

SHIPLAKE COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2000

Stableyard development opens

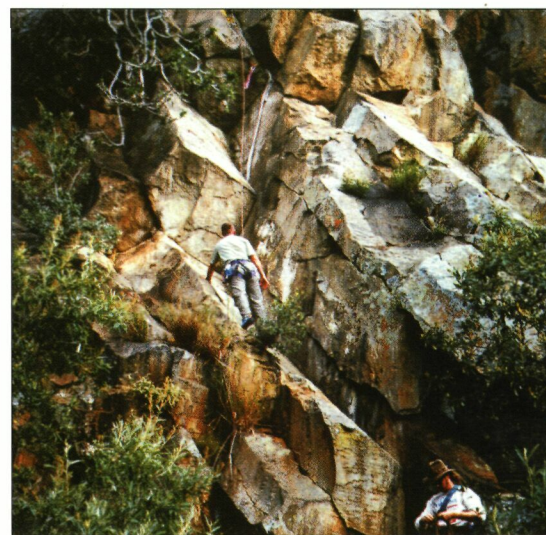
A triumphant fanfare concentrated the crowd's attention on the opening ceremony of the Stableyard Development. Parent Mary Jane Pugsley, a major donor to the 40th Anniversary Appeal, drew back the curtains to reveal the plaque on the extended English Department. Bob Phillis, Chief Executive of the Guardian Media Group and Chairman of the Development Committee, spoke of his gratitude to Shiplake as a parent of three sons. Nigel Gilson, Chairman of Governors, congratulated the team involved in the ambitious programme and Headmaster Nick Bevan commented on the outstanding work put in by Mr Phillis as chairman of a committee which had raised over £250,000.

Parent Mike Stubbs and pupil Harry Simpson then opened the new Business and Learning Support departments.

Visitors toured the new premises, admiring among other facilities, the extensive provision of IT, Media Studies and its editing suite attracted many compliments. Early in 2000 the final phase of the £1.1 million development will be complete. This time the new accommodation for History, Geography, Modern Languages and the refurbished Biology and Chemistry labs will be centre stage.



Mary Jane Pugsley unveils the plaque, watched by the headmaster and Mr Gilson and (below), some of the pupils



Travel you can't buy off the shelf!

'Our expeditions are designed to give an experience unlike those available from travel agents. Participants are placed in situations where self-reliance, ingenuity and team-work give them the confidence to overcome third world culture shock and African life,' said Expeditions Leader Marcel Wagner on his return from Kenya.

The 1999 expedition started at Mount Suswa, a 7,500 feet volcano rising out of the Great Rift Valley. The vast lava tube cave systems were explored before climbing the summit and moving on to walk up the beautiful gorge to Hell's Gate National Park for more rock climbing. A night at a campsite on Lake Naivasha provided the first hot water for five days.

The intrepid travellers found the road to the Aberdare National Park atrocious and bruising, but worthwhile as this little visited area has beautiful forests and giant heather. Before attempting their major climb, the group

continued over the page

NEWS IN BRIEF

Four A grades

Yo Kim obtained the best A Level results of 1999, gaining As in Art, Maths, Further Maths and Physics. Many of the upper sixth gained entry to their first choice university. James BurrIDGE is studying History at Leicester; Charles King is reading Business and Economics at Exeter; Bryce Lindsay is taking Accounting at Edinburgh and Tim Bailey is a jockey in Australia!

D of E Gold

Five pupils successfully completed four days, three nights and 50 miles walking for their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award expedition in October. They hope to follow in the footsteps of last year's group of 16, who have just received their awards at St James's Palace.

Poems, tea and crumpet

The College celebrated National Poetry Day with a limerick competition and pupils reading their favourite poems as they sipped tea and munched crumpets.

Inspection

'The social services inspection report was very helpful and complimentary,' commented Headmaster Nick Bevan. After the inspectors had departed, Chief Oxfordshire Inspector Roger Morgan ran through a mock inspection for *The Independent* newspaper explaining the criteria for boarding school inspections.

Cultural events

As well as the traditional autumn term concert the College also held an Advent Concert. The school's 17 piece Big Band Jazz Concert, part of the Thursday evening programme of cultural events, attracted a large audience to the Tithe Barn Theatre. The Balloon Debate inspired inventive and passionate defences from HJ Heinz, Shakespeare's Mum and the Man-in-the-Iron-Mask.

Waiting lists

The Learning Support places for September 2000 were filled by October 1999 and some Houses already have waiting lists as there are a record number of registrations for September 2001.

Twelfth Night

The College's Tithe Barn Theatre was transported back to the swinging sixties for the December production of *Twelfth Night*. Directors Chris Alcock and Lindsay McDonald believed that the era reflected the spirit of revelry, sheer enjoyment and even hedonism that spread throughout Shakespeare's Illyria.

Joss sticks, flared trousers, Afghan coats, twanging guitars, John Lennon glasses, Carnaby Street chic and ban-the-bomb stickers reminded some of the audience of happy, even hippy, memories of their younger days.

Jessica Jonzen as Viola coped impressively

with the complications of her role. She acted out a part that would in Shakespeare's time have been played by a boy cast as a girl (Viola), pretending to be a boy!

Ilana Rakhorst masterminded the comic subplot in a flower-power Mary Quant dress and Diana Rigg boots. Footnotes to the sixties continued with Tom Wood's Malvolio eventually showing off his yellowish fishnet tights when utterly gulled by the tricksters and somewhere beneath an acre of hair Chris Smith gave a flamboyant performance as the debauched Sir Toby.

Seen below in their swinging sixties style Twelfth Night: Chris Smith (Sir Toby), Steve Wood (Sir Andrew), Charlotte Morse (Olivia) and Ilana Rakhorst (Maria).



Continued from page 1

acclimatised by tackling a 14,000 ft peak in the park. They then spent five days on Mount Kenya, sometimes in blizzard conditions, striving for and achieving the 16,000 ft summit.

After the rigours of the preceding 10 days it was time for some rest and relaxation, even a little pampering at Timau River Lodge with showers, log chalets and a bar

which was much enjoyed by the five sixth formers who made up the group.

They spent two days of game watching, followed by a short stay in Nairobi for trinket buying and a visit to Kikunduku School where they met Julian Seaton. The hard work over they headed to the coast to swim, fish and sail a 45-foot ketch in the Indian Ocean.

Reinforcing the bonds of friendship



Julian Seaton and Kikunduku School on a school walk

As soon as the summer term was over Julian Seaton, Head of Design and Technology, set off for Kenya to help out at the Kikunduku Primary School. After a bumpy three and a half hour bus ride from Nairobi, Julian was met in Neezka by Kikunduku's Headmaster, Christopher Maundu, who had borrowed a 50cc moped to transport him and his luggage as close as possible to the impoverished village. The epic journey finished with a 20 minute walk to school. 'There was no electricity, no telephones, and even water had to be carried uphill from the well. I was two hours from the nearest hospital, a letter would take two weeks to reach England and I was the only European within a radius of 25 miles,' Julian said afterwards. 'I had a tremendous month. The people were so welcoming. They gave me presents of eggs and bananas. They often gave me their next meal. The villagers were resettled to this arid area and the crops only come if the rains arrive. Some months they are

without food for two or three days.'

The Kenyan government provides teachers but not school buildings, books or materials. Parents are asked for donations but they have little to give so Julian busied himself with many practical tasks such as making and repairing the school chairs.

At the end of his month Marcel Wagner and the Shiplake College expedition visited him. It was Marcel who had originally found the school and been determined to help Kikunduku.

'Julian's visit has reinforced the strong bonds between Shiplake and Kikunduku,' said Marcel. 'And he has also visited other schools and communities to find out where else help is needed.'

In April, Shiplake College's sponsored walk raised over £12,000 for Kikunduku. Money is slowly reaching the school to provide such basics as floors and doors for the classrooms and wire-mesh windows to keep out animals. The Headmaster plans to visit Kikunduku in February.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Top five percent of schools

For the third consecutive year Shiplake's Year 11 achieved an average of more than half a GCSE grade better than predicted in every subject taken. According to the statistics compiled by Durham University, this places Shiplake in the top five percent of schools for academic added value.

Curriculum 2000

Deputy Head Barry Edwards has been researching options for the new sixth form curriculum to be introduced nationally in September 2000.

Shiplake has settled on eight lessons for each of four AS options in the lower sixth. Pupils will be able to continue with three or four subjects in the upper sixth, when lessons will increase to a maximum of 10 thirty-five minute periods.

Art

Encouraged by last year's successful art expedition to Italy, Head of Art David Stoker is planning another trip to the galleries and architecture of Barcelona, with a hotel base at Tossa del Mar.

Drama

Welsh House conjured up their version of *Cinderella* as a Christmas panto treat. Charly Lowndes will be directing a production of *The Front Page* to be staged in March for actors in Years 9 and 10.

Dancing

On Friday evenings members of the lower sixth have been learning to dance (ballroom style) with the girls of Queen Anne's with a view to dancing the night away at a Grand Ball in February. Meanwhile Year 11 boys have travelled to Cranford House School for a disco.

Viking Voice

The in-house newspaper, the alternative voice of the sixth form, has produced some bumper editions this year. It started the term with a 'Head jumps off mountain' headline but since then has moved on to finding embarrassing pictures of prefects when they were in the U14Bs or wearing prep school shorts.



Teams, teams and more teams!

'Shiplake can field 12 teams, when we can find the opposition!' says Director of Rugby, John Gayton.

There are A, B and C teams for Years 9, 10 and 11 and the sixth form battle it out for places in the first, second and third XVs.

'Of course it is primarily about enjoyment. There is a great deal of satisfaction in working as a unit, whether that unit be the U16As or the team of coaches

working through a cohesive programme,' says John. 'One of our great successes last season was naming a team of the week in assembly. You could have a first XV centre outside an U14C inside centre.'

The search for fixtures takes the Shiplake teams many miles. The first XV left at 10 o'clock on a Saturday morning, arrived at Milton Abbey in Dorset for lunch, recorded a 0-16 victory, then left for the

SHIPLAKE SPORTS

long journey home while the U16Bs took on Eton's U16Ds and won. One of the most

heart-warming stories of the year has come from the U15As. They had failed to win a match at U14 level and did not win a match last year until November. The breakthrough, however, was a victory, full of character, against Bloxham. Brimming with confidence they then scored three tries in the first ten minutes in their next

match against Milton Abbey, eventually winning with an amazing 62-5 scoreline. There was much to celebrate at the Rugby Club's annual dinner. As John Gayton said: 'The dinner is an example of the spirit, camaraderie and friendship that rugby develops. Win or lose, we have been successful when we teach players to respect the opposition, to adhere to a code of conduct and to play for each other.'



NEWS IN BRIEF

County rugby

Shiplake's Paul Johnson, an Oxfordshire U16 selector, has been keeping a close eye on Rob Gurney and Gordon Marshall in their county performances. Rob was man-of-the-match in the game against Berkshire.

Caribbean cricket

Cricket coaches Tom Caston and Alex Hunt are planning to take a senior touring squad to the Viv Richards Cricket Centre in Antigua next year.

New astro

Over the summer holidays a new astroturf surface was put down for the tennis courts and hockey training area. Strengthened netting and posts now provide opportunities for soccer too.

Rowing

Nick Quirke, first VIII, gained the fourth fastest ergo time in competition to become a candidate for the GB squad. Welsh House's Gordon Marshall won a Bronze Medal at the National Ergo Championships held at Rivermead.

Lapping it up

Tom Chilton, Year 10, continues to attract media interest as he is the youngest of eight boys competing in a series of T-car races at prestigious venues such as Brands Hatch and Silverstone.

Golfing

As well as the usual Thursday afternoon visits to Henley Golf Course, some boys have been receiving golf tuition from the Henley golf professional who visits the College.

House competitions

With the House rugby, soccer and squash competitions already complete, three Houses are tied for first place in the Baldry Competition. There is still much to play for with points available in athletics, basketball, cross country, cricket, hockey, rowing and tug-of-war.