

The Times - Friday January 31, 2003.

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Taunton, Somerset TAI IXQ.
January 28

From Mr N. V. Bevan

Sir, At 7.15 last night what might loosely be described as my extended family quietly and contentedly settled down to their homework. Calm prevailed for an hour and a half before younger members prepared for bed while others watched television and relaxed with friends.

Teachers were on hand to help with any problems. The pattern is repeated daily with no "coercing or forcing". A boarding education must be the answer to the distressed parent's prayer.

Yours faithfully,
NICK BEVAN
(Headmaster), Shiplake College,
Henley-on-Thames RG9 4BS.
January 29

University entrance

From Mrs Suzanne Houchin

Sir, I received yesterday a communication from the Open University. On the back of the envelope in large, clear type were the instructions: "To view contents, lift flap."

I am encouraged to believe I may be worthy of a first after all.

Yours,
SUZANNE HOUCHIN,
Red Barn Farm, Tythe Close,
Stewkley, Buckinghamshire LU7 0HD.
January 28.

Ambitious programme at college art day

Professional actors Piete Vodden and Chloe Hughes were top of the bill for an arts day at Shiplake College.

Vodden, who numbers *Holbyaks* amongst his credits, fascinated pupils with his guide to method acting.

"You've got to think yourself into the part. I always ask myself some key questions. Who am I? How do I relate to my environment? What does the character want from this situation?"

Lowri Cook, Charly Lowndes and Malcolm Woodcock organised an ambitious programme of art, improvised drama, mime, play-readings and art.

Chris Alcock, who ran some of the mime sessions alongside Peter Gould said, "We worked on the day's theme of *War and Peace*. Slowing down battle scenes, medal awards and the news of the loss of loved ones was highly effective and really very moving."

Throughout the day, David Wilson, Suzie Ellis and Phil Davey organised a team of reporters and photographers who produced a programme and a website of the day's events.

In the afternoon it was time for the pupils to be entertained. Sixth formers Jennifer Lock and Stephanie Crystal joined teachers Luke Foster, Lindsay McDonald, Robert Prance and Peter Webb, a heavenly good fairy and then an undertaker, as they performed a series of comic sketches. Charly Lowndes' impression of a headmaster's assembly brought much laughter and loud applause. Jo Cassells supplied a brief break from the arts with a high energy aerobics session held in the sports hall.

Throughout the day, pupils



Teacher Peter Webb as an undertaker.

had been rehearsing for the evening's house music competition. Each house had to select its own song and sing a song of their own choice. Peter Mullan, Julian Mills and Will Downing led the way with Everett house producing an energetic version of Mungo Jerry's 1970 classic *In the Summertime*.

Headmaster Nick Bevan said, "It was a very brave

concept and the teachers totally threw themselves into it. The pupils were rather reluctant to join in at first but the majority soon warmed to the idea.

"It was all tremendous fun but I think next year we will all have a much clearer concept of the rhythm of the day."

Successful tournament for Shiplake

Shiplake College's director of rugby took a squad of eight players to a sevens tournament held at Bearwood College.

Shiplake began with an emphatic 47-0 victory over the hosts. From this early game it was clear that Shiplake had a potent competition.

Over the afternoon Basil Holiasmenos' powerful running produced six tries. With Shiplake outscoring Pangbourne College by four tries to two, Simon Winthrop and skipper Chris Mills frequently taking the right options, Shiplake were poised for overall victory until they ran

into a well-organised Windsor Boys side who outscored them by a solitary try.

Shiplake completed a successful afternoon, scoring four tries against Maiden Erleigh. It was an encouraging afternoon with U16s Joshua Rankin and Jamie Orpwood successfully linking with more experienced players such as Max Williams, Alex Entin and the speedy George Hackford.

Shiplake College: C. Mills, J. Rankin, G. Hackford, B. Holiasmenos, J. Orpwood, A. Entin, S. Winthrop, M. Williams.

seemed to come under less pressure afterwards and in the last ten minutes had a number of promising attacks, all of which failed through handling or passing mistakes. Almost at the end Chris Ward had an opportunity to snatch the win with a penalty but the kick was just wide.

Henley Wanderers 1sts: C. Ward; M. Cawthra, C. Ryan, C. Darke, K. Meslohi; M. Burton (R. Potter), D. Ryan; G. Moolman, J. Cuzen, S. Tross Youle; N. Darke, J. Harris; M. Laing, A. Dupee, M. Vines. Substitutes: H. Saward, M. Buck.