

SHIPLAKE COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2001

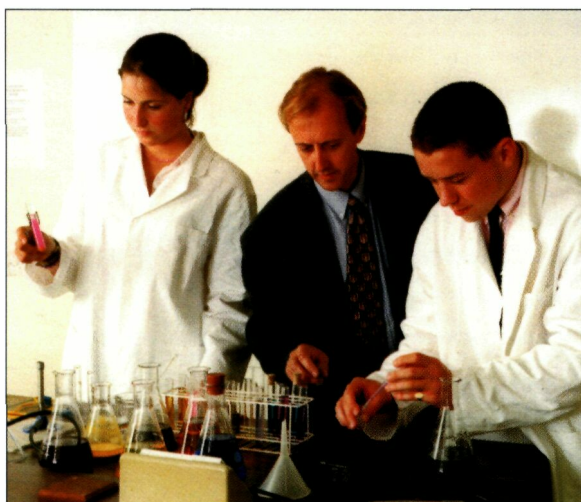
Survey puts Shiplake top of the class

Shiplake College has an outstanding reputation for academic added value according to a market research survey undertaken by Ratcliffe Hall International. The survey, questioning current and prospective parents as well as prep school heads, placed Shiplake first among a sample of local schools for academic added value.

"It is encouraging that feeder schools and parents appreciate the achievements of our pupils and teachers," said Headmaster Nick Bevan. "Durham University's academic added value measures have helped people to understand that it is not just the highly selective schools who get 'good' results. Every year we have pupils who perform far better at GCSE and A level than anyone dared to dream

when they came into the school!"

For the fourth successive year, GCSE results placed Shiplake in the top five per cent of schools for academic added value. Over fifty successful appeals, raising GCSE results by at least one grade, would have added yet more value if the results had been available in August. Shiplake also came out top for the responsibility it gives its pupils. "There is a lot to be said for the traditional system of house and school prefects. Leadership events such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the World



Added academic value: pupils working in the science labs

Leadership Challenge and an away-day on HMS Excellent develop management skills. In a small school almost every senior pupil has an area of responsibility," said Nick Bevan. Ratcliffe Hall's report stated that



SHMIS

HMC

boarding is likely to continue to decline in the UK but noted that many London parents are now seeking weekly boarding places in country schools within an hour's travel of the capital. Shiplake has certainly benefited from this trend with record enquiries and registrations for admission in 2003 and 2004.

"We are very grateful to all the parents and prep school heads who took the time and trouble to fill in this extensive questionnaire," concluded Nick Bevan.

Open Mornings Year 9

Saturday September 29
10.00 - 12.00
Coffee and refreshments in
the pavilion from 12.00

Year 12

Saturday October 13
10.00 - 12.00
Headmaster's address in the
Tithe Barn Theatre at
12.00

Contact the Registrar on
0118 940 2455 for
details.

Shiplake College, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 4BW
0118 940 2455 www.shiplake.org

NEWS IN BRIEF

Featured in *Telegraph*

Eleanor Guy led the way with A level results of AAB. She also featured in a *Daily Telegraph* article on the agony and ecstasy of results day. "Anti-climax," was Eleanor's response to all the tension.

Lectures

John Rae began a series of sixth form lectures taking 'Alcohol - our favourite drug' as his title for a concerned talk on the British habit of binge-drinking. Baroness Peta Buscombe, Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party, continued the series with a fascinating lecture on 'The Point of Politics'.

Enterprising Old Boys

Members of the Old Vikings Society, Shiplake's alumni, are carrying on the school's sporting traditions in various extreme forms. Ben and Tim Phillis are running across the Sahara to raise funds for the children's charities Sparks and Babes in Arms. Alastair Smee and Chris Marett are rowing from Teneriffe to Barbados in aid of Cancer Research.

Choice of worship

Chaplain Robert Prance put together a distinctive March weekend of worship. The options began with a Saturday evening mass at Henley Roman Catholic church, continued with a choice of Sunday morning services and concluded with an evening service at Greyfriars Church, Reading.

Armless

Peripatetic trombone teacher Gary Howarth was determined to make the Shiplake Carol Service even though he had broken both arms in a painful supermarket slip. Just weeks after his accident Gary made his usual melodic contribution to the service in St. Mary's, Henley.

Kenya

Ten sixth-formers will be flying to Kenya in July for a 25-day expedition which will include trekking, rafting, game-watching, climbing and five days along the coast at Kilifi. The group will also assist with a project at Nzouni School to develop the impoverished site.



Judy Smail and a group of Shiplake pupils during a language trip to Limoges

Life in Limoges

FORTY-TWO pupils studying French spent a week in Limoges. The trip involved pupils staying with families which enabled them to be introduced to the French way of life. The group visited Futuroscope, the quaint Roman town of Saintes, Cognac and had a tour of Limoges itself. Lindsey McDonald, Head of Modern Languages, commented: "The pupils behaved wonderfully and many of the host families commented on their fluency and willingness to practise the language. This was really good to hear, as it was the main point of the excursion."

Mouse technology at Euro Disney!

A GROUP of Year 12 pupils went to Euro Disney in February - an ideal base for a practical visit studying information technology in hotel management systems, animatronic robots as well as the in-house web-site design team.

"The extensive use of logistic systems within each area is impressive. For example it is used to count people in and out of designated sectors which is an essential safety check. All systems are connected to a network with a storage capacity of 3,500 gigabytes," wrote Andrew Webber.

The group stayed on site at the Cheyenne hotel and attended seminars as well as sampling rides. Head of ICT, Charly Lowndes, put up a page on the College's web-site so that parents and other staff could catch up on the group's progress while they were away.

Fun, frolics and French farce

MOLIERE'S *The Hypochondriac*, performed in the Tithe Barn Theatre, produced three December evenings of delight upon delight, fun, frolics and farce.

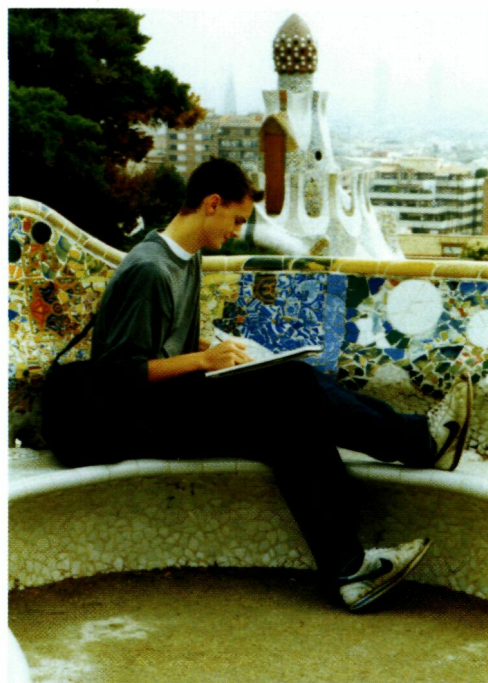
Moliere had clearly had a bad experience with the French 17th century equivalent of the NHS and decided to vent his spleen by

BARCELONA!

DAVID Stoker, Head of Art, organised an October half-term art trip for a group of keen artists. Based at Tossa del Mar the group visited the local museum, The Babel of the Arts, containing the work of Catalan artists and visitors to Tossa such as Chagall.

A whole day was devoted to the art and architecture of Gaudi who used sinuous writhing shapes in his buildings and parks. For many of the pupils the highlight of the whole trip was Gaudi's design of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, La Sagrada Familia.

Then it was Picasso day. Three thousand of Picasso's works are contained in a fifteenth century palace. Some of the works date from the artist's childhood



Simon Hurlstone sketching in Barcelona

and even at the age of nine, the Spaniard's amazing skills were highly evident.

Salvador Dali also featured on the itinerary and the coach made the two-hour journey to Port Lligat where the group could muse on the links between Dali's home and art. The group was also fortunate to have time to admire the Rambla's market-stalls and street performers. "The best word to describe Barcelona is 'vibrant'," commented Adam Palk, reflecting on an enjoyable and fascinating trip.



Andrew Fox and Nick Lowry in 'The Hypochondriac'

lambasting all those who practised medicine. His targets also included those taken in by the medical profession, and happy to pay preposterous fees.

Though much of *The Hypochondriac* is in the

spirit of *Carry on Doctor* it does have its dark, serious side. "Doctors are peddlers of dreams" is a sentiment brilliantly reinforced by a nightmarish final scene. Lindsey McDonald's debut as a Shiplake director can be reasonably described as "triumphant". A classical French satire, in a racy modern translation, was an inspired choice, giving the chance for many pupils to take centre stage for a few minutes. How well they took their chances! Anyone who was in the audience will remember with pleasure the performances of Steven Wood as Antoine the butler and Andrew Fox as Argan. They milked the jokes but never lost sight of the

characterisation, the psychology of a *malade imaginaire* and his exasperated servant. All credit to James Wilkinson, Nic Lowry, Jack Rayner, all of the lower sixth girls and every single member of the cast.

NEWS IN BRIEF

www.shiplake.org.uk

The web-site continues to receive a large number of hits. Recently it is the alumni association's page which has topped the charts for the most visits.

Registrations

The number of sixth form day girls is set to rise. Already there are 14 registrations for September 2001. The A level results of the first cohort of girls alone would have placed Shiplake in the top 50 of the league tables.

New Year 12 curriculum

Teachers Suzie Ellis and Robert Prance have administered the first year of Key Skills with great efficiency. Key Skills assessments in Communication, Information Technology and Numeracy, alongside studies in four AS subjects, should provide excellent foundations for success in the new A2 exams at the end of Year 13.

Bus link

The College may run a bus link to and from the Marlow area, starting in September 2002. Please contact registrar, Ann Lazur, for details.

Music

The programme for a Spring Evening of Music catered for a diverse range of tastes from Stainer's *Crucifixion*, through Mozart and Lloyd-Webber, to the contemporary *Mambo Number 5*.

Events cancelled

The Duke of Edinburgh Silver expedition to the Brecon Beacons and the CCF Field Day both became victims of the foot and mouth crisis.

Parents' discussion evening

Relationships, drugs and areas of teenage concern were all on the agenda for a Year 10 parents' discussion evening. Housemasters, tutors and matrons attended.

Easter IT

Fifteen teachers spent part of the Easter holidays on an intensive course run by IT technician Ruth Cotton. Meanwhile Charly Lowndes supervised the creation of radio networking for Orchard, Skipwith and Welsh.



Ben Hunt-Davies, second from right, back, shows his gold medal to the head and senior rowers

Ben's gold medal inspires 1st VIII

OARSMAN Ben Hunt-Davies returned to Shiplake to display the gold medal he won at the Sydney Olympics as a member of Britain's victorious eight. Ben, who left school in 1989, has competed in three consecutive Olympics but this was his first medal.

"The secret to achieving any of your dreams is determination. You have to have a willingness not just to dream but to get up and do something about it. All the perseverance is worth it," Ben said.

After the assembly Ben met some of the College's current rowers.

Jack Gregory and Ed Greig, who are current upper sixth members of the 1st VIII, have both been selected for the Great Britain squad and seem to be following in Ben's wake.

Another old boy, Nick Quirke, who left last July, has also tasted international success.

He was a member of the GB U19 squad taking part in the European Coup de Jeunesse in Lucerne.

His crew saw off close challenges from the Italians and French to finish with two gold medals, recording the fastest U19 time ever.

Boys enjoy Barbados cricket tour

FOURTEEN U16 cricketers spent 10 days on a Barbados tour in April. After early net practice and coaching they took on teams from three local schools. Although it proved a testing experience for the boys, they are well prepared for the coming season. They managed to sneak in a few hours at the Bridgetown Test

watching West Indies battling against the South Africans. The boys also tried their hands at water sports including body-boarding and banana-boat rides. From their base at St James, the squad went snorkelling over a wreck, swam with turtles, took glass-bottomed boat trips and visited Harrison Caves.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rugby honours

1st XV captain Will Paddison played for Oxfordshire U18s and at U16 level, James Blanchard, Johnny Halsall, James Larkin and Chris Mills also played for their county.

Squash

New Head of Geography John Blunsdon has revived squash fixtures with matches against Eton, Pangbourne and Downe House. Peter Gould has also introduced boys to the delights of Fives at Eton.

Hockey

The 1st XI acquired an early season reputation as score draw specialists. Coach Peter Gould was eager to dispel this rumour and his team won 5 - 0 and 7 - 1 victories over Reading School and Reading Blue Coat School.

Sailing

Although flooding severely restricted spring sailing at Sonning Eye it is hoped that the sailors will be able to enjoy their usual summer programme.

Soccer

This year Shiplake's soccer players have enjoyed more soccer than ever before. As well as an inter-house league and indoor competitions there were fixtures against Eton.

Training camp

After last year's successful training camp in Switzerland, Shane O'Brien's 1st VIII and a selection of senior rowers returned to Sarnen, base of the Swiss National Rowing Centre, for another intensive week of preparation during the Easter holidays.

James Blanchard, right, shakes hands with Harrison College's cricket captain

