rupert Davies, Thomas Deane, Alexander de Rivaz, Alexander Dietz, Christopher Garner, William Gaze, James Gordon, Maximilian Green, Charles Hustler, Matthew Johnson, James Kayll, Michael Laing, Thomas Legge, Hugh Maclean, Edward Oldham, Michael Pattison, James Pegrum, George Percy, Louis Powell, John Rice, Christian Roe, Charles Sargeant, Thomas Sowerby, Dominic Sullivan, Jeremy Walker, Henry Warhurst, Edward West, Nicholas Wills, George Woodifield, Richard Worrall.



CHRISTIAN LIFE AT STOWE

Views from Stoics... from the third form

"I have been a Christian for about three years. My Mum told me about this meeting called Crossfire. I thought she was mad to start off with, but the next morning I saw a sheet of paper saying 'Crossfire: everyone is welcome.' So that Friday I went along. It was great fun and I have been every week since. The teachers are friendly and the talks help me to understand Christ. The food is good too. A few weeks later I saw another notice about Confirmation. I joined a class and am getting confirmed in May, which I am really looking forward to. . . This school gives great opportunities for everyone. There are Bible studies for every year, Chapel, Crossfire, Communion and the Lent Addresses."

JEREMY WALKER

From the fourth form

"I came to Stowe in the fourth form and I found it fairly easy to fit into the Christian life of Stowe. The Confirmation course was useful as I was able to get an in-depth understanding of the Christian faith. Although there are not as many as I would like going to my year group Bible study, I have found the weekly Crossfire meeting a help."

GEORGE WOODIFIELD

From the fifth form

"Stowe does a lot for the Christian. There are year group Bible Studies as well as personal Bible Studies. There is Holy Communion every Wednesday and there is Crossfire every Friday evening. There is certainly no lack of help and encouragement as a Christian either; both the Chaplain and his assistant are available at any time for a chat. The Lenten Addresses too are an encouragement not just to Christians but also to those who perhaps are not sure what the Gospel means or what the Christian faith involves. Christians definitely have their fair share of Stowe's attention."

NICK VERNEY

From the sixth form

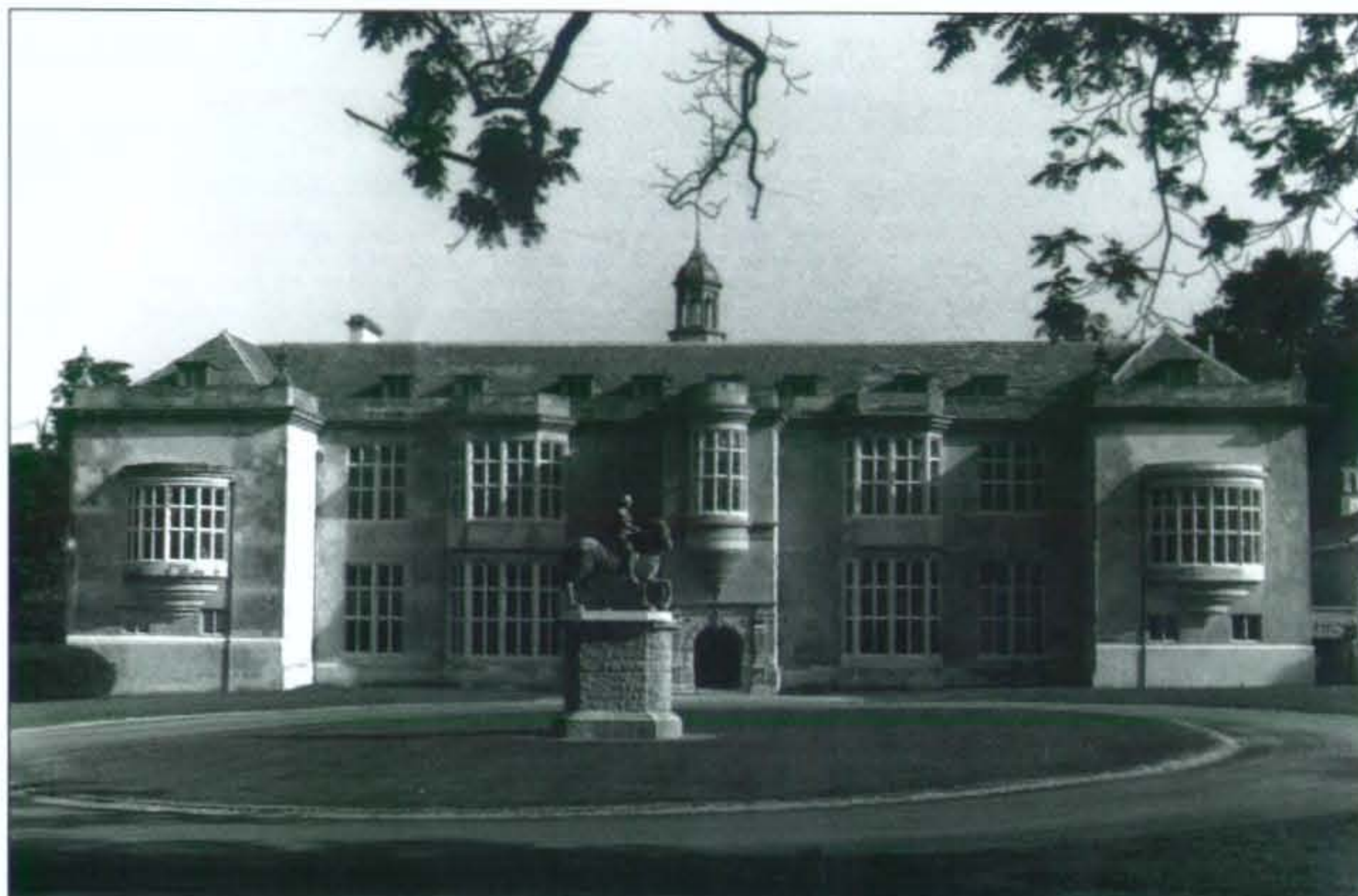
Crossfire is proving to be a great success here at Stowe, with some excellent speakers coming to give amusing, interesting and most importantly Christian talks. The hand-over by Rupert Demery to Brian Elfick has been very smooth. The meeting has always been great fun, and thought-provoking, many people at Stowe have started to understand the true claims of Jesus and his importance. The informality is one of Crossfire's greatest attributes, because it gives Stoics a chance to hear the best news in the world without it being something compulsory, over-traditionalised and inherently boring. There are always cakes, donuts and drinks after the talk – this helps to encourage a feeling of warmth and induce conversation about the issue presented in the talk. The speaker always stays behind afterwards in order to get to know the pupils and to explain any individual queries which are left in the minds of members of the audience. Crossfire's main aim is to get pupils out of the idea that Christianity is 'boring' and to help them realise that it is not about being religious and following outdated rules but that it is God's offer of true fulfilment, enjoyment and eternity. The view of a cold, over-spacious, empty building only being occupied by the elderly is a view many of us have of Christianity. Crossfire is doing a great job eradicating this mythical impression. It explains that Jesus came to offer the best time in the world to all people of all ages.

ALEXANDER LYELL



HARTWELL HOUSE

VALE OF AYLESBURY



A RESTORED HISTORIC HOUSE IN A LANDSCAPED PARK

It is difficult to match the splendor of Stowe and its gardens. It is now possible, however, when visiting Stowe or making an excursion there, to stay or dine in a restored country house with a good table and its own fine landscaped park with a lake, and garden buildings by Gibbs.

Hartwell House, the home of the Lee family until 1938 and the residence in exile of Louis XVIII of France from 1809 to 1814, is two miles west of Aylesbury and about half an hour's drive south from Stowe.

For further details and table reservations
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Drama

Senior Congreve: Arthur Miller's

DEATH OF A SALESMAN

The cast was almost uniformly strong. A stroke of charming brilliance was David Barr's success in matching up the young men with the children, who appeared in the flashbacks, as a convincing physical progression. This was achieved most successfully with Biff (Richard Clapham/Harry Soames), Happy (James Sleater/Edward Comber) and Bernard (Hugh Arbuthnott/Freddy Barrie). All the actors sustained their New York accents unfalteringly throughout the performance and Jim Cocola is to be congratulated as their coach: not an English R.P. sound throughout!

Richard Clapham and James Sleater were consistently excellent as Biff and Happy. To begin with, they came across as two clean-cut masculine, All-American boys, having been, as good youngsters, the platform of their father's hope. Biff was gradually and convincingly revealed as a less than wholly honest drifter and Happy as a somewhat nugatory Good-Time-Charlie. Their acting showed special quality when Richard and James responded so well to each other: (no catnaps when the other brother was doing the talking).

The auditory problem which regularly afflicts an audience in the Roxburgh Hall was generally, but not entirely, overcome. This particularly affected an otherwise very fine performance from Catherine White as Linda Loman, Willy's wife. Even so, a genuine crescendo was achieved when, ever touchingly loyal to her husband, Linda cried out, 'Attention must be paid' to the hollow indifference of the world around their marriage and Catherine White achieved a commendable variation of register throughout, especially, in her passionate rebuke of her elder son, Biff.

Noteworthy performances were also provided by William Pudney as Howard, Willy's young boss, an indifferent egotist with his ridiculous tape recorder, coldly ignoring loyalty and humanity when dealing with a long-serving and faithful employee, and by Ben McCarey as Ben Loman, Willy's alter ego, the ghostly, successful elder brother, also unattractively egotistical, as he haunts Willy like a ghoul, a patronising menace from the past, mechanistically chanting his dreary equation in which moral virtue is perceived as materialistic success. Young Bernard (Freddie Barrie) was a convincing swat and Hugh Arbuthnott continued the role with effective compassion.

The greatest credit, however, must go to Ben Scholfield's remarkable achievement as Willy Loman. His diction was clear throughout and yet he presented an astonishing range of tone: fatigue, uncertainty, irritation, hot temper, dream. This was a convincing portrayal of a man who, not really through any fault of his own, was a loser even in his youth. Ben merged past and present seamlessly, his character constantly misdirecting moral and emotional energy, albeit when, with false pride, he snapped at his wife for mending stockings or failed to control young Biff. There was genuine pathos when Willy the failure dispensed hopeless advice when trying to act out success through his elder son: "Remember, Biff, you have that greatness in you", and later: "That boy's going to be

magnificent". Biff, of course, was, like his father, to be neither great nor magnificent. Ben Scholfield had an amazing facility to transfer from old to young, to cope with sudden vicissitudes of temper and to hold to all the futile conventions of the Great American Dream in the teeth of humiliating disillusion. Here indeed was a man trapped between the dreams of the past and the failure of the present.

The set was both workmanlike and elaborate, the pale aquamarine monotint blending an appropriate statement of drab uniformity and dreamy unreality. However, Arthur Miller does give very precise directions himself and one can see why. There was an acoustical problem in the cavernous Roxburgh Hall, with that yawning pit between the large stage and the audience, when significant parts of the action (in the parents' bedroom) were staged so far away at the rear of the set. The stage seemed unhelpfully cluttered at times and (most significantly in the view of this critic) there was no adequate sense of the claustrophobia of the New York skyscrapers so frequently and painfully referred to in the text. Thus, for example, the terrible sadness of Willy's seeing the moon so briefly crossing a chink in the sky was forfeited. The lighting varied in effectiveness. There was a clever and complex use of shadow in the flashback scenes and the crepuscular illumination of the ghostly elder brother accentuated the mechanistic aridity of his message. But the lighting was too subdued in the here-and-now scenes when, in accordance with Miller's own direction, there must be a more definite contrast. The playwright himself insisted on orange and blue to achieve this.

But, nevertheless, stop such carping. This was, by any standards, a very fine production with some magnificent acting. Special congratulations must go to David Barr, the Director and to Ben Scholfield for his extraordinarily impressive achievement as the central character. The pathos achieved in the empty graveyard at the end of the performance was truly moving. Well done indeed!

PASF





JUNIOR CONGREVE: ARISTOPHANES' *FROGS*



The end of a war far longer than Kosovo, and the choice of a new poet 'laureate', gave the Frogs a contemporary feeling well matched by other novel features of this marvellous and talented production. Music, costume and some jokes were up-dated to give the audience a wonderfully enjoyable and entertaining evening.

Dionysus was played brilliantly and with growing assurance by Christian Roe as a suave but nervous god. He came over as a convincingly effeminate coward, providing an excellent foil to a truly burly and bluff Hercules (Nathan Witt), who could brandish a club manfully and parade his lion-skin as an authentic killer. His slave (Hugh Vacher) clearly relished every opportunity to make fun of his master and the audience – much to most of the latter's delight – and

he took obvious reassurance from his supposedly oppressed status. There was opportunity for the usual horse-, or at least, wheel-barrow play.

Verbal jokes in Aristophanes' comedies always present some problems, but from the start the audience was intrigued by the mixture of new and old. The allusions to fifth-century politicians and events were mainly left intact, and the programme notes were helpful and clear in explaining many of the details. Some modern allusions appealed to the audience, ranging from Tudor Hall to the Spice Frogs. Several puns earned impressive drum-roles, until the drummer too decamped in disgust, 'caring' little for the over-emphasis.

The passage down to the underworld was the most moving visually, with a sense of eerie wonder and uncertainty.

Charon (Harry Beamish) was a commanding but motionless ferryman, soon overshadowed by the brief appearance of the false chorus of Frogs with their marvellous costumes. They were duly replaced by the true chorus of differently endowed, but wonderfully ethereal, Initiates. In both cases the music, specially composed by Rupert Burchett, proved most suitable and attractive.

Much of the audience responded warmly to Aeacus' (John Dawson) threat and reality of leather, knuckle-dusters and whips to determine the true god. The same applied to the two landladies, suitably over-dressed with certain feminine charm. In the second act, presented as a games show competition with its inevitable hype, Dionysus found his true metier. There were equally sparkling performances from a supercilious Aeschylus (Nicholas Austin) and a hip-hop Euripides (Louis Buckworth). What could have become a prosaic presentation of the world's first recorded excursus in literary criticism, was instead given pace and style in a way which transcended the chronological divide.

The timeless setting gave this production scope for a wide range of appeal. The main theme was clear: at its last gasp in the long war against Sparta, Athens, in the guise of Dionysus, its god of plays, was in need of a poet or playwright who "can produce something really audacious", since Sophocles and Euripides had died the year before. Euripides, a master of sophisticated wit, was Dionysus' original choice, but once in the underworld he chose Aeschylus, now dead for 50 years, on the grounds that he had the moral arguments and 'a sense of proportion'; he alone could 'save the stage from politics, lies and distortion'. Dionysus was caught in a

dilemma, leaving the modern audience equally as torn, as doubtless its ancient counterpart was, between the attractions of clever modern idioms and the moral wisdom of an older outlook. David Stephenson's whole approach to the production, drawing on elements from pantomime, music-hall and revue, well captured the caricature, lyricism and fantasy found in Aristophanes; what it lacked, perhaps, from an academic viewpoint, was the serious political and moral tone of the parabasis and exodos. Nevertheless it more than made up for this with its evident liveliness and enjoyment. He, Julia Eastwood, all the cast and the many others involved in this polished production are to be congratulated for bringing alive what is often considered one of Aristophanes' greatest comedies and, in doing so, giving us an excellent evening's entertainment.

MJB



Above and clockwise:
Aeacus (John Dawson)

Euripides (Louis Buckworth)

Xanthias (Hugo Vacher)

Dionysus (Christian Roe)

Chorus of Initiates
(Emily Townsend, Elizabeth Weston, Amelia Jackson-Gray & Tania Alexander)

Aeacus, Xanthias and a slave





Lyttelton: Daisy Pulls It Off



Chandos: Lone Star



Nugent: Hen Night



Temple: Whose Life Is It Anyway?



Chatham: The Gentlemen

HOUSE DRAMA FESTIVAL

The last weekend of February saw eight Houses presenting plays over three evenings to packed audiences and some critical acclaim. The Festival adjudicators, Joshua and Clare Howard-Saunders (actor and drama lecturer respectively) had between them seen all the productions by the Saturday evening.

Bruce's *A Stab in the Back* was KM's comic re-working of *Julius Caesar* and was directed by Dan Ferris and Tom Furse-Roberts. With a starring role for the housemaster himself it proved to be tragical, historical and comical, if not pastoral. Temple's *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* contained an impressive performance by Alasdair Gaston as a paraplegic hospital patient who decides to have his life support switched off. Temple deserve credit for attempting this challenging play. Grenville's *The Dumb Waiter* was another excellent choice, a valiant attempt by Alex Lyell at this Pinter classic. There were moments of real tension and threat. Chandos'

Lone Star, performed as usual in the Chandos houseroom, was a wry comedy, three American rednecks reflecting on life. There were splendid performances by Charles Santon, Nic Brandram and Harry Vere Nicoll and an atmospheric set bringing out echoes of *Whistle Down The Wind*. David Widdick wrote the Chatham Play, *The Gentlemen*, in which a crime boss (Jonathan Howorth) gets his come-uppance from his own employee, Archie (David Widdick). Rupert Corbishley and Harry Beamish were other hoodlums in this enjoyable gangster movie spoof. Walpole had done a very serious play the previous term and, by contrast, now gave us the remarkable *The Snatching of Horrible Harold*. Lyttelton's heavily cut version of *Daisy Pulls It Off* was performed in ripping style. There was some very good stage business and amusing acting. Nugent's *Hen Night* was an uproarious and bawdy comedy about a group of working class Liverpool girls on the town. It was strongly played and much appreciated.

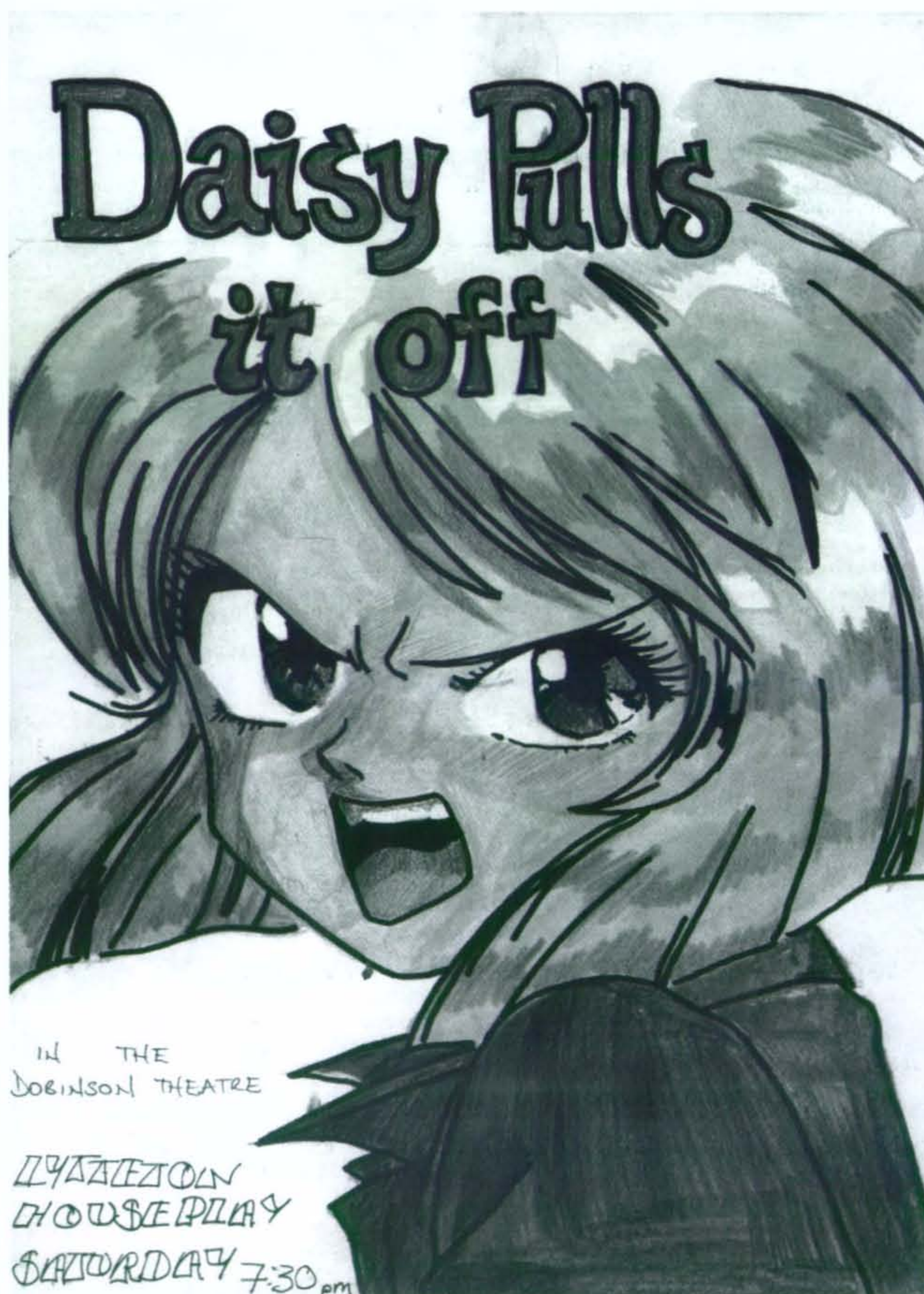
Our adjudicators awarded Best Actor prizes to Charles Stanton and Alasdair Gaston.

Best Actress was split between Charlotte Devonshire and Georgina Whitlock (in *Daisy Pulls It Off*) and Camilla Skene (*Hen Night*).

Best Direction prizes were awarded to Charlotte Devonshire and Emily Holloway (*Daisy Pulls It Off*) and to Tania Alexander (*Hen Night*).

Greatest Audience Appeal went to *Hen Night* and *Lone Star*.

DSB



Right: Lyttelton House poster by Soo-Ah Paik

WALPOLE HOUSE: OUT OF THE SUN

Photos: LEW

Lionel Weston's production of *Out Of The Sun* by Roger Sennett, which took place in the autumn term, proved that it is still possible to produce high quality house drama in the middle of a busy academic term. Performed to coincide with Remembrance Sunday, the play commemorates the courage of the fighter pilots who served in WWII. Set in the pilots' mess, the play focuses on the pressures felt by three young officers and their reactions to the arrival of a new recruit with

merely two weeks' training. We share their hopes and fears as they steel themselves for combat and wait expectantly to see who will return.

Flight Lieutenant "Desperate Dan" Anderson, played by Stuart Healey, is "a veteran of 25" and the most experienced of the officers. Stuart managed to capture the character's exhaustion, forced good humour and occasional cynicism. Flight Sergeant Jonathan "Joker" James was played by Matthew Whitaker. Quick-witted and a skilled raconteur of bad jokes, the character brought some welcome comic relief and earthy realism to the play. An equally skilled performance was given by Charlie Robinson as the patriotic "Weaver Whyte". Piers Winton gave an excellent performance as the anxious newcomer "Young". We share his anxiety and awkwardness as he struggles to cope with his own fears and the bewildering flippancy of his fellow pilots. It becomes clear that the real preparation is done in the mess. In between the mock hilarity it is games like "trench cricket" that help to sharpen the newcomers' skills and compensate for the lack of official training.

It is a tribute to the director and performers that when "Young" fails to return after combat we, the audience, shared the characters' sense of loss. As the two pilots come to terms with the pain of recognition the audience is made aware of the mental discipline needed if they are to survive and continue to fight: first they must have "a memory that can erase old friends" and secondly the ability never to allow a new recruit "to become real". "Young" was just one of the many and for the officers who are left to carry on he must remain "only a name and not even a full one".

The set, a backdrop of images of WWII, made effective use of limited resources. The theatre crew, led by Anthony Stormont, David Loasby and Bird Chanprabhap, did sterling work with lights and sound. Acting and production elements combined to create a moving and memorable piece of theatre.

FAB



Charles Robinson and Matthew Whitaker



Stuart Healey, Piers Winton, Charles Robinson and Matthew Whitaker

GRAFTON HOUSE: 7 DOLLAR BILL

Grafton opted out of the usual festival, allowing their Upper Sixth leavers to organise a post-examination play at the end of the summer term instead, and it is a considerable tribute to the energy, enthusiasm, stamina and creativity of Ken Yuktasevi and Toby Barnett in particular that it all worked out so brilliantly. Ken wrote a complete draft of the script well before his A-levels, did the initial casting and setting-up, then put the whole thing on hold until after the last exam. It was impressive to see the force and determination with which these guys hurled themselves into putting on a play when most of their peers were collapsing in a post-GCE heap.

The play itself was a superb blend of movie-spoof, farce, spectacle, manic performances and youthful ideology. Centring around the unfortunate coincidence of six bank robbers choosing the same bank and the same day to ply their trade (they'd all been tipped off that the Fort Knox shipment was in...) it moved effortlessly from visual jokes relying on well-orchestrated frenzy, Ken's remarkable OTT showmanship and masses of stage blood, to moments of freeze calm which featured dramatic monologues which, by virtue of some good writing and strong, convinced acting, succeeded in being moving, even for a hyped-up audience having a whale of a time.

The Upper Sixth not only carried the show with their own very assured presence, they must have supplied a leadership which inspired confidence, because actors from every year-group were involved, all selling it for all it was worth, all able to carry the audience through the changes of pace and mood, all equally up for a truly remarkable in-yr-face production. They even got Ken's tutor to yell a line or two cameo. Enough said.

Amelia Jackson-Gray provided the love interest, playing a beautiful bank clerk. Also from outside Grafton, Geordie Barrie had a walk-on part in a memorable gag with his twin brother, Freddie. Other third-formers were much in evidence: Harry Soames as the ultimate fall-guy - the Rooster delivery man - along with Edward Comber and Charlies Cavill. Fifth formers James Johnstone (a beleaguered bank security-guard) and Henry Cavill (a sophisticated bank robber) added to proceedings, as did sixth-formers Drew Brennan, Hugo Chance, William Ingram and Tom de Serville. Ken Yuktasevi and Toby Barnett were the inspiration.

If this lot ever realise the ambition of making a movie, they certainly have the presence, the eye for the visual joke, the timing, the wit, so go see it!

SGAH



Hugo Chance and James Johnstone



Amelia Jackson-Gray, Henry Cavill, Hugo Chance and Tom de Serville



Roxy Fashion Show
organised by Charlotte Lowe



Music

THE ORCHESTRA

With so many very fine instrumentalists at Stowe at the moment it is not surprising that the Orchestra is flourishing. In November the String Orchestra gave a short concert of works by Handel, Norton and Jenkins. Handel's Concerto Grosso Op.6 in G minor makes great demands on the two solo violins and 'cello. Alex Medwell-Bates and Gene Kindell were matched beautifully on the violins and had a wonderful sense of dialogue between them whilst Oliver Thomas gave great support on the 'cello. The precision and verve of the string playing surpassed anything from recent years.

In January the full Orchestra gave a magnificent performance of the first and last movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Playing such a well known work is very difficult but the Orchestra brought it off with considerable panache and skill. The First Buckingham Concerto written by PDH for students at Stowe was played by Ben McCarey and Robert McKinnon (oboes) with Rupert Burchett and Rupert Burnell-Nugent (clarinets). The inspiration for this work was Vivaldi's Concerto for the same combination and like the Vivaldi it also uses a Harpsichord. It could be described as a Neo-Classical or Neo-Baroque work and its sparkling rhythms, piquant harmonies and languorous slow movement were well executed by the Orchestra and Soloists.

Bizet's L'Arlésienne Suite No.2 is one of the great French pieces of the orchestral repertoire and includes the famous movement "Farandole". It was brought off extremely well and the duet between harp and flute, played by Lauren Small and Sally Clark, especially deserves mention.

The major work in the programme was Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No.2 with Alexander Winter as soloist. The outer movements have a joyous, extrovert character whilst the slow movement is one of the most beautiful pieces of music ever written. Both soloist and orchestra are to be congratulated on the brilliant performance of this work. It was a tremendous challenge for them all and a great triumph for all concerned.

In May the Speech Day Concert got off to a blazing start with Leighton's "Festive Overture". The offbeat brash chords from the wind and brass punctuated an aggressive strident melody from the strings. The vivacity and tightness of the playing came over extremely well and gave ample evidence of an ensemble of great quality. The much lighter "Polka Dots" by Mark Lubbock is a real "stocking filler" but the orchestra showed real control and sensitivity and never let the music sound banal or trite. Contrasting with that was the "Meditation from Thais" by Massenet. Gene Kindell on the solo violin gave a performance of this work that few of us who were there will ever forget. His beautiful expressive tone let the music speak with great passion and there were quite a number of dewy eyed in the audience during the performance.

The final item, The Polovtsian Dances by Borodin, surely must be amongst the most difficult items ever attempted by the Stowe Orchestra. These energetic, brilliant dances which drive forward with hardly a respite make staggering demands on the technique of the instrumentalists and in particular the woodwind. How fortunate we are to have the likes of Rupert Burchett on clarinet, Sally Clark on flute and Ben McCarey on oboe who were able to bring the sparkle of these dances to life. It was a tremendous end to a wonderful concert and all are to be heartily congratulated for this great achievement. Finally the String Orchestra gave a concert of two string symphonies, one by Britten and the other by Mendelssohn. Both works were written at a staggeringly young age but make huge demands of the player and in particular Britten explores every aspect of string technique. The Mendelssohn String Symphony is typical of his often complex contrapuntal style with all instruments of equal importance. The strings brought this off well and in particular the slow movement with its interplay of parts was well executed. Britten's "Simple" Symphony is no simple work but a *tour de force* for string players. The constant change of dynamics, the displacing of accents and the contrasting styles all need great care. The strings performed the work magnificently and at the end of this excellent concert special thanks were given to Alex Medwell-Bates (Leader), Hugo Chance and Sally Oliphant, all in their final term.

JCG

PREP SCHOOL CHORAL DAY

It was the present Director of Music at Ludgrove who suggested that Stowe would be a wonderful venue for a Prep School Choral Day. Following this suggestion a meeting was held of Directors of Music of interested schools and they proposed a traditional Choral Evensong where the Choir of Stowe would form the nucleus of the altos, tenors and basses supported by Directors of Music from visiting schools. In the last few years more schools have been bringing their own tenors and basses, perhaps a sign that boys' voices are breaking even earlier. We were all very keen that this event should be regarded as the "Prep Schools' Choral Festival" and not just "Stowe's Prep Schools' Choral Festival" so it was decided that the Conductors and Organists should be Prep School Directors of Music.

The first Choral Day was held on Thursday, February 3rd 1994 with over four hundred choristers from eighteen different schools. Although numbers fluctuate slightly, many schools, we are very pleased to say, come every year and we are often joined by new schools. At this year's Choral Day there were 542 choristers from seventeen schools.

As time is limited on the day for rehearsals Choirs come well prepared so valuable minutes are spent in shaping the music rather than teaching notes. Much of the music is chosen, or suggested, by the Prep Schools and is always a challenge and this, so Directors of Music say, is what the choirs so enjoy about this festival. This year the choirs sang Colin Mawby's eight part setting of 'Ave Verum' as the introit, Parry's 'I was glad' as the anthem and the Canticles to Herbert Murrill's setting in E. To see the Chapel packed with young choristers and hear them singing such great music is an awe-inspiring experience and something not to be missed.

JCG

MOZART TRIO PRIZE 1999

The end of the academic year has come and it is that wonderful day of celebration when we listen to our Grade 8 and above instrumentalists supply us with a feast of music. Each performer plays either a complete sonata or concerto or presents a recital programme of fifteen to twenty minutes. This year there were twenty performers and there would have been more from the Upper Sixth and Fifth form had they not left after exams. As the day grew longer so the task of the adjudicator, John Blakely, became more difficult with so many fine performances to choose from.

In the Piano Class Mr. Blakely chose Alexander Winter who played Mozart's Piano Sonata in Bb KV 570. He commended Alex on his musicality and the precision of his playing. In the same class he mentioned Simon Creek's performance of Chopin's Ballade in G minor Op.23 – this is an incredibly difficult work by any standards and the demands made upon the performer are enormous. Simon played it extremely well even though he had only been learning it a short while – we all look forward to hearing him play it again.

The Woodwind class was the largest and so the competition was fierce. In the end he gave Sally Clark the prize by a mere whisker. Sally gave a brilliant performance of Arnold's Flute Concerto which demonstrated her great technical skills in the two outer movements and her sensitive musicality in the slow movement. The very close runner-up on this occasion was Rupert Burchett who played Reger's monumental Sonata in A flat, a test of musical and technical stamina for any clarinettist. Two others were commended in this class. Matthew MacLeod for playing Ronald Binge's Saxophone Concerto and Ben McCarey for his performance of the Oboe Concerto in D minor by Alessandro Marcello.

The String Class was dominated by the brilliant performance of Beethoven's "Spring" Sonata played by Gene Kindell. Gene demonstrated not only his mastery of the instrument but his musical understanding of the partnership between the Piano and Violin in this work.

The Brass Class was the smallest but produced two winners. The adjudicator decided to award the Brass Class to Michael Jones but the overall winner for the best performance of the day to Alexander Lyell. Michael played Strauss' first Horn Concerto with tremendous bravura and conviction through a most glorious tone that he possesses. We have all come to think of a trombone as that loud brassy instrument which supports the Orchestra or Jazz Band but Alexander Lyell's playing takes us into another world. The "Romance" by Weber demonstrated a wonderful warmth and sensitivity coming through the sensuous and velvety sound that Alex produces. The other work in Alex's programme – Serocki's Sonatina for Trombone was full of technical brilliance and left us full of admiration for this talented young man.

It was a privilege to hear live performances of these works at Stowe, performances which showed not only that they have all got technical mastery of their instruments but also that they play with enormous musical understanding. It is wonderful to think that they will all be here next year and will be joined by more very fine players – next year's competitions therefore are something not to be missed.

JCG

PUPILS' CONCERT

When well over 90% of our concerts and recitals are given by Stoics it seems strange to single one concert out and give it the title "Pupils' Concert". Many attempts have been made to find a new title which is short and says what it is, so the title remains and we all know it is the concert by some of our Senior Musicians and Ensembles. The last four years has seen a steady rise in the standard and it is a pity that more do not attend as it is a real showcase of our music at Stowe.

The String Orchestra opened the programme with three movements from Handel's Concerto Grosso Opus 6 No.1; the soloists being Alex Medwell-Bates and Gene Kindell (violins) with Oliver Thomas ('cello). There was a neatness in their playing and great confidence which meant that all the Baroque vigour sparkled. Contrasting with the Handel was the Sarabande from Britten's "Simple Symphony" – what a wonderful piece this is and the strings are to be congratulated on putting over all the musical nuances of this piece. From the richness of Britten's English string writing the Clarinet Quartet transported us to Russia for the lighter sound of Josef Bonische's arrangement of Russian Folk Songs with their dance rhythms impeccably played.

There then followed performances by three Lower Sixth Music Scholars. Rupert Burchett has an incredible technical command of the clarinet and he gave a brilliant performance of Messenger's "Solo de Contours". Alex Lyell is able to sustain a most wonderful quality of sound on the trombone and his performance of "Marceau Symphonique" by Alexandre Guilmant had great poetry. Mozart's piano writing is so precise that it puts great demands on the player and Alexander Winter showed all the sensitivity, technical skills and finesse that make him such a fine performer.

The first half of the programme was brought to a close with a most interesting and unusual work which involved many of our best instrumentalists. Shostakovich's "Jazz Suite No. 1" was written in 1932 and is in three movements: Waltz, Polka and Fox Trot. As well as all the usual jazz instruments the piece requires violins, xylophone, glockenspiel and an Hawaiian guitar. The work is great fun and was performed with great panache and wit.

The second half of the Concert began with the Chamber Choir singing Pasadena by Paul Drayton and Carter's arrangement of "I do like to be beside the Seaside". It was good to hear this choir again and we look forward to many more performances by it in the near future. Last year we heard Rupert Burchett and Rupert Burnell-Nugent play Mendelssohn's Concert Piece No. 2 for Clarinets and this year they performed No. 1. This virtuosic performance of a real *tour de force* was a triumph for these two talented musicians. The relaxing sound of the first movement of Mozart's Flute Quartet and the tranquil mood of Elgar's "Harmony Music" for Wind Quintet provided an excellent foil to the brilliance of the Mendelssohn and the ebullient final items from the Jazz Band which brought this excellent concert to a close.

JCG



Rupert Burchett



Chirag Keswani



Sally Clarke



Matthew MacLeod



Jonathan Witt



Gene Kindell



Oliver Davies



Matthew Johnson



Ben McCarey



Robert McKinnon



Michael Jones



Rupert Burnell-Nugent



Oliver Cullingworth



Alexander Lyell



Ben McCarey



BJD accompanying Gene Kindell

CLARINET RECITAL BY RUPERT BURCHETT

Rupert Burchett comes in a long line of outstanding clarinetists that Stowe has produced in the last few years. His recital programme was divided into two halves each of which explored the two main characteristics of the instrument "the reflective clarinet" and the "energetic clarinet". He chose to begin with Max Reger's First Sonata in Ab. Reger is most famous for his organ works, the majority of which are written on the grand scale and make huge demands on the player. The influence of these works was evident in the writing here for both the clarinet and piano with its extreme chromaticism and long melodic lines which flow almost incessantly. It is a work that not only demands an assured technique but great musical insight and maturity. Otherwise it makes little musical sense to the listener. Rupert brought it all off magnificently and managed to get right inside the music.

The next work in his programme was the "Carol" from five bagatelles by Gerald Finzi. Although a small-scaled work it is a gem and how beautifully Rupert performed it in front on Christopher Finzi, the composer's son, who was a member of the audience.

The second half of the programme began with Poulenc's Sonata which explores many sides of the clarinetist's technique. Rupert managed to convey all the energy and rhythmic vitality with his bright tone but contrasted that with a more lyrical mellow quality where required. The recital came to an end with a great display of virtuosity in the "Carnival of Venice Variations" by Paul Jean-Jean. This piece is a *tour de force* and Rupert played it brilliantly.

As well as accompanying the recital, Benjamin Davey gave us a real treat in his performance of Schubert's second and third impromptus which were performed in each half of the concert. The audience were spellbound as the lyricism of Schubert's piano writing floated through the State Music Room. How fortunate Stowe is to have Benjamin Davey on its full-time staff, a wonderful solo pianist and sensitive accompanist.

JCG

SIDE-BY-SIDE

We were delighted to see a large and enthusiastic audience at this year's 'Side-by-side' concert earlier this term. The philosophy behind these events is to give our most talented players the chance to play in a 'professional' concert. Expectations thus ran high. This year we were joined by Rupert Burchett (clarinet), Ben McCarey (oboe) and Michael Jones (horn) in a performance of the Octet in Eb by Krommer. Rehearsals were virtually all day – concentration always needs to be at the most intense level, and indeed was! The exchange of musical ideas: tempi, balance, dynamics, musical direction and so on, were by no means just the province of the 'pros'!

The first half consisted of a quintet for piano and wind by an unknown German composer (Edward von Lennox); I suspect he will remain unknown! and the ebullient trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano by Francis Poulenc which was brilliantly played by Melanie Ragge, Fiona Byrne and Benjamin Davey. We played the Krommer after the interval – it was a wonderful experience for all of us and the audience seemed to respond warmly.

PDH

FLUTE RECITAL BY SALLY CLARK

It was Stowe's great fortune to gain Sally Clark as a Music Scholar. She has a phenomenal technique and a large audience was able to enjoy her flute recital in February. Sally chose to present an hour's programme of French flute music from the 18th to the 20th Century. Many of her items were written as examination pieces for student graduation at the Paris Conservatoire and showed real virtuoso playing. But Sally was not only able to impress us with her mastery of fast passages but also let the flute sing in the ravishing slow movements. It was a recital that would have tested the stamina of any professional player and she was not afraid to tackle major pieces of the flute repertoire including Debussy's "Syrinx", the Fantaisie Op.49 by Gabriel Fauré and Poulenc's Sonata. This was a real feast of flute music which delighted the audience; Sally obviously has a great future ahead of her and we are all anxious to hear more of her playing.

JCG

WIND AND BRASS PRIZES 1999

This year we were lucky to be joined by the eminent clarinetist Duncan Prescott. Duncan has adjudicated at Stowe before so we knew his comments on each of the performances would be both friendly and wise. Those given by our junior brass players this year were impressive and bode well for the future. Jeremy Walker played Tchaikovsky particularly well on his trombone – he is clearly going to become a very useful player. Alasdair Gaston gave a bright and technically exciting performance of a Fanfare in the Intermediate Brass section. Alex Lyell's Seroki Sonatina, a rhythmically most complex work, won the Senior Brass, but there were also sensitive and polished performances by Ben McCarey and Tom Kemble. Gevork Anderyassian (who has only been learning the oboe for a matter of months) played Pleyel most beautifully and well deserved the cup for the player with most potential. Many other junior wind players impressed and although it's unfair to mention individuals, Olly Tree and James Johnstone both played with great character and musicianship. Charlie Carter gave a cheerful and technically polished performance of Hornpipe and Matthew Johnson and Edward Tighe deservedly shared the prize in the Intermediate Woodwind. The Senior Woodwind was breathtaking. We were treated to seven spectacular performances – all of them well considered and demonstrating an extraordinary degree of technical and musical authority. Rupert Burchett took the Giles Underwood Tankard (together with the customary bottle of beer to fill it) with a rhythmically energized performance of Poulenc's wonderful Clarinet Sonata. But it could have been anyone's really! There were also some tremendous performances in the Concerto class at the end of the day. Sally Clark played Malcolm Arnold with great spirit, James Vane-Tempest gave us some well styled quasi-jazz in the Blues Concerto by Bill Holcombe, but the prize was won by a very well crafted performance of the Ronald Binge Saxophone Concerto given by Matthew MacLeod.

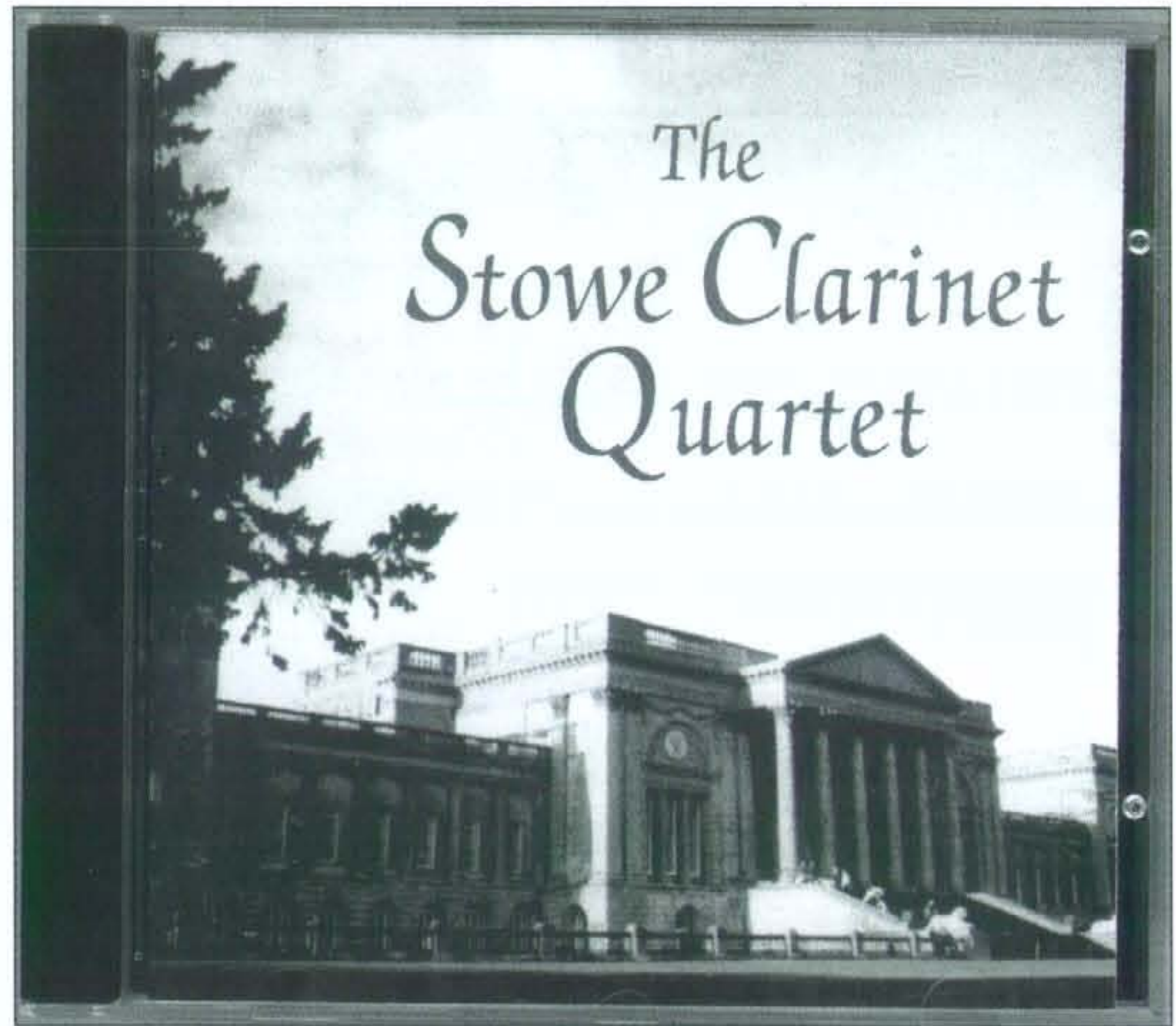
I'm not a great fan of competitions – music is not for coming in first past the post. Nevertheless as a celebration of this great art, the day was a resounding success!

PDH

THE MAKING OF THE STOWE CLARINET QUARTET CD

We were quite surprised that Buckingham has its own recording studio, but there was a good deal of excitement in the air as we arrived after lunch one Tuesday towards the end of the Spring term. We met Nigel, the consummate professional, and got our stuff out amidst cables, microphones, headphones – the whole works in fact. We were in a small studio separated by a glass window from Nigel, who was sitting in the adjoining studio at his console, clearly the master of the vast array of technical equipment all around him. We had three hours to record our twelve chosen pieces and the session went smoothly. There were a number of retakes, both whole pieces and the occasional small section, but nothing serious. Everyone remained in very good spirits even though concentration was always at a very high level. The only problem occurred when we were joined by our team leader, PDH, for a performance of Clare Grundman's Caprice – a piece for five clarinets. Who should be the only person to squeak during the whole recording process? ! Anyway, Nigel's skill was evident here as he edited out the squeak without us even having to re-record that section again. We were finished well within our allotted three hours and so had some time to consider exactly how much reverb we wanted and one or two other points of balance. We left exhausted but delighted. Next we had to design our cover – a few carefully taken pictures and some carefully chosen words and we left all that in Nigel's very capable hands. Just a week later we were able to pick up our first hundred copies (which sold very quickly!) We are now putting together ideas for CD no. 2!

RUPERT BURNELL-NUGENT



THE NEW *CANTATA STOICA*

The last major revision of Stowe's Hymn Book *Cantata Stoica* was undertaken in 1964 and so the time was long overdue for a radical revision and reappraisal.

At a service of dedication for the new *Cantata Stoica* I told the school how stocks of the old edition were depleted and there were not now enough books to go around especially if there were a special service with guests. Moreover there were almost 150 hymns that to my knowledge had not been sung at Stowe during the past ten years and were very unlikely ever to be sung again. Since the last major revision was undertaken in 1964 there were no hymns, neither words nor tunes, written in the past fifty years and perhaps as we reach the Millennium we ought to include some of the best hymns of the latter half of the 20th Century. To some extent the lack of contemporary hymns had been met by publishing a small supplement of additional hymns and the use of 'Psalm Praise', but this was extremely inconvenient and very untidy.

Stowe needed a *Cantata Stoica* that was representative of all that was best of the traditional and new hymns, suitable to be sung by a regular congregation of over 600. The new *Cantata Stoica* was not to be just a Hymn Book but also a Service Book, a Psalter and contain a number of special settings for congregational singing.

As a special tribute to the late Dr. Leslie Huggins, Director of Music 1929-1952, I was very keen to include some of the fine tunes written by LPH for Stowe and not all

included in the 1964 edition. So as well as the tunes Stowe (Say not the struggle), Jeremy (Father of all to thee), Berkswell (Sunset and evening Star) the following were added: Chatham, Queen's Temple, Grafton Regis and Droitwich. The words of the hymns originally set to Queen's Temple and Grafton Regis were now no longer suitable for contemporary worship and so I approached Brian Stephan to find out if he would be willing to write words for them. BSS wrote original words for Grafton Regis "Let all creation bless the Lord" and for Queen's Temple he translated Archbishop Rabanus Maurus's words "Christ the bright sovereign".

Brian Stephan took a great interest in the new Hymn Book and suggested some very fine hymns which ought to be included. Sadly Brian died eight months before the new "Cantata" was published but it is a great delight to all of us that it is dedicated to both LPH and BSS and a fitting memorial to two men who so lovingly served Stowe.

The present generation of Stoics have been very enthusiastic about the new book and already a large number of new hymns have gone into the repertoire and have been very well received. It is probably not surprising that this fresh new hymn book has raised the standard of the singing in Chapel and the singing at the weekday morning services now has much more vigour than before.

JCG

The Clarinet Quartet at Weedon Lois





ATHLETICS

The season started well with the Dr Challoner's relay meeting, ten schools competing. Our seniors won both 4 by 400 and 3 by 800 events. The intermediates won the 4 by 400 and finished third in the 3 by 800. The juniors won the 3 by 800 and 4 by 400, our B team finishing second behind our As in the first of these events. The girls finished second in the 4 by 400.

The inter-school matches proved very successful overall, with wins recorded over fourteen schools and losses to nine. Sports Day was early this year, in mid-May, but the weather was good and many fine races took place, not least the senior 200m where Charlie Duffin edged out Jamie Douglas-Hamilton and in the intermediate distances where Alex Rogers (1500m) and Malcolm Riley (800m) shared the spoils.

Bruce crept through on the inside to surprise everyone at the end and win the overall title, despite not winning a single age group. These went to Grafton (seniors), Walpole (intermediate) and Temple (juniors). The girls' competition

managed to outdo the boys for a close finish, with Nugent and Lyttelton tied.

Our athletes have probably performed better this year than at any time in the last ten years. Three runners qualified for the National finals: Ollie Tree ran some very fast 200ms in the junior boys. Malcolm Riley went from strength to strength in the 800m and Alex Rogers looked very impressive over 1500m and 3000m. At County level 15 gold medals were won. Ollie Tree led the way with 3 firsts. Pippa Newman, Alex Rogers and James Owen each won two events. Simon Creek, Jamie Douglas-Hamilton, Olalekan Akinjide, Dan Webster, Vlad Guseynov and Julio Shah all picked up one apiece. Strength in depth was clear in the team this year, with 13 silvers and 9 bronzes also won.

Twelve school records were set during the term, the majority in the longer events with just two field event records being registered. Pippa Newman broke three records (400m, 800m and 1500m) and Alex Rogers the Under 16 1500m, 3000m and 1500m steeplechase.

Malcolm Riley set a new mark in the Under 16 800m and just failed to get under the 2.00 minutes. In the juniors Charlie More Nisbett (400m) and Will Gallimore (High Jump) set records as did Nathan Witts (U16 80m hurdles). Dan Webster (senior javelin) was just short of 50m and Natalie Garthwaite picked up the first of what I am sure will be many records in the 200m.

AMcD

AEROBICS

Every Thursday afternoon a number of girls jump, turn, twist, jog and stretch in time to music. In other words, take part in an aerobics class. This hour-long session, as well as helping co-ordination and fitness levels, has also been found enjoyable by many, including watching basketballers, who have occasionally joined in briefly. As yet, however, no boys do the activity. They obviously can't take the pace!

NDH

BASKETBALL U19 Boys

This year apart from de Serville our 6'7" centre the team lacked any real height so from the word go we decided to concentrate on man-to-man defence for the whole season. This helped our smaller more mobile players and the team enjoyed playing fast-break basketball. With many returning from last season the expectation was high. It was therefore a great disappointment losing the opening game of the season against Harrow in a low scoring match (30-34). It did not help not having our 3-point shooting point-guard Koka, who was on

an educational trip in Paris. Koka was back against Rugby scoring 12 points and leading a more successful attack. W. Hook, who was also captain of the U16 team top-scored with 20 points and helped his team to a 56-24 victory. In a very tight game against Eton Nop Riensavapak played a great captain's game and was supported by Koka (19 points) as victory was stolen in the closing minutes 56-48. The team was unable to get going against Bedford and defended uncharacteristically poorly. Nonetheless Bedford did shoot well

from outside and deserved to win 64-46.

The return match against Rugby was very tight to begin with but the constant pressure told in the end and a 68-46 win was a fair reflection of the game. Winchester lacked any real fire power this year and were beaten comfortably 48-34. However, Uppingham fielded their strongest team for several years and led at half-time by one point. Dewitte and W. Hook came out strongly in the opening exchanges of the second half and in the closing stages Mathu, Koka and Temnianski came good to lead the

team to a 10-point triumph, 58-48. As usual Bradfield were strong and excellent shooting from Nop Riensavapak (22 points) and Koka (18 points) was not enough to prevent a defeat by 7 points. Captain Nop Riensavapak continued his good form into the last match of the season and fittingly top scored with 21 points. W. Hook hit 20 points to round off a superb season in the U19 and U16 teams. It looks promising for next season with nearly all the Senior Squad returning. It would be nice if they were able to make more of an impact in next season's National K.O. Competition.

U19 Squad: Nop Riensavapak (Capt.), T Koka, W Hook, M Dewitte, T de Serville, W Mathu, Natee Riensavapak, J Davies, B Alakija, R Ward, J Kaphuka, H Trelawny, L Akinjide, T Hook, I Temnianski, D Webster, C Glatzel, C Stanton, R Large

IM

U16 Boys

Like the U19 team the U16s only play man-to-man defence but they play it as it is better for the development of their basketball. This year the squad was very powerful and well balanced. There was plenty of height inside, athleticism and outside shooting. The opening game against Akeley Wood U19s developed into a one-sided affair and the team romped to a 73-10 victory. The team was in devastating form against Rugby with Dewitte, Hook, Trelawny and Temnianski making significant contributions in the 83-13 win. The trip to Eton proved successful and the team powered their way to victory 72-44. After witnessing the Senior team go down against Bedford the U16s seemed to be heading the same way and were trailing by 19 points at half-time. The players then decided to put into practice the advice from the Coach and closed the gaps in defence forcing the opposition to shoot over taller players and W. Hook played an awesome inside game to hit 20 points and help his team clinch the match by 1 point 46-45. The return match against Rugby resulted in another big win 81-18 with Trelawny hitting 35 points, just one short of equalling the individual scoring record in the School of 36 points, set by Adam Riley (Temple) in 1996. Neither Uppingham nor Radley were able to play at U16 level so only Bradfield stood between this team and an unbeaten season. It did not take long for a lead to be established and Dewitte's 19 points crowned a magnificent first season at

Stowe and sealed victory for this deserving and talented team. An unbeaten season had been achieved. This was truly a great team effort and as in any team sport there are the players who make the team work but do not always receive the glory and credit. Well, there were two players in particular who deserve a mention, Gambarini at Point Guard with his terrier defence and unselfish passing, and Kaphuka who was the best defensive player in the team.

U16 Squad: W Hook (Capt.), M Dewitte, I Temnianski, H Trelawny, P Gambarini, J Kaphuka, E Ismailov, J Zaldua, V Bajenov, V Pak, D Martynov, G Barbier

IM

U15

An unblemished season, with several players showing there is great promise for the future. Early on we pulled out close wins over strong teams such as Harrow and by the season's end we were leaving the opposition, namely Royal Latin, in our tracks.

Our captain, Mats Dewitte (who comes to us from Belgium via America) fearlessly and repeatedly shook off numerous attacks on both his distinctive accent and his distinguished talents, pouring in a career-high 36 points against Buckingham and proving equally adept as a point guard, a small forward and a centre. Our most consistent guards were Vadim Pak, whose ball-handling ability and defensive quickness were much needed in close games, and John Rainton, who was the spearhead of our fast offence, scoring numerous uncontested layups and making lovely passes in transition. Chris Hamilton also made himself known in reserve, equally capable of driving to the basket or directing a more passing-orientated offence. Standing tall in the middle of our zone defence was the formidable Matt Johnson, who caused general havoc in the lane and grabbed countless key rebounds on both sides of the floor. Guy Barbier was another big presence down low, with his talent for converting loose balls and rebounds into scoring opportunities. Last but not least in the list of the major contributors is Christoph Simon, who added many features to his game over the course of the season and finished the year as the second-leading scorer with an average of 14 points per game. Finally, it would be remiss to neglect mentioning the efforts of Rupert Davies, Charles Obieniu and Nathan

Witts, each of whom contributed valuable minutes in matches and boundless enthusiasm in training sessions. It was a very successful season. With some hard work in the off-season this group should make significant strides in the autumn national tournament.

JMC

U14

We were effectively a practice squad, and by the time our first and only match occurred, our lack of experience showed in a narrow loss at the hands of Buckingham. Our top scorer and rebounder was Max Green, who used his dexterity and height to great advantage. Other solid contributors down low included Jonathan Dickens, James Owen and Dmitri Pestov. A strong group of guards was led by team captain George Kent, who took charge at the point position along with the always-entertaining Jamie Savage. Leading the fast break were Abdul Farish and the much-improved James Moon, while our top outside shooters were Majid Harasani and Ju Manomaiphan. This year group has the advantage of being a predominantly Cobham side, which contributes greatly to the team unity. With more experience in game conditions to boost confidence, they should continue to improve rapidly in the coming years.

JMC

Girls

The team deserves congratulations on their success. Two matches were won out of three: there was a 40-12 win over Bloxham, a 14-10 win over Bradfield and a 31-42 defeat against Buckingham. Netball was the foundation for most of the girls and this resulted in a relatively clean attack and sharp shooting in close. In defence vice-captain Layinka Howes and Samia Brahimy proved very good at stealing the ball and general hustling while Katherine Rankin and Caroline Sabberton showed excellent rebounding skills. Congratulations must also go to Katherine for her efficient and enthusiastic captaincy. Finally I would like to thank Claudia Remeza for her support as a coach and all the girls for their cooperation and good spirited games.

AJC

	P	W	L	For	Against
U19	9	6	3	498	387
U16	7	7	0	476	177
U15	3	3	0	169	124
U14	1	0	1	24	27
Girls	3	2	1	85	64



Sports Day



CLAY-PIGEON SHOOTING

Having done very well at the end of the Easter term in the Warwick School Challenge and in the Eley Eastern Region Schools Championships where the B team came top of their division, we enjoyed continued success in the summer. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Eley/Smiths Gore British Schools National Competition, where the A team came fifth out of 23, well ahead of many of our old rivals such as St Edward's, Millfield, Rugby, Oundle, Cheltenham and Dean Close. The girls' team also performed in excellent fashion, as they have done all season, achieving seventh out of 14 in a very strong field. Our strength in depth once again shot our B team to victory, beating Millfield by just one clay, Edward Balfour distinguishing himself as "High Gun" in this section.

At Stowe the Inter-House Competition was won by the Cobham team of Charles Chute, James Feilden and James Nettleton, with Grenville two clays behind, followed by Temple and Grafton, third equal, a further three clays in arrears. It was, as ever, a hard-fought but happy and informal contest.

The season reached its climax on Speech Day, when the competitions were as entertaining as usual, under the overall organisation of our coaches (of whom more later!). John Blayney (OS) was kind enough to take charge of Old Stoic and parental contests in the unavoidable absence this year of that great perennial, David Pickavance (OS). I take this opportunity to thank David for all his cheerful and efficient work over the years and John for his fine efforts in making the join so perfectly seamless on this occasion. The OS were unable to stop the School's successful run, although they shot in fine fashion, and in the "Parent and Offspring" competition for the Wyvill Cup Mr Prentice and son Robert were victorious. It was a closely contested event. I congratulate our captain, Alexander Prideaux, for a fine year in the post and have greatly valued the way in which he has always led by example and carried out his duties efficiently and with great good humour. The onerous task of taking Stowe Clay-pigeon Shooting into the twenty-first century rests with our new captain, Robert Prentice, and vice-captain, James

Nettleton. I am sure that they will do an excellent job.

This report would be sadly incomplete without my thanks to all team members who attended practices at Stowe and Cherwell Valley on a regular basis and who stumbled from their beds early on Sunday mornings to spend the whole day away, representing the School so cheerfully and so well. Finally, the thanks of all of us associated with clay-shooting must go to those marvellous coaches and enthusiasm-generators, Chris Lockwood and Bob Spademan (Brackley Gunsmiths), as brilliant a pair of natural teachers as ever we will see. We look forward to being reunited with them in September and to another enjoyable and successful year's shooting.

Teams from: Edward Balfour, Jessica Beaumont, Charles Chute*, Christopher Davis*, Daniel Hayes *, Francesca Hayward, Timothy Hook, Alexander Janson, Robin Jones*, Taro Koka, James Nettleton*, Robert Prentice*, Alexander Prideaux*, Amanda Sheppard, Natasha Sinclair, Flora Soames, Alexander Tate, James Vanc-Tempest*, Henry Warhurst & Maximilian Wittgenstein*. (* = colours)

MW

CRICKET 1st XI

Having lost eight 1st XI players and especially Robert White (now with Northants), we were always going to find the season a difficult one. Our experiences in the tour of Argentina and Chile will have benefited most boys and I truly admired the way they played in such heat and against mainly adult teams.

The season at Stowe opened as normal with lots of rain and it was due to Steve Curley and his ground staff that any cricket was possible. For the second year running we were unable to play Winchester due to the weather, but at home we defeated Oakham and Northants U16s during the first weekend. William Browning and Robbie Large batted well and Lester Smart bowled some quality spells. We lost narrowly to the Free Foresters by two wickets, a most exciting finish. Our match at Bradfield was lost to the weather, only two overs being possible, and a draw against MCC followed. We bowled well to reduce them to 115-9, a last wicket stand saving the day for MCC. Stowe replied with 117-5, chasing 164. We had

an excellent win against local rivals St Edward's, bowling them out for 100 and winning by 4 wickets. James Defty, our captain and off-spinner, took 4-6. For the second year running we disappointed against Radley. On a beautiful batting wicket Radley made 240-4. We could only make 168. We had something to prove against the Old Stoics, having lost the previous three years. Our response was superb. We bowled them out for 127. The Old Stoics made us work hard, but we eventually won by 4 wickets, Ashley Pearson making a determined 58 not out. The following week poor weather led to a draw against The Oratory. We bowled them out for 96 but rain finally intervened with our score at 68-4. Our match with Oundle was undoubtedly our worst performance of the season. Oundle made 245-9 thanks to a wonderful hundred by Lowe. We made a paltry 83. Against Rugby we were again frustrated by the weather. We declared at 204-8, Rugby replying with 127-8. There was an excellent finish at Bedford, Stowe declaring at 229-5 with Alan Bowman making 66 and Robbie Large 70 not out.

Bedford won in the final over, Smith making an excellent hundred. Next we entertained St Peter's, Adelaide. They bowled really well to remove us for 104. Our boys responded excellently, bowling 41 good overs and we lost by only 3 wickets.

And so to the Festival. We lost the opening match to Wellington by 20 runs, beat Melbourne Grammar School by 2 wickets and lost the final match to Bedford, again in the final over, Bedford winning the Festival with three victories.

Overall our season was very satisfying. We had five fifth-formers as regular members of the side which argues well for the future. James Defty captained the side with great dedication, setting a wonderful example in the field and producing a marvellous team spirit throughout the season. Lester Smart was outstanding with the new ball and took 40 wickets. He will captain the side next year with Robbie Large as vice-captain. Colours were awarded to James Defty, Adam Cottrell, William Browning, Nicholas Oldridge, Lester Smart and Robbie Large. My thanks to Steve

Curley and his staff for some excellent wickets and net facilities, to the catering staff, especially Ann for her hard work, and my thanks to IM for all his encouragement and help.

HJR

Averages: Batting

	I	NO	R	HS	Ave.
Large	14	2	428	91*	35.66
Pearson	14	4	269	58*	26.90
Bowman	5	0	118	66	23.60
Oldridge	14	2	264	63	22.00
Cottrell	13	1	254	45	21.16
Coram James	13	2	206	41	18.72
MacLennan	11	2	120	46	13.33
Browning	14	1	171	68	13.15
Smart	8	3	65	16	13.00
Dudley	5	0	57	25	10.50
Defty	12	2	105	26	10.50
Hook	4	2	17	13*	8.50
Clark	5	2	17	6*	5.66
Worrall	3	1	8	3*	4.00

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Ave.
Smart	231	48	576	40	14.40
Defty	146	38	398	20	19.90
Large	60	4	214	9	23.77
Worrall	105	14	321	13	24.69
MacLennan	169	24	463	17	27.23
Clark	99	24	301	7	43.00
Dudley	18	1	90	2	45.00

2nd XI

The overall figures for the season were good. There were some impressive wins with Bedford and Oundle being somewhat surprised at being defeated so heavily. The pool of players we could call upon was very talented and quite deep, though some of our major players were disappointing in attitude, which took some of the pleasure from the season. Our solid victory over Oakham in the first game was followed by two equally solid defeats, against Radley and St Edward's. At this point the season looked like it was going to be a long one. However, the players put these disappointments behind them and won their final three games with some very enjoyable cricket. Oundle failed to achieve the 211 posted by Stowe, being bowled out for 127. Rugby were then defeated in the last over, as James Feilden and Harry Girardot managed to see us through with one ball to go. Bedford seemed very confident but on our final outing on the North Front we pulled out all the stops to dismiss them for 98, Hugo Wilson taking four wickets. We passed their total for only four wickets with Brett MacLennan scoring a solid 59 not out.

Tom Oliver deserves a mention as the season's top scorer with 125 runs in 4 innings. Also Kaunda Kavindele who scored 84 runs in very rapid fashion in 3 innings. Top wicket taker was Hugo Wilson, who only started bowling this year! He bagged 7, with Charles Chute hot on his heels with 6. Solid performances were also produced by William Watson (captain), Tim Hook, Harry Riar, James Feilden and Will Dudley.

RCS

4th XI

Rain wiped out three of the five matches. However, a fine victory was recorded over the St Edward's 3rd XI. Rory Scott, who opened the innings, scored a century in exemplary fashion, treating the bowling on its merits, defending punctiliously and scoring boundaries in a display of controlled hitting. Credit must also be go to Harry Girardot, his opening partner, who played in the most responsible way to put up over 70 before the first wicket fell. Thereafter others chipped in; team spirit was excellent, with Rory Scott looking after his junior partners. In reply St Edward's barely made half Stowe's total, the early inroads being



Cricket. 1st XI v Rugby. Alan Bowman and Henry Coram James batting

created by Harry Trotter and Hector Ross (2-7), and Rory Scott polishing off the innings. Against Radley an under-strength team was beaten easily, the brittle batting displaying of note only Jonathan Howorth's 31.

EST

Junior Colts A

v Oakham drawn
v St Edward's lost
v Radley lost
v Oundle lost
v Rugby drawn
v Bedford lost
v Parents/staff lost

A very frustrating season in terms of results does not do justice to some fine cricket matches and individual batting performances in particular. In every match the team had periods of domination and it was only a lack of competitive cutting edge at crucial moments that prevented more success. A cold day at Oakham early in the season saw Stowe chasing 155 and, though we ended up well short on 122-8, when Leggett (46) and Sharp (31) were at the crease a difficult run-chase seemed achievable. A clatter of late wickets lent a false appearance to a creditable draw.

After rain ruined the Winchester fixture a strong St Edward's team visited Stowe and encountered the home side in fine batting form, a super 84 not out from Cullingworth providing the anchor while Leggett's 63 provided the spark in a fine total of 184-3 in 35 overs. An equally competent reply from St Edward's, however, coupled with complacent fielding and inconsistent bowling saw Stowe defeated with only an over to spare in what was an excellent game. More rain followed to ruin the Bradfield game, but a fine, sunny day saw Radley entertained on the South Front. An excellent start from Stowe saw Radley 7-3, but a few missed chances lost the initiative which Radley never relinquished with their score of 199-6 easily too good for Stowe (95 all out).

Speech Day saw the Parents/Staff game - 25 overs a side. A fine start by Cushing and Pak (helped in the former case by wayward parental bowling!) was pegged back by some vicious pace from AJW and RCS. Arguably astute captaincy saw Mr Worrall in position to catch his son at short fine leg; Mr Johnson dismiss his son Matthew and Mr Buckworth to fling himself memorably to catch his son Louis off his own bowl-

ing. A total of 140 was made to look low by a quick 50 from TFK, but tight bowling saw the opposition struggling and it was a scampered bye from the level-headed Messrs. Campbell and Leggett that squeezed the adults home off the last ball by 5 wickets.

After a rained off fixture with The Oratory another tight overs game, against Oundle, saw Jonathan Dickens promoted from the Yearlings to top score with 62 in a total of 162 from 35 overs. An exciting finish saw Stowe edged out once more as Oundle hit the winning runs off the third last ball of the last over with only two wickets left. The best match of the season, at Rugby, followed where a very talented Rugby batting side scored 199-4, led by a centurion captain. The undefeated Rugby team then suffered a century opening stand from Cullingworth (55) and Cushing (44) and while Leggett (28 from 17 balls) was at the crease, the run-rate of 8 an over seemed possible. A good catch on the boundary sealed his and Stowe's fate, however, and a draw was the result as we finished on 179-7. We went to Bedford anxious to secure our first win but after an excellent start (Cullingworth 55) struggled to reach 154 on a good wicket. A couple of missed half-chances proved crucial, the story of the season, as Bedford won by 5 wickets in another tight game with two overs to spare.

The team has been very unlucky in close finishes but good batting was not always followed by good fielding and bowling. Sharp fielding wins matches and that was amply proved. Luke Worrall and Gareth Sharp were unlucky with the ball, however, and Oliver Cullingworth and Jamie Leggett's batting was worthy of far better reward. A season full of disappointment but, equally, with hopes for the future.

Squad: O. Cullingworth (captain),

L. Brewin, L. Buckworth, T. Campbell, G. Cushing, O. Dannatt, J. Dickens, A. Jinnah, M. Johnson, J. Leggett, M. MacLeod, G. Norton, A. Offley, V. Pak, L. Powell, M. Riley, P. Rossiter, G. Sharp, A. Tate, H. Warhurst and L. Worrall.

JSM

Junior Colts B

Fortunes were mixed. Perhaps the most impressive of our results (won 3 lost 3 rained off 3) was the win against Oundle, Stowe scoring 220 in 35 overs, their largest total of the season. Louis Powell and Alim Jinnah both scored 35

not out. Oundle were bowled out for 125. Another superb match to watch was that against St Edward's. We made 136, Chris Lyon scoring 44 with a flashing bat. We strode out onto the field, knowing this total was vulnerable, but confidently bowled out the opposition for a meagre 49. Matches have been good to watch; practices have been done professionally and standards have improved. Well done!

Yearlings A

v Oakham won
v Oxfordshire U14 lost
v Bucks U14 won
v St Edward's won
v Radley lost
v Rugby lost
v Bedford lost
v Merchant Taylor's lost

Lord's Taverners Cup:

Wins over Akeley Wood, Chesham Park, Sir William Borlase and (in the County Final) RGS High Wycombe

The Yearlings Inter-House indoor competition proved to be an excellent way of giving our new intake some out-of-season game practice and also allowing early identification of the more talented performers. The opening game of the season was against Oakham who were restricted to 91 all out thanks to some fine swing bowling from Sheppard (4-12). In reply Stowe reached the target with 7 wickets down, the major contribution being a gritty 44 from Dickens. The Winchester game was washed out again. However, the pitches were playable on Sunday when the Oxfordshire U14 side visited us. In this overs game Oxfordshire did well to reach 175-5 and although several players made double figures Stowe finished 12 short of the target. The rain came down on yet another Saturday and this time it was the Bradfield match which suffered. On the Sunday a young Bucks County side were the visitors and although Stowe were limited to 152-8 in this overs match (Dickens 51), Gallimore and N. Prince took 3 wickets apiece limiting Bucks to 117 in their 40 overs, which gave us a 35-run win. The side were becoming quite a useful fielding team and St Edward's were the next to fall victim, being bowled out for 78. This time it was the left-arm spin of Preston which did most of the damage. Stowe reached the total comfortably, winning by 7 wickets in the end. Radley were

given a second chance when Butler, who should have been run out when 10, went on to make a superb 100 and put the game beyond the reach of Stowe, who made a spirited 161-8 chasing 218. Rain cancelled both the Oundle and Oratory fixtures. Rugby had a very lively bowling attack and 85 runs was never going to be an easy total to defend. However, although only 4 Rugby wickets went down, the team could not be faulted for spirit and effort. Bedford were the next opponents, unbeaten at this stage of the term, and as in the Rugby match we failed to make enough runs, all out 106. Sheppard and Gallimore ripped through the Bedford top order, bagging 3 wickets apiece, but a priceless 29 not out from Watson saw Bedford home by just 2 wickets. The end-of-term festival at Merchant Taylor's was marred by the weather and only one game was played. After taking 3 early wickets some big hitting by Rideout saw the hosts to 208 with Stowe making 133 in reply, N. Prince hitting his first 50 of the season.

In the Lord's Taverners competition we met Akeley Wood in the first round. Dickens (151) and E. Prince (118 not out) put on a superb school record opening partnership stand of 304. Akeley Wood, overawed by this total, were dismissed for 38. There were victories over Chesham Park and Sir William Borlase on the way to the County Final against RGS High Wycombe. RGS were bowled out for 79 after a fine fielding display and superb bowling from Preston (4 wickets) and Sheppard (3 wickets). What looked like a fairly easy total to chase turned out to be far from easy. Even though opener E. Prince hit a match-winning 45 it was left to Green to hit the winning runs with 1 wicket to spare. This was a fitting climax to an excellent season, notable for the team's enthusiasm for the game and great spirit. Much credit for this must go to William Gallimore who was a fine captain. He made big improvements in his tactical awareness of the game and was a superb motivator. They were a super group of players to be involved with and I wish them every success next season, particularly in the Lord's Taverners as Buckinghamshire representatives.

Squad: W. Gallimore, E. Prince, J. Dickens, N. Prince, G. Cushing, H. Sheppard, J. Ryde, M. Green, J. Preston, J. Norman, J. Finch-Knightley, G. Kent, M. Gracie, R. Langer-Paget, P. Hitner, J. Cumming, J. Sanders and W. Consett.

IM



Alex Rogers



Gideon Ashworth



Charlie Tull

CROSS COUNTRY

This has been another very successful season for the cross country teams.

Seniors

We began at Sevenoaks early in the spring term. We acquitted ourselves well on a long, tough course. A sixth place out of 28 schools was encouraging. Jamie Douglas-Hamilton laid down his marker for the term with a fine 12th place out of 232 finishers. Back to Stowe and a chance to entertain visiting schools on the new Home Farm courses. This proved too tough for most schools. We filled all first six places in the match with Stamford, Oakham and Uppingham. Resounding wins followed, home and away, over Rugby, Oundle, Bradfield, Marlborough, Winchester and Charterhouse.

The next major event was the County Schools Championship run this time at Waddesdon. A chance to win back the title from local rivals Dr Challoner's and Aylesbury Grammar School. Jamie Douglas-Hamilton and Charlie Tull quickly took the lead until a marshalling error saw them having to re-join the race some way down the field. They fought back to finish 4th and 5th and, with Gideon Ashworth just behind in 6th and Vladimir Guseynov also running well enough to make the County team, the cup was easily won back.

The last three Saturdays of the term proved the highlight of the season with the Brinvets Trophy at Harrow, the Midland and Northern Championships at Ampleforth and sandwiched between them the English Schools Championships. At Harrow for the first time all term we were able to field our first choice 8. Alex Rogers ran well to finish 8th out of 160 finishers and with Dan McCarey, Marcus Williams and Jerome Starkey all running well to back up our county runners we were able to close in on 2nd out of 19 teams. The English Schools Championships were quite an experience for the newcomers, Gideon, Jamie and Vlad, none of whom had seen the event before. Arriving at 10.00 for a race to start at 15.30 certainly provides a test of patience. With 350 starters and an 8km course of knee-deep, cloying mud from start to finish resilience was sorely tested.

The last weekend saw a long trip to North Yorkshire. The loss of Alex Rogers and Marcus Williams to illness meant that a top three spot was not going

to be on. But the eventual 5th out of 22 schools was by far the best result we have had this decade. The team were led home by the captain-elect, Jamie Douglas-Hamilton, who ran his best race of the season to collect the individual bronze medal.

The senior team have been a pleasure to coach and it is the hard work of the likes of Hugo Pile, Ben Morgan, Michael De Butts, Kingsley Ford and, yes, Will Gaze and Evgeny Demchenko which means that we don't need to rely upon the stars week in and week out. The team has enough depth to field a variety of 8s which can put most other schools to the sword. Over the season we raced against 72 schools, beating 61 of them.



Alex Housley



David Hervey



Intermediates

Things got off to a good start in the autumn term in the National Cup competition. Running the first round at Stowe galvanised the team and helped produce a major shock as, with Alex Rogers beating all of last year's County team to win and Malcolm Riley collecting the bronze medal, we easily overcame Waddesdon and Dr Challoner's, leaving previous finalists and last year's county champions, Aylesbury GS, out of the qualifying positions. Off to Dr Challoner's for the regional round and problems along the way. With David Hervey injured and Rory Cheyne and Will Barker sick, we still came through, thanks to a great run by Max Jones. Alex Rogers went off very fast and quickly decimated a strong field. This allowed Malcolm Riley to run down the tiring chasers on the second lap and give us a 1-2. He, Alex Rogers, Rory Cheyne and David Hervey fought out the closest result I have ever seen in the County championship: Dr Challoner's and Aylesbury GS both finished on 69 points and Stowe on 70.

Alex Rogers, who like David Hervey also represented our seniors, ran for the County at intermediate level, coming an excellent 29th in the National, the finest run by a Stowe runner in our records. He was also part of a victorious Shaftesbury Barnet Harriers quartet in the National Relay Championships.



Dan McCarey

Juniors

The juniors have proved to be just about the strongest team in the school in any sport. They won the Milton Keynes District championships and raced a total of 22 other schools, beating 21. Max Jones, Nick and Ed Prince, Will Gallimore, David Ashby and Andreas Uglund have all run very well to achieve this fine record. But pride of place must go to the captain, Tom Seccombe, who has organised the team so well and led by example. Tom won his County vest this year and finished 267th at the National.

Girls

The girls have been ably led by Pippa Newman. With Clare Fraser-Smith, Olivia Burwood-Taylor and Stefanie Woodward all available again next year we hope to win back the County cup.

Inter-House races

Max Jones won the Junior race, Alex Rogers the Intermediate, Charlie Tull the Seniors and Pippa Newman the Girls. Team winners were Lyttelton (girls), Chatham (seniors), Grafton (intermediates) and Bruce (juniors) with Chatham winning the overall House shield.

My thanks for a most enjoyable, long and tiring season go first and foremost to Charlie Fife and Frank Thomson for all their help in producing the courses. Steve Curley and his staff for all of their hard work and the Landrover! But most particularly to Miss Pratt, LEW, EST, TJE, DWJ and last and by no means least AJW, who do so much to help and support the team. Finally I must thank and congratulate the captains that I have had the good fortune to work with this year: Gideon Ashworth, Jerome Starkey, Pippa Newman and Tom Seccombe.

AMcD



Jamie Douglas-Hamilton

FENCING

After a rather fallow period, a renaissance of fencing has begun at Stowe this year, under the leadership of Zeno Trapp, ably supported by Edward Baker. A core of ten Stoics have practised on Thursdays and Fridays under the tutelage of Mr Money and PVC. Their enthusiasm has seen a steady rise in standards with the result that when an inaugural match was held against a club from Oxford Stowe ran out the winners by nine fights to seven. The team was made up of Zeno Trapp, Edward Baker, Vladimir Kossinov and James Lyon (coaxed out of a retirement brought on by the responsibilities of being Head of School and 1st XI Hockey goalkeeper). The experience of James (who won all his fights), the skill of Edward and the determination of Zeno and Vladimir combined to allow Stowe to defeat a more experienced team. The plans for next year include taking part in more regular competition both by taking on school and club sides but also by taking part in the Leon Paul series of regional competitions. Mention must be made of the splendid performance by Edward Baker in coming 2nd in foil in one of the regional finals this year before going on to coming 7th in his age group in the national finals. With a few more recruits, a little more experience and some more competition Stowe will have a fencing team able to compete with the best.

PVC

FLY-FISHING

As in previous years the Oxford Water was well-stocked with trout for the summer term's fishing. Owing to the vagaries of the weather conditions have rarely been stable for any length of time and the fish have often proved difficult to catch. The situation has also been exacerbated by the generally high turbidity ("colour") of the water, an unfortunate characteristic of the lake ever since the removal from the entry stream of many of the natural obstacles and aquatic growth which had previously acted as natural silt-traps. Let us hope that regrowth will be allowed to occur and that better water quality will be restored.

MW



FIVES

This year the Fives team has transformed itself, although we have not yet been able to reap the changes sown in terms of results. Presently there is not enough depth to challenge consistently the very best rival teams. However, there has been no shortage of individuals who have made important contributions to increasing the profile of the sport this year. Nick Oldridge was the outstanding player of the year, a wonderful natural talent, whose wide sporting commitments elsewhere prevented him from getting enough time on court to earn him a place in the schoolboys' national team. In the Third Form Max Green was particularly impressive and together with Freddie Raikes was undefeated against school opposition. Louis Powell also improved rapidly over the year and had some good matches with Mike Pattison.

It was the senior players who were in many ways the most impressive, however. Charlie Robinson was an exemplary Captain and Hugh Arbuthnott gave equal attention to bringing on his own game and that of whatever junior happened to be on court at the time. It was encouraging to see that by the end of the season irregular players such as Hook, Grant Peterkin and Coram James were keen to pick up a pair of gloves and play again, at least occasionally.

In terms of fixtures, little success was had against the wily adult teams provided by the EFA, Jesters and Old Etonians, nor in matches played at the start of the year against King Edward's, Birmingham, or Cranleigh. However, towards Easter the junior teams beat Sunningdale and Summer Fields, had taken revenge on King Edward's and had earned a draw against the Old Stoics.

With generous donations provided by, amongst others, the Old Stoics, the head coach of the EFA, Howard Wiseman, was able to provide inspirational lessons throughout the year. We were most grateful too for help from parents, in particular Ronald Pattison, whose enthusiasm and willingness to help knows no bounds. There was certainly no lack of adult support for Fives at Stowe over the past year. With sixth-formers like Hugh willing both to play and coach, we can look forward to a strong team and some successful fixtures next year.

PSR

Photos covering the Academic Year 1999-2000 will be gratefully received by The Stoic's Editors.

GOLF

Under the captaincy of Stuart Healey and Willie Watson and, in the last few matches, Hugo Douglass, the Golf Team have had another very successful year, beating strong teams from the local golf clubs (home and away) as well as Harrow, Winchester, Cheltenham, St Edward's and Northampton County Golf Club. This year's Micklem Trophy was therefore a particular disappointment as we had a strong team, but we just lost to Bradfield on the final green. No excuses, but if we are to be successful in this competition in the future we must try to reorganise our calendar commitments which every year clash with this fixture and usually take at least one of our best players.

On a very positive note, our captain, Stuart Healey, was selected to represent the public schools' team in America this Easter; this year's Swifts team did exceptionally well against top American schools and Stuart was complimented by the organisers for his excellent attitude throughout the tour.

To continue this international theme, at the end of the summer term a young Stowe team entertained Hudson Park School from South Africa at the beginning of their UK tour. All the players took this fixture very seriously and an honourable draw was achieved against strong opposition.

I now give up the golf and we are extremely lucky to have GAC as my replacement. He has become increasingly involved this year and I know that he has great plans to widen our involvement in competitive golf, which should give us the opportunity to play some good courses against high quality opposition.

Ru Corbishley captains the side next year, following in the footsteps of his brother Jonathan, with Johnathan Harris as Secretary. I wish them well for the future and possibly we will meet on the course when Buckingham Golf Club play the School.

GStJS



The 1999 Micklem Trophy Golf team, outside the clubhouse of the Woking Golf Club. Left to right: Henry Watson, Ricky White, Will Watson, Stuart Healey, David Parker, Hugo Douglass and GStJS





Henry Gillingham on the charge



Jamie Peel in control



Will Dudley on the ball

1st XI v Pangbourne

photos: Al Bianco



Jamie Haselwood sizes up a cross



Reverse stick from Will Browning



Matt Williams, one against two

HOCKEY 1st XI

Played 10 Won 3 Lost 7

v Stamford (h) 4-5

v Northants (h) 6-2

v Radley (a) 1-4

v Bloxham (a) 0-2

v Abingdon (h) 5-1

v St Edward's (h) 0-8

v Magdalen College School (a) 2-5

v Old Stoics 6-5

v Pangbourne (h) 0-2

v Framlingham (a) 0-1

The excitement of securing the coaching services of Duncan Woods, current England midfielder and Southgate club player, gave the school hockey club an extra "buzz".

Twenty senior boys came back for pre-season training with Duncan Woods and England Captain, Billy Waugh. The 1st XI struggled admirably with injuries and illness (James Defty not appearing till late in the season), but it was a credit to those from the 2nd XI who continually filled the spaces, demonstrating our strength in depth. There were good wins against Northants, 6-2, Abingdon, 5-1, and the Old Stoics, 6-5. Playing at the National Hockey Stadium, Milton Keynes, against Framlingham in March in the "Curtain Raiser" to the Varsity Match was a special privilege and the team were a credit to the School, losing just 0-1. The following represented the School in that match:

Rory Scott, Adam Cottrell, Angus Elphinstone, Peter Mann, Ben Turney, Jamie Peel, Jamie Haselwood, Toby Adams, Matt Williams, Will Dudley, James Lyon, Will Browning, Henry Cavill, Henry Coram James, Rupert Kelton and captain Henry Gillingham (who was awarded Stowe's "Player of the Match"). Colours were awarded to Toby Adams, Tim Barker, Adam Cottrell and James Lyon.

DCB



Jamie Haselwood watches Adam Cottrell intercept

2nd XI

Played 8 Won 3 Drawn 1 Lost 4

The team lost the first match to a strong Stamford side, 0-2, but pulled back the next week to beat Shiplake 1sts 3-1. Other wins were against Bloxham, 4-0, and Abingdon, 6-0. There was a 2-2 draw with Radley. Three of the losses came in the latter part of the season, against St Edward's, 0-3, Magdalen College School, 1-2, and Pangbourne, 0-3. Robert Bell captained the team superbly and, supported strongly in defence by Richard Worrall and Sami Robertson, was always a pleasure to watch. Several members of the team moved up to the 1st XI including Will Browning, Ben Scholfield, Alex Garbe, Matt Williams and Rupert Kelton.

DCB

3rd XI

Played 7 Won 4 Drawn 1 Lost 2

There was a wealth of talent and a considerable amount of enthusiasm. Having a regular training slot on the astroturf has encouraged Stoics to enjoy and improve their hockey skills and this was reflected in a solid season for the 3rd XI who could so easily have survived the term with an unbeaten record. We started well against Stamford with a stunning back-stick goal by Charles Hustler and for long periods of the match we were dominant. Unable to score a second to make the game safe, we gradually crumbled in the second half, going down 2-4 (our second goal scored by the speedy Rupert Kelton). At Radley we won 1-0 on astro on an appallingly wet afternoon. Suitably buoyed up, we took on Bloxham away and won convincingly 6-1. It was at this point that our success found us out as key players were drawn up to the 2nds and even the 1sts, but we still managed to beat Abingdon 4-0 and drew creditably with St Edward's, 1-1. The away game at Magdalen College School was a huge disappointment. On a soggy grass pitch we put immense pressure on the home side in the first half and finally scored just after half-time, through Hugo Pile. Again we failed to score the second, clinching goal and instead leaked an equaliser, ultimately going down 1-2 in a game all present suggested we should have won. Finally the skill of the 3rd XI (and of Harry Trotter, Sammy Barratt and Ed Webb in particular) was pitted against the brawn of Pangbourne's 4th XI. It was a while before our dominance was

rewarded, but we showed good discipline and gained a deserved 2-0 victory.

Hugo Douglass drove forward from defence with authority and skippered the side well throughout the term. A much improved Alex Medwell-Bates was a revelation in goal. Jack Mann and David Parker provided most of the fire-power, assisted by wide-boys Harry Trotter and Rupert Kelton. Messrs. Radmall, Hustler and Kayll provided an industrious and attacking midfield and we were solid at the back with the skill of Robert Prentice, the tenacity of Max Wittgenstein and the positive clearances of Ed Webb.

SJBA

4th XI

The team practised regularly but as a result of cancellations only managed to play one game, against Magdalen College School, which, sadly, they lost. After Stowe had attacked for a major part of the first half, the opposition's marauding central striker scored two goals in quick succession. The grass surface deteriorated so rapidly during the second half that neither side was able to play with any consistent skill. Spades and shovels would have been more effective than hockey sticks for the remainder of the game, a hacking match. Overall, however, it has been a good, enjoyable term.

LEW

Colts A

Played 9 Won 1 Drawn 2 Lost 6

- v Stamford (a) 1-5
- v Shiplake 2nds (h) 2-1
- v Radley (h) 1-7
- v Bloxham (h) 1-3
- v Abingdon (a) 3-3
- v St Edward's (a) 1-5
- v Magdalen College School 0-2
- v Loughborough (h) 1-1
- v Pangbourne 3rds 1-3

Colts B

Played 8 Won 4 Lost 4

Relaxed yet committed, skilful yet evolving, determined yet sporting, the Colts B has indeed demonstrated all these qualities in abundance. Despite the ravages of illness, bad weather and the occasional promotion to the A team, the B team has played some enjoyable and coherent hockey - with moments of genius and exhilaration. The opposition varied enormously, but Stowe never

failed to play with enjoyment and to raise their game to strong teams where necessary. Defensively the team was strong and the back formation clearly grew in confidence and ability as the season progressed, with Mark Mackay-Lewis and Hugo Pearson giving a solidity on either side and Ricky White (in goal) proving a tough obstacle for attacking teams. The midfield and forwards coped well with changing surfaces and with the inevitable fluctuation of players as the A team spotted their talents. Only occasional lapses in team structure were evident and, when relaxed, Stowe played some very good hockey against some strong sides. It is a shame the score sheet does not reveal the pressure that Stowe exerted on many teams right up to the final whistle, even when the score didn't go our way. Overall, it was an excellent season and a great team to coach:

T.R.A. McLauchlan, T.F. Kemble, A.G. Pearson, H.A. Rebbeck, M.K.A. Lawrence, M.T. Roche, C.H.R. Pearson, M.J. Mackay-Lewis, J.E.S. Harris, E.J. Clark, H.A. Leon, R.J. White, N.A.H.R. Morris and R.H. Kazandjian

SNA

Colts C

The team was not able to play any matches because of the weather and a lack of suitable opposition, but some friendly rivals were found in the form of the Junior Colts C and the Colts A and B XIs. These matches were regarded by the team as proper fixtures and they played with panache and enthusiasm throughout.

Team: O. Weston, E. Warr, E. Oldham, H. Ross, A. Spencer-Churchill, P. Craven, A. Comber, M. Rogers, E. Keane, S. Churchill, J. Chanprabhap, A. Wilson, H. Heneage, A. Kirkwood and G. Kindell.

KB

Junior Colts A

Played 9 Won 5 Drawn 1 Lost 3

- v Stamford (a) 1-0
- v Shiplake (h) 7-2
- v Radley (h) 1-1
- v Bloxham (h) 0-2
- v Abingdon (h) 0-5
- v St Edward's (a) 0-2
- v Magdalen College School (h) 3-0
- v Loughborough (h) 3-0
- v Pangbourne (a) 3-1

This year's team showed great strength in depth and positions were strongly contested each week. It was no

surprise that the Junior Colts A team were voted "team of the year" and from the beginning they showed their team spirit and determination, beating Stamford after only a few training sessions. Shiplake followed and the challenge of moving to a wet grass pitch from the astroturf was quickly dismissed and the excellent constructive midfield play was quickly converted into a convincing 7-0 victory with Will Barker continuing to add to his impressive goal tally. A mid-term loss of focus and some quirks of an unkind fate led to a disappointing draw against Radley and narrow defeats against Bloxham, St Edward's and an extremely strong Abingdon XI. The competitive nature of the squad was then shown by an excellent turn of form and the term ended in impressive style with outstanding victories over Magdalen College School, Loughborough Grammar School and Pangbourne.

Throughout the season the team has played exciting, attacking hockey and were frequently commended for their ability to work and win as a team. Congratulations must go to Chris Lyon for his selection to represent the County 1st team for his age group. I would like to thank all the boys for their hard work and enthusiasm and the parents for their wonderful support, whatever the weather!

Squad from: Malcolm Riley (captain), Vadim Pak (vice-captain), Chris Lyon, Jamie Leggett, Tom Legge, John Rainton, Hussein Safa, Henry Warhurst, Luke Brewin, Will Barker, Oliver Cullingworth, George Woodfield and Matthew Johnson.

TLH

Junior Colts B

Played 5 Won 1 Drawn 1 Lost 3

Junior Colts C

Played 3 Won 1 Lost 2

Despite a slow start to the season, thanks to the first match being cancelled because of waterlogged pitches, the team kept up the momentum throughout the term. Under the able captaincy of Jonathan Boyman, they proved themselves a particularly pleasant, cheerful, willing and enthusiastic set of players, who settled down to producing sound hockey, especially in midfield and defence. If there had been one or two more strikers to add the goals, they could have turned some modest results into something more spectacular.

Team from: Jonathan Boyman, John Sayle, Adam Daines, Rob McKinnon,

Jeremy Chiu, James Gordon, James Keenan, Tom Butcher, Henry Snagge, Hugh Maclean, Mark Lee, Rory McIntyre, Duncan Wai, Tom Campbell and Jerome Thompson.

MJB

Yearlings A

Played 9 Won 4 Drawn 2 Lost 3

The Yearlings were very conscientious and hard-working. Both those who had played hockey before and those who had not responded well to our programme and all the coaching. (They were lucky to benefit from the expertise of Duncan Woods, not to mention the tremendous enthusiasm of TFK.) This year our goalkeeper situation surpassed any season before. We had at least three challenging for the A team slot, with George Kent making the position his, with Charles Cavill and Tom Ward always in the background. Overall the team was very successful with the skills of the Prince brothers to foil our opposition. They had a big win against Mill Hill, 10-2, beat Uppingham twice, 3-1, and beat Loughborough Grammar School, 5-0. There were draws with Oundle, 3-3, and RGS, 4-4. The team also played against a very talented German side from Kahlenberg, losing 2-5. In January a few of the A XI played in a "select" side at the National Hockey Stadium against an U14 Midlands side and were very professional in their approach and gained invaluable experience for next year.

Squad: G. Kent, O. Dannatt, H. Sheppard, J. Dickens, E. Prince, T. Durston, W. Gallimore, N. Prince, E. Baker, G. Woodfield, P. Hitner and D. Ashby.

DCB

Yearlings B

Played 7 Won 3 Drawn 0 Lost 4

Highlight of the B's season were the victories over Uppingham, 2-1, RGS, 7-1, and Mill Hill, 2-0.

Squad: C. Cavill, G. Sharp, T. Daniel, O. Tree, H. Seccombe, H. Reid (captain), M. Jones, C. Roe, J. Finch-Knightley, O. Thomas, J. Robinson, J. Walker and J. Saunders.

Yearlings C

Played 6 Won 1 Lost 5

Yearlings D

Played 3 Won 0 Lost 3

Boys' House matches

The House matches were matches of quality again this year. The senior winners were Bruce who beat Temple 3-2 in possibly the most exciting final for years. The junior winners were Cobham who beat Grenville on penalties. In the Yearlings Inter-House 7s Bruce regained the trophy in a very exciting final with Chatham.

Girls A

Played 10 Won 2 Drawn 1 Lost 7

TLH took the girls A team in the Autumn term. It was captained by Olivia Armitage. The wins were not too many but the girls demonstrated some good defensive play.

Highlights were wins against Rugby, 2-1, and Akeley Wood, 6-0. The defence was solid but the team suffered from virtually no strike force, only scoring 8 goals all season. Colours were awarded to Louise Macdonald, Gemma Coles, Georgina Lee, Amy Gillam and Frances Morley-Fletcher.

Girls' House match

Lyttelton won 1-0 from a strongly challenging Nugent side.

Girls B

Played 8 Won 2 Lost 6

The girls 2nd XI made a slow start to the season; the first month being used to bring together a team made up of both first-time players as well as 2nd XI regulars. The squad first showed signs of potential at St. Edward's with a 3-0 win, goals being scored by Vicky Bell (2) and Tania Alexander. The team went from strength to strength improving tactically every match, culminating in a 4-0 victory over Haileybury College. (Clare Fraser-Smith (2), Fran Morley-Fletcher, Katie Turnbull)

The team has shown excellent potential for next year. Samia Brahimi, one of our beginners, made such an improvement that she even played for the 1st XI at the end of the season, as did Vicky Bell. There were many excellent individual performances throughout the season but the most noticeable were those of our goalkeeper, Liz Weston, who made some incredible saves in every match. Congratulations also go to Gemma Taylor, in defence, Emma and Katie Turnbull on the wings and Fran Morley-Fletcher in midfield.

DCB



Staff v Leavers, March 1999 (The staff won 6-4)

Prep School Staff Training Day

In addition to the usual programme we attempt to vary the season if we can. One such occasion was the inaugural Prep School Staff Training Day. It was an idea dreamt up by myself and David Vinson, F.I.H. Coach, England U21 Coach and director of coaching at Southgate hockey club. Seventeen schools were represented, coming from the Home Counties, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, Birmingham and Sussex. There were twenty-eight prep school staff, plus three of our own. After various sessions on the latest coaching techniques, with Duncan Woods, David Vinson and our own coaches leading things, the Yearlings A and B came out in the afternoon to provide material for coaching. Everyone agreed the day was a great success and hoped there would be a repeat next year.

DCB

LACROSSE

We suffered defeats at the beginning of the season, always a difficult time as new teams are formed. But results improved and we did well to beat such teams as St Mary's, Wantage. Team spirit remained high all term with commendable efforts from Mila Stoilova, a formidable goalkeeper, Yolanda Macpherson, Emily Wills, Antonia Jones and Layinka Howes, all of whom were awarded colours. Katherine Rankin and Iona Graham had theirs reallocated. Congratulations to the latter on making the County squad.



The netball team had a triumphant season winning nine out of eleven matches. The season got off to a good start with victory against Wellingborough (43-5). However, the Oundle tournament posed more of a problem and the team unfortunately failed to qualify in their section. After this disappointment the game style was adapted to account for the variations in weather which had created difficulties at the tournament. A slightly altered team then won a succession of matches against schools such as St Edward's, Downe House, Tudor Hall and Bloxham. The next event was the Bradfield tournament where we won all our matches in the qualifying section, with victories over St John's, Cranleigh, Charterhouse and Bradfield. In the semi-finals we beat

St Edward's convincingly (10-3). The final, a rematch with Bradfield, went into extra time when we managed to pull away to win 15-12, thereby retaining the title and shield another year. The season ended on a high note with a win in the triangular match with Haileybury and The Leys. The squad consisted of Caroline Sabberton (captain), Vicky Bell, Lucy Keenan, Gemma Coles, Louisa Jones, Katherine Rankin and Georgina Lee.

The second team also had a successful season, winning nine out of eleven matches. Some strong Lower Sixth players promise well for next season. Although the team participated in no tournaments, they had some convincing wins both home and away.

CAROLINE SABBERTON

RUGBY 1st XV

It was a season of two halves. Up to half-term the record read: played 7, won 5, lost 2. After the break: played 5, won 1, lost 4. There were several causes for this. Before half-term we were relatively free of major injuries. Afterwards we also lost players to the Argentina cricket tour and several players were committed to the county programme.

At the start of the season the coaches and players identified two priorities. First to provide a platform and style for future 1st teams to work from. Secondly to meet and measure ourselves against the top school side in England, Colston's. I feel the first objective was fulfilled. The cup game against Windsor provided us with the stage to demonstrate how we as a school should approach and play our rugby, professionally, with passion and at pace. Alas, on the occasion in question the crowd motivated the Windsor defence and unnerved our attack. This suggests a great learning curve for our youngsters, many of whom should feature again next season. But our second objective floundered on the same afternoon.

The squad system adopted in training and on match days helped towards our goals and prevented the last two fixtures from being total disasters. The side contained players of some quality. James

Jones has good line-out presence and pace for No. 8 but he needs to work on his strength and handling ability. Jamie Peel needs to have more self-belief to support an array of natural talent. Kaunda Kavindele has pace and power but if he had the passion and true desire he could become a consistent force on the wing. Angus Elphinstone has raw ability but needs to work on his approach to the game. Jackie Oliver could be a little diamond next year. He has that abrasive edge which some lack. He needs, however, to address the technical skill necessary to be a quality hooker.

The last word should be reserved for the skipper, James Jones, who supported me to the hilt and led his players with some style, backed up with a lot of guts and determination. I don't think his team's record did justice to his or their efforts.

AH

v Magdalen College School L 0-19
 Uppingham L 5-51
 Royal Latin W 45- 5
 Bloxham W 34-17
 Abingdon W 11- 3
 Stamford W 12- 5
 Dr Challenor's W 54-10
 Mill Hill W 24-12
 St Edward's L 6-47
 The Oratory L 3-35

Team from: James Jones (capt.), Rob Bell, Adam Cottrell, Tom de Serville, James Defty, Charles Duffin, Angus Elphinstone, Henry Gillingham, Tim Hook, Charles Howard, James Kayll, Kaunda Kavindele, Ed Lake, Robert Large, Peter Mann, Tom Oliver, Jamie Peel, Chris Reeves, Abs Sakdicumduang, Lester Smart, Charles Stanton, Dan Webster, Matt Williams and Henry Wood.

Also played: Ola Akinjide, Babafunso Alakija, Tim Barker, Sam Churchill, Richard Clapham, Harry Girardot, B MacLennan, Robin Jones, Patrick Pearce and Hugo Wilson.

Sevens

This was a successful season with the school lifting a trophy at a major event.

In the rain, wind and mud of Windsor the squad, without several key members, initially struggled to come to terms with the conditions but overcame Magdalen College School in their first game. They next played Wellington College, the outright winners, a painful lesson indeed. The side then stole a win over RGS, Guildford, 12-10, and proceeded to the Plate knock-out stages where they received a bye into the semi-finals as Latymer Upper pulled out of the competition. After defeating QES, Barnet, 24-5 the team then had to raise itself for one last effort against Bedford Modern in the Final. Here they played their best rugby, combining excellent ball handling skills with aggressive and controlled defence. With a 17-5 lead at half-time, from tries by Bell and Stanton, heroic defence coupled with a late try by Henry Wood, the captain, ensured the School's first silverware.

At Douai the following week a peculiar qualifying rule prevented the team proceeding into the knockout stages although they came second in their pool. At Rosslyn Park it was a different tale, the squad never regaining the collective spirit shown at Windsor. With a weakened squad we never came to terms with the intensity of the competition. I prefer to remember the sheer pleasure and joy on the muddied faces at Windsor.

Squad: Henry Wood (capt.), Charles Duffin, Daniel Webster, Kaunda Kavindele, Charles Howard, Jamie Peel, Robin Jones, Charles Stanton, Tom Oliver, Edouard Lake, Robert Bell, James Jones and Brett MacLennan

AH



Jamie Peel in action against Pangbourne

2nd XV

What a great start! A 67-0 win against Magdalen College School. This really set us on our way to what was an enjoyable and successful season. Our euphoria was tainted somewhat when we travelled to our next match at Uppingham and, although we were not really outplayed at all, we lost the match 5-19. Unfortunately our vital link and captain, Robin Jones, who played fly-half, was taken off with concussion after only five minutes and was to miss the next few matches.

However, we bounced back with good wins on the South Front against Bloxham and Abingdon with Baba Alakija proving to be an unstoppable force on the wing and a strong pack of forwards being well marshalled by a combative Harry Girardot at scrum-half.

The second half of the season proved to be more of a challenge as many injuries made it difficult to put out a settled side. On the positive side players like Hugo Wilson, Hari Riar, Hugo Douglass and Piers Winton moved up from the 3rd XV and really progressed rapidly to steady the ship as we took on strong teams at Stamford and John Cleveland.

We were back at our best against Mill Hill with some excellent open rugby, again on the South Front, as we convincingly beat them 58-0 with Hari Riar scoring a hat-trick. Robin Jones was again proving a live wire at fly-half and collected a couple of well deserved tries.

Our match against St Edward's was always going to be tough as the team we had to put out was an unfamiliar one. Again the new caps such as Ian Grant-Peterkin, Ed Gambarini and Alex Pooley gave their all but could not stop a well organised team and we lost 5-36.

This left us with one match to play and our win-loss record standing at 4-4. We were desperate to make it a winning season as we travelled down to The Oratory. In an extraordinary game we tried every trick in the book but both teams were so well-matched that we ended in a rare but exciting 0-0 draw!

This was a very enjoyable season all round. Many players appeared in the 2nd XV and all gave 100% in training and matches. Special mention must go to Robin Jones for an excellent job as captain this season.

Played 9 Won 4 Lost 4 Drawn 1
Points for: 186 Points against: 117

RCS

3rd XV

The 3rd XV in its September guise was a very different beast from the team which graced the Bourbon on a cold Saturday in September but, in spite of the promotion of many players, the spirit of the team remained buoyant throughout the season. As our old boys graced the exalted pitches at home and abroad the faithful scored four memorable wins and only suffered three gruelling defeats.

We started the season with an encouraging win on the South Front against Akeley Wood but suffered a fairly comprehensive defeat away at Uppingham. Wins against Bloxham and Abingdon put the season back on the rails but Stamford proved too strong for us just before half-term.

There was then a long period without a game because of half-term, the cancellation of the Mill Hill game and our second fixed weekend and the side returned to action away at St Edward's. Although we were outclassed, especially in the backs, the team tackled hard throughout the match and even threatened to score at the start of the second half. To lose 42-0 to this particular side was no disgrace. The final match was greatly enjoyed by all not only as it was a solid win but for the spirit in which it was played and refereed. An open, free-scoring, running game was the very best way to conclude the season.

Congratulations to all those who were regular players (skipper Ashworth, Jelly Jenkinson, the constantly combative Brandram, big Darcy Terry, flying Sami Robertson and whatshisname Bennett) to the upwardly mobile part-time players (Gambarini, Winton, Douglass, Sakdicumduang to name but four) and to the injured (Tull, Pearce and Musker). In short, our thanks to all 42 of you who represented the 3rds this season.

SJBA/LEW

4th XV

Ours was most definitely a season of superlatives; from the extreme score lines to the variety of talent in the side, even the creativity expressed on the team lists, very little about the fourths could be described as mediocre. It all began hours from home and in front of a hostile crowd. Nonetheless, the bitter determination with which we faced Uppingham was to be admired, and although we returned sombre and vanquished, the moral victory was ours.

The intensive and dedicated training of the previous few weeks soon paid off against Bloxham and Stowe's superior handling, recycling and enthusiastic tackling made it seem like a premiership side were playing a pub team, leaving us with 71 points to their 0. Our confidence massively restored it was with excited impatience that we trained for the Abingdon fixture. However, we went fifteen points down. We seemed unable to break through until a Guscott-like interception from Mortimer gave us just the opening we needed and he charged over the line to score our first. Within two minutes we had scored again, and having taken the lead Abingdon soon resigned themselves to their fate, as a further 22 points were racked up, the final result 32-15.

Against Stamford we came back from ten points down to win by a comfortable 31 to their 10. However some weeks later against St Edward's we were soundly beaten. So it was that we travelled to the Oratory, in an effort to make the season a winning one, but the side was much depleted, and resembled more the 5th XV than the star-class 4ths of earlier fame. The 0-46 result bears unfair testimony to the men that played that day, all of whom played with the same determined spirit which had done us so many favours in the past.

JEROME STARKEY

Colts A XV

With very little points on the board in their previous season, the team's objective was not only to tighten up on a sieve-like defence but also to engineer a sense of control and determine point-scoring opportunities. Some big results needed to be turned around and with little experience in crossing the line for a try, the season presented a tall order. The pre-season tour to France had provided a foundation as our patterns for the season began to unfold. Great determination was shown on tour against difficult opposition and it was difficult to see how other teams could have caused so much damage in the previous season.

The first match against Magdalen College School was won 19-8 and set the team off with some belief that success was possible. The aim against Uppingham was to get on the score sheet and to keep the score well below that of the previous season. With these realistic objectives losing 0-22 was a credit to team. Bloxham were next and the team

suffered with ill discipline losing 5-43 (we were on the score sheet!). Abingdon were the best team we played with a very well drilled pack that denied us any ball up front. The demoralising 10-59 score-line did not reflect the effort that went in to secure the 10 points. As Stamford approached it was difficult to see where a win would come from, as the remaining fixtures were tough ones. In a very scrappy game which was difficult to gain any control of, Stamford imposed a messy authority on us and kept us out to win 0-38. John Cleveland College is a hard, tough fixture and we welcomed Brett MacLennan into the team. He provided greater strength up front and made us more competitive, although we left him isolated too often. It was necessary to blend him into the side and this would take time that we were running out of. 17-39 was the final result. Away to Mill Hill saw us survive another scrappy game. We walked away with an unpopular 17-14 win although we were by far the better side on the day. On the South Front, we played St. Edward's. The two sides were evenly matched until the home referee gave a penalty try under the posts. 14-18 and we were unlucky not to record a win. The final match was also a close one as we went down 14-19 to The Oratory.

The team responded very well to coaching and developed a strong desire to score tries. This is borne out by the close results that could have gone either way. Will Hook was a good captain throughout the season leading by example on the field. The forward scrummaging was extremely good as was the line-out, with Will taking virtually all his own ball. Nico Heath showed great determination at fly-half covering all of the park each match. Alex Housley also grew in stature as the season progressed.

My thanks to BGD and JSM for their help and support with coaching.

SHM

Colts B XV

The first match of the season was home to Uppingham. The tackling was poor and the fitness level of each player was extremely low. The final score was 34-0 to Uppingham. But we won at Bloxham by 43 points to 0 (Jackson Kaphuka having scored five of them).

Against Abingdon, Stowe started well and scored the opening try. The conversion followed and the possibility of a win was on. What happened next was a complete lack of concentration, and this resulted in Abingdon getting four tries.

The match against Stamford was highly controversial after Stowe had had a try disallowed in the last minute of the first half. The final score was 15-7 to Stamford.

Playing on the South Front is always more inspiring than playing up on the Bourbon and even though we conceded an early try to a John Cleveland team who had beaten the Junior Colts last season, the players were determined to get a victory and even though the team didn't play well, their determination was the key factor in a 24-5 victory.

A 5-5 draw at Mill Hill followed and a 0-6 defeat at home to St Edward's. The match was played at a quick pace but both defences held firm and only two penalties were the difference between the two teams.

The last match of the season was against The Oratory. The Colts BXV never really managed to trouble the pace and power of The Oratory. The team eventually lost by 27 points to 12.

There are certainly some positive points to pick out. The training throughout the term set up by Mr Durrant was the key factor. He managed to make the team work hard and inspire the players when they were down.

ROSS GRIFFIN



Junior Colts at Soustons in their pre-season French tour

Junior Colts A XV

The season started with a tour to Soustons in south-west France. Of the party of twenty-one most were pushing for a place in the A team. It was obvious in training and the opening games of the season that those who had been on tour clearly benefited from the experience.

In the first match, against MCS, Oxford, no side was able to gain much of an advantage in the first half. However, Malcolm Riley was moved back to fly-half (the position he made his own all season) and this gave the backs a few more options. Luke Brewin, the team's prolific try-scorer, used his devastating pace to score two tries. The 17-7 win was a great confidence boost. The players went into the next match against Uppingham full of optimism and although the team went ahead with an intercepted try, it was Uppingham who finished the stronger to register a 5-21 win. The team put on a superb display of open attacking rugby for the visit of the local Royal Latin School to finish runaway winners 55-0. The backs ran in 8 tries thanks to the toil and quality of ball provided by the pack. Led by no.8 and pack-leader Matthew Johnson, they dominated every department and no-one was more deserving of a try than hooker Jamie Leggett. On a very narrow Bloxham pitch Stowe found it very difficult to use the flair of the backs. Bloxham were big and strong and decided to play the game tight and go down the middle. Fortunately every player on the pitch was switched on defensively and although Bloxham did manage a penalty conversion that day they were simply not going to score a try. In the closing moments of the game when legs were beginning to tire Malcolm Riley used his enormous energy reserves to loop outside of the left-winger to go over in the corner. The 5-3 win was thorough-

ly deserved and the Bloxham Headmaster, who was refereeing, was full of praise for a tremendously hard-fought game. Three defeats in a row – against Abingdon, Stamford and John Cleveland – was not the best preparation for the Daily Mail U15 game against Wellington College. The players found themselves 3 tries down before they were able to pick up the pace of the game. Although Stowe staged a spirited fight-back, just when Wellington seemed to be in trouble back they would come and score. The score-line of 14-60 rather flattered the opposition who had a tougher game than it suggests; it was some comfort to know that we had lost to the eventual winners of the competition. Five of the A team had been selected to run for the Cross Country team in the National Cup which gave other players the chance to impress in our under-strength team at Mill Hill. Thibaut Taittinger started for the first time and showed he is a player for the future with some powerful running and aggressive tackling. Tom Sowerby seemed much more at home at full-back following his move from the forwards and was very difficult to stop in full flow. The make-shift half-back combination of Vadim Pak and John Rainton proved very successful. The forwards steadily gained the initiative and their hard graft laid the foundation for Luke Brewin to run in five tries, three of which he had promised to deliver before the match. The 36-10 win was excellent reward for a very determined side. It was not surprising that we went down to St Edward's and The Oratory considering that the Cross Country team had now taken Luke Brewin as well to compete in the National Cup Final. All credit to the squad for sticking to their task regardless of the make-up of the team. It typified the character and determination of the players who have been a pleasure to

coach for the last two years. Much credit for the unity and positive attitude must go to coach Ray Dawson and it has been a pleasure working with him, as with the pupils. I am confident they will go from strength to strength next year as Colts and having three boys who have played for the County U16 side a year young will do them no harm.

Squad: Luke Brewin, David Hervey, John Rainton, Vadim Pak, Malcolm Riley, Tom Legge, Matthew Johnson, William Barker, Dominic Gordon, Tom Sowerby, George Percy, Jonathan Boyman, Jamie Leggett, Jeremy Chiu, Guy Barbier, Thibaut Taittinger, Anthony Offley and Rory McIntyre.

IM

- v Magdalen College School W 17-7
- Uppingham L 5-21
- Royal Latin W 55-0
- Bloxham W 5-3
- Abingdon L 0-43
- Stamford L 0-36
- John Cleveland L 6-13
- Wellington L 14-60
- Mill Hill W 36-10
- St Edward's L 0-22
- Oratory L 5-22

Junior Colts B XV

If one was to judge a season purely on results one could never point to this season for the JCB XV and describe it as their 'finest hour'. However it is true to say that results often paint a very distorted picture of a season, and in this case mask a number of individual successes and brave team performances.

The main thrust of the season came before half-term and as the correct personnel became more evident within the squad, we were able to field an increasingly settled team. Only then could we begin to play with any kind of pattern. A couple of early defeats were followed by a resounding victory at Bloxham where the forward pack dominated the game



The Yearlings A team surge into the attack on the South Front,



then veer to the right,

with a tremendous rucking performance. Good ball was presented to the backs and Greg Cushing at fly-half distributed the ball wisely to allow the backs to secure a handsome win. Greg's running with the ball in hand was to improve as the season progressed.

A week later we travelled to Abingdon. Having lost our captain, the tenacious terrier-like Will Barker to the A team, this was to be our best performance of the season. After a sluggish start we began to dominate in every area of the game. Abingdon found it difficult to cope with the huge Garry Owens of Oliver Cullingworth in the centre and all eight men in the pack were performing as one blue and gold unit, launching attack after attack. Without doubt the middle half hour of this game was the best rugby played all season and fantastic for the crowd to watch. The game was characterized by the ever-present bone-crunching tackling of the pocket-sized, battleship-like, blind side flanker Alex Dietz; the excellent distribution at scrum half of Tom Kirk; and the sniping runs from the back of the scrum of the gutsy number eight Ben Sanchez. Anthony Offley gave a performance in the pack that day which was to lift him to the A team for the rest of the season. Unfortunately we failed to convert our supremacy in the first half into a big enough lead and Abingdon eventually converted much late pressure on our line to snatch victory, a difficult defeat for the players to handle.

After half term the momentum we had built up previously was to be halted by injury to a number of key players and a bout of 'flu throughout the squad. After a good win over John Cleveland we found it hard to regain the spark and promise we had shown immediately before half-term. However we never played again with a full strength side, and up against some fine opposition in

the form of St. Edward's; we showed considerable spirit and bravery in the way we tackled, and defended tirelessly.

Tarik Al-Buhaisi, the mighty prop forward, improved with every game and by the end of the season could be said to be lethal from five yards out. Luke Worrall confirmed his place as a crucial member of the pack. George Norton achieved his ambition of playing in the centre, but soon realised he preferred it out on the wing. Hugh Maclean continued to show the way in terms of commitment despite never failing to be the smallest man on the pitch; and James Keenan captained the side with a fine brand of leadership and grace.

One feels that many of these players are destined for finer things next year and in the realms of senior rugby.

DGB

Yearlings A XV

With respect to the long-term strategy for rugby in the school it was important that our new recruits received a strong foundation of coaching to prepare them not just for this season but for four and five years' time when they will be representing the 1st XV.

To this end a great deal of success was achieved and I acknowledge the splendid efforts of the coaching team.

Two initial defeats to Northampton School and Q.E.S. Barnet did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm and when the A's, B's and C's all beat Uppingham away, the staff and the boys themselves revelled in such success. The A's only lost two more matches but, perhaps more importantly for the future of rugby in the school, the B's and C's produced some staggering results showing a strength in depth within the year group, the B's amassing 183 against 5 in their last three matches and the C's pulling off a 10-10 draw against RGS High Wycombe.

The A team gradually evolved

through the squad system adopted and it was pleasing to see the likes of Chi Kavindele, Tom Probert, John Keen and "Eddie" Shah emerge from the early C team selection. There was by contrast obvious talent in the shape of the Prince twins at half-back, Ollie Tree in the back row, Harry Sheppard at hooker and Ju Manomaiphan who destroyed opponents whether he was in the 2nd row or at tight head. The team was led by Matt Gracie, an uncompromising figure in the centre. His direct running and tackling proved a feature of the term.

I will be keeping a close eye on the progress of this year group not just next year, when they have an opportunity to impress in the Daily Mail U15 Cup, but beyond, when they will (hopefully) bear the fruit of their coaches' labours.

AH

v Magdalen College School L 0-27
 QES, Barnet L 5-37
 Uppingham W 20-14
 Oundle L 0-12
 The Leys W 34-0
 RGS High Wycombe L 0-18
 Royal Latin W 52-0
 Mill Hill W 10-0
 Wellingborough W 33-5
 Stamford W 34-0

Yearlings B XV

Points for: 269 Points against: 168

The fixture list is a daunting one for the B side. We have to take on some of the biggest rugby schools in the area with little time to prepare. It is therefore extremely pleasing to reach the end of the term having given all but one side (RGS High Wycombe) a good battle and beaten all our traditional rivals soundly.

The team was well motivated and balanced. The pack was large with boys like Tom Probert, Cameron Brown, Rob Habib and Chibweka Kavindele proving to be immovable objects in the set pieces. Added to this we had the tenaci-



veer left again.



and over the line they go!

ty and technical expertise of Charlie Shirley-Beavan, Tom Durston and Alex Pike in the back row. Philip Hitner did a wonderful job as a courageous scrum-half and James Sanders, Peter Tromans, Max Green and Hugh Stilgoe developed rapidly to create a dangerous back line.

After the giant hurdles of QES Barnet (lost 12-38), RGS High Wycombe (lost 7-63) and Oundle (lost 12-38) the team put the lessons learnt into good effect with a remarkable will to score tries and dominate teams. We finished term with three huge wins, 72-0 v Mill Hill, 70-0 v Wellingborough and 43-5 v Stamford. We added these to a pleasing win over Uppingham (27-0) earlier in the term.

Cameron Brown led the scoring spree with a remarkable 11 tries in the last three matches mainly from his powerful pick-ups from no. 8. It is a real reflection on the strength of the A team that players such as Cameron, Tom Durston, Philip Hitner and James Sanders could not find regular positions in their side.

This was an extremely encouraging season. Well done, all who participated! Many thanks to my coach, DGB, for a great job in moulding such a good and technically sound pack.

RCS

SAILING

Public examinations have made the sailing season shorter than ever before for matches. Opportunities have been fully used, however, and almost as many matches were sailed before half-term as was the case throughout the term in previous years. High winds during May tested the competence of experienced sailors and novices alike, while consequent maintenance of the boats has equally tested staff responsible.

The sailing team has been younger than usual, with only two in the sixth-form, but it remained cheerful while facing tough opposition. Alex Medwell-Bates displayed in several matches the maturity and skill of judgement which he has gained in five seasons with the School. Daniel Ferris should be well placed to continue in a similar way next year. The regional finals of the British Schools Dinghy Racing Association took place at Farmoor in strong winds, and the team came up against two more experienced sides before their section had to be cancelled. Although there were several excellent individual performances with high places over the finishing line, other school matches went a similar way. The team never disgraced itself, however, and with greater experience next year can look forward to some more promising results.

In internal competitions, Alex Medwell-Bates helped Chandos to win the house matches from Chatham, Daniel Ferris (Bruce) beat Alex to win the Helmsman's Tankard, the individual senior trophy, and the Junior Pennant Competition was won by Freddie von Schroder (Grafton) with George Percy (Chandos) second. I am very grateful for the large amount of help given by two new members of staff, TJE and JJH, this term. They both showed their skills by individually winning each of the staff races in turn, and thus allowing the staff team another victory in the annual contest against a school team.

Team from: Alex Medwell-Bates (colours awarded), Daniel Ferris (colours awarded), Oliver Weston, Harry Heneage, George Percy, Edward West, Freddie von Schroder, Henry Snagge and Charles Clark.

MJB

SOCCER

Played 5 Won 0 Drawn 1 Lost 4

A disappointing season, made very difficult by the early loss through illness of the captain, James Defty. Nevertheless, there were some spirited performances and particularly good showings against the Corinthian Casuals (1-3) and the Old Stoics (3-3). The core of a solid team remains for next season.

AKM



Yearlings v Wellingborough on the South Front

SCULLING



Geordie Mackay-Lewis, Oliver Wilson and Tom Seccombe

Once again sculling proved a popular activity in the summer with sessions being run on four afternoons a week and about a tenth of the school involved in the sport. The club was led by a group of Upper Sixth enthusiasts (Jerome Starkey, James Sleater and Alex McMicking), who were invaluable support to the three coaches (JECH, SNA and WEHV).

The aim of the club is to introduce Stoics to the sport and hopefully foster their enthusiasm, which they may wish to develop at their local clubs or at university. Whilst the splendour of the lakes at Stowe offers a spectacular place to start sculling, their size also poses a constraint. Nonetheless nine did compete for the Ball Cup at Evesham and acquitted

themselves well. The new growth in the club is emerging in the form of Alex Perry, Philip Ashworth and Edward Spurr.

The programme of improving equipment has continued with the purchase of a second Burgashell scull and a replacement rescue boat with a small outboard. Over the winter we hope to buy another boat.

Sculling ties were re-awarded to Jerome Starkey, James Sleater, Alex McMicking and Edward Gambarini. They were also awarded to Philip Ashworth and Michael De Butts. Edward Gambarini takes on the captaincy for next season and has Philip Ashworth as his deputy. The ladies' captain is Elizabeth Weston and she is assisted by Vicky Bell.

WEHV

SWIMMING

Every event in the Inter-House competition last February was closely contested. Sam Musker (Chandos) was undoubtedly the swimmer of the gala, the winner of the 50m Freestyle, 100m Freestyle and 50m Butterfly, and he was awarded the Geh-Spencer Cup for individual achievement. Other individual winners were Sami Robertson (Temple) for the Senior Individual Medley, Alex Tate, the Intermediate Medley, and Igor Tolstoy, the Junior Individual Medley. Layinka Howes won the Thomas Hobbes Cup for the Girls' Individual Medley. The House trophies were well spread with the overall winner, Temple, not actually winning any age group but having an all-round team in all age groups. Lyttelton and Nugent tied this year, an incredible result.

The school team itself formed at the beginning of the summer term with several Stoics actually swimming when possible throughout the year. There is always an enthusiastic feeling of apprehension in the pool as we begin our matches in the very first week. We opened our season against Dr Challoner's Girls and Loughborough G.S., where we were well beaten in all age groups. However, the intention to swim well at the Harrow Six Schools was fulfilled with the seniors 5th, the



DCB's 1999 Swimmers

intermediates and juniors 4th and the girls 1st. During the term we swam in all against fifteen schools, but only managed to record wins against Haileybury (twice), St Edward's and Harrow (in the juniors), St Edward's and Radley (in the intermediates) and Uppingham and St Edward's (in the seniors). The girls beat Haileybury at Harrow and then St Edward's at Stowe. The match against St Edward's gave us a brilliant finish to a well worked season.

The team was a credit to the School and this year was led by Alexei Sorokin and Weibke Althoff (with Layinka Howes holding the reins when Weibke was unwell). They really were a conscientious group, always performing to the best of their ability. We may not have won many matches this season but we certainly had excellent team spirit. The juniors were our most successful age group, led by Edward Baker and Igor Tolstoy, both very committed and achieving P.B.s almost every match.

Senior relay teams of both sexes

competed again in the Public Schools Bath & Otter Cups at Crystal Palace and although they did not qualify for the finals, the boys' team swam faster times than their predecessors. This competition attracts fifty-six schools from all over the U.K. and for our swimmers to compete in an international pool it is well worth the day away from school.

The annual water polo competition, in its third year, demonstrated the overall improvement in playing standard. Temple retained the cup with Walpole runners-up and Chatham third. The girls' match was won by Lyttelton, 1-0. There is a great desire by many Stoics to play inter-school water polo matches, so I am waiting for a member of staff to fulfil their dreams by running such a team. It would certainly enhance our swimming results. Any offers?

Swimming colours have been awarded to Matthew Cumani, Richard Ward, Oscar Bernadotte, Layinka Howes, Sarah Dalby, Laura Kaye and Allegra Whittaker. I would like to thank

Graham Porter for maintaining the pool and to acknowledge the help of Angus Barnes, CHJ, EGJ, ARGJ, JLHJ with the swimmers and KFD, TFK and GMH for helping with the officiating; and all the matrons who are always there to make our galas the envy of all.

Teams:

Senior: A. Sorokin, C. Howard, M. Cumani, S. Robertson, R. Ward, O. Bernadotte, G. Filsell, D. Martynov and H. Pile.
Girls: W. Althoff, L. Howes, S. Dalby, L. Kaye, A. Gillam, E. Schwind, C. Grounds, A. Whittaker, and G. Taylor.
Intermediates: D. Pearce, H. Rebbeck, M. Lawrence, G. Barbier, H. Warhurst, H. Bartlett, A. Tate and R. Pitcher.
Juniors: E. Baker, I. Tolstoy, C. Driver, J. Owen, T. Durston, D. Pestov and C. Cavill.

DCB

TENNIS Boys

This season has seen tennis progress at Stowe. With fixtures every Tuesday and the presence of an external coach both the profile and the standard have risen dramatically. The tennis club has been fortunate enough this year to be led impressively from the top. Ben Scholfield has been an excellent captain both on and off the tennis court, showing impressive organisation, leadership and commitment.

The season started with rain causing the disappointing cancellation of the match against Wellingborough. Still battling with the weather but determined to play, Stowe took to the windy courts of Oxford against St Edward's and despite some excellent tennis at the top end of the school the 1st VI narrowly lost, but the seconds found their form to win 5-4. The U15 and U14 teams were struggling to perform at the best of their ability and both came a close second. The U16 team, however, playing with the home advantage, performed extremely well, beating St Edward's convincingly.

Despite this initial defeat morale remained high and constructive training commenced. A strong Uppingham team were our next opponents and it was the U15 team who certainly started to find their form and 1st pair Legge and Pak

played some exciting tennis to win all their games. Rugby was the next stop and the coaching was starting to pay off with the team winning convincingly at 1st, 2nd, U15 and U14 levels. The seniors continued their unbeaten run with victories against Bloxham and The Perse before ending their season at half-term to concentrate on their A-levels. A depleted U15 team narrowly lost to Bloxham before also ending the season on an unbeaten run with victories against The Oratory, The Leys and Loughborough Grammar School. The U14 team had some pleasing results, winning impressively against The Leys (9-0). They were the most improved team this year and their enthusiasm bodes well for the future.

The season ended with matches at senior and U15 levels against strong teams from Kearsney School, South Africa. Despite being unable to match their talent and experience we performed well and gained richly from playing both doubles and singles. The weekend was a tremendous success and one we hope to repeat in the future.

Colours were awarded to Toby Adams and Jake Davies.

TLH

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Girls

The season began with a team trial from which many competent players emerged. The first match, for 1st and 2nd teams, was against Tudor Hall, resulting in a win for the 2nds and a loss for the 1sts. This scoreline continued through most of the matches during the term. The opposition was often very strong. The rain stopped one match, that against Uppingham after only four games, but on the whole it was adjusting to wind rather than wet which was the relevant factor. The 1st team enjoyed a mixed match with the boys, which proved a competitive and successful occasion. The weekly coaching sessions have been thoroughly enjoyed by all participants and the players all showed signs of improvement during the course of the term. Colours were awarded to George Lee and Katherine Rankin.

DG

Societies

Anacreon

George Bertram, Barbara Babei, Catherine White, Drew Brennan, Melissa Katto, GMH, Alex Katthagen, Caroline Sabberton, Emma Box and Paola Chadwick.



Chess Club

The main event over this last year was the Inter-House match in June which was particularly eventful. Grafton, who had not fielded a team in recent years, turned up with a young squad to charge their way into the final. Temple, before falling to Grafton, put paid to Cobham with their formidable group of Russians. Chatham defeated Walpole, the cup holders and favourites, with the crunch game being Dominic Sullivan's defeat of the school's strongest player, Alexei Sorokin. The tactics worked out in Dominic's favour. He is the most improved player over the last year, mainly as the result of maturing positional sense.

The club has been strengthened by two Lower Sixth girls, Diana Bojilova and Elizabeth Weston. They played a prominent part in our victory over Swanbourne School, who, because they are a prep school, fielded adults on boards 1 and 2 of this eight board match.

The club tournament over seven rounds was won jointly by Dominic Sullivan and Jonathan Boyman. Alexei Sorokin dropped out to concentrate on his studies. He will be going up to Cambridge in the autumn to read Economics. We thank him for his loyalty over the last 4 years. Jonathan Boyman is the club secretary.

EST



Above Winning team, Chatham: Harry Heneage, Jonathan Witt, Dominic Sullivan, Edward Pitcher and Oliver Wilson
Right Inter-house final, top board: Harry Hay and Dominic Sullivan

Classical

In February Dr David Levene from the Classics Department of Durham University gave an excellent lecture, drawing comparisons between the epics of Virgil and Homer. A large audience of sixth-formers found it a stimulating and most worthwhile occasion, aided by some being able to meet the speaker informally beforehand in the Gothic Library, thanks to the kindness of the Headmaster. In May, Miss Eastwood gave a challenging talk on a particular aspect of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the Nisus and Euryalus scene. It likewise provoked some thoughtful reaction.

Last autumn the sixth form classicists attended a series of lectures at Royal Holloway, on the theme of Greek Tragedy. Last term a select group of classicists attended a Classical Dinner at Headington School, to hear a stirring speech from Sir Anthony Cleaver, the President of the Classical Association and Chairman of AEA Technology. A larger number also enjoyed a forthright performance of Greek drama at the Oxford Playhouse.

For a younger audience we were fortunate to have a visit from the Roman Military Trust, a group of enthusiasts who research, make and dress up in Roman armour. Despite the cold evening they carried on with their informative talk, and the third-formers responded with a series of excellent questions.

This term several, mainly younger, classicists, under the able direction of Mr Stephenson and Miss Eastwood, have been preparing for a superb production of Aristophanes' *Frogs*, as the Junior Congreve play. We shall be sorry to lose Miss Eastwood and thank her for all her contributions to things classical at Stowe over the last year.

MJB



Corkscrew

The year began with the girls getting themselves organised in most impressive fashion, filling many of the available places before the boys even had time to draw breath, let alone claret!

Our now traditional opening meeting once again brought Captain John Stewart of the International Wine and Food Society, ably assisted by Mrs Stewart, into our midst to give "An Introduction to Wine-Tasting". This concise, lucid and informative talk was most entertaining and we were privileged to see the Stewart's large and varied collection of antique and modern wine and spirit glasses and decanters. Much was learned by the group that evening, the wines being as varied as the glasses, ranging over six countries in both hemispheres.

Simon Alper (OS) spoke to us in November on the subject of "Sparkling Wines and Champagne" and brought over some excellent examples from his own vineyard, Chilford Hundred Wines, near Cambridge, as well as wines from Italy, California, Australia and, of course, France! The trials, tribulations and experiments of the wine grower/maker were brought into sharp focus in his delightful and crisply witty exposition.

The Spring term brought Mrs Felicity Sidders of Nene Valley Wines, Northampton, to us once again, this time to give an authoritative and informative lecture on Italian wines. It was a good lesson in Italian geography, too, with wines coming from all areas.

In April we were visited by one of our long-time supporters, John Dudbridge of S.H Jones, in Banbury. As usual, his ineffably witty and urbane way of coaxing Stoics to put forward their opinions in this carefully thought-out blind-tasting marked him out as a natural educator and thespian. Wines from all over the world appeared in steady succession, followed by those you might find in a car journey 'avec dégustation' along the Rhône Valley and we finished with a most excellent champagne.

Our last visitor of the year was Tim Ferguson (OS) of Lay and Wheeler Ltd., Colchester, who, in his inimitable and delightfully entertaining fashion, impressed his audience with another, but different journey into Rhône-land. Lirac, Crozes-Hermitage, Gigondas, Chateauneuf-du-Pape, Côte Rôtie (great favourites of PVC and MW), names which roll off, and even better, on to, the tongue. Our palates were suitably seduced by these vintages, the *coup-de-grâce* being delivered by a Muscat de Beaumes de Venise; oh, roll on Christmas!

Philip Cottam, though always up to his antlers in school responsibilities, has remained a staunch supporter of the Society, helping at, and attending all of our meetings this year. The thanks of the Society also to Geoff Higgins (Catering Manager) and Paul Reid (Head Houseman) and their staff for their ever-reliable services, without which we could not function.

In retrospect, I am sure that, as in previous years, members of the Society will now have realised what deep fascination there is to be had from the study and understanding of wines. Something to treasure for a lifetime. John Keats' line "Give me books, fruit, French wine and fine weather and a little music out of doors..." should touch a chord in all our hearts.

MW

Foundationers

In September 1998 the Foundationers organisation was resurrected in a form different from that which had been operating previously at the School. The idea was to introduce the whole of the Third Form year to various "life skills". Each of the eight activities is attended by the boys for three weekly sessions on a Monday afternoon. Here they are taught basic skills or ideas - the sort of thing which will stand them in good stead in the years to come - the kind of skills we often take for granted. First Aid, drama, keyboard skills, life-saving, thinking and leadership, navigation, social skills and physical fitness.

The pupils achieve scores based upon their "attendance, attitude and attainment" and a running total is kept. At the end of the year those boys who have attained a minimum standard will be awarded a particular class of Foundationers Certificate. The "pass" is not automatic - it must be earned.

So far the pupils have responded very positively. They are enjoying the predominantly "hands-on" approach and are gaining an enormous amount from the programme. Staff and Sixth Form assistants are delighted by the enthusiasm (and competition!) generated. All are looking forward to the giving of prizes in June.

AKM



AKM congratulates Foundationer Freddie von Schröder who gained the highest award for the year

Pitt

The Pitt Society, an historical discussion group that had temporarily fallen into desuetude, was successfully revived. Lower-sixth Historians attended by invitation to share a pleasant glass or two and cheese as well as discussion on a variety of challenging topics. Ben McCarey began the year by leading a session on "What makes a nation?" where few conclusions were reached but Northern Ireland was mentioned a lot. Philippa Newman argued persuasively that, on

occasion, dictatorship has its advantages in "Is dictatorship always bad?" with JSM revealing his distinctly undemocratic leanings as well as several members highlighting the autocratic tendencies of the school system. Lauren Small attempted to undermine the whole enterprise in "The denial of history" by arguing, depressingly but compellingly, that not only Holocaust sceptics denied the past but that we all did, whether consciously or not, including professional historians.

We were encouraged to question the somewhat clichéd connection between religion and war by Alex Lyell in "Why are war and religion so interconnected?" with the discussion revealing clear disagreement between members, some of whom held firmly to the idea that religion caused war while others accepted Alex's assertion that the causes of war were always very complex and that it was religion abused that was so often the cause rather than religion itself.

A heated debate on the rights and wrongs from an historical perspective of the NATO involvement in Kosovo saw PVC defend the action while JSM opposed, neither fully agreeing with the position they were taking. A lively discussion followed with particularly impassioned and well-argued denunciation of the West by Diana Bojilova. No vote was taken.

Finally, we were treated to brief biographical reviews on Hibbert's Nelson (Rupert Burchett); Hill's Cromwell (Alex Lyell); Duff Cooper's Talleyrand (David Widdick) and Cronin's Catherine the Great (Diana Bojilova). All were balanced and informative with the life of Talleyrand particularly well highlighted. It has been an excellent year with much discussion provoked and keen and regular attendance reflecting the historical commitment of the year-group.

Members: PVC, JSM, Diana Bojilova, Rupert Burchett, Nicholas Chambers, Alexander Lyell, Benedict McCarey, Charles Neville-Smith, Philippa Newman, Alexander Pooley, Lauren Small, Roman Strecker and David Widdick.

JSM

Science

Activities this year have been confined to attending Friday Evening Discourses at the Royal Institution in London, in style of course, with smoked salmon and a glass of bubbly augmenting school packed supper as we headed down the M40! As a gathering place for eminent scientists over the last two centuries, the RI welcomed its first female Director, Prof. Susan Greenfield this year as it starts its Bicentennial Celebrations.

The relative young discipline of Materials Science (many of its pioneers are still alive) was the subject of a lecture in the Autumn term. Prof. Charles Friend from Cranfield University ranged widely over new techniques for breast cancer screening, stab-proof clothing and "smart" domestic products. Prepare for kettles and other such household items that change shape to indicate the stage they have reached – the spout will "appear" when the kettle has boiled!

'Unravelling the structure of Matter' by Prof. Richard Catlow, Deputy Director, followed in the Spring term and showed how much we have advanced in our understanding of the structure of matter over the last one hundred years – an object lesson for the A-level candidates. Relying heavily on powerful computer graphics to display molecular architecture, Prof. Catlow showed how complex structures could now be designed and then built in the laboratory to provide,

for example, new catalysts that could improve fuels and reduce pollution.

Earlier in the Spring term a small group of A-level Biologists attended a discourse by Sir Walter Bodmer on the latest advances in the battle against Cancer. The programme for the year ended in March with a "Journey to the Anti-World" by Prof. Frank Close, known to the general public for his RI Christmas Lectures on BBC TV a couple of years ago. With "anti" Hydrogen atoms now being produced, the mind-boggling prospect of a mirror image "anti-world" may not seem so extraordinary! A report on this Discourse by one of the Stoics who attended appears elsewhere in this publication. So the year ended with a sleepy band of Stoics returning up the M40 to the real (?) world of Stowe at around midnight.

BHO

Think Tank

An experiment for this year's Lower Sixth Form, run by SGAH in conjunction with BRE and JMC. Its aim: to bring together the academics of the year group in an informal setting where we tackled important issues, solved problems and had fun.

This year we met on Wednesday evenings and discussed many topics. The content of meetings ranged from "The Meaning of Life" to "Do straight lines follow the curvature of the Earth?" and other mind expanding questions. One particularly successful discussion involved our being organised into a version of The American Government (Pippa Newman as President and David Widdick as National Security Adviser were two of the more intriguing pieces of role casting) to re-make all the strategic decisions precipitated by the events of the Gulf War. Did we do better than the real US government of the time? Hard to judge – just as it was surprisingly hard to judge between various versions of openings and endings of famous old movies or a literary "Call my Bluff" night in which teams read out a sentence from a well-known novel alongside five self-penned alternatives; leaving to the opposing team to sort out which one was which.

The turnout was surprisingly good, although many found it hard to attend due to conflicting loyalties to other societies. All who attended would like to thank SGAH, BRE, JMC and all involved in organising Think Tank. We think it was a success.



A Balloon Debate in the Music Room

CCF

CONTINGENT COMMANDER'S REPORT

All sections have been busy throughout the year providing a wide range of activities. The taster programme has continued to ensure that our proficiency cadets experience cross service activities throughout the year. It now seems some time ago that Air Commodore Kennedy visited Stowe as inspecting officer for our biennial inspection. The Air Commodore spent a great deal of time talking to our cadets and felt very at ease with them. He saw a typical taster day and got a feel for what we do without us laying on anything special. The report itself? "The best we have ever had" was the comment from Ray Dawson. Inspection Day passed by and it was pleasing for all to receive a pat on the back from the MoD.

Paul Sewell has found time to select a few interested cadets and convert a store room back into a signals room. The cadets themselves fitted the furniture and when funds permit, some more up to date signals kit will be installed. The aims of this new section are high and it will evolve over the next few years into a good support unit for the CCF.

Field days have been more active this year as staff have been available to accompany cadets on a wider variety of activities. The army section have made full use of the Longmoor training area for exercise and range shooting. The Navy and RAF sections have utilised

Yardley Chase where they found demanding conditions for their overnight bivvy. Despite this, the majority emerged from the experience hardier and better equipped to lead cadets on future field days. Visits to Station X at Bletchley Park, sailing at Calvert lake, air experience flying and gliding trips have proved to be worthwhile field day activities.

A feature of Easter camp in recent years has been the inconvenient weather conditions. Inconvenient in so much that it has rarely prevented us from achieving what we wanted to do. The camp site soon became muddy and tents had to be moved and areas fenced off. All activities went ahead with indoor and outdoor climbing, abseiling, canoeing, sailing, mountain biking and orienteering. Unfortunately we had to cancel the climb up Skiddaw as the peak could not be seen and was covered in snow! We did, however, have an enjoyable swim in the local hotel swimming pool. Ray has made the welcome decision to move next year's camp to the Summer holidays.

The Coldstream Cup competition continues to become more and more competitive with several records broken this year. Demands on staff for training and preparation were higher than previous years. Temple were the eventual worthy winners with Lyttelton again taking the girls' honours. Nugent broke the record for the Casualty Shield with a new record time on the assault course. Grafton were the Casualty Cup winners and Grenville set a new record for the run. Peter Mann was awarded the Nulli Secundus Cup for the most outstanding cadet of the year. The dinner proved to be a tremendous occasion with Brigadier Nick Cottam (yes a relation!) the guest speaker. Roddy McLaughlan played the

bagpipes before dinner and, as Mr. Vice, gave the loyal toast.

In the background we have had a number of other inspections concerning the armoury, weapons and equipment we hold. All have been good and it is a credit to Ray Dawson that our equipment is kept to the demanding standards that the MoD set.

My thanks go to all the staff who have helped out this year making it a smooth and successful one. We continue to have support from the ground staff (Leigh Horwood), catering department (Mark Stonnel) and school office (Sandra Amdor) where the releasing of staff can be difficult. The Pioneers and 16 cadet training team have given us their total support enhancing our activities almost on demand. The Army Air Corps have provided us with helicopter flights towards the end of the year. We say goodbye and thank you to JJH who has given freely of his time. His assistance was highly valued and we wish him well in his new post at Dauntsey's School. Peter Mann and Ben Morgan have done a superb job as senior cadets and we thank them for all their time and effort.

We look forward to an exciting year in 1999/2000 with senior cadet promotions as follows:

Under Officer WO1: Ed. Balfour
Cadet Sergeant Major: WO2 J. Mann
Senior Cadet RN Coxswain: T. Koka
Senior Cadet Army WO2: C. Sargeant
Senior Cadet RAF WO: R. Prentice.

CCF ties have been awarded to:

C. Sargeant, B. Morgan, E. Balfour,
T. Draper, J. Mann, E. Gambarini,
H. Arbuthnott, R. Prentice, R. McLaughlan,
J. Lyon, T. Hook, P. Mann, R. Jones,
A. Sakdicumduang, H. Harrison.

SHM



RAF SECTION

I took over the section just after the Autumn Term field weekend. I have enjoyed the challenge and look forward to developing the RAF side of the CCF. A cadre course is currently running where Rikki McCowen, Buster Drummond and Philip Ashworth will no doubt be the future NCO's. Philip Ashworth and Theo Turner both successfully gained wings after a week's gliding course at RAF Newton. A summer camp at RAF Leuchars is planned and hopefully a station visit to RAF Brize Norton, which unfortunately was cancelled due to the troubles in Kosovo. At the first field weekend in the Spring Term Sgt. Rob Prentice was in charge of cadets staying overnight at Yardley Chase which was extremely wet and muddy but enjoyed by all. On the second Field Day Chris Garner injured his wrist and he and I were treated to the "luxury" of ration pack stew and dumplings and lots of tea courtesy of the "real" Army! We also managed to get some gliding in at RAF Little Rissington and a trip to RAF Halton is planned for this purpose. Air experience, flying Bulldogs, was the highlight of the year, when cadets took to the air, some taking the controls and doing "air acrobatics". A good time was had by all!

FLT. LT. JENNY COPE

GLIDING

The boys of the RAF section have enjoyed another year's gliding as part of their overall flight education. It seems to me that they are thoroughly spoilt! They certainly love every minute of it. Rising at a leisurely hour to be ferried over an unspoilt area of Buckinghamshire called Hinton-in-the-Hedges, there they are met by the enthusiasts of the Aquila Gliding Club. The pilots come from all walks of life and all have a passion for soaring the skies. Their enthusiasm rubs off automatically on all Stoics; Ed West, Matt MacLeod, Alan Griffin and others all come back after a long day almost singing of their exploits! Fortunately I know why. I too have felt the strange sensation of being towed up to 2000 feet behind a noisy tug plane and then, all of a sudden, hearing the clunk of the tow rope being released; and the subsequent peace of the skies. The amazing sensations of watching the small, busy world pass by and searching for that next bit of "lift" to take you to greater heights. A great privilege to belong to the CCF.

AJW

AIR CADET LEADERSHIP COURSE

The course is one of the most highly regarded within the CCF and ATC. It is run by RAF recruits currently in the Services and lasts six days. Initially you are introduced to the concept of leadership via talks and practical exercises in the form of command tasks. These tasks get progressively more demanding as each criterion is successfully fulfilled. The tasks are not only to assess the potential leader but to help him recognise how people who have never met before best work together in order to produce the required needs. At the end of each day there is a debriefing of the past 24 hours' activities and every cadet is given areas to think about for the following day.

Before any of this you are expected to pass a fitness test in the form of a 10 minute mile and achieve a "basic" level on a bleep test. There are also a 20-mile

mapwork exercise and a 15-mile orienteering task. These exercises are the main areas in which cadets fall short, lack of fitness and poor preparation often leading to blisters and train tickets home.

On the penultimate night all cadets take part on an exercise which includes camping out and being totally self-sufficient. The final two days in the field are the most demanding of the course and troubled many, but experience of numerous field weekends in the Stowe CCF was an enormous help. The course ends with a barbecue and a full parade in which all cadets who completed the course receive their certificates and brassards (yet another badge on your sleeve) before departing.

The professionalism and enthusiasm of the course is terrific. I strongly recommend it!

ROBERT PRENTICE

COLDSTREAM CUP



Temple – overall winners



Nugent were easy winners of the Drill Competition

CCF CAMP, EASTER 1999

Many members of the CCF braved the unpredictable weather of the Lake District for a week of challenging and entertaining activities. We made camp near Keswick amidst spectacular mountains and lakes. Throughout the week we were confronted by a variety of different activities: orienteering, abseiling, mountain-biking, sailing and canoeing.

During the week many individuals distinguished themselves in different ways. Ben Sanchez showed us his skill for abseiling, Nikhil Chauhan displayed his sporting talent and George Norton his calibre as an entertainer and impersonator. There was a friendly (if heated at times) competition between four teams, which was of course won by the D Team with Will Gaze's A Team in close second. Chuck Stanton's and Hugo Harrison's teams came joint third.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members of staff and others who helped make the camp such a success: Mr Dawson, Mr Malling, Mr Ellis, Leigh, Mark, Mrs Amdor, Miss Dore, Mrs Cope, Jamie and Richard Hignett, Buddy Wheatley, Chesney Clark, Pony, Taro Koka, Jack Frost, Lucy and Tess.

EDWARD BALFOUR



FIELD DAY: CALVERT LAKE MAY 1999

It is said that the two last useful items to have aboard a sailing vessel are a mowing machine and a Royal Navy Officer; and, if you are short of space, jettison the Officer in preference to the mowing machine. Mindful of this, both Lt. T. Ellis and Cmdr. J Hutchinson RNR kept well away from attempting to sail themselves and took command of the rescue boats and shore-based activities (setting up the barbecue), while the cadets launched the 420s and Toppers. Once Alex Spencer-Churchill had righted his 420 dinghy, amazingly capsized while still tied up alongside the pontoon, sailing got underway with great enthusiasm until the numbing cold of the water and the incessant rain caused an early abandonment of waterborne activities and several enquiries of "How long till lunch?". Chief Pony Moore, having seen the Toppers safely deployed, had erected a splendid awning of green plastic with the careful use of 6" nails under which the barbecue, under the command of LJG, produced quantities of burgers and sausages. The Naval Section did itself proud and devoured lunch in the best traditions of the Senior Service; all washed down with lashings of coke. With spirits restored and the rain stopping we set forth again in fitful sunshine and a moderate south-westerly. Harry Heneage and Alex Wilson won the Yorkie Bar Award for their performance in the 420 class race of the day and Ollie Weston took line honours in the Toppers. At the end of the day all men and machines survived unscathed in spite of the close scrutiny given to the undersides of the majority of the Toppers. Hussein Safa learnt quickly how to drive the inflatable safety boat and James Johnstone also became quite proficient at high-speed passes in the other, ostensibly trying to rescue Tom O'Halloran from his umpteenth capsize of the day. The majority declared that they'd had a really enjoyable time and were profuse in thanks...

COMDR. J. HUTCHINSON RNR



RN SECTION

We have had another busy year. The absence of sixth-formers from the section has thrust early responsibility on the junior NCOs, in the forms of James Johnstone, Mark Mackay-Lewis and Howard Thomson, promoted as a result of their showing at last summer's Naval Cadet camp aboard HMS Bristol. The programme has included activities as diverse as survival, radio communication and sailing, in addition to naval knowledge, leadership tasks and rope-work.

Field Days have provided milestones in the experience of the cadets, and the officers too. In the autumn term the Field Days were literally that for the fourth year, as they were introduced to the obstacle course before discovering the contents of the naval air survival box and learning how to build shelters and make fire without matches; the fifth year were divided into cerebral and physical, sailing in the Morning Star of Revelation into strong winds and heavy seas in the Thames estuary or doing the long and fascinating walk around the exhibition on codebreaking, including Enigma itself, at Bletchley Park. Spring term was the greatest physical challenge, many succumbing before even departing for Yardley Chase training area. The area had its naval connection in being a "sea" of mud, as well as the weather being generally wet and cold. The exercises were done jointly with the RAF Section and involved building bivouacs, sleeping in them, living off ration packs, navigation and attack and defence scenarios; Howard Thomson and the RAF's Buster Drummond were the section leaders with Will Barker looking every bit the walking bush. In the summer the navy returned to the water with a raft building session and a day's sailing. The raft building was run as a competition between the fifth and fourth years; it was won by the fifth years on a raft designed and built under the direction of Harry Heneage and Alex Kirkwood, who both took the two-man craft on its maiden voyage across the Eleven Acre Lake. The rest of the team followed, although Patrick Bingham didn't make the whole journey on the raft. The fourth year design, largely the work of Alex Tate, was artistically symmetrical any way up: a feature it displayed every time a cadet tried to board it, Tom Campbell being the first of several intrepid seamen to try.

TJE

SIGNALS SECTION

On the 7th March of this year the newly formed CCF Signals Section comprised entirely of volunteers went walkabout to Bletchley Park, also known during the war as "Station X". Station X was the world's best kept secret during the war and cold war years, as it was the home of the famous code breakers. Whilst this in itself may not seem enthralling the highlight of the trip is to see both the ENIGMA machines and the first computer named "Colossus" which has been reconstructed from just six photographs and half of one sheet of the electrical plans. The computer is now working and can read characters at an amazing 2000 character per/set.

Upon arriving at the park we were given a tour of the house which contains the Winston Churchill Museum and static displays of the various forms of the ENIGMA machines. All of this is set in a splendid country house with an interior mostly of English oak. After some initial apprehension the Stoics were ready to move! And we were off with our guide around the site. After walking through the grounds for a few minutes we arrived at the Radio Room which has a fully working Amateur Radio Station

manned by ex-service personnel some of whom were previous employees of the facility. We were welcomed and shown around whilst some signals traffic was being passed as part of a competition they were taking part in! Burchett and Turner made straight for the Slow scan tv station that was working and found themselves immortalised on television for the world to see. After this we continued our tour and took in the sights which consisted of the "Cipher Trail" which led you around several rooms in which was displayed the total history of Cryptography starting from the most basic to the most incomprehensibly complicated notably The Japanese Admiralty codes. One look at these and suddenly A-level Maths became clear! The tour culminated with a look around the RAF and Communications hardware collected over the years. Verdict: a very interesting and enlightening day out.

On the 8th March the signals had their first attempt at a field day exercise. This was to be a most memorable event. Of the total number going several were either suffering or absent due to the 'flu bug and those left had twice the work to do. However it was decided to go ahead with the visit to Yardley Chase together with the Navy section and some RAF.

The object of the day was to provide communication to the exercising groups in a typical "capture the Flag" exercise. At least that is what most thought. The reality was somewhat different: The signals team were indeed providing communications to the North and South units but also providing "Intelligence" information to a third independent force i.e.: the staff who were to capture any or all of the opposing forces. This was fine in the planning stages but due to the lack of numbers proved to be quite dangerous for our new "undercover" Stoics. One had his cover blown soon after the beginning of the exercise due to a suspicious trooper from one section who began an impromptu interrogation and discovered the undercover Stoic was not as good at keeping a secret as he thought he was. This was followed by some Radio trouble and weather problems. The exercise was a success despite the muddy, wet and cold group of "Covert" Stoics who survived it!

So if you notice a Stoic acting strangely or talking oddly into a little black box beware! You may be under surveillance by the signals section!

PRS (HEAD OF SECTION)



Coldstream Cup: Lyttelton setting the pace

ADVANCED INFANTRY

The Advanced Infantry Platoon of the CCF (Army) has had an active and varied year. The platoon started out 36 strong with James Lyon as the SNCO in charge well supported by James Feilden, Robert Bell, Tim Hook and Robin Jones. The programme began with an emphasis on infantry tactics, field craft and map reading. The first field day of the year was held at Stowe and involved an overnight exercise which tested both field craft and map reading as well as the Stoics' ability to look after their equipment when faced with a number of rapid and unexpected night moves. The following day was spent doing a seemingly endless series of section attacks against an enemy who never quite took the expected or obvious course. It was a tired but more experienced group who returned to their Houses.

The Spring Term saw the platoon split three ways with one group forming part of the patrol competition team, another group doing a "methods of instruction" course and the remainder continuing to improve their military and self-reliance skills. The platoon came together again for a very successful and demanding night exercise at Longmoor. The platoon found itself map reading at night (in some cases getting very lost!), patrolling and also guarding a base camp. The enemy under PVC and JJH made a nuisance of themselves for most of the night. The exercise ended the following morning with a successful platoon attack which involved the attackers in a much more varied and complicated situation than they had expected. A great time was had by all and a significant amount of blank ammunition and pyrotechnics were used up. It was a tired but happy party which endured the two hour coach journey back to Stowe.

The Summer Term saw the platoon start to disintegrate as its members started to get involved in the exam season. However, this did not stop DGB taking a patrol team to the regional competition at which they smashed the record for the forced march. As some of the senior members could not attend because of exams they lacked the experience to keep up the same standard in the more technical stands. Field Day was run at Longmoor again but this time on the ranges. Once again the Pioneers came to the rescue. Despite Kosovo they produced a team of twelve to help run the ranges and lay on some background activities. The young soldiers impressed not just with their smartness and fitness but also with their confidence and sense of humour. It was a splendid day and the Stoics had lots of fun as well as learning a great deal. It was a fitting end to a great year.

PVC

ARMY SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp was held at Leek in Staffordshire this year. The camp is just outside the small country town of Leek on the south west corner of the Peak District. Indeed, the grit-stone cliffs of the Staffordshire Roaches are only ten minutes drive away. A small party of twenty under the leadership of PVC arrived on Saturday 3rd July after a long and hot bus journey. The first evening was spent in settling in, in preparing clothing and equipment and in briefings for the next day.

The first day was spent on military training run by a Sergeant from the Welsh Fusiliers with a droll sense of humour. He was helped by a number of young soldiers from the Staffordshire Regiment. The day was spent on a number of different military activities varying from making a shelter to giving fire orders and doing section attacks. The following day did not start so well. An hour and a half bus journey to a range that turned out to be closed was not good for morale, especially on a very hot day. The system sorted the problem out quickly. The party moved to another range and within an hour of arriving at the closed range everyone was firing. For many of the Stoics this was their first experience of firing live with the cadet GP rifle. It is such a pity that the School is no longer able to fire on the 30-metre outdoor range in the grounds. Some of

the evenings at camp were spent on a range trying to build up more experience.

The following day was competition day. Every member of the group had to take part in all the activities. This competition was designed to test the teamwork and overall qualities of the various schools. Teams of gladiators were banned. The Stoics rose to the occasion and came 2nd= by only two points. With more experience at shooting they would have swept the board as they were the only team to get maximum points for both of the physical events. The forced march (6.5 kilometres on a very hilly course) was completed well within the bogey time with everyone coming in together as a squad. This was a tribute to their teamwork and to the determination of Ed Warr and Ben Sanchez to complete the march at the front of the squad. The story on the obstacle course was much the same. They did two of the three fastest times of all the 15 or so schools taking part. Indeed, they just missed getting the fastest time by 2 seconds. Better still the B team beat the A team home by four seconds. The Guards Sergeant Major running the competition, not a man moved easily to praise, described them as the best team at the Camp. In short, it was an excellent day. That evening the whole party went to Stoke to celebrate!

The next two days were spent in brilliant sunshine either climbing or canoe-

ing. It was a marvellous change after the military exertions of the first three days. The only drawback was that the packed lunches were still dominated by some very inedible sausage rolls. None of us will want to see, let alone eat, another sausage roll again for some considerable time. All good things come to an end and the final day saw a return to the rigours of military training on an exercise planned by PVC. As one would expect, it was full of the unexpected, varied in content, physically demanding and ended with a big battle. Ed Balfour, Tom Draper, Tom Baxendale, Henry Cavill and Chris Lyon had their powers of leadership tested while Ed Gambarini enjoyed playing the enemy. Everyone sweated buckets as it was the hottest day of the camp, everyone fired a great deal of ammunition and the visiting staff officer went away suitably impressed.

That evening and the next morning were spent in cleaning equipment, cleaning rooms and packing up ready to leave. The bus turned up on time and the return to Stowe managed to avoid both Birmingham and the British Grand Prix traffic. Thanks are due to Ray Dawson for all his hard work in getting the background administration done, to DGB and especially to Mrs Amdor for helping on the ground but most of all to a cheerful and hardworking bunch of Stoics who certainly lived up to the school's motto *Persto et Praesto*.

PVC

PATROL TEAM 1999

Before Easter a squad of sixteen boys trained long and hard to prepare for the Tancred Shield, a patrol competition held at Stowe each year and run by the Pioneer regiment. The squad had been broken into two teams and the individual units were beginning to train autonomously. Unfortunately with only three days to go before the actual competition the Pioneers were called to Kosovo and the competition became a casualty of war. Disappointingly the teams missed their chance to compete on their home patch. The Stoics involved deserve much credit, however, for the commitment and enthusiasm that they showed in the build-up to the competition; notably the sixth formers Peter Mann, Robin Jones and Ben Morgan. It is this trio who most richly deserved success in their final year of competition.

After Easter, Stowe entered a much younger and less experienced team into the 4 Division Cadets Skills Competition held on Longmoor Training Area at the end of April. A team of seven cadets travelled to Hampshire under the leadership of Jack Mann who took over the reins from his elder brother Peter. The other team members were William Gaze, Hugo Harrison, Edward Gambarini, Edward Balfour, Roderick McLauchlan and Nicholas Keyser.

The weather was kind over the two days and what was essentially a very inexperienced team competed remarkably well after very little preparation. What we lacked in technical knowledge



Back row: Hugo Harrison, Jack Mann, Roddy McLauchlan, Will Gaze.
Front row: Ed Balfour, Ed Gambarini, Nick Keyser

we made up for in guts and sheer effort. The team competed solidly in both the day orienteering and night navigation. As a unit they posted a very creditable time on the team assault course, and at the end of the first day's competition they actually performed the best out of the whole field on the individual assault course.

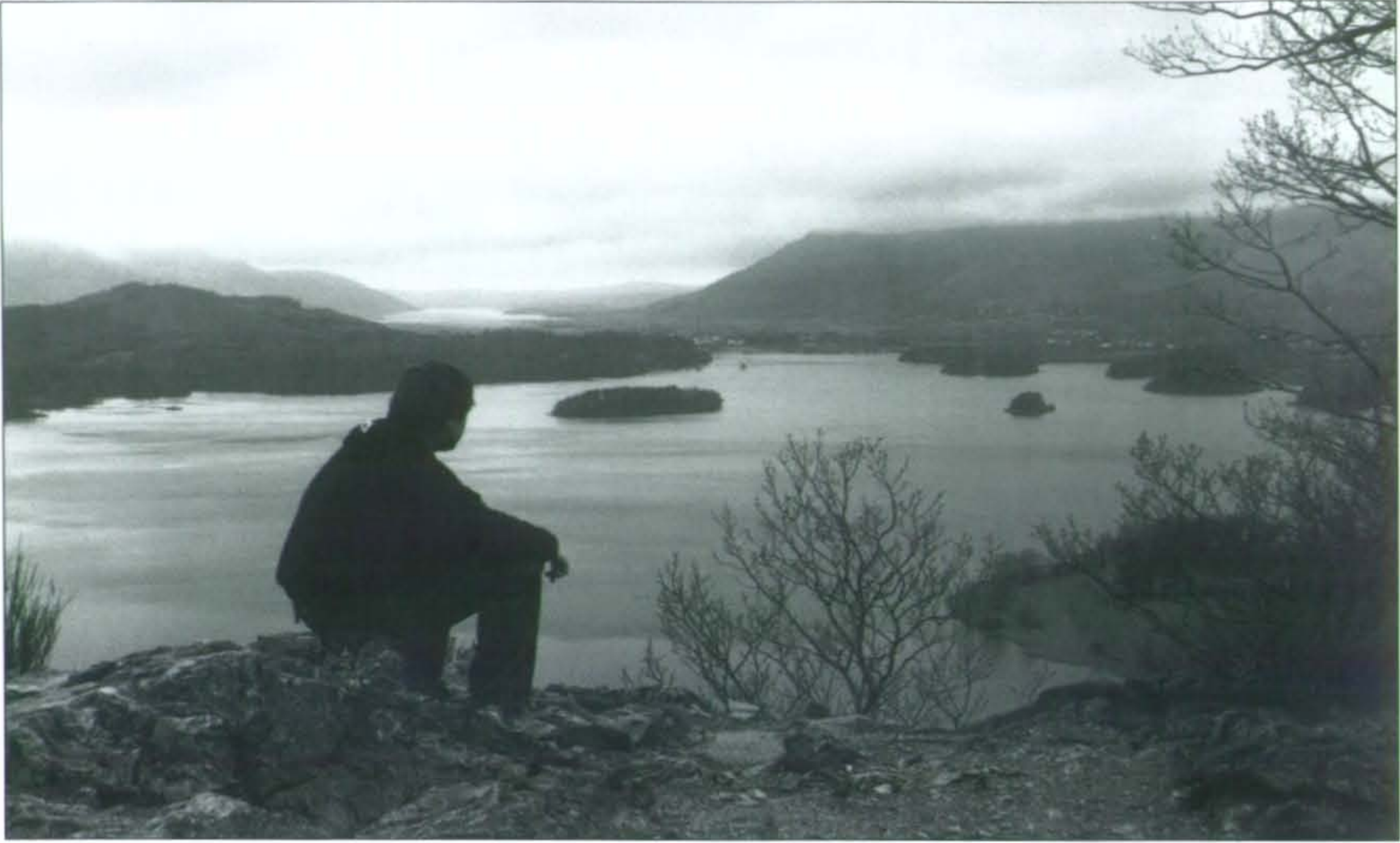
Going into the final day's competition Stowe had a good deal of ground to make up on the leaders of the competition. A task which was never really feasible; such was the strength of the field and our poor performance in some of the

more technical events the day before. However the Stowe team ended the competition with a remarkable performance in the 8 kilometre section of the march and shoot. Posting a time of 45min 13secs, the Stowe team came in over two minutes faster than anyone else in the field. This was just reward for the determination the team had showed, as well as the excellent leadership skills of Jack Mann, who clearly gained valuable leadership experience over the two days.

One can't help thinking that Stowe will be a force to be reckoned with next year.

DGB





Easter Camp in the Lake District, 1999





Flights with the Army Air Corps

Take-off



Bird's eye views of Stowe



Down to earth: Alan Griffin, Anthony Offley, Louis Buckworth, Matthew MacLeod, Oliver Cullingworth and Peter Rossiter

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

County Award Ceremony for Bronze and Silver

On Sunday 14th March Stowe's Duke of Edinburgh's Award group were honoured to be hosting the first county presentation for Bronze and Silver participants. All participating schools and youth groups involved in the award scheme in the Aylesbury Vale district were invited. Councillor Freda Roberts MBE presented the certificates. This year Stowe had quite a number of award winners in both sections.

Achieving Bronze standard were: Charles Archer, Jeremy Bodian, Piers Craven, James Elwes, Mark Harper, David Hyslop, Elliot Keane, Tom Kemble, Duncan Pearce, Alex Pooley, Hugo Rebbeck, Matthew Roche, Hector Ross, Henry Watson, William Watson, Jonathan Witt and Ben Scholfield.

Achieving Silver standard were: Sam Lyle, Hugo Mortimer, James Nettleton, Ben Scholfield and Jerome Starkey.

Some of the Stoics also assisted with the presentations: Jerome Starkey was Master of Ceremonies and spoke very clearly. Sam Lyle and James Nettleton managed the administration and registration effortlessly. David Hyslop was the model photographer. A number of Stoics also helped with the car parking (Ben Scholfield and James Elwes).

Below: Hugo Rebbeck and Matthew Roche receiving their awards.

Right: The fearless three RCS, EGJ and MDGW



Mountain Leader Training in the Lake District

Exhausted after the festivities of the New Year, MDGW, RCS and EGJ arrived at the Mountain Leader Centre in Sedbergh in order to go through the rigorous week long training to become Mountain Leaders. Such a course is normally a challenge but to attempt it in the middle of winter seemed remarkably masochistic as we faced a gloomy weather forecast of high winds, flooding and then a sudden cold snap with snow. For once the British weatherman was correct in his predictions and we did indeed struggle through all possible and hideous combinations of winter weather.

A Mountain Leader is qualified to take groups of people into mountains and potentially inhospitable terrain and such a qualification is a prerequisite of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme for at least one of the accompanying teachers/leaders. The intrepid three had volunteered to take on the training course even in the depths of winter.

We were eased in gently with a number of lectures on weather, camp craft, safety in the mountains as well as improving our navigational skills. Every afternoon we were let loose in the hills of the Lake District to put into practice

what we had learned. We battled through some of the worst weather to do our night navigation exercise, wandering around a pitch black mountainside looking for our orientation targets, bumping into sheep and falling down holes in the driving rain and sleet.

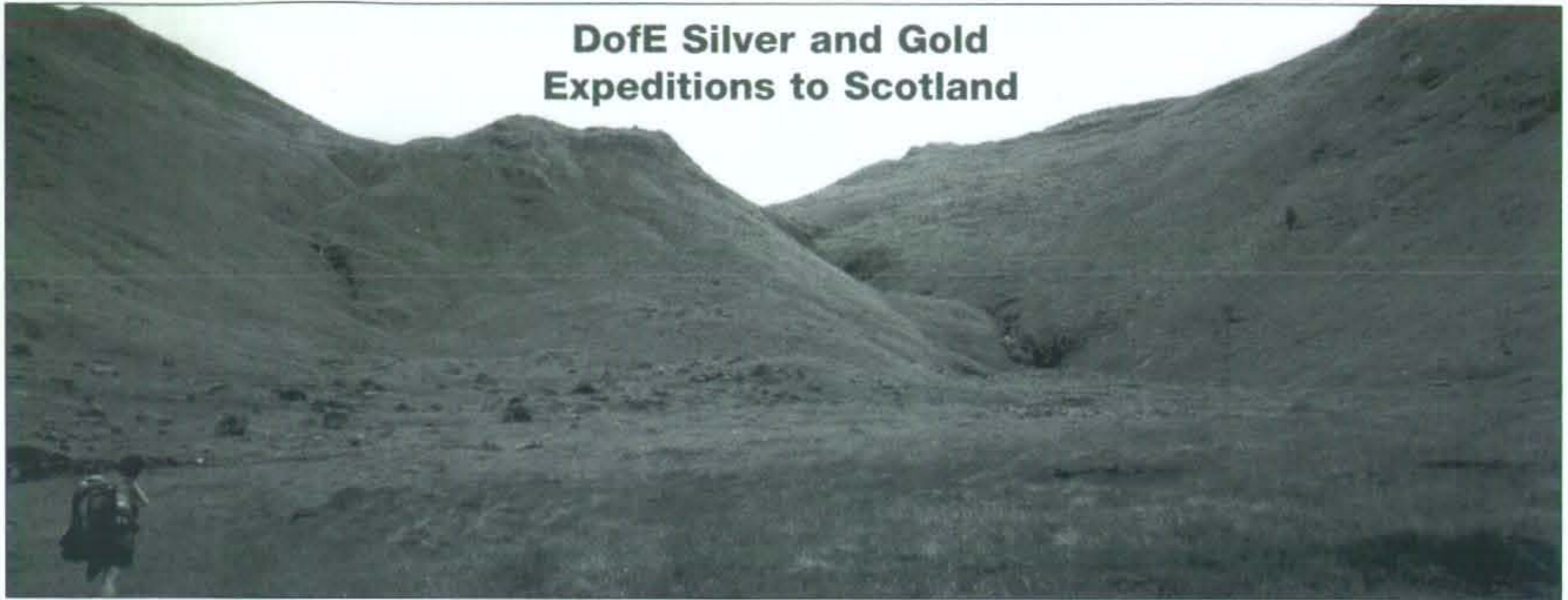
The rope-work proved difficult as we learnt how to lower someone down over precipitous ground and then to carry out an abseil using only one rope and no harness: not for the faint-hearted!

The culmination of the course was a 24 hour expedition involving five hours of walking at night and of course camping. By the time we had survived amongst other things the flooding, when the waters rose so high in the lane that the cook could not make it through to make our supper, we could not imagine it could get any harder. We were mistaken, for the temperature plummeted and we spent the night in deep snow protected from the elements by canvas.

Believe it or not, we are not yet Mountain Leaders. Now we have to gain at least one more year's experience and then do another week for the assessment. It is not a qualification to be taken lightly. Nevertheless the fearless three are determined to see it through to the end...

EGJ





DofE Silver and Gold Expeditions to Scotland

On Sunday July 4th 3 Silver and 1 Gold group set off by coach to their Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. The Golds had to walk for 50 miles in 4 days through wild country and the Silver groups had to complete 30 miles in 3 days.

We arrived in Scotland 9 hours later, having stopped off at Gretna Green on the way. We had a leisurely meal in the local hotel before we trekked the 4 miles to the bothy known affectionately as Cuiltemhuc. Camp was set up and we settled down for the night.

Early in the morning the Gold group set off for Aviemore, accompanied by Mr Murray and Mr Ghirelli. Over the next 4 days, Bertie Marsh, Simon Creek, Hugo Mortimer and Vladimir Karpov walked the 50 miles back to base camp. The journey was very successful and the group navigated with confidence. Although there were patches of bad weather (especially on the first day) the conditions were generally kind. The only problems that they had were the blisters that appeared due to the wet boots from the first day. The external assessor was extremely pleased with their walk and had no difficulty in passing each of them.

The 3 silver groups set off on Tuesday morning. Silver 1 was shadowed by Mr Wellington and Mrs Noble. They were a strong group but were shocked to find that KMN always managed to be ahead of them when walking and still found time to bathe in a river before they arrived at each camp. Silver 2 were shadowed by Mr Eve and Mr Harding. This group were quite slow due to the fact that they stopped off at every spring, waterfall, cowpat, dead animal or item of dubious interest. Silver 3 were followed by Mr Hirst and Mr Cocola. Although this group walked well it took them the whole of the first day to realise

what the compass was for. That was the reason it took them 8 hours to cover a 2 hour stretch of their walk. They finally arrived at the first night's camp at 10.15pm, very tired!! The second and third days were then planned in much more detail.

All of the groups arrived back on Thursday afternoon in good spirits and were all extremely pleased with the achievement they had made. There just remained the one final hurdle; The Staff versus Stoics football match. This again was a hard fought game but the staff with their superior fitness and skill managed to keep youthful inexperience at bay. The final score was 4-1 to the Staff with MDGW being robbed of his hat-trick by AKM's sympathetic final whistle!

We travelled back to Stowe after a hearty breakfast in the hotel. We even had a rare treat of travelling in a brand new coach with air conditioning.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves even though there were aching limbs and sore feet. Thanks must be given to the base camp boss, Mrs Shahani, and to the other staff that gave up their time for the trip.

AKM



STOWE WORLDWIDE

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Other Expeditions
Abroad



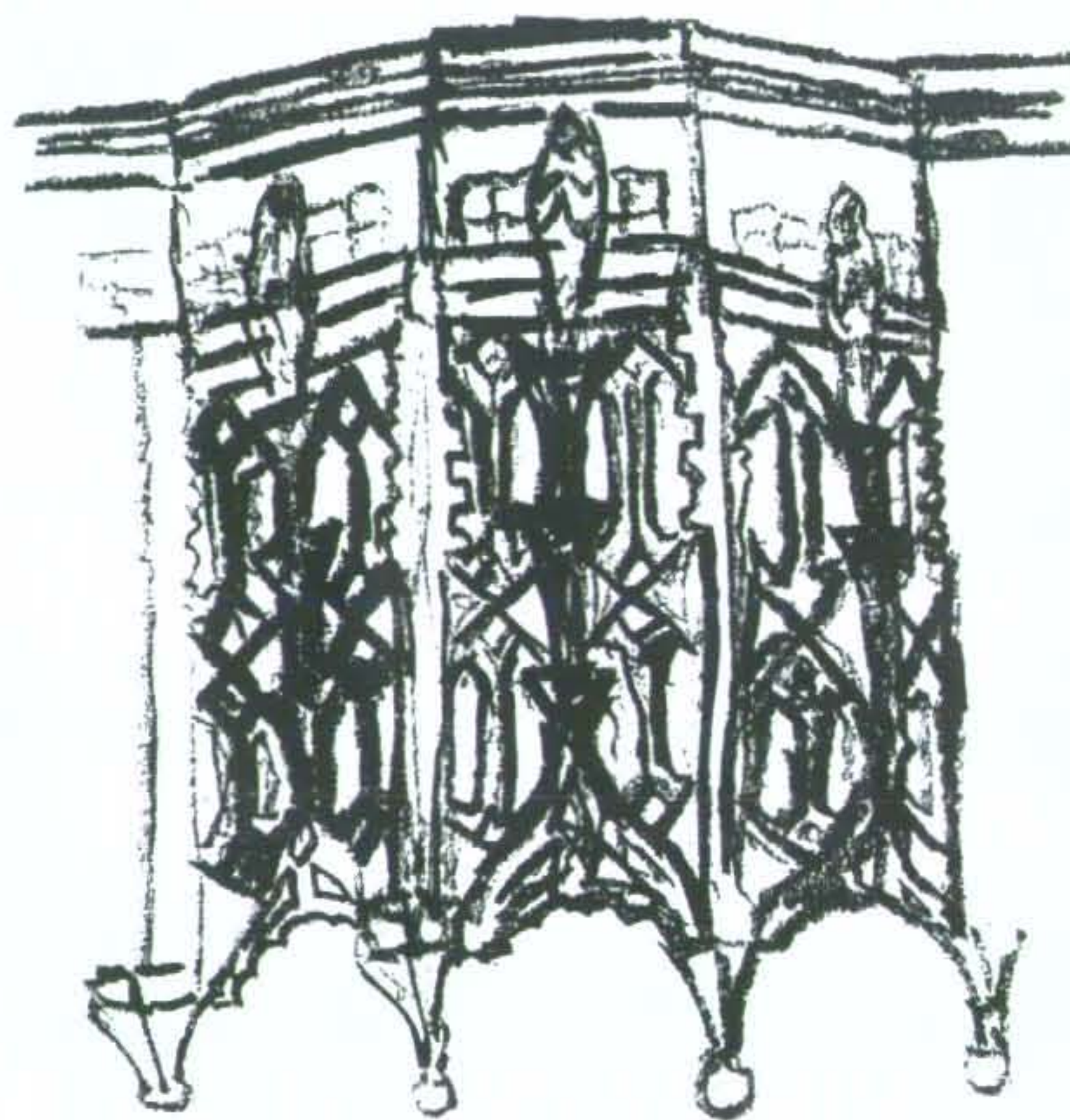
PARISIANS AT STOWE

Towards the end of June a party of eighteen Parisians came to stay for a week at Stowe, under the aegis of DWJ's International Development programme, studying architecture and landscape gardens in a course written and organised by the Visual Education Department.

The pupils of the Lycée Jean-Baptiste Say spent the mornings at Stowe and the afternoons at nearby places of architectural interest, accompanied by fifth-form and sixth-form Stoics. It proved an extremely rewarding visit from all angles and one we very much hope may be able to be repeated. A party of lower-sixth modern linguists from Stowe will be making a reciprocal visit to Paris this autumn.

Some examples of work done during the visit are included on these pages.

AGM



Detail, Gothic Library, Jean Hélie



Detail, Stowe Church, David Simonetta



Sketches by Gaëlle Métadier



Rigaud's "View of the Great Bason" as seen today, David Simonetta

VISIT OF DUTCH ART STUDENTS



Above: Janneke's "Collage of Stowe"
 Below: Esther's etching of the Chinese House
 "...how it would look in water".

Last Autumn term three students from Raayland College in Venray spent an enjoyable and most successful week at Stowe under the aegis of DWJ and GStJS.

"We have drawn a lot," writes Janneke van Berlo. "A couple of days we even spent the whole day till half past ten drawing in the Art School. The subject "art" is very different from this subject at our school. At Stowe you do a lot of still lifes and drawings based on observation. In Holland we do this less. Our lessons are more based on the developing of your fantasy and expressionism. But I always like drawing from observation so I liked the lessons at Stowe.... Esther and I made etchings for the first time..." Maarten Daudey was similarly enthusiastic: "The moment we set foot in Stowe's Art School we were astonished by the level of your students, especially in drawing and painting what they see. Their ability in analysing their three-dimensional subject and then transferring it to a flat surface is amazing..." Esther v.d. Pas chose to turn a drawing she had done of the Chinese House into an etching. "It used to be in the water but now it stands on dry ground. I tried to make an impression of how it would look in water. At first I made photocopies, cut out the house and turned it around. When I had done that, I drew in the surroundings..."



CONTEMPORARY BULGARIAN ART EXHIBITED AT STOWE

We are well used to receiving wonderful support from very many of our parents in a variety of ways but sometimes exceptional opportunities arise. When Mr Bojilov, Diana Bojilova's father, contacted us in April offering to send an entire exhibition of thirty seven oil paintings and lithographs by well-known Bulgarian artists to Stowe for a week in June we accepted the offer with alacrity.

An unexpected, and most welcome, spin-off from this offer came when our two Bulgarian students, Diana herself and Mila Stoilova, together with Dr James were invited to a reception at the Bulgarian Embassy in London to celebrate an important day in the Bulgarian calendar – 24th May, the day of the Slavonic alphabet and Bulgarian culture. Here we heard a recital by the talented violinist, Juliana Georgieva, and were entertained by the Ambassador to Bulgaria.

The paintings duly arrived and the exhibition was formally opened by Mr Bojilov and Kamen Chichmanov, the manager of the Romfeia Gallery in Plovdiv from where the paintings had originated. A wonderful evening in the Temple Room attended by both staff and pupils was enhanced by the arrival of eight members of staff from the Bulgarian embassy. They brought with them many crates of excellent Bulgarian wine, for which we were most grateful.

To both our A-level students and those lower down the school, this exhibition was a joy and a revelation. We took our Art, History of Art and Visual Education students to see it and they all came out with some reasoned opinions as to what they had enjoyed (or not) about the art and why. To the visitor who knows little about Central European or Bulgarian art perhaps the most striking features of the exhibition were the bright colours and the variety of techniques. Brilliant reds, blues and greens predominated, often laid on the surface of the canvases in thick impasto layers. Against that, the refined clarity of Buyukliiski's architectural composition stood out visibly.

Perhaps the most interesting discovery was the curious technique used on a series of paintings by Hristo Krlev. He laid gesso onto the surface of the canvas that he then carved or engraved, tilling the lines with colour. Over the engraved surface he then laid on yet bolder colours. The forms of many of his figures were strongly reminiscent of the Bulgarian heritage of Byzantine figures in their curved simple forms, large staring eyes and simple lines suggesting drapery folds.

It was good, however, to see traditional subjects and styles. The Bulgarian tradition of folktale art and even icons was evident in several of the paintings. Viewed as 'naive' by some but at the same time fascinating, these images of the landscape seen from a bird's eye view and at raking perspective challenged more 'realistic' images. At the back of several visitors' (and artists'?) minds were the paintings of Chagall whose love of Russian Jewish folklore and bright colours, elongated forms and bizarre perspective were echoed so strongly here. We are immensely grateful to Mr Bojilov for making it possible for us to gain glimpses of the work of these important artists and hope that we are able to maintain contact with our new friends at the Bulgarian embassy for many years to come.

DWJ/CCR

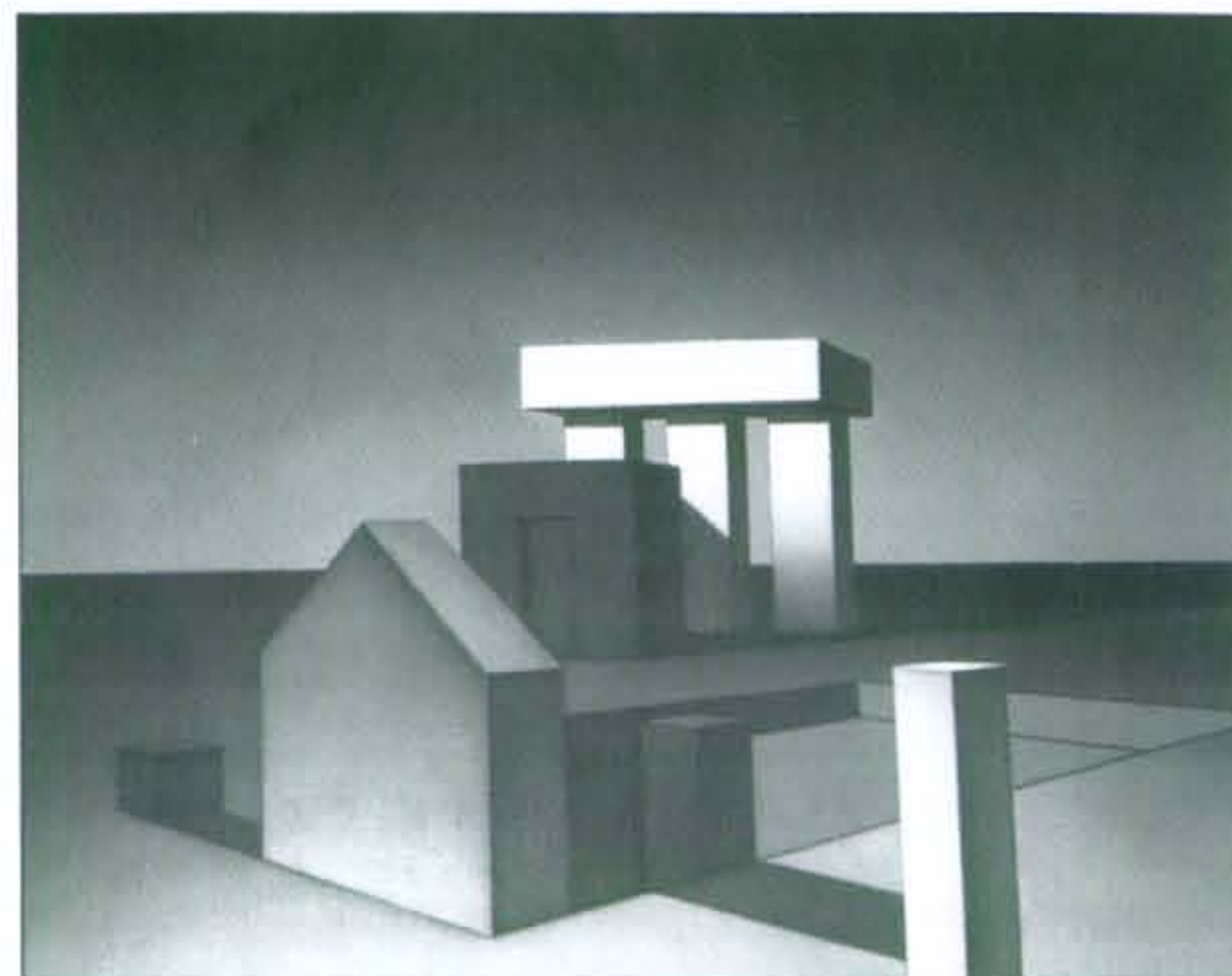


'A Harvest' by Hristo Hristov Ioshkata



DWJ with Kamen Chichmanov, Petia Dimitrova (interpreter) and Ivan Bojilov at the private view

Mrs Aglika Markova,
First Secretary,
Culture,
Bulgarian
Embassy,
London



'Composition' by Dimitar Buyukliiski

International Stowe

There is a clear international focus at Stowe. We have approximately 80 Stoics from abroad and 26 nationalities represented. In order to celebrate such cultural and international diversity there are a number of international events throughout the year. We have had a celebration for German Unity Day, a United Nations Day and an Italian evening with beginners' Italian lessons and home-made tiramisu.

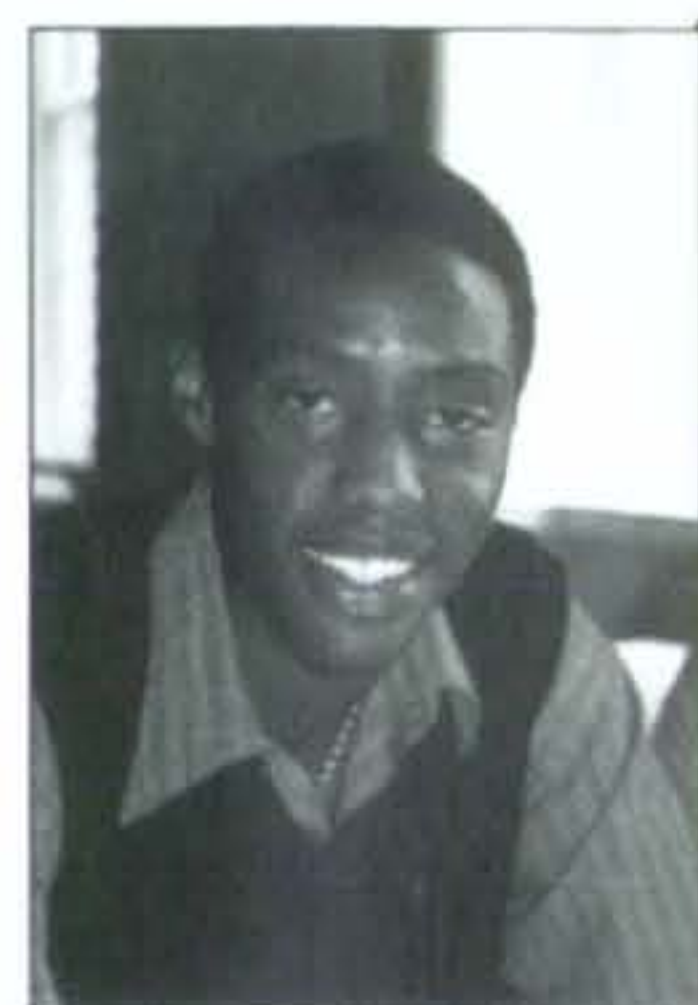
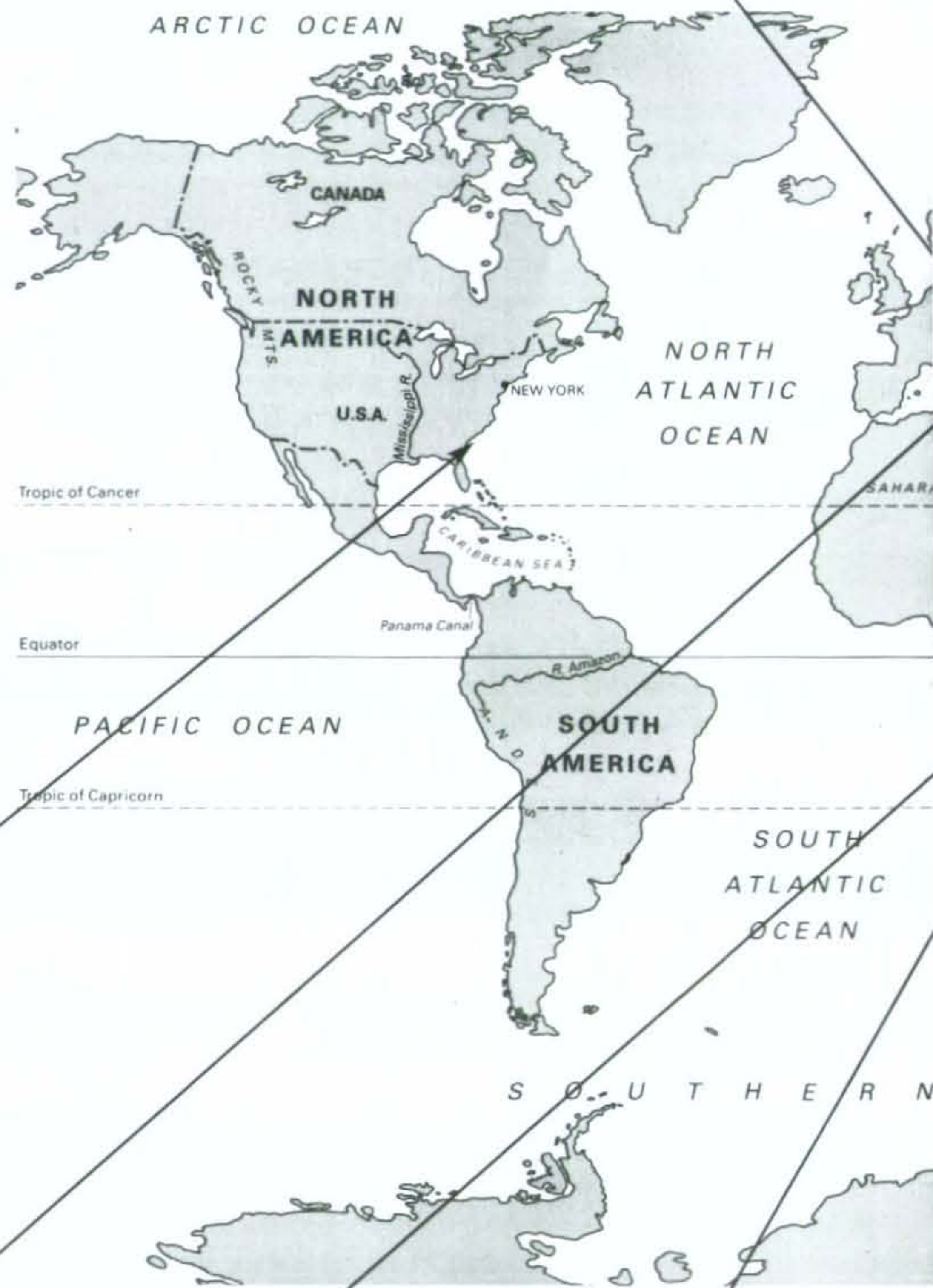
A very successful event was the Russian evening with blinis and other Russian delicacies provided by Rosemary Shahani and Rowena Pratt. Denis Martynov astounded us all by singing a Russian folk song and we all learnt some Cossack dancing. Spring 1999 heralded an African evening and the Stoics learnt a few facts about East and West Africa including the demonstration of a fertility dance and some Ugandan dishes prepared by Melissa Katto. Diana Bojilova and Mila Stoilova put a great deal of effort into their Bulgarian evening, bringing with them their traditional dress and some wonderful displays of Bulgarian art and architecture. In autumn 1999 there will be the annual International Supper and the Vindaloo Evening, the cultural origins of which are not hard to guess! These events provide the international pupils with the opportunity to share their culture with others and are an invaluable learning experience for the British pupil.

EGJ



I came to Stowe from Charleston, South Carolina, a place very different from here. I like the friendly people at Stowe, the grounds and staying in such a scenic place. There are many things different at Stowe compared to my home. I'm used to going to the beach, to warm weather and to a more tropical setting. Also a boarding school is much more confined and controlled, something I'm not used to. The school I went to in the States was very different; it was a day school about five minutes from my house. Overall I am glad I came to Stowe to start my A-levels and I like England very much. Nevertheless I think I will go back to the States for university.

MATTHEW BROCKBANK



Top:
Barbara Babei
(Belarus)

Right:
Pietro Melloni
(Italy)
Mugabe Kaijuka
(Uganda)
Wambaa Mathu
(Kenya)



Coming from Bulgaria, I found Stowe a great new experience and challenge. I was surprised that only a few people knew something about my country but in the same way I was glad to realise that Stoics are open to international students and

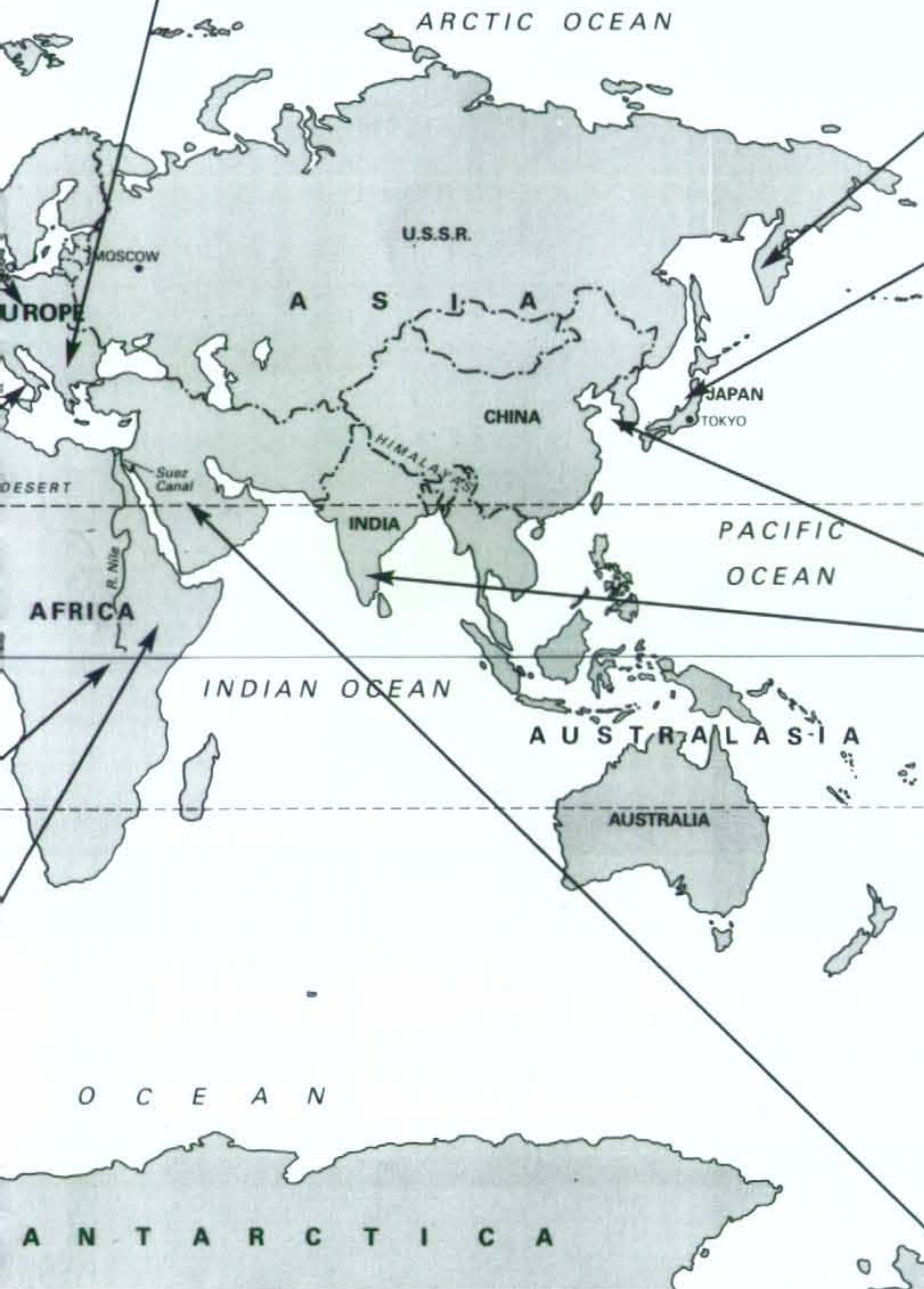
appreciate their unique culture. Being part of Stowe means a lot to me and I can happily say that I have learned from this. All the things we share together, all the friendship, the care and the support are unique and unforgettable. Stowe has given me what I want. I am happy that here I can choose my

A-levels and specialise, rather than having 15 compulsory subjects in Bulgaria. Besides, the atmosphere is always friendly and one of cooperation, where each individual is respected. Nonetheless there have been things that have amazed me about Stowe and England such as the school uniforms and not being allowed to walk on grass. However, I have learned to appreciate them as part of a different culture and education.

DIANA BOJLOVA



Above left and clockwise:
Dimitri Pestov (Russia)
Taro Koka (Japan)
Chirag Keswani (India)
Soo-Ah Paik (Korea)



Leaving your country, your parents, your friends, leaving everything behind and going to a country 3000 miles away is not easy. Especially if you are going to a place where you don't understand what everybody is saying, if you are going to a place which is completely different in culture, food and everything else. It is all very difficult to get used to. That was how I felt leaving Jeddah in Saudi Arabia and coming to Stowe.

It is almost like a human going to another planet, but not quite as far. That is how England seemed to look when I first came to Stowe. A whole new world.

Eventually after getting used to the weather, the food, the language and of course after staying four years in this country, it has now almost become normal for me. Of course there will always be one thing or another that makes you feel worried or insecure. That is inevitable.

At Stowe there is a lot of help and care given to foreign students to make sure they are feeling happy and they are welcomed. On behalf of all the international students I would like to thank Miss James for her continuous efforts and also thank the School as a whole.

TARIQ AL-BUHAI



THE MCELWEE TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP (I)

Frances Morley-Fletcher and Henrietta Askew
in Spain

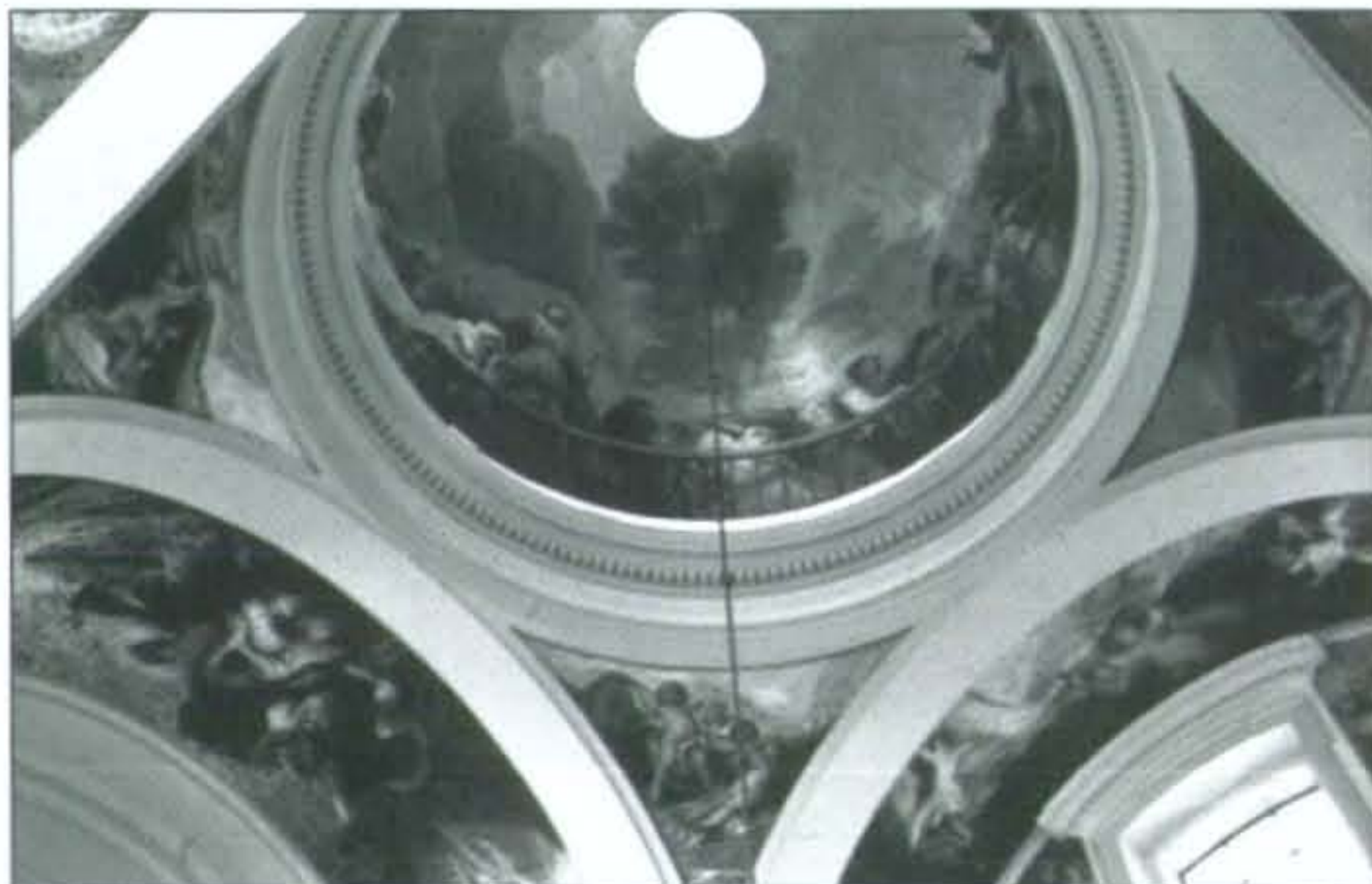
Last August Fran and I went off to Madrid taking with us the aim "To investigate the works of the three great artists of Spain, El Greco, Diego Velazquez and Francisco Goya". We explored the areas in Madrid which influenced their artistic achievements and we looked at how the artists influenced one another in their techniques and subject matter.

We also visited Toledo which contributed greatly to our discovery of El Greco and his art. During the two weeks that we spent in Spain, we also visited Avila, Segovia and the Escorial. These areas were not as beneficial to our task as Madrid and Toledo had been, but they showed us another part of Spain which was just as interesting.

Throughout our trip we sped from gallery to gallery. In Madrid we visited the Museo del Prado, the Centro de Arte Reina Sofia and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, all of which contained some fascinating works of art, although some of them were completely irrelevant to our project. We had intended to go to the Cason del Buen Retiro but sadly it was closed for restoration. Toledo was even more frenetic as we had to squeeze a lot of sight-seeing into three days, such as going to see El Greco's home and museum, various synagogues, a convent and other places of interest.

The trip proved to be profitable, both in terms of our education and A-level work, but also in life skills. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves in Spain and not only gained a great deal of knowledge but we also acquired a huge amount of experience in independence and money management.

Below: A statue of Goya in Madrid
Fran making the most of her camera
Goya's fresco in the Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida, Madrid.



El Escorial, outside Madrid



El Escorial, the weather changing for the worse.



A view of Toledo, showing the Gothic cathedral and the Alcazar



A courtyard in Toledo showing Moorish influence



The Alcazar in Segovia – straight out of a Disney film

THE MCELWEE TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP (II)

James Vane-Tempest and James Sleater in Macedonia

We were very fortunate this year to be awarded the McElwee Travel Scholarship. We proposed to travel to Vergina, Northern Macedonia, to investigate and, if possible, participate in an archaeological dig relating to King Philip II, at one of the most important excavation sites in the classical world. After originally deciding to travel to Greece by train, we found a last minute unbeatable offer to fly to Athens one way. As well as this, we also purchased an inter-rail pass, valid for a month, allowing us to travel anywhere in Europe by train.

We arrived at Athens mid-afternoon, and we concentrated our efforts on finding a place to stay rather than going straight to the tourist sites. We planned to visit the Acropolis the following morning to avoid both the heat and the crowds. Unfortunately, we arrived in the early afternoon and were greeted by soaring temperatures of up to 106°F and crowds of tourists. After a few hours admiring the Parthenon and the Erechtheum, we headed down the hill to the Roman Agora, where we could compare Greek and Roman architecture.



Sleats tickles the group with his skilful use of a pick-axe



VT shows Sleats his expertise when it comes to excavating



Down but not out

Next morning, after an extremely early start, we caught a 7am train and seven hours later we arrived in Thessaloniki. There was still another hour to go until arriving at our final destination, Vergina. Although exhausted, we thought it was right to introduce ourselves to the professor in charge of the excavations. We set off around the small town trying to find her, but to no avail.

The following day we again searched for the professor, and we eventually found her in her office just three houses away from our hotel! She introduced us to her excavation team, who were excavating a Hellenistic and Classical grave site. After a brief “run-down” to the excavation process, we were quickly set to work on our own grave. Two days later, we completed our grave and had found two perfume vessels, a large wine vessel and the remains of a woman, all dating to the 4th Century. The next day we watched the objects being restored and in the afternoon we were given our own vessels to restore.

We were very privileged to be given a guided tour of numerous tombs that will never be open to the public for preservation reasons. We are amongst only 100 people who have been able to go into Eurydice’s tomb (Philip’s mother) and that of Philip II (the father of Alexander the Great). The tombs at Vergina are historically very important as they are the only known examples of exterior painting on the outside of Greek buildings and led to the theory that other Greek buildings such as the Parthenon were originally painted.

On our second week we were moved to a new site, a raided tomb. The archaeologists in our group became very friendly and bought us presents including T-shirts of their favourite football teams.

One of the archaeologists owned a local night-club and gave us a job behind the bar for three nights; that was immense fun as we had to try and work out what people were trying to order! After a great two weeks we swapped more gifts and addresses. After saying goodbye to the professor who asked us to keep in touch and to come back again, we grudgingly left. We took a train down to Patras, and caught an overnight ferry to Brindisi. Luckily, there was a train waiting at the station to take us direct to Rome. We spent just two days in Rome but could have justified many more if our wallets would have allowed it. We visited the Vatican and were duly impressed by the works of Raphael and Michelangelo. The Pantheon, the Fountain of Four Rivers by Bellini, the Coliseum and St Peter’s were also a source of much interest.

Florence was our next stop. Unfortunately, our train arrived in the middle of the night so were forced to sleep at the train station. In the morning after very little sleep and a few odd looks, we headed for a little bite to eat. That day we visited the Uffizi and the Duomo, and took the option of catching a night train to Paris via Milan. After a quick tour of Paris, we jumped on Eurostar and after an amazing time abroad we finally arrived in England and headed straight for the nearest bed in which to catch up on several nights’ sleep.

The trip was tremendous fun and we very much recommend the LVI to enter for the award. It was a trip of a lifetime.

ARTISTS IN FLORENCE

4 p.m. At Stansted airport. In their monotonous pursuit of being cool, Girardot, Fenwick, Humphries and Ginge rocked up fashionably late with designer sunglasses firmly placed on the head – a ritual which was deemed to be a necessity throughout the trip. Blonde bombshell Jamie Haselwood, clad in a rustic cap, was the first real shock of the trip and, compared to Louis XIV he was accordingly nicknamed the ‘Sun King’.

Before we had even left the ground, CCR showed his true art historical colours by commenting on the minimalist architecture of Stansted airport which was created by Sir Norman Foster.

On arrival we drove from Pisa airport to our ‘5 star’ hotel. In typical Stoic fashion we arrived late, and thus missed our supper. After some slight aggravation over room allocation which, thankfully, was changed, we formed a crocodile and headed for Florence city centre in search of food and wine.

The first place we visited, the next day, was the Medici family Church of San Lorenzo (no Oscar, not the restaurant in Walton Street SW1.) Contained in Brunelleschi’s fine Renaissance church of San Lorenzo are numerous works of art, the first of which brought to our attention was Desiderio’s marble Tabernacle. This was set in 1462 in the wall of the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, of which the Medici were the patrons. In front of Desiderio’s fabulous tabernacle sculpted in the ‘Sweet Style’ is the first of two bronze pulpits by Donatello. These two pulpits are of great size both containing large narrative panels of bronze. Also housed in San Lorenzo is Filippo Lippi’s Annunciation. This was of particular importance to one member of the group – Kate Melber, an Old Stoic who is studying this picture as part of her degree dissertation at Leicester University. Seeing this in the flesh brought out for all of us the bright colours, the facial expressions and movements; and also the crystal vase in the foreground, not easily viewed in slides, here is seen more clearly, used by the artist to represent the Virgin’s purity.

Within the New Sacristy, also part of San Lorenzo, we saw two tombs by Michelangelo carved in marble using Night and Day and Dawn and Dusk to represent different, profound Renaissance ideas such as transience. It was commented by some that the female bodies were not that dissimilar to those naked bodies of the male figures. However this amazing art work was admired by all.

The groups divided and after lunch we headed for Santa Maria Novella, the largest church owned by the Dominicans. In the church is Masaccio’s Trinity. This fresco painting was somewhat faded in its appearance and thus was not as magnificent as we had initially expected. However it was possible to visualise what it would once have looked like in its original splendour. Also encased in Brunelleschian architecture is Ghirlandaio’s fresco cycle on the life of the Virgin situated in the High Altar Chapel; the most memorable aspects of this fresco cycle are the vibrant and strong colours (recently cleaned by restorers) used by the artist – although much of our change was consumed at this point as we were only able to marvel at this for a short period without the light meter running out.

Next day we visited the Uffizi gallery which is packed full of works of art. We were faced first of all with the three enormous Virgins and Childs painted in the Gothic period by Giotto, Duccio and Cimabue. They were far larger than I had expected them to be. We also were able to see the work of International Gothic artists such as Gentile da Fabriano’s Adoration of the Magi. In the Uffizi the most memorable painting to my mind was Botticelli’s Birth Of Venus for its large size and sharp linear lines; I thought, however, that the painting would be brighter in colour.

One afternoon we climbed to the top of the Duomo – many conquering their vertigo or otherwise paralysed to the spot by their fear. Here we were presented with an astounding view which can only be described as continuous miles of beauty. The city of Florence spreads for miles and we even saw the surrounding hills. Inside the dome the frescoes of Heaven and Hell had just been cleaned and were clear to see, such images as enormous demons devouring sinners. This was eye-catching through both the style, colours and most of all the shock factor.

We also went to San Marco where we were able to view Fra Angelico’s frescoes; this was memorable as we were able to visit the cells of the friars and novices and acquire some understanding of the lives of the friars. All the frescos in the novices’ cells had a didactic function as each showed a similar setting, Christ on the Cross, but with St Dominic or another Dominican Saint performing a different prayer action. It was here that we also saw the San Marco Altarpiece which was much smaller than we had thought and not as bright – most probably due to its bad state of conservation. Although it was damaged we were able to get a glimpse of what it would have once been like.

On our last day we travelled to Siena where we viewed works of art and saw the beautiful city. We also climbed to the top of the walls of the unfinished Cathedral. It was inside the museum that we saw Duccio’s Maestà which although enclosed in a dark room was still shown in its true splendour with rich colours and lavish gold. The staff sunned themselves in the Campo, filled with good Chianti, dreaming of their colleagues’ lunch back at Stowe while most of us ‘kids’ – CCR’s term of endearment for us – munched our way through a pizza, or, if lunching with Mr Barker, a full gourmet lunch. We then hopped back on the bus and travelled to San Gimignano where we saw the magnificent towers and walked around the medieval city in autumnal Tuscan countryside.

Florence was a fabulous trip in which we both ‘worked hard and played hard’. Florence proved to be not only a wonderful city but one which could still function with twenty Stoics. It only remains to give our greatest thanks to Mr Robinson, Mr and Mrs Melber, Mr Farquhar, and of course Patty Smith and Mr Barker for their courage in taking us all to Florence and for enabling us to go on such a sensational trip.

EMILY WILLS & LARA BAILEY

A DESIGN EXPERIENCE IN EURODISNEY

On the 19th-21st January, 32 sixth-formers studying for A-level Design and Technology travelled to France to develop their knowledge and understanding of Design and Technology in the 'Real' world.

The party left Stowe on Tuesday morning and had a relaxed journey to the Hotel Cheyenne in EuroDisney. After unpacking and an evening meal, we attended the first seminar. This set the scene for the whole visit, informing us about how Design and Technology are incorporated into everything the park does. A number of case studies were discussed; design of costumes, floats, buildings, rides etc. The seminar finished with a brief discussion about 'Space Mountain' (the newest attraction in the park) providing details of what investigations needed to be carried out in the park the next day.

Throughout day two, students were requested to visit certain design features around the park, so that they could see for themselves the principles involved and how the final results were achieved. In the evening the day was rounded off with another seminar. This one focused on the principal features of 'Space Mountain'. Other case studies were investigated. An impressive one was the Batch and Mass production flows that were utilised for all the catering needs of the park.

The final day's seminar rounded off the course and allowed the pupils an opportunity to ask their questions. After this we travelled home (via Paris), very tired.

"I learnt how designers of the world actually solved a design problem. They start with a 'blue sky' (blank page) and fill it with as many ideas as possible. These ideas are then filtered down during the 'design process'. This has broadened my mind to think of design not just being for myself but for everybody in everything they do."

SAMMY BARRATT

"There is so much thought involved in making EuroDisney successful. It is 'magical' and 'fun' and most importantly 'extremely safe'. The seminars highlighted the obvious things, like the mechanisms and structures, but at the same time they identified many things that were taken for granted; safety measures, how to prevent sickness, construction and use of materials in the rides and the park in general, graphic design of signs, menus etc."

BEN HART



Above: The roof of Space Mountain was a structural masterpiece

Below: Although this winch mechanism was dated, the principle was used to launch the train in Space Mountain.



Design & Technology goes West

DRAMA STUDENTS IN HOLLAND

The whole of the L6th Theatre Studies class went with DSB and Jim Cocola to Holland last June.

We had been invited by Raayland College to attend the performances of their junior and senior school plays and to perform two pieces of our own work which had been prepared as part of the A-level Theatre Studies course.

On Tuesday afternoon we were welcomed at Venray station by staff and pupils and taken to the College for a reception – tea (Dutch style) and cream cakes before being allocated to the parents and staff with whom we would be staying during our brief visit.

Early the next morning we were up, fed and presented with bicycles on which we were to ride to school. All of the 2000 students at Raayland cycle to school in everything but the very worst weather conditions. We were lucky: the weather was warm and sunny and several kilometres on the well maintained Dutch cycle tracks proved (for most of us) a very efficient and enjoyable way to get to school. As an American, Mr Cocola was inexperienced in non-motorised transport and had to ride pillion on Hugh Arbuthnott's bicycle.

We met the director of the top stream (grammar school equivalent) section of the College before going on a cycle tour of the town of Venray which is an affluent and very attractive place. We visited an outdoor art gallery, the British

war cemetery and the town centre. In a seminar with Dr Janssen, the director of the international programme, we were given a short lecture on the Dutch educational system and had the opportunity to present the idiosyncrasies of English public schools in a lively and enjoyable discussion.

After a special lunch in the International Centre for all staff and pupils involved in the exchange, we had two and a half hours to prepare our productions for performance in the school hall. We performed one comic piece set on a space shuttle and a more serious play which analysed the psychological consequences of success and fame. The plays were quite well received. We then had an hour's seminar with the drama teacher of Raayland College discussing the strengths and weaknesses of our performances, our working methods and plans for future productions.

The evening was taken up with the performances by the Venray students. Although the plays were in Dutch, the quality of the acting was such that we were able to understand a good deal of what was going on and to get a feel for the strong atmosphere created in each play.

On Thursday morning we were again on a Dutch train heading for Brussels and the Eurostar back to London. We very much enjoyed the whole trip and look forward to welcoming our opposite numbers from Venray back to Stowe.

DSB

LINGUISTS IN MUNICH

On the 17th May 1999 the lower-sixth German class set off for Munich from Luton airport early in the morning. We arrived at Munich to meet the warm rays of the sun which were obviously more common there than in England. After reaching our hotel we realised that with smart bedrooms and breakfast in bed at 9.30am we were not going to fuss about our lodging. Lunch was a simple but delicious sandwich from a nearby bakery and then we started our carefully planned tour of central Munich.

We started with the great Karlsplatz, a large square in the town and then we went on to visit church after church after church. All of these churches were in their own way extremely ornate with hundreds of sculptures and statues. Especially in the case of the rococo churches the ornamentation was just too oppressive. The Marienplatz must be mentioned with its new town hall full of Bavarian traditional sculpture, especially the glockenspiel which is a musical instrument within the building with dancing sculptures. Before a traditional Bavarian supper we visited more sights; the national theatre; the river Isar; and a famous traditional beer hall and brewery serving the famous litre glass.

The next three days were spent visiting more and more sights including the Viktualien (food) Market with its exotic foods, the BMW museum, and the 1970s Olympic Stadium with the 290m tall Olympic Tower. A rather strange experience was the English Garden which was a nudist area. Fortunately there were not too many naked figures, but to see even a few was not what one could call typical of a major city. One evening, we went to a

piano concert in the Hercules Room which was a wonderful Romanesque concert hall with tapestries of the twelve tasks of Hercules on the walls.

Some of the best times we had were when we ate in Bavarian restaurants, giving us a chance to taste the traditional cuisine of sausages, dumplings, pretzels, sauerkraut and especially the German beer in its three flavours; white, dark and lager. One cannot visit Munich without noticing their proud traditionalism. Many of the true Bavarians were wearing lederhosen and green felt hats, not just as a gimmick, but out of their own choice of clothes. We were even lucky enough to hear some yodelling. Munich is really worth a visit. It is not the type of city one would expect to find in western Europe with its mixture of mass industry and very traditionalist culture. It's a real experience.

ALEX LYELL



Left to right: ARG, Alex Winter, Rupert Burchett, Alex Lyell, Polly Stephens, Cecily Chambers and Oscar Bernadotte

CREATIVITY

Pages 121-140

Prose

The studio was a buzz of activity that day ...

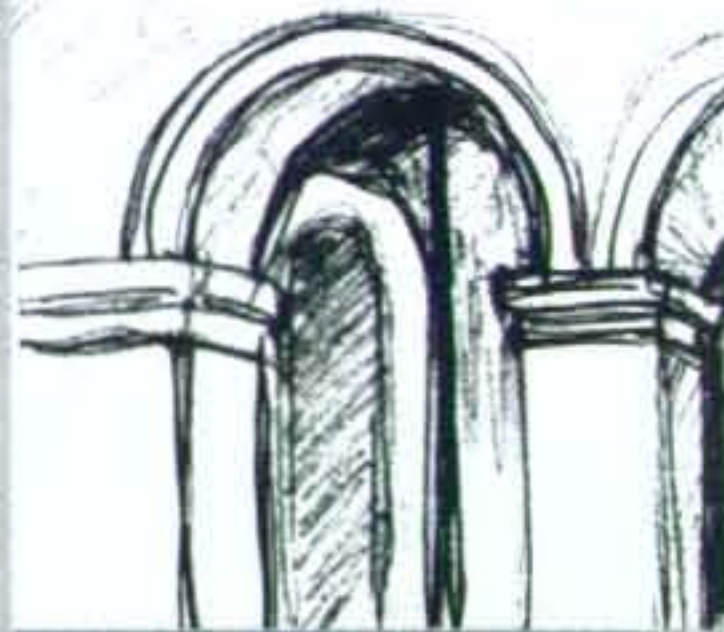
Verse

Spring is changing into summer, passion into ardour...

Painting



Drawing



Photography



Design



GUY SCOTT'S ART SCHOOL REFLECTIONS

It is a time of change in the Art School. I retire at the end of the summer term and the new Head of Art is Mrs McInnes, who is at present in charge of a very large art department in Wolverton and lives locally in Stony Stratford. She was trained in Art History and has a strong interest in ceramics and three-dimensional work. In conjunction with IJM and KM I am sure the Art School will prosper and certainly is in a strong position to meet the demands of the new national curriculum in Art and Design, both at GCSE and A-level.

On Speech Day I managed to organise with the help of friends a retrospective exhibition of my own work, which included many of the drawings I completed in China, as well as sketch book drawings made when the Art School went to Venice and Florence. As the School made no charge, we were able to donate £1000 to Sophie Watson's own charity, SCCWID, which helps supply interesting things for children to do when they have to be in hospital for a long time. Sophie is indeed a very remarkable young lady and is a very positive member of both the Art School and the theatre.

I have many memories of Stowe Art School, particularly the work of some of our most talented artists over the years, and it is always an enormous pleasure to hear that they have become successful, in whatever field of the creative arts they have chosen. Whether it is architecture, computer graphics, fashion or fine art. I will miss this contact and I hope the new Scott Scholarships, generously donated by the mother of Shiho Ichinose, will help to encourage talented local sixth form artists to come to Stowe and be part of this exciting environment.

On a more light hearted note, my final memory is of the amazing party organised by the students and staff in the Art School at the end of term, which they managed to organise without my knowledge. On a beautiful summer evening I was dragged off the golf course by two beautiful young ladies then driven to the Art School in KM's Mercedes, where I was met by all the art students and staff in black tie and 'best frocks'. After a wonderful meal, they presented me with the most amazing electric golf trolley (for my old age!) to say goodbye to their old art teacher, who was quite overwhelmed.

RIO AND THE AWKWARD TOURIST

I would hear stories of vulnerable foreign women witnessing what they could not understand, occupied in their happy ignorance as they set out to absorb Brazil's cultural and festive glory. The vitality and exuberance of its people, the colour of its landscape, carnival week, its architecture, the Corcovado statue with Christ overwhelming in his 2000 feet high position above Rio's beaches of Copacabana, his arms outstretched uniting the rich and the poor of Brazil – she might think, a symbol of hope for the poor to those who understood. These were the experiences which beckoned her – she knew nothing of the rest.

The natives would watch her with a sort of alien fascination. She was certainly less rich than the richest of Brazil, but tourists will disrespectfully parade their gaudy extravagance. On such occasions, stationary in Brazil's untidy traffic, a poor man would thrust a gun at the driver's temple until the traumatised gringo beside him had hastily handed over her Rolex watch, a bit of gold, anything flashy or which sparkled with false value. It was an occurrence which was to shape her views and feelings towards the poor of the third world without reference or consideration to their logic, their predicament. Poor, ignorant visitor.

To the stranger the Brazilian poor were often dangerous. You would shift uneasily around the docile bodies which lined the streets, each with their own allotment, and just as arrogantly drive through red lights in order to avoid the raw persistence of relentless families of brothers and sisters who would gather, one at every window, professional in their timing, and bargain away today's wares. Flowers, nuts, and hammocks, such charming little luxuries that the foreigner had fallen prey to many times previously during that first unfamiliar year.

But not today. Today they were pests, a swarm of flies, too much today in the thick spread of tenacious defeating heat. Perhaps she was tired of feeling guilt, a guilt which penetrated her with the knowledge that she was depriving them of more than their basic daily meal by ignoring the red traffic signal and leaving behind faces that should have but didn't hate. Or perhaps it was a guilt at feeling nothing. Perhaps she no longer cared. It is all too easy to become hardened to the images of poverty, as it can seem futile even to attempt to make a difference.

Others pitied them, these people who survive the foreigner's living death, barred from opportunity, from material civilisation, education... And then I recall an incident or rather humbling experience, of breaking down in the sleepy haze of humid air in a dusty street. A mechanic caught two buses in order that we should return home before nightfall. He reached us after a short but chaotic trek through the

capital's jumble of midday movement. We sat irritated, waiting impatiently as he assumed authority, scrutinizing and adjusting as a painter critically views his work, before submerging beneath the grey of the chassis, straining – edging himself further. Exasperated sighs we heard before he scrambled out, raising himself triumphantly. His task accomplished, we brightened out of our boredom and, being suddenly immensely grateful, we thanked him and conferred between us as to what we could offer him. A plain nondescript plastic watch was a possibility. English coins were another. The mechanic seemed puzzled, uneasy, then understanding clearly, an expression of disappointment and disgust stole across his face.

'I have a watch, I have a shirt on my back, I don't need your money.'

I watched in frozen thought as he toiled his sack of tools in his hand and effortlessly raised them onto his shoulder, until he was lost to my eyes in the haze.

So yes, I have seen or experienced all of these feelings about the poor of the third world, as I watched from my palace. But my world behind guard dogs, remote-controlled gates, iron-spikes protruding from every wall is not their reality. This, I sadly and suddenly discovered in a journey to a distasteful truth. The overwhelming realisation of the *favelas* – Brazil's solution to extreme poverty. An endless tide of wooden shacks rooted in litter and dirt and urine, contrasting painfully with the land of the comfortable minority, and mushrooming beyond control. The first sight of these slums which house half of Brazil can be misleading. To many this first glimpse is 'picturesque'. To me, from a distance, it was a rubbish tip, the brown of the palm bark merging the shacks together as they fought for space on their designated landscape, with only the clothes lines of vibrant colour adding variety to the wasteland. This is not far from the truth and an instinctive unease arose with the knowledge that this wasteland actually houses millions of people.

It seems hard to believe that within the *favelas'* unjust exteriors a kind of admirable human spirit is embodied, one which never causes them to ask why, perhaps because the young are taught not to expect, whereas I was. Brazilians have in them a light-heartedness that I have never found in anyone since. To me they were a source of curious inspiration, and I wondered every time I passed the ceaseless slums, what was separating me from them. A mere accident of birth.

I was sharing their land but not their world, and I feel ashamed that money governs our society.

EMMA WAINWRIGHT (LVI)



ANDREW DAVIS (III)

ELECTIONEERING

The studio was a buzz of activity that day in preparation for the live airing of 'Exchange, the talk show with a difference'. What the difference was never became entirely apparent though it formed the mantra of most of the country. The host Mick Tabbot fiddled with breath freshener and made vulgar passes at his co-host Sabrina Chalkosky who was involved in a quarrel with the stage manager about the size of her dress. Nerves crossed the studio like wires, for today was different even for a show that ardently pursued the different. Exchange had a once in a decade chance to interview all presidential candidates in the same room with a live and reactive audience, the ratings were going to be phenomenal. Exchange could no longer be ignored as a seedy event lurking somewhere in the mid-afternoon television conscience of the nation. It would become a cutting edge political commentator, a mouthpiece for the terminally awkward social misfits that paid such homage to the shows ratings. If everything went to plan Exchange could become the most watched social drama in history, and not even the ignorant were unaware of that.

The first candidate had been relatively easy to persuade, the president himself. Randy, son of God, had been elected four years ago when the revelation emerged that Randy's father was none other than the creator of heaven and earth. The evidence was scurrilous but decisive. Randy was dishing out Kosher sausages at big Abe's burger bar when the roof was removed by a squad of angels. He was declared son of god by the largest and handed a cigar, a sure sign that he was destined for presidency the common folk murmured. Unfortunately for the public both were cheap imitations. The angels were cinematic projections spawned by some ex-Harvard film junkie from deep within the tortilla chips and the cigar was actually a hand rolled cigarette of ambiguous shape. Sceptics pointed to his DNA which suggested his father was a Garth Brooks Roadie named David, though these tests were never deemed legally consequential. Randy – and everyone knew it – was controlled by the angel Gabriel, a shady ex-senator from Kansas who controlled Randy's calendar. Gabriel may have been dubious but he was certainly determined. He had a surgeon superimpose eagle wings on his back to appear more genuine, and, although doctors thought he would never fly, it captured the imagination of many ordinary Americans. Together they had taken the country by storm. Born again Christians hastily disposed of their crucifixes and purchased I-love-Randy key-rings, sponsors anxiously petitioned Randy to wear their merchandise in his first live walking on water and America's social conscience was relieved when Randy officially ended American involvement in foreign affairs, when the third world were sent a basket of bread and fish and told to break it amongst themselves.

Randy was good, but was he God enough? The main challenger casting doubt upon this was Digby.

Digby was unique as the first animal ever to run for office. Digby, of course, was no mere animal but a cat with a human voice box and at least two thirds of a human mind. Digby officially hailed from California where biologists had created a being composed of both man and feline. Digby initially received applause for his highly entertaining if banal cameos in televised home videos and, later, action films. Audiences would rock with laughter as the black and grey creature stalked on to the screen, offered a one liner and prowled off. Though lucrative, this existence never fulfilled Digby and the cross breed developed a social conscience. He released the outline of his dogma in his pamphlet 'Behind Green Eyes', a tract condemning centralist economics and social liberalism. The critics dismissed Digby's political stab as a 'sustained gimmick, losing value every time exposed' and sneered at some of his more extreme attitudes. But they underestimated the cat and especially his ability at public relations crucially exhibited in a number of magazine and television interviews. Digby had the common touch and was well able to fluctuate the tone of his monologues to suit the spectators. In Texas Digby gave a moving speech relating the traditional values of his grandfather's day to the present social corrosion. The fact that this gap was only five years was conveniently ignored by the nostalgic tint of public opinion. In Wall Street bankers overcame their incredulity at talking beasts as the result of a lucid treatise on the post-war finance of the state. Certain firms were so impressed they adopted the motto 'To fly like an Eagle you must think like a Cat' as their corporate slogan. As for middle America, Digby had a lot of ground to make up. Many questioned the suitability of Digby as the leader of the free world, though it would not be the first time an actor became president. Digby had partially appeased them by promising to balance the ticket with a man with a cat's vocal chords. This pledge remained mercifully unfulfilled.

Digby looked strong but it was by no means a two horse race. The third candidate was Zion 2000, a computer that had consolidated a growing support. Computers all over the country had logged on to the campaign of Zion, crackling in awe as Zion professed an equality of megabytes and increased ram for all. Net surfers were intoxicated by the idea of having a virtual government which by default could not be corrupted. As computers go, Zion was very opinionated, having been programmed by a social management package borrowed from a computer game. When quizzed on the immigration problem Zion calculated that two machine gun turrets on the Cuban border would eliminate approximately four hundred of these menaces daily. This would produce nearly 8000lbs of dead flesh and 12000 pints of congealed blood. If sixty cleaners started cleaning at six o'clock in the evening the border should be suitable for onslaught at about three o'clock the next morning. This, however, made the assumption

that the workers would not dawdle and many were doubtful of this claim. A more credible policy was Zion's action to end all government unemployment benefits. Zion predicted that if the average unemployed person was deprived of sustenance and water for three weeks they would cease to be an economic consideration. The effect of this treatment could be predicted and incinerators could be ordered in advance to dispose of the waste. Texas responded particularly to Zion's nonsense message and some suggested the same logic could be applied to minority groups. Zion's main opponents felt it lacked sincerity, housewives complained that Zion never looked like he meant what he said and the more discerning found Zion's professed family values strangely sterile. Zion's inability to communicate convincingly developed into an embarrassing *faux pas* when the computerized politico invited the French ambassador to 'shake my mouse' leaving the bemused diplomat to inquire what act he was meant to perform. It would be telling to see what effect these teething problems would have on Zion's campaign.

Tonight of course second chances would be handed round in abundance. There were 250 million viewers, twenty cameras and thirty minutes to turn to a crucial advantage. The tension was mounting behind stage; the sound engineer had completed his checks and the lighting was sparkling like floating champagne glasses. Zion was being plugged in and Randy had just touched down on the roof of the building from his helicopter. Digby was having a nap in his dressing room and the producer was nervously tweaking his collar and trying to disown the lingering quandary in his mind. The studio audience began to file in, nests of journalists forming at the front and the ordinary social lepers occupying the ranks behind them forming a battalion of staring eyes and matching leisure wear aimed unflinchingly at the stage. The lights dimmed and three contenders entered the arena. The lights went up – a cascade of nuclear orange – and the cheers erupted. Mick Tabbot and Sabrina Chalkosky sauntered on to the stage and the cameras blinked into action.

'Welcome to the biggest extravaganza in television history. Tonight we present the people, animals and androids who you will choose to be your leaders (another more muffled cheer). Today, though, we are not interested in them as politicians, we are interested in the people both virtual and actual that lie behind them. First of all I would like to introduce the talking cat from Unscrupulous Genetics Licensed, California.'

(fairly enthusiastic cheer)

'So Digby, what is it like being the first biological experiment to stand for president?' Digby yawned expansively.

'Well, you know, Mick, I prefer to be called an accidental person than an experiment. As a non-human candidate I feel I am pioneering social advances.'

Somewhere in the audience a hand shot up and some journalist from Iowa vacated his seat.

'Yeah, a question for Mr. Digby. How would you answer allegations that you should be put down as a sci-

entific atrocity?'

Digby mewed in anger – 'That's exactly what I would expect from a mediocre journalist with a closed mind. Give me one reason why you shouldn't be put down? Your wife probably wouldn't notice anyway.'

'How dare you, you little freak, I'm gonna come down there and sort you out.'

Before the enraged writer could perform the act of sorting Digby out two inconspicuous but sizeable body guards quietly removed him to some less congenial place in the studio labyrinth.

'Woah!' Mick exclaimed with elation, the audience gleefully scenting the metaphorical blood. Sabrina helpfully interjected.

'Yes, Mick, some high emotion there but now on to our next guest, a big hand for Zion 2000'

(somewhat restrained clapping)

'Zion, you're looking very smart today'

'THANK YOU SABRINA IT IS MY NEW ART PACKAGE'.

'Well that sure is nice. Now, Zion, some of us were wondering what you meant when you said you liked family values.'

'I WOULD LOVE TO ANSWER YOUR INQUIRY. THE FAMILY IS NECESSARY FOR THE CONTINUATION OF HUMAN LIFE AND ZION IS IN FAVOUR OF CONTINUING HUMAN LIFE (relieved sighs abound) BUT NORMAL FAMILIES ARE NOT EFFICIENT AT PRODUCING USEFUL PRO-PONENTS OF THE HUMAN RACE. PARENTS WHO LACK THE GENETIC CRITERIA WILL BE SENT A STANDARD VIDEO SHOWING THAT THEIR CHILD WOULD END UP A FRUSTRATED MALCONTENT WORKING IN A PURPOSELESS JOB WITH A DECREASING WAGE, THEN THEY WILL BE GIVEN A VIRTUAL CHILD WHOM THEY CAN MONITOR ON THEIR OWN P.C. A CHILD PROGRAMMED TO MAKE MA AND PA PROUD. IT CAN INTERFACE WITH THEM AND CAN BE FED HOME-MADE APPLE PIE THROUGH A DISK MARKED WITH THE APPROPRIATE FOOD STUFF. IN THIS GLORIOUS UTOPIA THEIR 'SPECIAL LITTLE GUY' WILL SUCCEED AT EVERYTHING ITS DESIGNATED PARENTS FAILED AT, THUS FULFILLING THE PERPETUAL BITTERNESS HUMANS FEEL WHEN EXPERIENCING IMPERFECTION.'

Mick, feeling rather eager to re-establish his position as host, intervened – 'Well that's certainly telling them, but now we move on to our final guest, yes, the one you've been waiting for, Randy, son of God!' (emphatic support demonstrated).

'Randy, much has been made of your ability to do miracles. Now we have a special guest back stage who we'd like to bring out. Come on out, Rita'.

Out Rita came, an obese forty-year-old with a bad

haircut and a penchant for lycra. Randy watched with growing horror as Gabriel placed his head in his hands.

'Now, Randy, if you really are son of God you will be able to turn this woman here into an athletic beauty by snapping your fingers. Would you like to see this, ladies and gentlemen?'

(yeah yelps)

'OK, Randy, do your stuff.'

Tightening his eyes and praying that this was a P.R. stunt someone had neglected to tell him, Randy uttered the magic words.

'In the name of the father...'

What happened next was quite unprecedented. Instead of a heavenly make over or indeed a public scandal the studio exploded in burning white light, a glow of such intensity that it instantly blinded the home viewers sending a universal spasm of panic throughout the nation. The presidential candidates were never heard of again and their fate remains a mystery, though a visually impaired studio technician groping for freedom did touch something that felt like a doormat covered by warm treacle near where Digby sat. In their confusion the blighted people crowded together to try and overcome their fear of isolation. In this state of frenzy people again yearned for a sense of faith and the congregations soon became catalysts for cut and paste philosophy to dull their sense of loss. This generally

took the format of 'What we cannot feel we cannot understand and what we cannot understand must be the substance of a higher being!'

Gradually the sense of deprivation became less pronounced and after a while barely had a discernible accent on American life. Those who did not fumble their way to supermarkets perished and those who did were forced to ignore the calorie content of their food and spend most of their lives in idle speculation. What was noticeable was the marked rise in religious interest and an ethical rebirth unchallenged by the deviating glow of prime time television. Idealists said it marked a new era in history, A.E., After Exchange and came to the opinion that their loss of vision had in some ways been aptly compensated, meandering their way to the conclusion that Randy was probably not son of God, that hybrids were not justified by being a cool gimmick and that computers should really stay in their boxes. For a few years people ruminated on why the explosion had happened. Some said it was a freak electrical malfunction, others maintained that it was a spiritual reprisal for their life of sin. One thing that was certain was that the Braille pornography industry was never more profitable.

WILLIAM RITCHIE (UVI)
SENIOR GAVIN MAXWELL ESSAY PRIZE WINNER

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5 Crowns
Highly
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Lower-sixth paintings: Buckingham Heritage Project

Right and clockwise:
Ben Hart
Kate Knott
Edward Webb
Sami Robertson
Giovanna Pauro
Edward Morley
Soo-Ah Paik
Abs Sakdicumduang



SYLVIA AND CELINE

Sylvia and Celine seemed almost identical. In a family this would be quite normal but Sylvia and Celine were not related but two pupils at Silwood Convent School. They shared everything – looks, age and, strangely enough, birthdays. Naturally, they were the best of friends. This summer term would be their last together at the convent for, after taking their exams, they would leave it and go to two separate schools. It was against their wills that they were to be separated for they were like real sisters.

The term passed quickly enough and the two girls passed their exams. They therefore decided to take life more easily and slow things down, for every second brought them closer to their departure. They adored the school and were in good favour with the teachers. They had their brief brushes with the school's laws but, on the whole, they were not considered as rebels even though they were not perfect enough to be prefects. Neither of them was particularly daring either.

Things went swimmingly for the two of them until something strange started to happen to Sylvia. Gradually she had been getting thinner and not as talkative as before, although she remained a good friend to Celine. Also Sylvia would occasionally leave lessons without even a word from the teacher in charge and her bed was removed from the dorm into the matron's flat. Sylvia was not to be questioned.

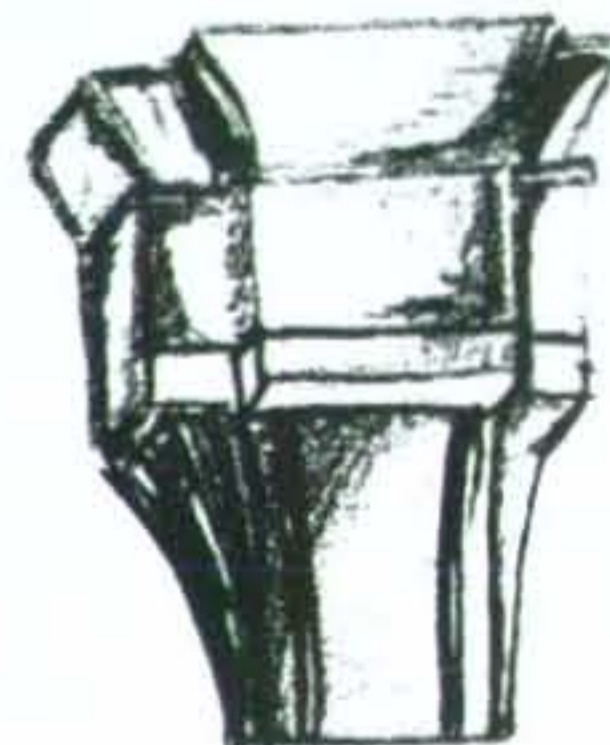
One break Sylvia approached Celine holding something odd in her hands. Celine could not quite see what it was. Sylvia opened her hands revealing two necklaces, silver with a cuprite heart hanging from each. "It's a gift," said Sylvia. "They are friendship necklaces. One is for you, the other is for me. I exchange my heart for your heart and forever wherever we may be, we will be friends."

That was the last Celine saw of Sylvia before she became ill. Sylvia would not be in the last school photograph with Celine. The photographer arrived with his odd camera. It was a special "wind-along" camera so that while it was taking a picture everyone must stand perfectly still and in the same place otherwise they would be taken twice. Every year a group of friends dared each other to run round the back and appear on both ends of the photograph (because the camera takes a while to move from one end to the other). Somehow Celine got herself involved. As usual the group drew straws to decide. They each picked a straw. This time it was Celine's turn to run.

Everyone was in position. Celine was at the end. Her heart was pounding. She looked at her watch. It was four minutes past three. A minute later the cameraman announced the start of the picture-taking and commenced winding his camera. As soon as the lens had passed her, Celine ran off the platform, sprinting around the back. Suddenly she slipped and fell, grazing her knee very badly on the gravel. There was no way she would get to the other end of the platform now. She had failed her friends. She glanced at her watch. It was now six minutes past three. When the pupils were dismissed, they were allowed time off lessons for the rest of the day. Celine went straight to the matron to see about her knees and to visit Sylvia. She was greeted by tragic news. Sylvia had died that afternoon at six minutes past three. Celine was devastated.

Two weeks later, on the penultimate day of term she was still devastated by her immense loss, when the demo copy of the school photograph arrived. She looked at it blankly and passed it by without thought. One of the friends in the group that had dared Celine examined it with excitement. There on the left was Celine as expected. She had heard of Celine's mishap in her attempt but her eyes wandered to the right anyway. But wait. There on the right in full glory stood Celine. She seemed to have made it to that side despite what she had said. Or was it – Sylvia?

EDWARD COMBER (III)



Details, Walpole House.
THOMAS HARDIMAN (III)

ANGELS

' "...And they all lived happily ever after with the angels in Heaven." Go to sleep now darling, you've got school tomorrow.'

But little Tommy wasn't falling for that one – not this time. He knew how it would go. His mother would kiss his forehead, turn out the reading light by his bed and shut the door, leaving the room in darkness. Then it would start.

The curtains – drawn so tightly a moment before – would flutter open despite the closed windows, allowing the frigid air on the window ledge to seep down onto his bed below. The wind would howl through the trees outside, and the urgent tapping would start at the window, as if someone, or something, was desperate to escape the night outside. The wardrobe door would creak open, ever so slightly, and a light would shine through the slit onto Tommy's face as he lay in bed.

Tommy didn't know what happened next because at this point he always pulled the covers high over his head and hid there shivering until he fell asleep.

Not tonight, however. Tonight he stalled for time.

'Mummy, what's an Angel?'

'Well Tommy, an angel is a very good person who always does what they're told.'

'Oh! But, everyone always says that Lulu's an angel, and she isn't, cause she never does what she's told and she cries all night, an everything...'

'Yes, but Louise is only a baby. She doesn't know how to behave like you do. People say that she looks like she's going to be an angel when she grows up.'

'Am I an angel then? Cause I'm grown up!'

'You could be, but only if you always go to sleep when mummy tells you to.'

Tommy saw his mother leaning over to kiss him, and knew that night was on its way.

'Is Granny an angel? Cause everyone always says that she was.'

'Yes, your Grandmother was a very good person, and was always kind and helpful to others. So God took her away to live with him in Heaven, and she looks down and watches us and makes sure we're always safe – especially at nights.'

'I think I'd like to be an angel when I'm older.'

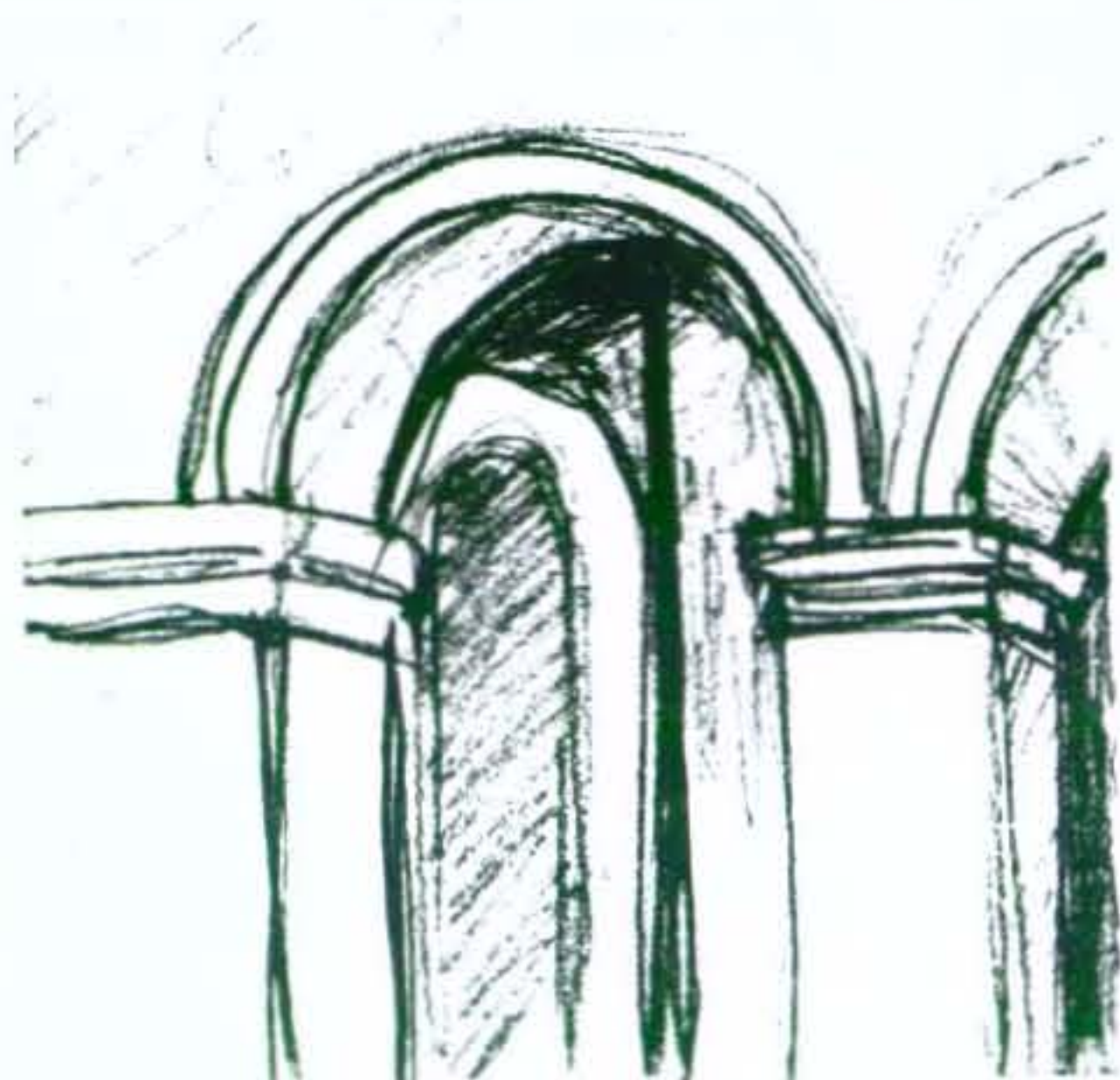
'Well, you'd better start now then, and go to sleep. Good night Tommy, I'll wake you in plenty of time for school in the morning.'

His mother leant over and kissed his forehead, turned off the light, and shut the door. The room turned to darkness and the wind started to howl outside.

But tonight, Tommy didn't mind. He was thinking. When the wardrobe door swung open he said:

'Night night Granny. You may be an angel, but I don't think you live in heaven. I think you live in my cupboard and watch over me with a torch at night. I wonder if you live in Lulu's cupboard too...'

EMILY TOWNSEND (LVI)



Details, Walpole House.
ANDREW DAVIS (III)



**GCSE
Examination pieces**

Left: Henry Watson
Below: Edward Kaye



GCSE Coursework

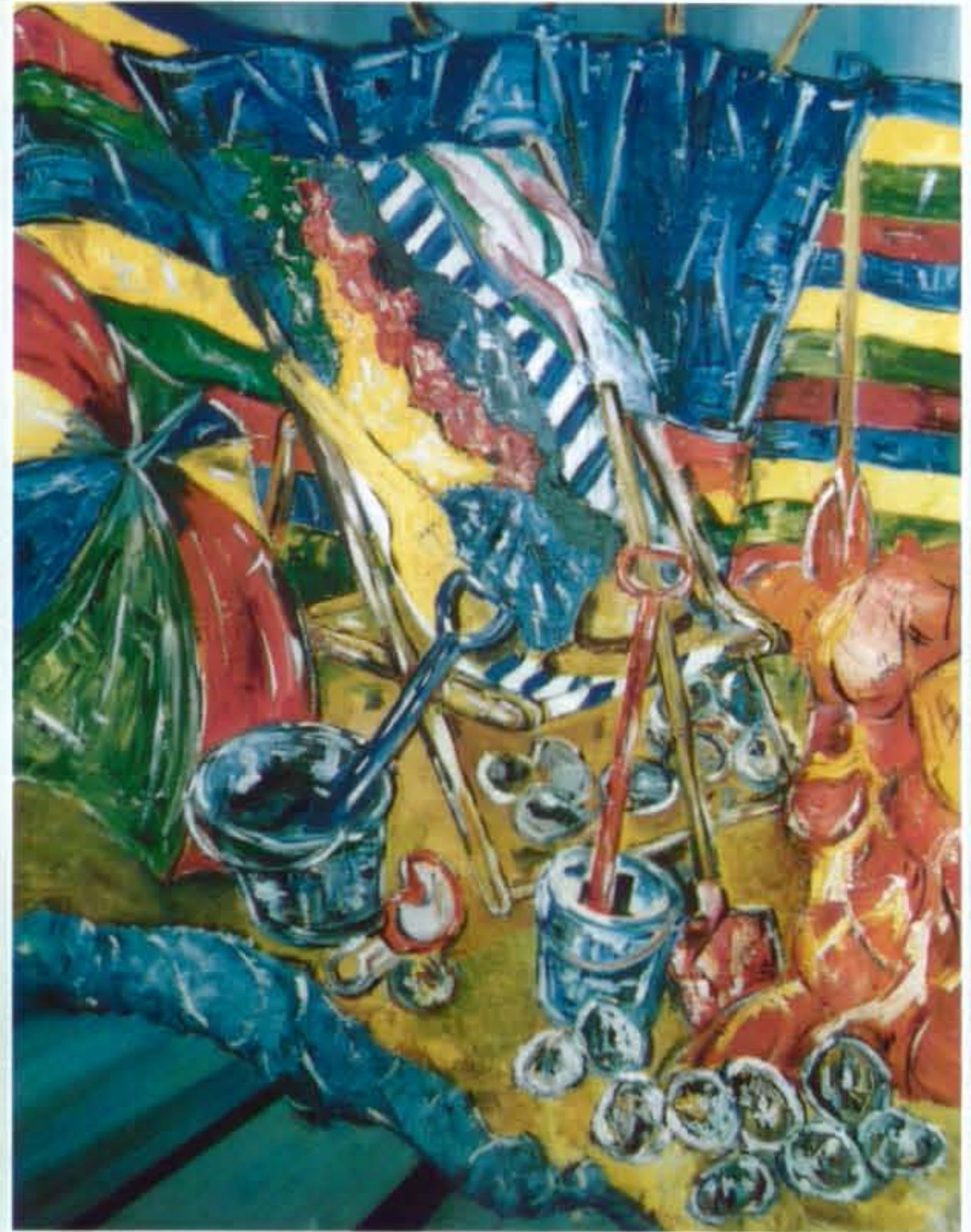
by Oliver Weston



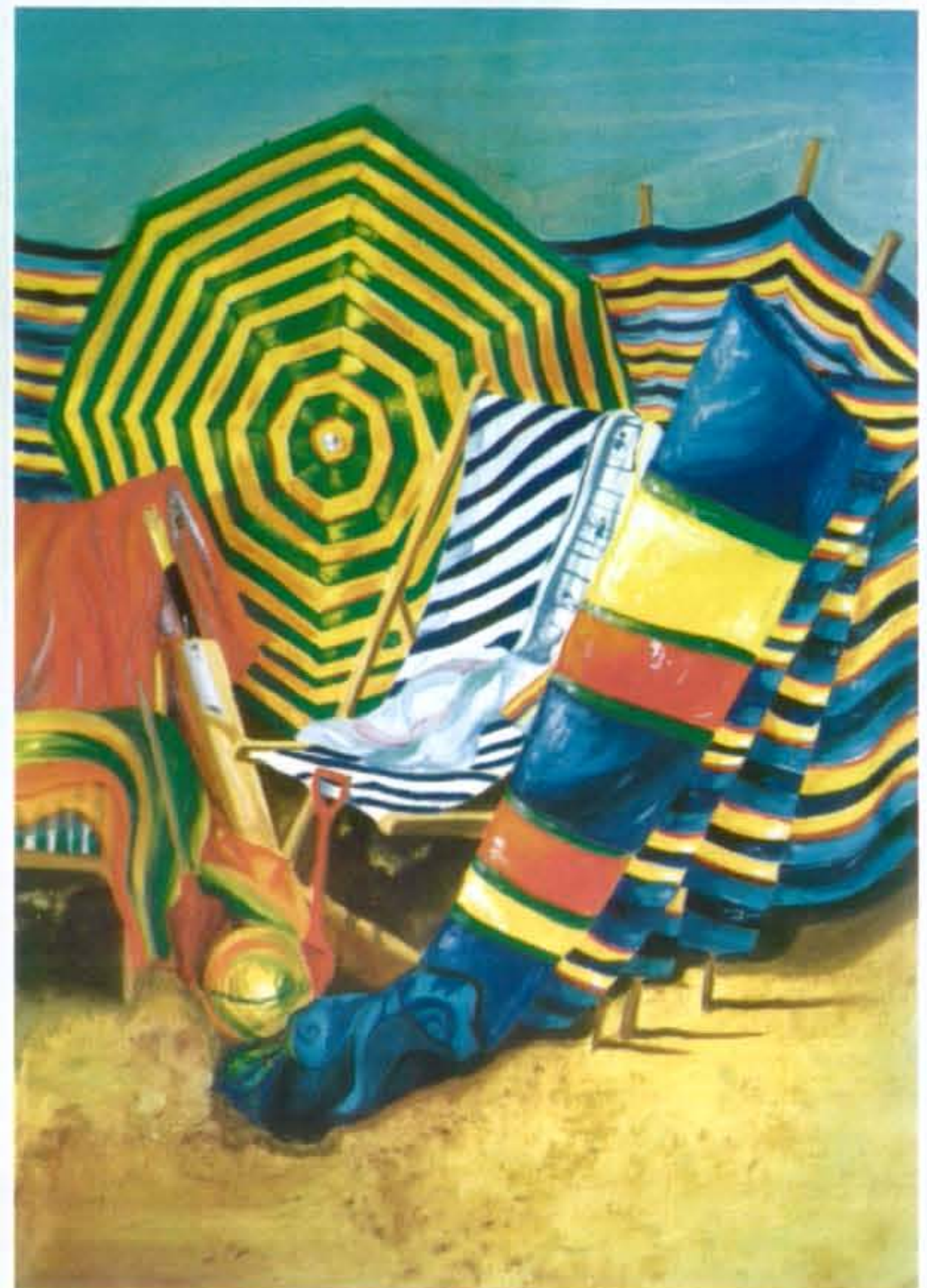


A-level Paintings

Left: Kim Taylor
Below: Tom Rundall



Above: Louisa Jones
Right: Laura Kaye



SPRING INTO SUMMER

Spring is changing into summer, passion
into ardour. The deep azure spring sky
is now a dull, used blue of higher fashion.

That green of early thaw is to the eye
dust-brushed emeralds, while great nature's blooms
are the old, tired gestures of some withered actress
who once filled halls, now plays to empty rooms.

She awaits an autumnal soft regress
wherein, bedecked in a green turning red
she bids past riches and old splendor flow
away, her better-day green-grey robe she'll shed
and waits for cover of crisp-folded snow.

She dreams, while her riches choke all the earth,
of her spring, her summer, of life, of birth.

SHAUN GARDINER (UVI)
SENIOR ROXBURGH VERSE PRIZE WINNER

OLD MAN LOOKS AT A PHOTO

I see a child I don't quite know
Although I'm sure I saw him grow:
I felt his stings
I played his games
I knew his friends
I've lost their names
Amongst a thousand other things.

With his every single breath
I laughed wholeheartedly at death,
A door that every second nears,
A door through which I cannot see.
And I can only sit and pray
This boy won't come through with me.
To be honest, I don't think anyone cares.

Melancholy, is he?
Or quietly happy?
Laughing dry tears
At a view
I can't see.
I wish that I knew,
But it's all gone with my years.

SHAUN GARDINER (UVI)

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL AWAKENING

I walk down a street.
There is a deep hole in the pavement.
I fall in.
It's dark, I am lost... I am hopeless.
It's someone else's fault, I am a victim.
It takes forever to find my way out.

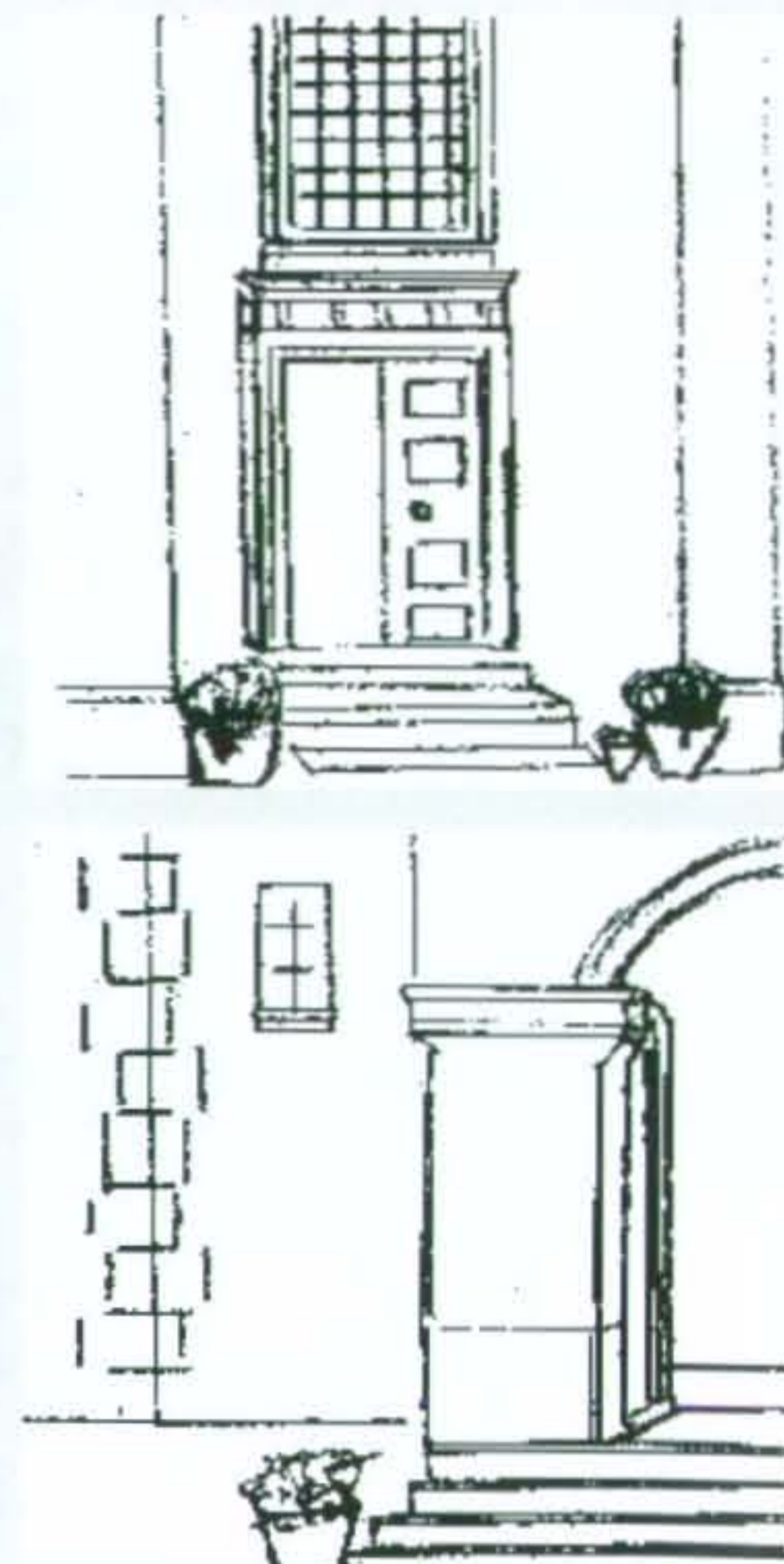
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the pavement.
I ignore it.
I fall in. It's dark.
I can't believe where I am.
But it isn't my fault, I am a victim.
It takes forever to find my way out.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the pavement.
I see it is there, I still fall in... it's a habit.
It's dark, I open my eyes.
I know where I am.
It's my fault.
I get out immediately.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the pavement.
I walk around it.

I walk down another street.

HARRY BEAMISH (IV)
JUNIOR ROXBURGH VERSE PRIZE WINNER



Details, Walpole House.
CHRISTOPHER DALTON (III)

AMSTERDAM PEOPLE

I stand looking at houses
Most tall and old
As I float down the canal.

Anne Frank's house slides past
Then the thinnest house
And the spot where the Nazis stood.

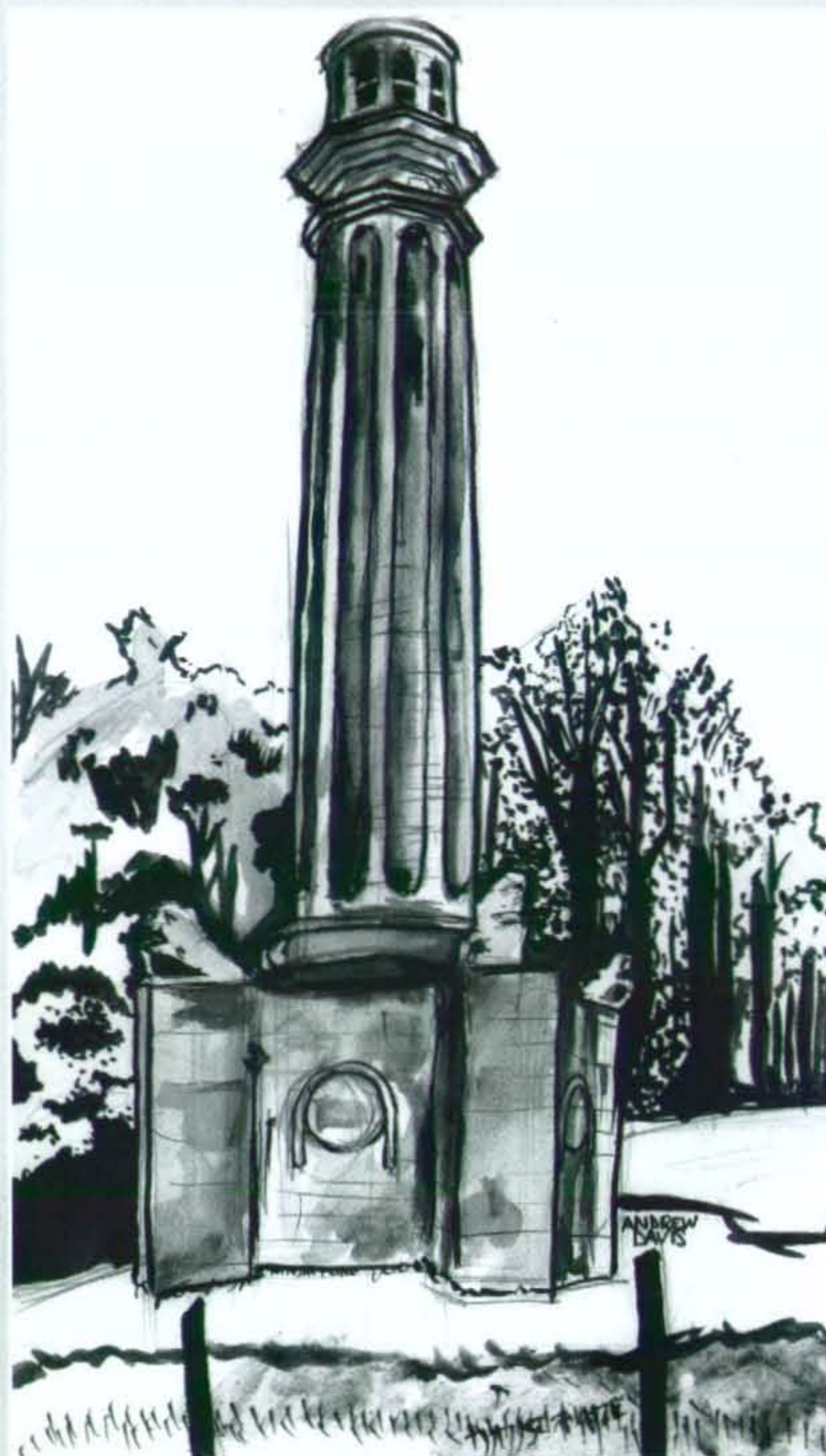
I'm in a place I don't know
With the sex shops and bistros,
Cafes with mellow Dutch and unconscious Brits

The swirling lights and sights of the night
The laughter from the shops
The loud clear music of parties

The free spirits mix with the cosmopolitans
Suits and jeans
Surround their herbal cakes and smoke

It's easy to lose yourself in Amsterdam
Submerge into the city
Find an assisted oblivion.

EMMA BOX (UVI)



ANDREW DAVIS (III)

LIFE CYCLE OF A ROOM

Room, tired, weatherbeaten with long living;
two endeavour to renew its life, replace the paint peeling.
New eyes will view its different vectors,
the curious walls, receiving, will become protectors.
The floor will notice the alien irregular movements
of a smaller creature acquainting itself with
its face and protrusions. Quickly –
daffodils, waterfights, bonfire nights, snow.
Again, again, rapid flickerings, continuous exposures through the casement.
Light, dark, dismal, bright, morning, noon, afternoon, night.
Flashes, intensity of time, resemble an old slide show,
typing moments into the audience of the fading walls.

Metallic strings stretched whilst the mattress compressed.
Toys, tired of tampering, retired permanently.
The exhausted teddy bear was surpassed by the vacant computer.
The primitive xylophone was replaced by the persistent stereo.
And then the walls changed from audience to introspective,
The slide show was cut, the remaining furniture became reflective.
Broken toy soldiers marked time.
The mirror watched dust drift slowly on sunbeams;
switch untouched, the lightbulb hibernated.
The space in the room stood patiently waiting.

PIPPA NEWMAN (LVI)



A-level Paintings

Above: Shiho Ichinose
Below Hugo Pile



A-level Coursework

Right: Crucifixion 7' x 3'
by Shaun Gardiner

Below: Ammanti. Hercules 5' x 4'
by James Lyon



Venice by Wiebke Althoff



Family Portrait
by Dan McCarey

THE EXCHANGE

'I never want to see you again!' screamed Angela as she slammed the thick oak door just millimetres from Michael Palmer's nose.

'I thought it might help,' he replied, sarcasm playing heavily on his tone, a line he knew she hated. A screech sounded from within the flat. Michael assumed the inaudible words referred to the status of his birth and his parents' marriage. He laughed to himself and went down the stairs.

The fight had started because he had refused to take her to New York with him the following week, despite having just met her. For some reason she had taken great offence.

Michael was a young merchant banker fast soaring up in the world. His bank wanted him to head up their New York office. Michael relished the challenge and also the opportunity of living in such an exciting city. He greatly enjoyed his lavish lifestyle and with rich appreciation. 'Angela,' he thought to himself, 'is not the one.' He grinned at the fact that he could not remember her surname, something that quite understandably had annoyed her intensely. He said goodbye to Angela as his cab disappeared into the sea of lights of night-time urban traffic.

— * —

The shadows of trees rippled over the limousine. The winter morning sunshine illuminated the famous Manhattan skyline, perfectly reflected in the Hudson River as he entered the famous city.

Over three days of intensive meetings he was extravagantly entertained. On his last day after spending the morning shopping, he spent the afternoon looking at a few apartments before flying back to London. He found a secluded loft apartment, which according to the real estate agent was the latest up-town fashion symbol. Looking south he could see Central Park, a pleasant contrast to the concrete sky scrapers of downtown. He told the agent that he would stay in touch, then he took a taxi to the airport, stopping at his hotel to pick up his bags and to check out.

Sitting back in his comfortable first class seat he thought of the things that would have to be done upon his return. Firstly he would arrange an estimate for his furniture to be moved. He had contacted a removal firm called Billing's, recommended to him by his bank and, for some reason, Angela. He would confirm his plans with them. His second thought was to get back his spare key from Angela!

He returned to a grey drizzling Heathrow. Clearly nothing had changed and spring still seemed far away. Jetlagged and in need of a shower Michael staggered up the steps leading to his flat. He unlocked the door and switched on the lights. A surge of panic and disorientation bulldozed through his body as he steadied himself in the doorway. He turned round to the door to check the number of the flat, willing it not to be 11.

Everything in his flat had changed, from his stereo to his coffee machine. He tore round each room, becoming more baffled and then angry as he progressed, finding more horrors. Where his Bang & Olafson wide screen television had been, now stood what looked like the first working prototype. His cream coloured sofas had soured to a dull and faded pink; the delicate Chinese silk rug bought on his first trip to Hong Kong was now a synthetic tiger rug, 'Esso' printed in the corner.

Everything he had collected and built up over the years was gone. His possessions made up a part of him and that part had been exchanged for what looked like the contents of a tart's parlour.

He jumped, startled by the sudden ringing of a foreign phone. He picked up the brightly covered receiver. 'Allo Sir,' said a rough but apologetic voice, 'Billing's removals here. I think we might 'ave a problem.'

Michael dropped the receiver to the ground. From across the room he noticed a key pinned to a note board – his key. A note was attached which read on Billing's Removals letter paper:

Dear Michael
Thought it might help!
Love
Angela BILLING

BENJAMIN MORGAN (IV)
JUNIOR GAVIN MAXWELL ESSAY PRIZE WINNER



The Stoic
Photographs of the Year Award

Winner: Tom Kemble (V)



DESIGN PROJECTS

There was a large number of excellent projects produced by the GCSE and A-level students for this year's exhibition on Speech Day. It was the culmination of many hours of hard work; the quality of the artefacts on display reflected the amount of time and care that each Stoic had put into his work.

This year it was particularly difficult to award the prizes. This shows the quality of the work the Stoics are producing. The Worsley Prize was awarded to Alex Prideaux. His solution to the problem of relaxing in the garden was a very impressive 'Maharajah'. This is a full size 'swinging bed'. It was constructed using traditional and modern techniques.

Continuing with the garden theme Amy Stephens designed and constructed a novel variation on the swinging seat idea. For this, she was awarded the Friends of Stowe Prize for Design in Wood.

Rowland Plyer's passion is for Jet Skiing. For his major project he designed and constructed a trailer that can transport his Jetski and can also raise it up so that it is a comfort-

able height for working on. Due to the forces involved many bearings had to be constructed. He was awarded the John Holland Prize for Design in Metal.

In addition to the construction of the finished design, the folder produced is also a major part of the coursework. The best student we had in this area was Toby Adams who won the Andrew McAlpine Prize for Technical Graphics. The quality of his paperwork was first class. In addition to these prize winners a number of Stoics need to be mentioned for their outstanding work: Chris Marsland (Work station), Ken Yuktasevi (Neon Guitar), Charlotte Lowe (Evening Wear) and Charlie Robinson (Sofa Bed).

This year the Lower School Prize for Design was hotly contested. There were a great number of excellent GCSE projects; many worthy of a prize. The eventual winner was Oliver Weston for his relaxing chair which was also adjustable. Other Stoics that were highly commended were Oliver Webb (Apple Juicing Table), Henry Watson (Garden Table), Hugo Pearson (Farm Trailer) and Nick Verney (Bookcase).



Henry Watson's garden table



Duncan Pearce's coffee-table bed



Edward Pitcher's bale spikes



Amy Stephens' swinging seat



Richard Plyer's trailer for a Jetski



Hugo Pearson's trailer

We also have a very good photographer at present. Hugo Harrison has certainly taken to photography and has produced a number of excellent photographs. His view of the Palladian Bridge is particularly stunning. Hugo was awarded the Prize for Photography.

All of the exhibits at this year's exhibition showed the vast array of talents that are being developed in the Stoics. Unfortunately, the examination boards are putting greater demands on students within this subject and have reduced the creative content. It remains our Departmental aim to allow Stoics to create impressive, well-designed and constructed projects. As a result of the growth in numbers opting for A-level (we have our largest ever group in the upper sixth) and the size and quantity of projects being produced, The Design and Technology Department has outgrown its teaching area and care will have to be exercised in the choice of project undertaken by Stoics. It will still give me enormous pleasure to see projects that are conceived by Stoics, designed by Stoics, made by Stoics and taken home proudly by Stoics.

MDGW



Oliver Webb's cider-making table



Ken Yuktasevi's neon guitar

Alex Prideaux and "Maharajah"



Theo Turner's camera airship



Charlotte Lowe's evening wear



Chris Marsland's work station



Oliver Weston's prize-winning chair



Nick Verney's bookcase

APOCALYPSE NOW

123,751 people, 920 dogs and a bus load of ageing hippies in that order. All of them squeezed into a mire of less than 2 square miles, a mud-sit comparable to the second battle of Ypres and the highest drugs tolerance outside of Amsterdam. It all looks as if it's going to be a nice weekend, out in the Somerset countryside.

The tent caves in at three in the morning because of the force of the rain; you've had your wallet nicked and haven't been able to eat for three days; there is not a working toilet within a ten mile radius; and you feel like calling your mother and breaking down uncontrollably for half an hour. You're having the time of your life.

Of the twenty-one bands that have played on the four or five various stages you have witnessed about five minutes of music. At this point, you queued for an hour and a half for a half pint of warm Boddington's costing £7.20. You only remember turning your head away for a fraction of a second before your first sip, but you remember very little after that other than that giant burger van at the end of the field that just would not stop coming on to you. And here you are in the midst of it all, dancing alone, 123,750 other people dancing with one another, but you on your own, because the blokes are afraid you're gay and the girls are afraid you're straight, and you really don't know after you left half your brain in the ever-increasing heap of sewage outside the porta-loos. You don't even know where your tent's gone, but you don't care because you're there in the midst of it – you are the atmosphere. Nothing else matters.

Same time next year...

BEN McCAREY (LVI)

CITY SCENE

At the entrance to the underground, wrapped up tight in a blanket against the cold, sitting and watching them pass. Hundreds upon thousands of people wrapped up in their own ways: In life, in love, or for the realists, in scarves and coats.

They rush on, engrossed in their lives, in the days of shopping left before Christmas, and not one of them stops and considers what they are doing. No one pauses to watch the faces surrounding them and to wonder, as I wonder, what is going on in their minds.

The dirty snow swirls down around them, dampening out what little light the sky affords at this time in the evening. The flakes fall. Those that land on people condense into droplets of water, the few flakes that make it down to the pavement are soon trampled beneath busy feet.

A few coins clink into the cap beside me. I smile my thanks, but they have already walked on, afraid of acknowledgement. I go back to watching the snow. Drifts build up at the curbs and in the few inches of untrodden ground next to buildings. The drifts are not the sparkling memories of childhood, but rather a filthy grey slush that seeps into shoes and depresses the soul.

Some more coins. I look up into a young child's sympathetic eyes before she hurries on to catch up with her mother and father.

Later, as the light grows dimmer still, the crowds begin to thin out as people get off the streets and into warm homes, or into shops to purchase dinner or some Christmas present that may never be appreciated. I decide that I too should move on.

I pick up the cap beside me, tipping the few coins into my hand and then into my pocket. The blanket, I fold and drape over my arm. A few blocks along, I drop the coins, along with some others into another poor fellow's collection, then hurry on, unwilling as everyone else to catch his eye. Tomorrow, I too will be doing the night shift. I trudge home and strip off my filthy rags.

Five minutes later, after a hot shower, I sit at my desk with a cup of coffee in one hand and a pen in the other, writing notes for my new book. My eyes fill with tears.

EMILY TOWNSEND (LVI)

OLD STOIC PAGES

Page 142
Leavers 1999



Page 149
Bill's Daredevil Dive



Page 150
RQD's Birthday
Speech



Page 153
Frank Tuohy



Page 158
Book Reviews



LEAVERS 2000

A few copies of last year's issue of *The Stoic* contained an extra section with photographs of the year's leavers. As the magazine is a school record, we have extended this idea so that the photographic section of this year's leavers is not just part of a special print-run but an integral part of the whole magazine. It is something we would hope might become a regular feature. This, then, is an appeal to the leavers of summer 2000 to prepare their pages early! The new editors will be contacting those currently in the Upper Sixth to discuss how best to treat the 8-page feature. The last minute approach to the feature this year has led to some unevenness of photographic quality and the individual photographs coming from a limited number of sources. We would be grateful, therefore, for photographs to be submitted to us early for the next issue, ideally, by Christmas. Early submissions will stand the best chance of inclusion! The absolute deadline will be the end of Spring term, 2000.

DODIE WATT DRAWINGS

In the last issue of *The Stoic* (March 1999) some drawings by Dodie Watt, recently donated to the School, were reproduced with an appeal for identifications of the subjects. This elicited a splendid response and several positive identifications were made: 5: Colin Anson; 6 Euan Campbell; 7: Kay Irgens; 8: Alan Maclean; 9: Jeremy Gentili; 11: Alan Caiger-Smith; 12: Anthony Mulgan; and 13: Guy Neale. There were also two cautious guesses, suggesting that 4 might be Lyndon Brook and 14 P.R. Boye Stones. As yet we have no identifications for 1, 2, 3 and 10. Clearly the series of drawings dates to the years of the last war. The Old Stoic office would be very happy to send copies of the drawings to anyone who thinks he might be able to assist with further identifications. It would be good to publish next issue a definitive list.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Finally, an appeal to Old Stoics for contributions to this section. The editors would very much welcome contributions in any shape or form. Old photographs and reminiscences are always particularly appreciated. There must be any manner of interesting Stowe-related memorabilia lurking away in attics all over the country?

Leavers 1999



Bruce

Back row: Damian Darkko, Henry Wood, Dan Hayes, Patrick Pearce, George Jenkinson, Shaun Gardiner, Kwesi-Nyan Amisah-Arthur. Front row: Tim Barker, Adam Cottrell, Matt Williams, Will Watson, Rory Scott.

Temple

Back row: Ben Morgan, Chris Marsland, Will Browning, Toby Adams, Max Wittgenstein, Will Ritchie, George Bertram. Front row: Richard Clapham, Peter Mann, James Defty, Ben Scholfield.





Grenville

Back row: Richard Briggs, Michael De Butts, Vincent Hobbs, Robert Mills, William Smith.
Front row: Sung Jae-Oh, Evgeny Demchenko.

Chandos

Back row: James Lau, Dimitri-Alexander Schoggl, Alex Medwell-Bates, Chris Johnstone, Dong-Won Jung.
Front row: Chris Davis, Wambaa Mathu, Oscar Humphries, Hugo Douglass, Sam Lyle, Jerome Starkey, Charles Hart.





Cobham

Back row: Hari Riar, Daniel Webster, Charles Fenwick, Edward Salt.
 Front row: James Lyon, James Feilden, Henry Gillingham, Charles Duffin, Charles Chute.

Chatham

Back row: Oliver Davies, Will Pudney, Tom Rundall, Alex Janson, James Vane-Tempest, James Ogle, Alex McMicking.
 Front row: Ben Turney, Dan McCarey, James Sleater, Kingsley Ford, Leo Fenwick.





Grafton

Back row: Mugabe Kaijuka, Will Ingram, Drew Brennan, Ken Yuktasevi, Matthew Cumani, Hugo Chance, Toby Barnett.
 Front row: Harry Girardot, Nop Riensavapak, Charlie Howard, Alfred Bagge, Robert Bell.

Walpole

Back row: Tim Hook, James Jones. Middle row: Hugo Pile, Gideon Ashworth, Stuart Healey, Alex Garbe, Matthew Whitaker.
 Front row: Mark Webb, Haris Kahn, Rakan Alfadi, Charles Robinson, Alexei Sorokin





Lyttelton

Back row: Catherine White, Alexa Alexander, Sarah Dalby, Caroline Sabberton, Melissa Katto, Sally Oliphant.
Middle row: Barbara Babei, Alex Katthagen, Anna Warburton, Emma Box, Antonia Jones, Charlie Lowe, Shiho Ichinose.
Front row: Amy Gillam, Louisa Jones, Olivia Armitage, Miranda Campbell Bowling, Yolanda Macpherson,
Louise Macdonald, Gemma Coles, Holly Anstey.

Nugent

Back row: Paola Chadwick, Nicola Mullinger, Laura McMaster, Wiebke Ramkin, Briony Lamping, Amy Stephens.
Middle row: Iona Graham, Georgina Lee, Lucy Keenan, Emily Wills, Katherine Connell, Kimberley Taylor, Layinka Howes,
Harriet Davis. Front row: Sophia Kakabadse, Henrietta Askew, Katherine Rankin, Frances Morley-Fletcher,
Daisy Shann, Camilla Stopford-Sackville, Lara Bailey, Bella Lloyd Owen.





Olivia Armitage, Louise Macdonald, Louisa Jones & Gemma Coles.



Adam Oakley



Tim Barker & Emily Wills



Richard Clapham

Katherine White, Anna Warburton & Sarah Dolby

Alex Katthagen, Melissa Katto & Max Wittgenstein



Drew Brennan



Anna Warburton, Alexa Alexander, Melissa Katto & Sally Oliphant



Oscar Humphries



Oliver Davies, Mugabe Kaijuka & Sarah Dolby





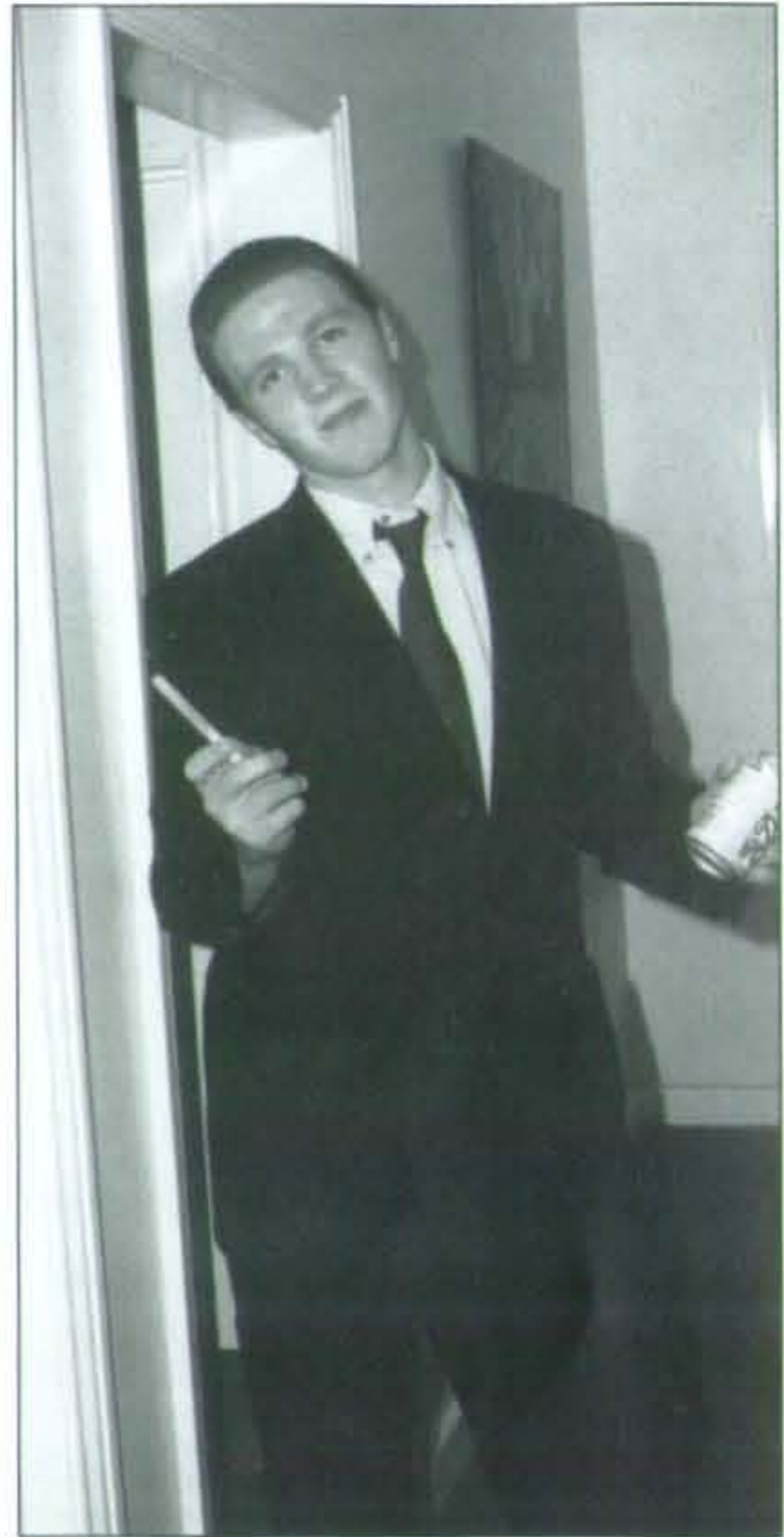
James Lyon & George Bertram



James Defty



Alex McMicking & Amy Gillam



Peter Mann



Wambaa Mathu, Amy Gillam, Chris Johnstone, James Sleater, Patrick Pearce, Tom Kulei, Damian Darkko, Kingsley Ford & Henry Wood

Daisy Shann

James Vane-Tempest



Henry Gillingham, Henry Wood, Robin Jones & Rory Scott

L-R: Alex Janson, Leo Fenwick, Tom Rundall, James Ogle & Alex McMicking



Caroline Sabberton, Nia Goodyer, Emma Box, Melissa Katto & Anna Warbuton



“BILL'S DAREDEVIL DIVE”

Such was the *Buckingham Advertiser* headline this summer after Bill Shand Kydd's successful parachute jump for charity. Angela Foster told the story:

“The uncle of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, set a new record when he became the first tetraplegic to do a parachute jump while wearing a breathing machine.

Bill Shand Kydd, who is paralysed from the neck down, performed the daring 11,000-foot jump at Hinton-in-the-Hedges Airfield near Brackley. The former amateur Grand National jockey broke his neck after he fell at a Grafton Hunt team chase in Sulgrave in 1995. He can only breathe through a portable electronic box which he calls George. The box works by electronic impulses and stimulates his chest to help him breathe.

Mr Shand Kydd, who lives near Aylesbury, raised £50,000 for the International Spinal Research Trust. Hundreds of well-wishers, including his wife Christina, watched as Mr Shand Kydd made his jump, attached to experienced instructor Geoff Wood. Mr Shand Kydd shouted 'Yee-hah!' as he landed on three large blue mattresses on the ground. Afterwards he said: 'It was fantastic. I was not at all nervous. I was really looking forward to it and it exceeded my expectations. It was better than the Grand National, though that lasted a bit longer!'"



Apart from jumping from an aeroplane for the Spinal Research Trust Bill Shand Kidd has also been active this summer on the School's behalf, making a memorable speech at the London launch of The Campaign For Stowe [page 3], part of which is reproduced below:

“According to Glenn Hoddle, I must have committed some unimaginable evil in my previous existence. I like to hope that it may just have been the evils of a life of libertine indulgence...

Whichever it was, I have no memories to shame me, but of my time at Stowe I have lasting, happy and vivid memories.

I suppose it is the indulgence of age always to imagine that the old days were better. This is probably not the case, but it is hard to imagine that the staff of today contain as many quirky and eccentric characters as those in charge when I arrived in 1950.

I was met on arrival by my housemaster Mr D.I. Brown, a seemingly enormous and imposing figure who inspired first awe, secondly respect (he had a very strong right arm) and finally affection... And who can forget the initially terrifying figure of “Slug” Gibson, who remarked to two of my friends one day, “You’re the sort of boys who stand on street corners, whistling at girls!” I eventually served under him in an unbeaten second XI and absolutely worshipped him... Or the diminutive and superbly sarcastic “Mini” Miles who remarked to another friend “Sanders, what are you going to be when you grow up?” “Me, Sir? I’m going to be a farmer.”

“Oh! I see, going on the land are you? Well, we all know what as!”...Bill McElwee charging up the Dadford hill in a cloud of dust, at the wheel of his enormous Lancia, as ever late for lessons. The sardonic, acerbic and charming W. Gilbert who was my Tutor during my last two years... The immortal “Bertie” Stephan, “Acid Bath” Haig, “Freddie” Fox, who survived teaching me and both the children, “Tubby” Deacon, “Grubby” Saunders, Capel Cure swaying slightly after his mid-morning 70 proof coffee break...There were others, too numerous to mention. I didn't want to leave.

They provided the living pulse of the School, but the amazing effect of living in such imposing, beautiful and atmospheric surroundings seeped into the subconscious of even the most tasteless vulgarian. Even overgrown and decaying, the various monuments and vistas provided an inkling of what has now been restored. None of us ever imagined that we would live to see the dreams of Vanbrugh, Kent and “Capability” Brown recreated in all their glory...”

The speech by Bob Drayson, Guest of Honour at the Old Stoic Dinner 1999, marking his 80th birthday

MR PRESIDENT, HEADMASTER, AND STOICS OF ALL KINDS, SHAPES AND SIZES...

It is a great honour to be invited to speak to you this evening, just as it was a great honour and indeed a great surprise to be invited to be Headmaster of Stowe. Two days after the appointment was announced I received a post card from a Housemaster who had known me as a boy at school; it read "Well, well, who'd have thought it?" I agreed with him.

Now, it is not my job to welcome the guests but I just want to say how delighted I am to see Bidy Stephan here tonight, a warm and friendly reminder of that great honorary O.S., Brian, whose chronicles of Stowe, *Hearsay and Memory*, I'm sure you have all read. Brian was for over fifty years an essential part of Stowe.

In his memoirs Brian was more than kind in his assessment of my sixteen years as HM, but he also teased me for being a devotee of the cliché! Well, he might be putting words into my mouth, but when all's said and done, it depends on how you look at it, you have to take the rough with the smooth; after all I am getting on a bit – but you're as old as you feel; you win some and you lose some. That's what it's all about; and in the final analysis you can't have too much of a good thing. I only hope that you will feel I've made the grade – but to coin a phrase – that's the way it goes. But was it not Brian who said "Tempora mutantur" – times change – a cliché in the Latin style? Dear Brian, I can imagine him smiling down at us with that look of kindly understanding. Joe Bain and Muir Temple summed him up – "a man of great sympathy, always prepared to listen and to guide rather than to instruct". No, I don't mind being teased by Brian and I doubt if at my age I shall discontinue my use of clichés. Brian was the essence of loyalty.

Another here tonight who has given loyal service to Stowe over many years is John Chapman, Economics tutor and doyen of the book shop – and famous Old Stoics galore: Michael Craig-Cooper, Reggie Harland, Chris Atkinson (almost a permanent fixture), David McDonough (now chairing an OS PR working group as part of the Development Office), Nigel Rice, Christopher Tate, Anthony Shillington (OS in residence), and of course we cannot forget John Fingleton – pervasive is the word which comes to mind, largely evident at every Stoic occasion, a true servant of Stowe – where one word would do he always used two. Peter Longhurst – idiosyncratic – I salute Peter's highly individualised contribution to Stowe. And speaking of quality in service we have incurred the loss this year of three distinguished Old Stoics: Andrew Croft, one of the first 99, John Boyd-Carpenter and Laddie Lucas – was it on account of him that someone said "Scratch a Stoic and you'll find a golfer underneath"? These three men are witness to the great years of Stowe under J.F.

But we must not revel too much in nostalgia – let us look at the here and now. We give thanks for the past – and now look forward. You will all have received a copy of the *Stowe Bulletin* and be rejoicing, as I do, at the tremendous array of activities and achievements of Stoics past and present, but I wonder how many of you have read the latest edition of *The Stoic*, the School's magazine: 150 pages of all that is happening at the School today – 16 pages on The Campaign for Stowe and Tony Meredith's comprehensive essay on "The Genius of Stowe", the School's unique heritage, all accentuating the spirit of the place – "the landscape of Stowe, a great enduring thing", articles by the Headmaster and others on the Foundation Trust, the Preservation Trust and on Stowe's great Jubilee Year 1998. I shall not forget the speeches at the Commemoration Dinner, especially the contributions by Tony Quinton and by the Head Girl, Anna Kenyon, who spoke warmly of all Stowe had given her in little over a year at the School – it was most moving. Then there is the picture on the front cover of the magazine of two Stowe cricketers in front of the scoreboard showing a score of 203 for 0 versus MCC – all part of the Jubilee Summer, with Prince Andrew at the Stowe Putter, the outstanding productions of *Julius Caesar* and *O What a Wonderful War*, the achievements of the much travelled Stowe Clarinet Quintet, successful golf, CCF expeditions and stories of Stoics abroad. Stowe is abounding with enterprise. May I salute the Headmaster and his team in this year of 1999.

I was delighted to see the picture of Stowe's beautiful Page 3 girls on the front of the *Bulletin* – I like to think that one of the best things that happened at Stowe in my time was the acceptance of girls into the 6th form in 1974; my innocent comment at an Old Stoic gathering that girls had added a touch to the School led to some ribaldry from a few of those present, but perhaps not quite as much as that gained by the Headmaster who, following his acceptance of girls into the School, unwisely stated on Speech Day that they had been successfully embedded in the Sixth form!

All that I read in *The Stoic* and all that I hear on the grapevine assures me that Stowe is in good heart today. Thank you, Jeremy. We are delighted.

So what does Stowe offer for the enormous fees charged to pupils who attend in 1999? Maybe you've had your answer in the pages of the *Bulletin* and *The Stoic*, but maybe we should consider how Stowe differs from other public schools.

The purpose of some schools is to produce a type, and we've all met so-called public school types with accentuated manners and an attitude of "the world owes me a living"; some schools take great pride in their high position in the league tables, which is quite understandable, but it is by no means the be all and end all of quality education.

Education, I believe, should be concerned first with the kind of men and women our pupils become and only second with what they know. Ruskin wrote "It is the effort that deserves the praise not the success – nor is it the question for any student whether he is cleverer than others or duller but whether he has done his best with the gifts he has". So much for League Table-itis. And it was William Cowper who wrote "Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much; wisdom is humble that he knows not more".

So what is it about Stoics that makes them different from so much that comes out of the public schools these days? I believe from all I see, all I hear and all I know that Stoics *are* different: they are individualistic, they are kindly, considerate, compassionate, generous spirited, sensitive, informal – leaning perhaps towards the casual, but with always an element of eccentricity. (Do you recognise yourselves?) Stoics continue, I am sure, to be antagonistic towards overbearing regulation. (On my arrival at Stowe I was appalled at the slackness and low standards of dress and appearance and even likened the School to a second class comprehensive, blaming the 5% who were dragging us down; the School's response was good and positive, but I was amused some time later when a leaver presented me with a black tie on which were featured a skull and cross-bones and 5%. I began to understand the quality of the Stoic!) Would a summary of advice to all Headmasters be covered by the notice I saw on the wall by the plug in the loo of a prep school "Pull gently, then let go, violence defeats its own object".

As to the quality of Stoics and to use a cliché, "what makes them tick?" I think Tony Quinton's summary of what Stowe had given him would take some beating – he spoke of "finding out what I was like, of making lasting friends, and within the non-too-rigid framework of the time-table, of running my own life" – there is also in him that element of eccentricity.

So, thank you for listening to these few rambling thoughts of an elderly retired Headmaster – I never cease to be grateful for my sixteen years at Stowe. I must couple that gratitude with a big thank you to Rachel, my wife. Without her I would have utterly failed to cope with the pressures. I obviously married the right girl. Cliché. The proof of the pudding is in the eating – we've now achieved 56 years together – that's what it's all about. FORTUNA DOMUS.

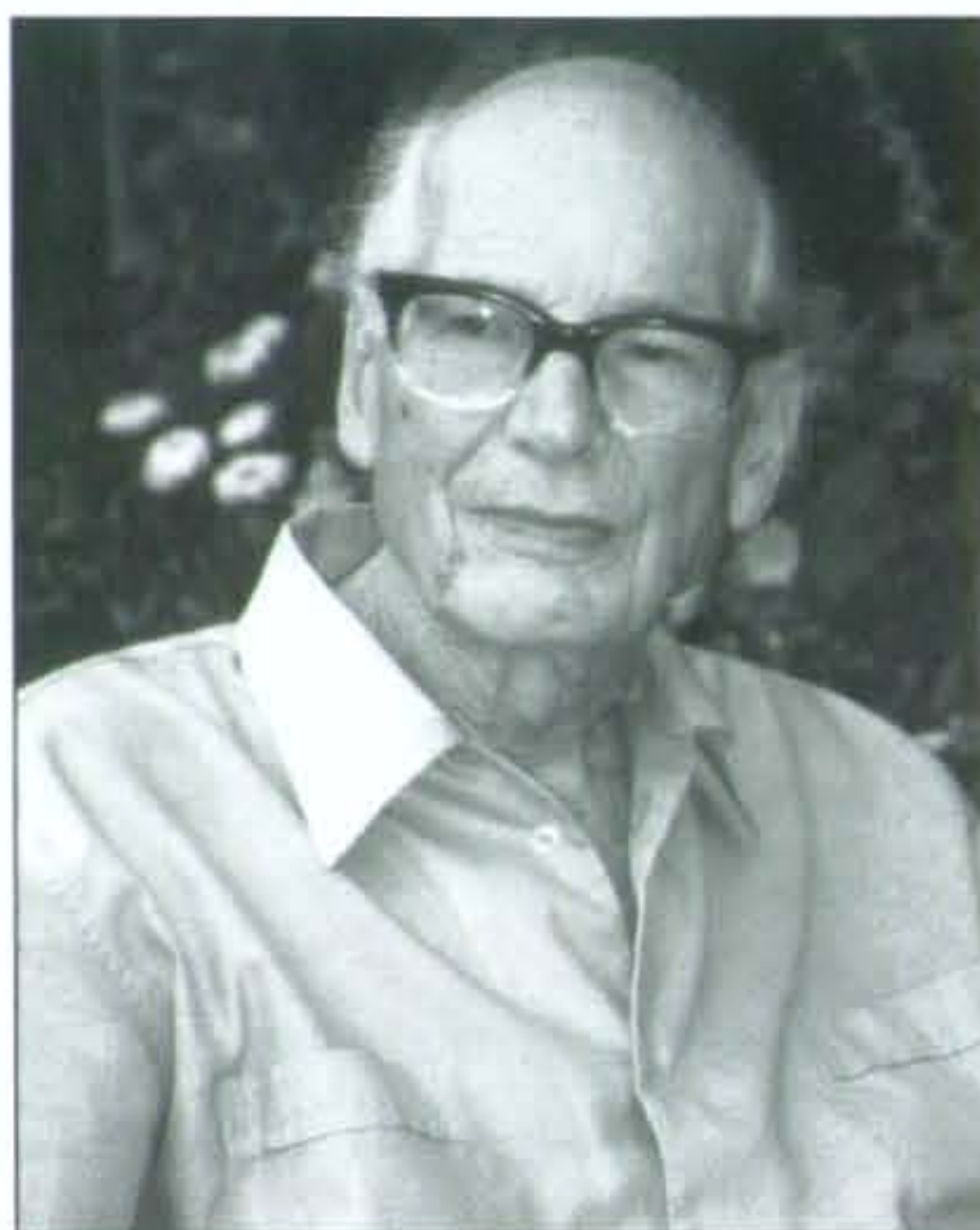


Bob and Rachel Drayson with the bowl presented to them by the Old Stoic Society

IVAN HILLS: A LIFELONG PASSION WITH BIRDS

On the death last March of his uncle, Ivan Hills (Chandos 32), Peter Hancock (a former Chaplain of Stowe), kindly sent *The Stoic* some details of his life.

After his schooldays Ivan trained to become a Land Agent at Woodbridge in Suffolk. He had a little boat on the River Deben, ideal for waterfowling. He often went out into the Essex marshes with the oystermen. Ivan had a knack of getting along with people, gaining their friendship and respect, and becoming one of the gang. Newly qualified, he bought an ancient Alvis, with a fabric body. It cost him £12 – and off he went with his Bimbo, no, not what you are thinking – a yellow Labrador – off to Inverness, to take a job with the District Surveyor. He loved remote places; he loved the mountains; he loved birds, inevitably he loved Scotland.



When war came he joined the Seaforth Highlanders, as part of Monty's 8th Army. He served in North Africa; the Sicily landings; the Italian campaign; and finally Germany. Afterwards Ivan joined the National Trust, becoming land agent for Kent, Surrey and Sussex. For several years he lived at Polesdon Lacey. Eventually he became the Trust's Chief Land Agent which meant that he was in charge of the fabric of all properties in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

However, even more dominant than his successful professional career was his hobby, birds. Birds were his lifelong passion. As a young man he climbed and shot – and he was a fine shot. His years at Stowe were happy ones; he kept a pet kestrel and raven. I don't suppose many schools allowed a pupil to keep a couple of raptors, but Stowe has always been different, and they do have more acres than boys.

His great love of birds came to the forefront again when he retired. Bobby, his eldest brother, gave him a motor-caravan, and he and his wife Mary travelled extensively. They made nine excursions to Arctic Lapland – trips of over two months each – to study and photograph birds and record birdsong. They also visited the Spanish Pyrenees and the French Alps. Many of their observations of bird behaviour are included in *Birds of the Western Palearctic* – a nine-volume opus which must have been the northern ornithologist's Bible, I suppose. Some of his photos have appeared in books, and articles with his illustrations in *Country Life*. Their birdsong recordings are held in the British Library of Wildlife Sound, which forms part of the National Sound Archive. He often gave lectures on birds and wild flowers, again illustrated with his own slides.


As the years went by, and the caravanning days were over, he still made expeditions to France and Spain, latterly driven by his son Tom. On his last trip to Spain, only last April, when he was eighty-three, he

could no longer stand up when using his binoculars; but he enjoyed sitting in a folding chair, and he could still take photographs of some wild paeonies.

I am not a real bird lover, but I have one special memory. Many years ago – when I was Chaplain at Stowe – an appointment that pleased him – I was planning a holiday in Scotland, and Ivan happened to call in beforehand. He was naturally excited to hear about the plans; particularly so when I told him we were going to Glen Orchy. "I love Glen Orchy," he said; "have you got a map? There used to be an eagle's nest there." He explained how to find the crag, and where the nest was, and – most importantly – how to

see it without disturbing the mother bird. We carefully followed his detailed instructions, and there was the nest – and the eagle. We returned to the little hotel where we were staying, told nobody, and sent Ivan a cryptic postcard: 'She's still there!' He was delighted.

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FRANK TUOHY

Frank Tuohy, one of the outstanding short story writers of this century, died last April. This commemoration comes in two parts; first the talk given in London last June by Francis King at the Royal Society of Literature; secondly an account of his time at Stowe during the Second World War.

I have often been inclined to mock at the recent fashion for describing meetings like ours today as, not commemorations, but celebrations. Apart from possessions, most people leave little or nothing tangible and durable behind them after their deaths. Their legacy, possessions apart, is memories – happy, poignant, consoling – which, gradually, over the years inevitably become fainter and fainter. In the case of such people the word commemoration, not celebration, is surely the apt one. But creative artists of stature leave behind a different sort of legacy, and in their case we can rightly use the word celebration.

Of course most of us here have our memories of Frank, as a relative, a friend, an acquaintance. But his major legacy to us was not those memories, cherished though they may be, but his books. To produce those books caused him endless anguish and difficulty, as many of you here will know. Unlike many other writers, myself included, he derived little happiness from writing – as he more than once told me. But he felt strongly that writing was his vocation – just as an errant priest feels, for all his doubts, restlessness and backsliding, that the Church is his vocation.

The old adage that hard writing makes for easy reading was amply proved by Frank's work. When one reads that elegant, fluent, beautifully precise and economical prose, it is hard to remember the blood, sweat and tears that went into the writing of it. Frank once told me that what E.M. Forster had done for the novel was to 'loosen it up'. Frank, like Victor Pritchett, did something similar for the short story; he loosened it up without, miraculously, any sacrifice of sinew or muscle. After his death, I picked up his *Collected Stories* and began to read here and there at random. When one reads some authors, their work is the stylistic equivalent of the sort of handwriting, usually ugly because so laboured, that a child produces by an unrelenting downward pressure on the nib or the lead. In Frank's case, the pressure is feather-light; but each sentence is incised, deftly and with extreme accuracy, as though with a burin.

Inevitably one must feel sad that his output was even smaller than E.M. Forster's and that after three successful novels he produced no more. Of those three novels, C.P. Snow wrote that they established Frank in the first flight of English novelists; and that was an opinion with which many critics of the time were in full agreement. But if, sadly, there were no more novels, there was, fortunately, the compensation of three marvellously varied and rich collections of short stories. Critics often compared him to Chekhov in his deceptively matter-of-fact manner and the way in

which the events that he described were often a part of everyone's experience. But a comparison to Maupassant would be even more apt. Each story, mordant, concise and a small miracle of construction, represents, as he himself put it, 'a painful bite down on the rotten tooth of fact'.

In his brilliant and all too infrequent reviews, many of them for the *Times Literary Supplement*, Frank set exacting standards for other writers. He set even more exacting standards for himself, and destroyed anything that in his opinion fell below them. That sort of perfectionism is a terrible cross for any writer to bear, since it is all too rare for a writer fully to achieve all that he envisioned when setting out on the journey of creation. For the perfectionist, therefore, there will almost always be disappointment.

Frank also set similarly high standards for both his own behaviour and the behaviour of others. He was conscious of his own inability always to live up to those standards; and was no less conscious of the inability of others to do so. The inevitable consequence was a dark streak of melancholy and even misanthropy in a man who, nonetheless, could be the most entertaining and sympathetic of companions.

He was, I think, always at his best with the young: with young writers, rather than established ones, and with the students at the universities at which he taught, rather than with his professor colleagues. He possessed a gritty integrity, which made it difficult for him to conceal his true opinions; but in the case of the young he was able more often to do so than in the case of the mature.

During the first half of his life he suffered from a heart condition, later corrected by surgery, that might at any moment prove to be fatal. The result of that threat of imminent extinction produced in him a fatalistic courage – an attitude of 'bear them we can and, if we can, we must', when faced with life's perils and horrors. He was in both senses of the word, a Stoic: not merely someone who had been to school at Stowe, but someone who had much in common with the Stoic philosophers.

Because he wrote so little during the past twenty years, he is, sadly, not nearly as well known to people not of his and my generation as he deserves to be. But eventually talent, like water, finds its own level; and, therefore, just as I feel sure that certain of the most prominent literary reputations of today will eventually subside, so I am equally sure that Frank's can only soar.

FRANCIS KING
JUNE 11, 1999

FRANK TUOHY AT STOWE

Arrival from Seaford

War was in the air and Neville Chamberlain about to fly to Munich when Frank Tuohy began his Stowe career. His parents had come up Stowe the year before to meet the Headmaster, J.F. Roxburgh, and discuss possible scholarships. J.F.'s



notes of the meeting survive: "Parents nice (pronounced 'Too-ie'). Cousin of journalist. F[rank] clever & should get Scholarship in June 1938. Languages, but Classics first. Plays no games owing to murmur in heart. Loves birds. Draws well. Parents asked suddenly to see San where perhaps neither impressed nor too well received!" The mentioned "murmur" was, in fact, no minor thing but a hole in his heart, an incurable condition at the time

Frank came from Sussex. His father, of Irish descent, was a GP in Uckfield and Frank's early schooling had been at Newlands, Seaford. Although head boy of his prep school, he disliked it there (a dislike which was later to colour the short story "Live Bait"). Frank's enforced exclusion from the playing fields of Newlands may have been a cause of irritation: "The boy is delicate," wrote his headmaster to Stowe, "though in my opinion not so delicate as he is made out to be." His summing-up of Frank was the somewhat unenthusiastic "quite a useful member of society".

When the time came for the scholarship exam Frank was too ill to sit it at Stowe. However, he still came top of the General Paper and fourth in English. His Latin was said to be promising "though he made little of the verses and the Greek". A scholarship was awarded, but only after J.F. had queried the validity of the invigilation. "It was done mostly by music mistresses and Under Matrons," came the somewhat terse response from Seaford, "who, even if they were dishonest, would be quite incapable of helping."

Joining Capel's Temple

In September 1938 Frank joined Temple House where the seniors included Michael Ventris, later to find fame with the decipherment of the Greek Linear B script, and Christopher Robin Milne. The housemaster was Eddie Capel Cure, J.F.'s former Head of House at Lancing. A gifted linguist, sportsman and musician, Capel ran what was generally considered a popular, civilised house.

Frank liked his new existence much better than his last. He was not overawed by his huge, Valkyrie-like matron, Miss Dykes, formidable in her flowing white hospital head-dress and voluminous brown overalls. He enjoyed his new-found freedom. Much of the teaching was lively and stimulating and there were plenty of opportunities for him to pursue the outdoor activities he enjoyed – fishing, scouting, and every branch of natural history. If it was frustrating not being able to join in physical activities, at least it got him out of afternoons of trench digging. Preparations for war vied with actions of appeasement. A party of Hitler youth visited the School in Frank's first term. The latter was drastically cut short by a bout of pneumonia, causing an absence of six months and nearly ending his Stowe career prematurely. J.F.

pulled strings behind the scenes to make sure Frank's parents were not charged fees for the Spring Term. "The boy is clever," he wrote to his governors, "and I should like to have him back, but if we require the full fees I don't think he will ever return." He got his way.

Establishing himself

Frank's school career subsequently flourished. He quickly passed School Certificate and a year later Higher School Cert, the latter eliciting a fulsome letter of congratulation from J.F. Capel had introduced in



Temple the tradition of regular light entertainments, for which he himself composed the songs and played the piano. In time Frank became a bright addition to Capel's troupe, he and Tony Quinton being much applauded for Temple's *April Folly* of 1941. Tony Quinton's *Babes i' The Wood* and Frank's *Luscious Lavender* were said to represent "the high-water mark of Temple's pantomime".

Frank began to assert himself. Debates in the Library were always well attended and provocative. Speaking from the floor to the motion "that the Public School tradition should be allowed to play its part in post-war education" Frank caused a stir by denouncing the Prime Minister as "an uncouth lisper of banalities". Unsurprisingly he spoke for the motion "that it is preferable to be a book-worm than a games-grub" (Peregrine Worsthorne and George Melly both speaking against it) and he later seconded Alasdair Macdonald's contention "that, in the opinion of this House, History is a better subject than Geography". His speech, wrote the society's secretary, "was profound. He showed that Geopolitics were founded on the historical theories of Spengler, and that modern Geography was a technical science. He then reached a climax: 'History requires the whole mind, Geography only the brain.'" In his final debate he seconded the opposition to the motion "that this House views with disfavour the present popularity of classical music". Speaking directly after a George Melly panegyric on jazz, Frank produced "the best speech of the evening. He did much to please the House by his wit and epigrammatical phraseology. He quoted lyrics none had ever heard to condemn songs no one had ever sung. He emphasised the transient nature of jazz and showed that classical music was liked for its own sake, not for its associations."

As one of the leading intellectuals Frank naturally became in time a member of the prestigious XII Club and before that was secretary of the Symposium, a club for younger scholars, to whom he read a paper on "Modern Poetry". At this stage poetry seems to have been a greater interest than prose. He reviewed Laurence Whistler's latest volume of poems, *Ode to the Sun*, in *The Stoic*. It reflected, he declared, the pioneering of Eliot and Auden, yet "many lines and stanzas display a power of construction and a skill in imagery which is entirely individual". He delighted that Whistler had attempted to restore narrative and ballad poetry "to its rightful position". He himself had a few poems published in the magazine. In "Holiday", a poem about the popular south coast resorts he would have known well, the sixteen-year old Frank shows typical Tuohy precision of observation:

*And all of a summer's day have they resurrected a tropic of
coloured shirts and parasols:
Where the high sun looms above them and pebbles are
brushed by the alabaster sea,
They throw sticks for dogs, examine beyond tamarisks
the municipal palisades of flowers,
Or tempt the prowling gulls with remnants of a picnic
Till suddenly on this special day,
As they stand at corners watching bicycles or the end of
the pier like a wedding cake,
Or look with windy sentimental eyes beyond the headland,
Tomorrow intrudes and all the holiday has vanished
As a chrysanthemum is crushed in a hot hand.*

Another poem had as its starting point some holiday work he had been engaged in with fellow Stoics, Tony Quinton and Alan Maclean, at an apple factory. The job was to stack crates of apples and occasionally accompany lorry-loads of them to a depot. Frank turns one such journey into a thoughtful meditation on life and death, war and peace:



*The lorry, stacked right up with crates of apples,
Swung round a siding bend. On top, in the sun,
I was a king (but once I'd had to duck
Under a whistling phone wire) chucking apples.
- Six for men shovelling sludge and one
For the carrier's mare with the wise head...
Unloaded them into a London truck
Smoky with coal-dust, vaulted like a shed,
Six high in tiers... I dropped a crate
And cursed, no longer king but fool,
As apples bruised by dozens on the floor.
Picking one up, held it like Yorick's skull
Not rotten yet – nor warped with cold earth's weight
But orange-red as the rouged cheeks of a whore –
And my front teeth crunched its spurting flesh
And I wondered where it might have been unless
I'd eaten it – such gold coin, I've read,
Young Paris bartered for another man's
Girl; or this might have been an artist's apple,
Mirrored in walnut, florid as Cezanne's,
Those precious fruits that never will go bad...
Might have been eaten in a photograph
By a silver girl, or, taken to the zoo,
Have fed a mandrill or a cockatoo...
This, juggled, could have made a sick man laugh
Or, in a gutter, pleased a rat-toothed boy.*

*But I bit it clean and chucked away the core.
Four fighters go on drolling overhead
And, squatting in the truck, a man called Ted
Is reminiscing endlessly
Of Arras and another bloody war.*

A scholarship to Cambridge

In December 1942 Frank won a scholarship in history to King's College, Cambridge despite serious illness when sitting the exams. J.F. rang up his mother with news of the success and wrote delightedly to Frank. He had taken the exam early, at 17, because he had decided to leave Stowe. J.F. argued to his parents the benefits of staying on. "I think he has a good deal to learn from his association with other boys and from the responsibilities that I hope he will get in his House – or would have got if he stayed. But he is of course far on intellectually for his years, and I have some sympathy with his wish to get away from the society of the immature and the leading strings of the school." Dr Tuohy took a cautious line. "Frank's head is full of imperfectly insulated ideas at the moment. I always feel that his physical handicap has caused him so much frustration that the less interference with his mental outlook the better." In the end a good compromise was reached. Frank came back for one more term to enjoy the exercise of his new monitorship and then went up to King's.

Frank and J.F.

Noel Annan's biography of Roxburgh suggests that J.F., in his 50s when Frank knew him, was no longer completely in touch with the young. *The Poetic Procession*, based on a series of lectures J.F. had given at Lancing, would have seemed with its predominance of Victorians deeply old-fashioned to Frank's generation, whose views were shaped by the literature and literary criticism of the inter-war years. Frank was shocked in class,



for example, when J.F. asserted that Thomas Hardy should not have given up writing good novels for bad poetry. When Annan was preparing the biography, Frank wrote to him of J.F.'s old-fashioned values: "I remember him saying in 1942 'I have just had a most unpleasant experience. A woman telephoned to tell me of the death of her son in action and, I am disgusted to have to say it, she was in a night-club and she was drunk.' To me, even then, the drunk mother seemed as sad as anything I could think of." J.F.'s all-pervasive old-world courtesy, which charmed so many, seemed suspect to young intellectuals like Frank. "We were sceptical, we admired sincerity and plain speaking, we were reading Orwell."

If Frank's feelings towards J.F. were ambivalent, J.F. certainly seems to have appreciated Frank. He twice invited him to come over from Cambridge to stay and help supervise School Cert. And he wrote warmly in a testimonial: "His school career was a distinguished one.... He rose to the very top intellectually and established himself as a notable personality... I regard him as a young man of unusual promise..."

Then there was the saga of Frank's wireless. J.F. explained the background in a letter to Dr Tuohy:

"I expect you know that Frank's Wireless was stolen from his study at the end of last term. This is a disaster that we cannot account for, and ever since it has been my great endeavour to make good the loss. Unfortunately, I have so far been unable to obtain a wireless set of any kind, either new or secondhand; but I am still trying and will write to Frank when I am further on."

He was as good as his word, eventually tracking down an expensive second-hand machine in a warehouse at the Elephant and Castle, for which he later only asked the Bursar to reimburse half the cost. Flushed with success, he penned a letter to Frank at Cambridge telling him of the "Ekco 7-valve superhet receiver" which would shortly be delivered to Uckfield. "I don't suppose it's as good as the one you lost but it is the only one that I have been able to hear of..." The letter ends warmly: "We are missing you here this term."

For a headmaster struggling to keep his ship afloat on wartime seas it was all a remarkable piece of determined endeavour. And Frank clearly appreciated it:

"Thank you most awfully for taking all that trouble about my wireless. I'm quite sure it'll be all right, as all I ask of a wireless is that it get the Home and Forces programmes, preferably not simultaneously. I think, as a matter of fact, I'll leave it at home because when such important events as the News (4 times a day) and Winston happen, my landlady always has hers on full bore, so that one hears it whether one likes it or not. Music is supplied by the man on the floor above me, who in spite of being a Bachelor of that Art, has a limited and very irritating repertoire...."

I hope to come down to Stowe at the beginning of July. I will be found just standing on the South Front, just as here I stand on Clare Bridge and look along to Trinity backs. Stowe and Cambridge must certainly be the two most lovely places in the world to be educated in...."

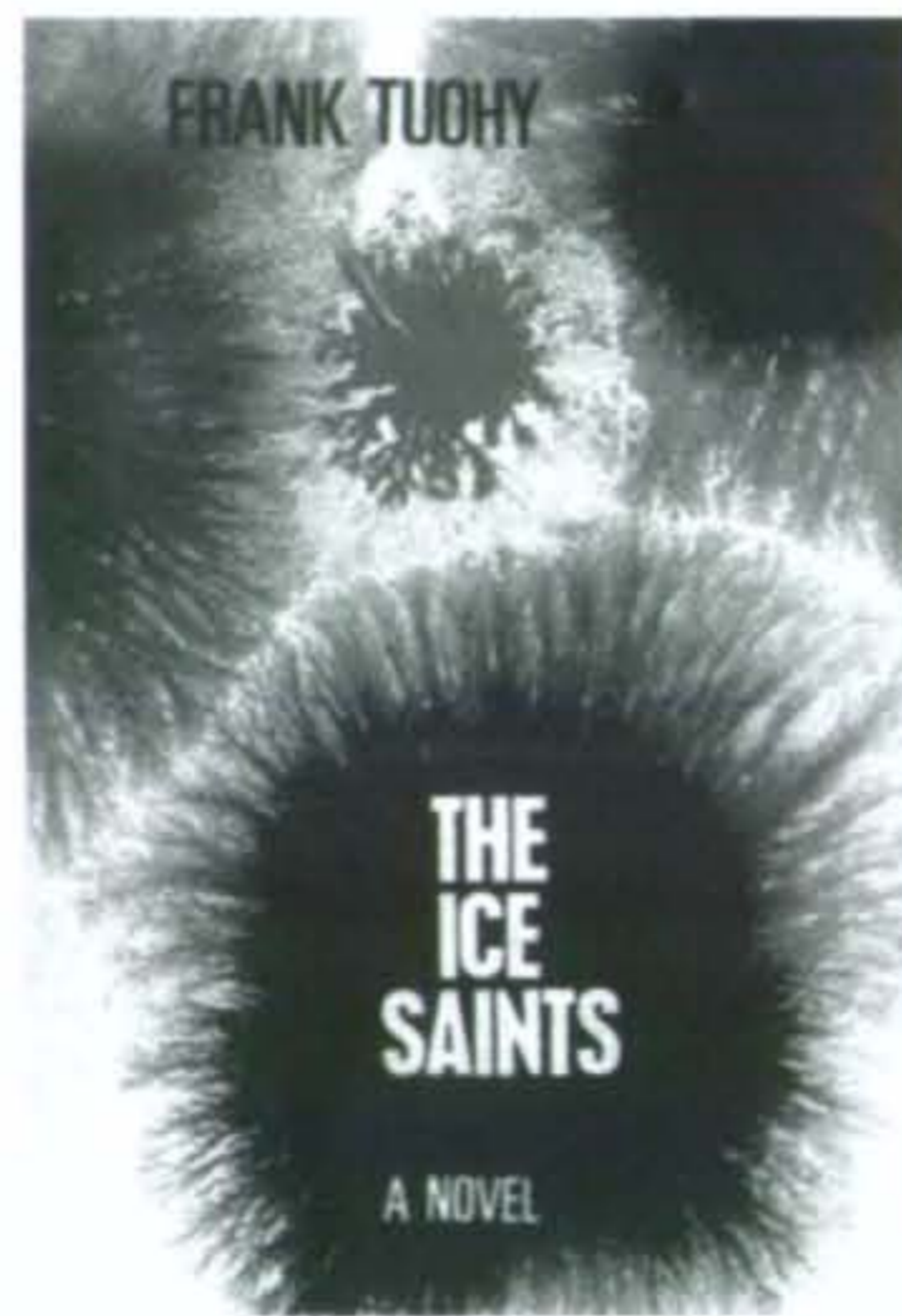
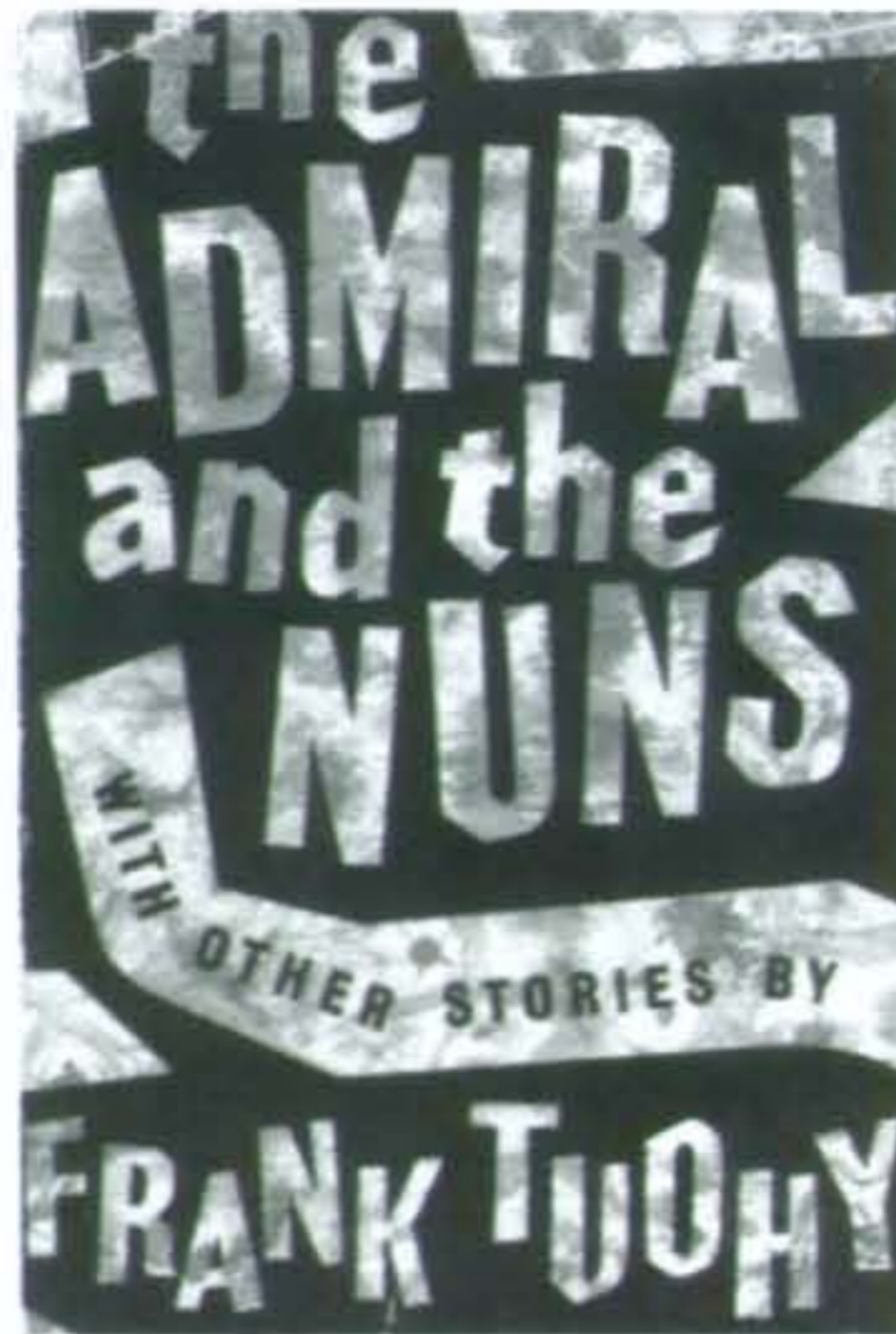
The relationship, however, foundered, at least on Frank's side. Towards the end of the war Frank paid a visit to Stowe and happened to meet J.F. with two other former pupils, both in uniform. J.F. greeted the two servicemen with elaborate enthusiasm, before noticing the third person. "Ah, Frank, for a moment I didn't recognise the fellah without a uniform."

This seeming incivility rankled for some time but it didn't prevent Frank making contact with J.F. after the war. In the freezing winter of 1947 Frank was living in Crowborough, where his father had retired, and was in need of career advice:

"I stayed at Christ Church with Anthony Quinton – plain living and high thinking as it always is – but a very welcome change from my present unemployed existence, which consists in thawing pipes and watching my family have 'flu.'"

It is a vivacious letter, bringing to life a recent period spent abroad:

"Paris was great fun, though there was no lotus eating, owing to the extraordinary poverty of the English there. It used to cost



about 7/6 to have a huge farinaceous meal in the student's restaurants in the Quartier Latin – a meal which left one very hungry about an hour later. I was there four months – about half the time in a rainy corner of Brittany and a comfortable flat near the Eiffel tower, with a family, and after that in a garret, partially furnished and unheated, looking on to the Metro somewhere east of Montparnasse. I liked that part best, but by the middle of November I found myself spending an increasingly large portion of the day in bed, trying to keep warm... My family were kind, but rather dull and "sportif" except for the younger son, who was a student, neurotic and hardworking, without, as far as I could gather, much effect. Of course the Place far outweighs the People – one goes around like a gaping idiot but, as soon as one starts talking, comes across defence-mechanisms and spots of irritation. I used to lose my temper quite a lot about politics, a thing I'd never do in England."

Frank was interested in the possibility of a job with "the re-education of Germany plan" and also the British Council. J.F. in his response encouraged the latter. It was to be through his work abroad, of course, sponsored by the British Council that Frank was to find his inspiration as a writer.

Two postscripts

Frank's career began to develop around the time J.F. retired from Stowe and his contact with the School thereafter seems to have been minimal. Yet his time at Stowe stayed with him and many years after J.F.'s death Frank wrote *The Palladian Bridge*, a short story set in Roxburgh's wartime era. Although the story (which is almost certainly autobiographical) only features one small incident, it chronicles what was probably a defining moment in his life.

At the time of the School's fiftieth birthday, in 1973, Frank agreed to record the story for use in a series of readings in the Aurelian Room which was to be part of the jubilee celebrations. Perhaps the recording has survived and its present whereabouts are known?

At the beginning of this year the School made contact with Frank again, asking whether a couple of Stoics might interview him for this issue of the magazine. An invitation to lunch at his home in Somerset was Frank's warm response. "I shall be out of England until late April. Any time after that." The two month gap looked useful, allowing the interviewers time to study his work. It was a shock to hear of his sudden death in April.

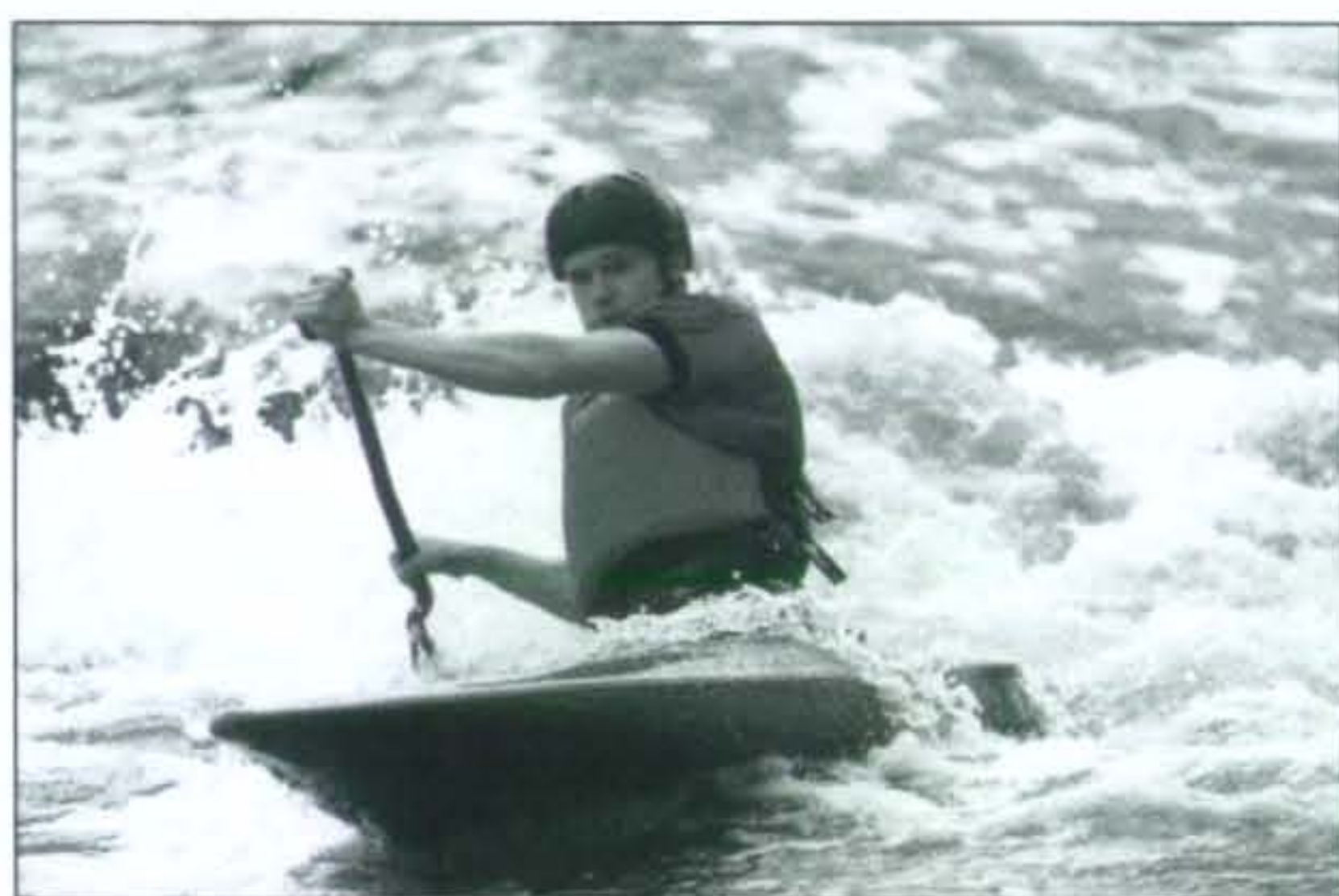
TONY MEREDITH

Andrew Nicoll (Temple 1995), who will be going to Sandhurst in January 2000,
writes about his latest exploits

COMPETITION CANOEING

In April last year I won a place on the British Under 23 Canoe Slalom team. I consequently spent the summer competing at international races in Norway, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and finally at the World Student Games at Metz in France.

In August I flew with the team to Oslo, where we took a coach to Sjoa, a small town five hours away from the airport. After five days of intensive training the race was held on a river which cuts down through a mountain gorge. Magnificent scenery. We were competing against teams from seven different nations, so it was pleasing to finish 7th despite a number of mistakes. From Sjoa we drove to Bjorbo



Barcelona Olympic course

in Sweden for the second stage of the Nordic Cup. In the race, which followed several days of training, it was good to win a bronze medal for the GB team by coming third.

After returning home from Sweden I had less than a day in which to pack the car and head out to the Czech Republic. The Trojan Horse Race is held in Prague every year and brings together many of the best paddlers in the world. A 30th place, in the circumstances, was encouraging. From Prague we went to Bratislava and raced for the Danubia Cup. I was pleased to qualify in 6th for the final where I ended up in 14th. And so to Metz where we were accommodated just next to the slalom course in the university campus. The University World Championship is a high-profile event held every four years. I was the only British C1 paddler to qualify for the final where, racing against the best in the world, I managed to come 15th. The importance of the event took me by surprise and was brought home to me after I was interviewed by French TV (in French!) and had to sign several autographs.

The rest of 1998 was taken up by national races. The highlight was coming third in the British Open, held in Wales. Last year was my first year of international races and I learnt a great deal, coming into this year with greater experience. With university out of the way I had more time to concentrate on the canoeing. The training abroad has been hard but I have managed to get a place on the team to go to Spain, where the senior team trials will be held on the 1992 Olympic course. This year I hope again to be on the World Cup and World Championship team and, ultimately, the Olympic team. The World Canoe Slalom Championships are this year in La Seo D'Urgell in Spain. There are four World Cup races this year with the final in Australia. I am also on the Great Britain Freestyle Canoeing team and am currently ranked Number One in Britain at this. It is a different discipline of canoeing and one which is growing rapidly both in Britain and abroad. Here's to the World Championships in New Zealand after the slalom season has finished!



Above: Bill and Patience McElwee by the Vancouver stables
 Below: Patience with foxhound puppies
 A portrait of Bill by Robin Watt



BILL AND PATIENCE

by Harriet Hall

Those who remember Bill and Patience McElwee will be delighted to hear that a book written about them by their daughter, Harriet Hall, is to be published next January. * It is a fascinating read. Harriet was never sent to school by the splendidly unconventional Bill and Patience. She spent all the more time, therefore, with her parents and the closeness of this relationship has allowed her to write a book which, in its candour of observation and its fund of good stories, brings the family to vivid life.

It is a book which should be read by everyone with an interest in Stowe. Here in three-dimensional characterisation is that famous History Tutor whose stimulating teaching was matched by a cavalier disregard for stuffy school protocol and whose wartime exploits won him the MC. Here is his bohemian wife, a compulsive writer and gossip, who outraged the Stowe establishment by putting at the heart of one of her many novels a recent, barely-hushed-up school scandal. Here is Vancouver Lodge, where from 1932 to 1962 (excepting a break in the war) Bill and Patience kept chaotic open house to all their historians past and present and, indeed, to any Stoic in search of intellectual stimulus or emotional support. Here is all the fun, confusion and, sometimes, startling achievement of the Historians' plays, Shakespeare on the steps of the Queen's Temple, eighteen productions in all.

Harriet has clearly put the family archives to excellent use in recreating these distant times. She has also drawn on reminiscences from many former pupils. And if we are in any doubt whose side we are on, the raffish, intellectual Vancouverites or their play-it-by-the-book critics up at Stowe, we have some very moving testimonies to help us make up our mind. "The quality of the attention that he gave me," wrote one Old Stoic of Bill, "entirely changed my attitude to myself. The fact that he believed in my potential caused me to believe in it too and it broke a certain kind of self-disparagement that my difficulties at the beginning of my school career had led me into." No schoolmaster could have finer testimony.

The book is full of new insights into old Stowe favourites. And the author never allows her closeness to her subject to prejudice things. At all times she strives for the balanced view. She makes several shrewd comments on the Roxburgh years and she does not mince words over the problems of the fifties and early sixties. The ending is understandably sad, with the sudden move from an unsettled Stowe to Sandhurst, quickly followed by Patience's death at 52. Bill's later years – he lived to 71 – were thereby so much the emptier. But Harriet leaves us with the happier picture of her parents reunited, sitting on a smoke-wreathed cloud, Patience with a whisky and ginger, Bill with gin and orange. A suitably whimsical conclusion to a really delightful book.

AGM

* *Bill And Patience* is to be published by The Book Guild at the end of January, 2000. Copies, priced £16.95 (+ postage and packing), will be available from the Old Stoic Office, Stowe, Buckingham, MK18 5EH. Tel: 01280 817818.

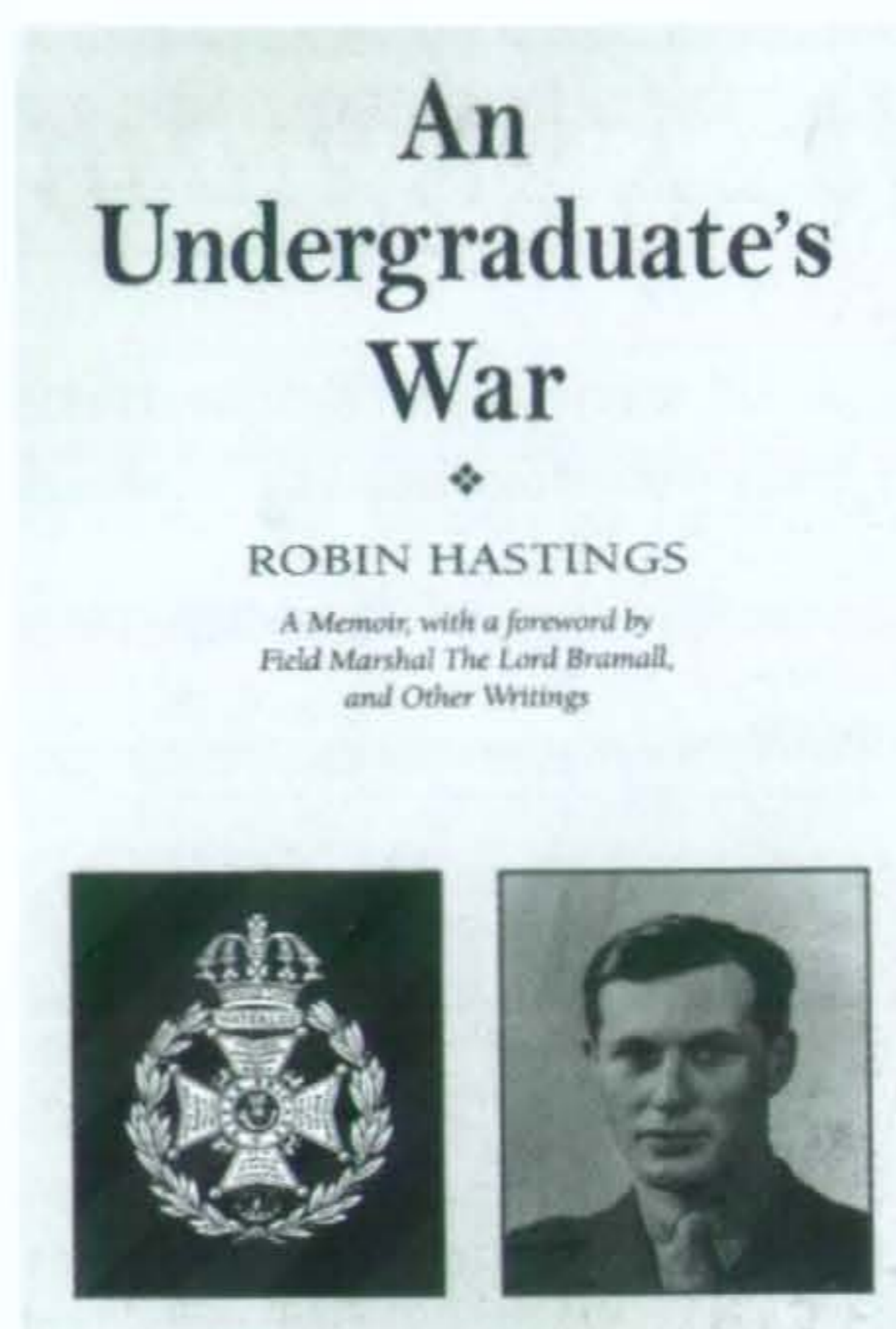
AN UNDERGRADUATE'S WAR

Robin Hastings (Temple 35) was for many years a well-known figure in horse racing circles.

A posthumous account of his wartime experiences has recently been brought out by Bell House Publishing.

This book is described by the author as the story of an "ordinary officer who happened to see action from the Nile to the Baltic". Despite his modesty there was certainly nothing ordinary either about Robin Hastings or about his experiences. He was one of a remarkable generation of young officers who, as a result of the outbreak of the Second World War, had the responsibility of command in battle thrust on them at an unexpectedly early age. By the time he was 27 he had been awarded the MC for bravery as a staff officer during the battle of El Alamein, had won his first DSO for outstanding leadership and courage commanding one of the assault battalions on D-Day and then, after recovering from wounds received during the Normandy campaign, won another DSO during hard fighting in Holland. He ended the war with an OBE after a spell as one of the senior staff officers in that illustrious formation, the 11th Armoured Division. By any standards it was a remarkable record. Field Marshal Lord Carver, who had been his Brigade Commander in Holland, described him as one of the outstanding battalion commanders of the war – extraordinarily brave, quick and decisive, cool and never ruffled and with an acute feel for a battle.

This book provides a fascinating insight into the experience of battle and especially of the problems of command at battalion level. Robin Hastings is an acute and perceptive observer both of people and situations, with an eye for telling detail and with some trenchant judgements on the performance of both individuals and units. The story begins with a brief description of how he went from Stowe via Christ Church College, Oxford to the Rifle Brigade in India and Palestine. The majority of the first half of the book then concentrates on his experience as a junior officer in the North African campaign. It illustrates the learning process that the British Army went through once it confronted the better equipped and more experienced Germans under Rommel. As Robin Hastings held a variety of appointments both on the staff and in an infantry battalion he gained experience of war from both the worm's eye view inside a slit trench or a Bren gun carrier and from the bird's eye view of a headquarters from which there was an overview of what the enemy was trying to do as well as from which operations were being planned. He encountered many famous people at close quarters, amongst whom were Jock Campbell VC and 'Strafer' Gott both of whom he admired, Montgomery and Horrocks (whom he respected but did not trust as people after their treatment of his divisional commander Callum Renton). Controversially, he regards the 'Jock columns' of artillery as more effective than many commentators have done since;



indeed, given that the British 2 pounder was out-ranged by many of the German tanks it was often only artillery fire that could damage the enemy. He notes the difficulty many older officers had in adapting to the widespread use of radio and the very fast speed of reaction that it required. He records one incident when as company commander he, in effect, took command of the battalion in the face of a fast moving, difficult and complicated situation. The commanding officer was subsequently moved elsewhere.

The story then moves to D-Day and the Normandy campaign. D-Day was probably his finest hour. He led 6th Green Howards onto the beaches near Ver-sur-Mer (part of

Gold Beach) against determined opposition from positions in depth and on the high ground that dominated the beaches. Despite suffering a number of serious losses amongst key officers and having to make adjustments to the plan as it unfolded he secured nearly all the battalion's key objectives. In doing so the battalion cleared the well-defended beaches, captured an artillery battery on the high ground at Mont Fleury, cleared the well-defended village of Crepon and advanced to within sight of the Caen-Bayeux road. It was a remarkable day's work.

The Normandy story comes to a sad and bitter end in the bloody fighting that took place in the hedgerows of the "bocage". A hastily mounted attack to capture a piece of key ground ran head on into units of a crack SS division. In the fighting that followed the battalion fought itself to a standstill. Although the ground was not taken, any further German attacks on the beach-head from that direction were halted. A few days later in another smaller but equally fierce battle at close quarters Robin Hastings was wounded and returned to England.

The last part of the book illustrates Robin Hastings' wide range of abilities. There are some short stories, a thoughtful essay on Wilfred Owen and Edward Thomas and some reflections on the experience of Normandy and on the infantry battalion in battle. The book concludes with obituaries published in the *Times* and the *Telegraph*, both of which mostly focus, as does this book, on Robin Hastings the soldier. *An Undergraduate's War* will be of most interest to those who want to find out more about this remarkable Old Stoic or about the British battle experience in the Second World War. It certainly gives some remarkable insights into that experience and into a number of the more well-known characters who took part. It is marked throughout by the deep understanding that comes from personal experience and by a real sense of humanity.

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