

Shiplake College

— Henley-on-Thames —

The Court 2007 - 2008





Freddie Durant-Pritchard and Tom Morgan-Harris in Beckett's *Rough for Theatre II*
 Photograph: Graham Young

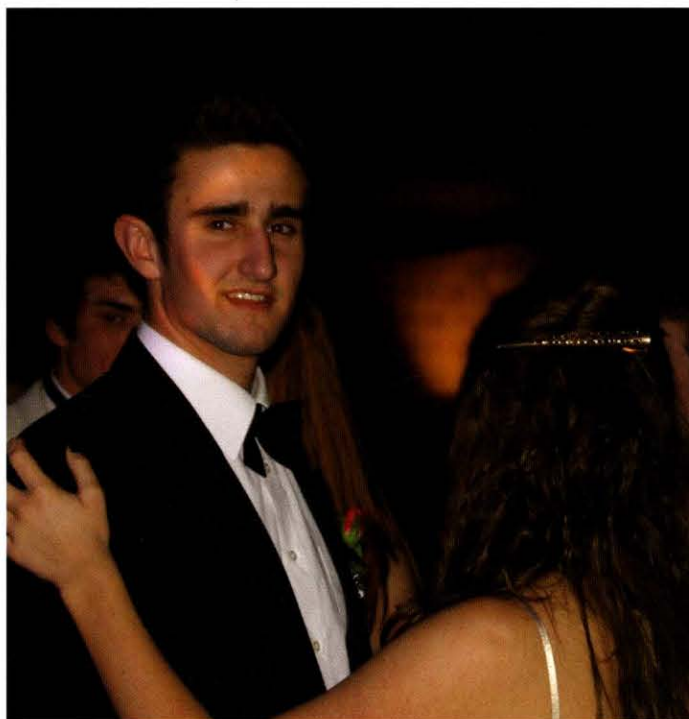
The Court Magazine 2007 - 2008

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Simon Weston OBE

This is the first time that I have ever spoken in a tent! It works for the Bedouin so I'm willing to give it a go. I don't know what right I have to address you in the academic world. I don't have a single A Level, an O Level or even a spirit level.

At 16 I had been in a spot of bother and my mother thought that the best way to sort me out was to enrol me in the army. I came from a very matriarchal society. My mother and grandmother were two very powerful women. When people ask me how I've overcome my difficulties I tell them what I am I owe to my mother and grandmother. They gave me the courage and determination to overcome any difficulties that I had to face.

I had grown up in a services background with my parents in the RAF. My father had been an operating theatre technician and my mother had saved thousands of lives by stopping working as a cook!

At 16 I joined the Welsh Guards and I was terrified as there were men there who were bigger, better and tougher than me. I learnt that when the going gets tough you have to dig deep inside to overcome the difficulties. The barriers and hurdles can be got over or got around, it can be done. Or you can be like the English forwards and go straight through the middle.

Once I was trained I was posted to Berlin and I had a wonderful time. At that time Berlin was one of the most avant-garde cities in the world. I saw Checkpoint Charlie and I saw the oppression and sadness. I learnt that if we wonder why we are here that it is to make a difference to help the less well-off and the less-fortunate. Next I went to Northern Ireland and I learnt that we were there to support the police who suffered the brunt of the people's anger.

Then at the age of 20 I travelled in style, on the QE2 to the Falklands. Then we transferred to the Canberra. I knew that I had to be prepared for anything, you have to invest in yourself to be ready.

We were already short of helicopters but when the Atlantic Conveyor was sunk there was a major problem. The Welsh Guards were due to be landed but we had to wait whilst the paras recovered from their march across the Island. Whatever people tell you, their feet were shot to pieces.

We were put on those noble sounding ships the *Sir Galahad* and the *Sir Tristram*. An Argentine commander, who is now a good friend of mine, dropped a 500lb bomb on us. Forty-eight soldiers died and ninety-seven were injured. I was the most severely injured to come back alive.

I knew when I signed up that I had been training for war. There is no point debating the rights and wrong of the war. I knew what I was going into. There were shortages of equipment but we have the finest armed forces in the world. The people in charge of the individual units provided great leadership.

In the first three weeks after the bombing I had two operations to save my eyes and received 14 units of blood.

It was four weeks before I got home and before I saw my parents. My mother didn't recognise me, she only knew that it was me from the sound of my voice.

"Well Simon where do we go from here?" she asked. It was the "we" that was important. There was no pity. We all need somebody to help. The world doesn't owe you a living. The only person that can change your life is you.



Gregg Davies, Simon Weston and Nigel Gilson

Since then I have helped 85,000 disadvantaged young people with my charity but it ran out of funds. I was watching the ball when I should have been watching the game beyond it. Again I'm not making excuses but I should have seen what was coming.

I have a simple philosophy in life. It is what you do about it that counts. You are all going to suffer at some time. Assume that you will win, if not you will let adversity win. Thirty five thousand men went down to The Falklands and too many of them stayed there. I've used the platform that it has given me. Fate is what happens but destiny is in your hands. If you don't accept change you'll be playing catch-up.

Don't measure success by the size of a house, the speed of a car or how expensive it is. These are just trappings. Success is being the best you can be, seeking out your barriers and limitations and seeing what you can achieve within those.

Prizes

Form Prizes

Year Nine

Alexander Barker
Richard Fitz-Hugh
Chris Gabe

Year Ten

Toby Bownass
Harvey Richardson
James Warren
Freddie Wilcox
Nicholas Woodford

GCSE Prizes

Art and Design
Design & Technology
Science
Drama
English
French
Geography
History
ICT
Mathematics
Music
Physical Education
Religious Education
Spanish

Ben MacPhee
Sam Wheeler
Nick Harper
Nick Harper & James Gifford
James Gifford
Cornel Mgbangson
Tom Imlay
Tom Imlay
Deacon Brown
Curtis Tseng
Curtis Tseng
Sam Levell
Asher Majeed
Ross McCafferty

GCSE Results Prize (2007)

Adam Davies
James Green
Alex Meerman

A Level Results Prize (2007)

Lydia Hannon
Robert Jackson
Ryan Gisborne Weare

Governors' Prizes

Art & Design
Biology
Bleackley Languages
Business Studies
Geography
History
Chemistry
Mathematics
Design & Technology
English
ICT
Margaret Wells-Furby
Science Prize (Year 12)
Media Studies
Physical Education
Spiers Award (Music)
Theatre Studies

Lorelei Bere
Brittani Lea
Gioia de Courcy-Wheeler
Toby Raper
Toby Raper
Toby Raper
Lizi Orpwood
Lizi Orpwood
Freddie Fontannaz
Christopher Webb
Michael Pullen

Alex Meerman
Laura Cotton
Archie Prescot
Freddie Durant-Pritchard
Tom Morgan-Harris

Special Awards

Eaton Prize
(Academic Development)
J W Whittingham Prize
(CCF Cadet of the Year)
Larkin Prize (Singing)
Rupert Mackay Prize
(Religious Life)
Salmon Prize
(Performing Arts)
Service to the Community

Asclepian Prize (Visual Arts)

Oliver Smith
Alex Turton
Jack Harvard Taylor

Laura Cotton
Charlie Ingham-Clark

Freddie Greaves

Ross McCafferty
Cornel Mgbangson
Freddie Durant-Pritchard

Lorelei Bere
Adam Furse
Jack Harvard Taylor
Joe Holmes
Charlie Ingham-Clark
Morgan-Harris
Lizi Orpwood
Jack Thompson
Ian Waters
Patrick Weiss

Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award

Senior Common Room Staff Prize

Edinburgh Prize
For the Non-School prefect who
has contributed most to College life

Laura Cotton

Matthew Bevin Cup
For the most industrious
Year 11 pupil

Cornel Mgbangson

Peter Caston Prize
For the pupil who has shown
notable determination

Daryl Richards

Headmaster's Prizes

Headmaster's Quaich
Outstanding Contribution to the
sporting life of the College

Toby Raper
Joe Weaver

Alexander Everett Prize
For outstanding contribution
to the standards and ethos
of the College

Joe Holmes
Charlie Ingham-Clark
Michael Pullen
Christopher Webb

Owl Ties
For outstanding contribution in
a wide range of curricular
and extra-curricular
activities

Lorelei Bere
Laura Cotton
Brittani Lea
Tom Morgan-Harris
Lizi Orpwood
Toby Raper

Senior Girl

Lorelei Bere

Head of College

Tom Morgan-Harris

The Headmaster provides his review of the academic year

It is probably true. Schooldays are the best days of your life, but at Shiplake we believe that they should prepare you for whatever the 21st century has to throw at tomorrow's citizens. This year our teachers have been inventive, passionate and resourceful as they have provided education, challenges and entertainment for our pupils.

One of my aims, when I arrived at Shiplake, was to reinvent Year 9. Too often schools merely see Year 9 as a period of settling-in and consolidation. I now believe that Shiplake provides one of the most beneficial Year 9 experiences in the country. From their first overnight camping adventure on our island through to writing poetry based on their visit to Louise Bourgeois' exhibition at the Tate Modern Exhibition we have provided our pupils with an ability to adapt, change and respond that will serve them beyond their school years.

Early on, as I watched our pupils visit Art, Music and Drama for the Year 9 Arts Day it was clear that they were already willing to have a go and beginning to approach new opportunities with an open mind.



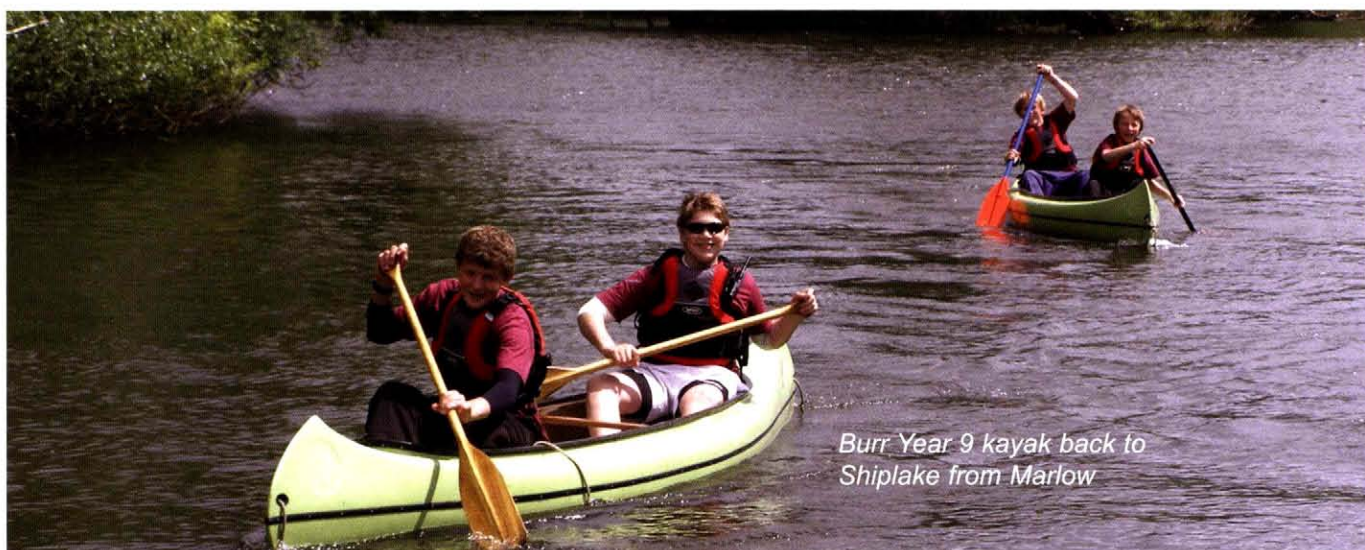
Santa certainly fulfilled many of Gregg Davies' wishes in the 2007 - 2008 academic year. For non-believers Santa is played by Paul Custance.

Then Richard Curtis organised a superb short rugby tour to the West Country for the U14s. A tour of Bath rugby club, some training from professional coaches, a tough game and the intensity of a Heineken Cup match at Kingsholm set the boys up for the rest of the season. In complete contrast the whole year group finished the term with a visit to Michael Morpurgo's *War Horse* at the National Theatre.

Add to this the high-energy, high-decibel *Stomp* drama day, a character-building twenty mile trek for our chosen charities along the Thames tow-path, the recent Science festival and you will begin to understand that this Year 9 will perhaps be better prepared for the future than any previous Shiplake generation.

For some of Year 9 this was not enough. Harry Griffiths, not content with singing the opening solo at a wonderful Christmas Carol Service at St Mary's also cajoled some of his Burr contemporaries into kayaking from Marlow back to Shiplake on one idyllic May Sunday.





Burr Year 9 kayak back to Shiplake from Marlow

So, schooldays may be the best days of your life but that does not mean that they are the easiest. Those of us who heard Stephen Trueman read the harrowing story of a holocaust survivor are not the same people who walked into that Church for our holocaust memorial service.

A stunning production of Samuel Becket's *Rough for Theatre II*, acted and produced by Tom Morgan-Harris and Freddie Durant-Pritchard, and the motionless Nick Harper, entertained us, but it was demanding and difficult.

Such success does not come easily. It takes application, dedication, hard work and hours of preparation. Shane O'Brien, our new Deputy Head, has worked tirelessly this year to improve the College's discipline and he has been successful. I have interviewed pupils from other schools, tired of disrupted lessons and wasted opportunities, who want to transfer to Shiplake. They know that we will not tolerate any pupil who interferes with the learning of another pupil.

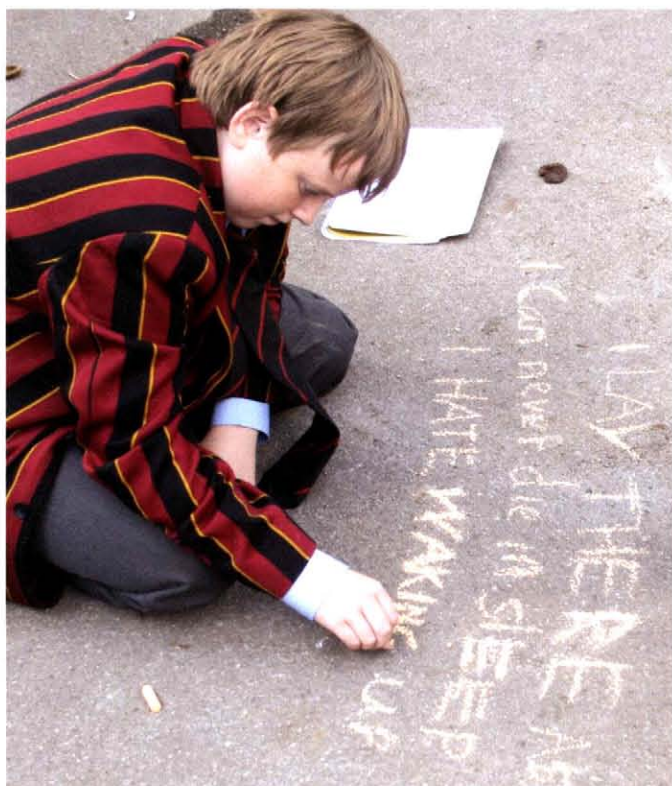
Last year the University of Durham's Academic Added Value scores demonstrated how well our pupils had performed at GCSE and I am optimistic that this year's added value scores will show another improvement. Teachers have willingly given up hours of their time to provide extra lessons and to deal with pupils' questions.

Teaching is Shiplake's greatest strength. The heart of my job is to ensure that Shiplake attracts and recruits the best teachers. In recent years we have taken our training much more seriously, though that does not mean that training is not fun. We began the year with some intriguing exercises to relax our new teachers and to encourage them to bond with their colleagues.

Jimmy Gordon, Governor, also helped us to understand our new Performance Review System. There are still some holes, but it is a step towards enabling every teacher to maximise their potential and to ensuring that the College makes the most of their varied skills and talents.



Year 11 GCSE Biologists could not wait to try the wine they had produced



Luke McGuire is inspired to chalk a poem in The Stableyard for National Poetry Day

Ruth Cotton and her team have also continued to make the most of our Management Information System. When I inspect other schools it is reassuring to see that Shiplake is making much better use of the potential of Serco's school management system than almost all other schools. When we ring Serco's help-line we discover that we are often the first to explore the far-flung corners of the system.

It seems a long time since I returned to Shiplake from the South Africa rugby tour. Riding ostriches, visiting the townships and touring as a squad provided immense benefits for the tourists both as rugby players and students. Never have so many opportunities for sports travel been provided as in the past year. At Easter 29 pupils visited Barbados for cricket, netball and tennis. Just a week later the Boat Club headed for San Diego and San Francisco. Malaysia is the destination for the Hockey Club's December tour.

Closer to home the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme continues to thrive. Brian Foakes has worked hard to keep up with an exceptionally large number of pupils striving for their Gold Awards in Year 13. Organising expeditions to Wales and France is demanding in itself but such large numbers also requires careful management of the skills component of the award. Many of us enjoyed the fascinating presentations made by the Year 13s after their September expeditions to Brittany.

That of course is one of the major benefits of life at a boarding school. The world tends to come to us. Jonathan Ling, our departing Director of Music, has provided some excellent recitals but has also allowed us to enjoy some inspirational visiting musicians. We have been privileged to hear guitarist Bridget Mermikides, saxophonist Snake Davis and Tamesis.

Reception and the Great Hall have become art galleries. The quality of art produced over the last year or two has been outstanding and I find it a real privilege to be surrounded by the work of some very talented artists who have been pushed to their limits by our highly demanding art teachers.

When parents, reliving the Sixties, started dancing in the aisles at Catherine Saker's invigorating *A Slice of Saturday Night* I could not help but think that some of our pupils were missing out on a real treat. It is a pity that not everyone in the College makes the effort to attend when we have such high quality performances on our very doorstep.

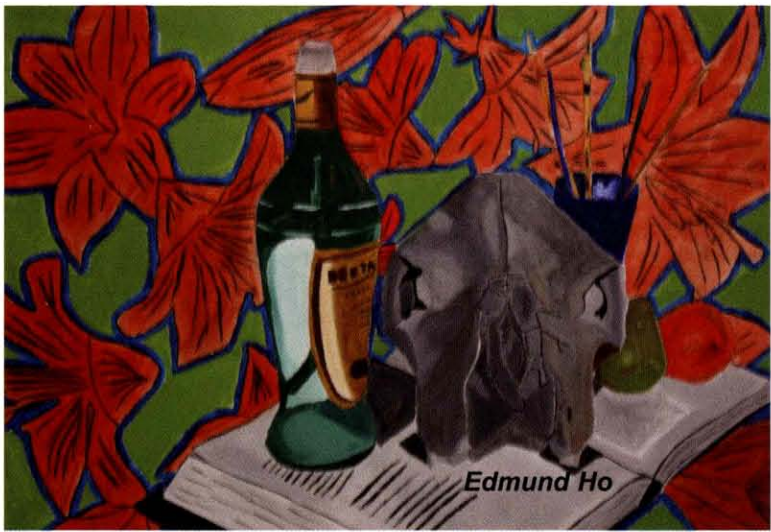
It has been the mark of a very enjoyable year that so often the routine has become the extraordinary. Every year we have a Confirmation service but every year the Chaplain, this year with the help of the Reverend Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, made it a very warm and memorable occasion for those being confirmed. The Burr family service became very special when Lindsay McDonald, now Head of Modern Languages at Tonbridge School, made an emotional return to address us. Earlier in the year we had all enjoyed Luke Foster's return to speak to us.

Of course the academic year from 2008 – 2009 will be very special. Work will begin on our new girls' House. This year we had to run a selection day to see which of the applicants for places in the Sixth Form would make the very best of the opportunity. It was unfortunate that we had to reject some very strong candidates. The new building will provide us with the opportunity to offer more places and provide state-of-the art accommodation.

The year also sees us celebrate our fiftieth anniversary. I know that many Old Vikings are already making plans to return for the celebrations. The College will celebrate the anniversary with a Thanksgiving Service in St Mary's on Friday 1st May 2009 and an extended Bank Holiday exeat to mark the occasion.

In the Summer Term, prefects, pupils in Years 9 and 10 will help Old Vikings celebrate on Saturday June 20th, 2009. Then on Friday June 26th there will be a grand 50th Anniversary Ball. We have plenty to look forward to.

A G S Davies



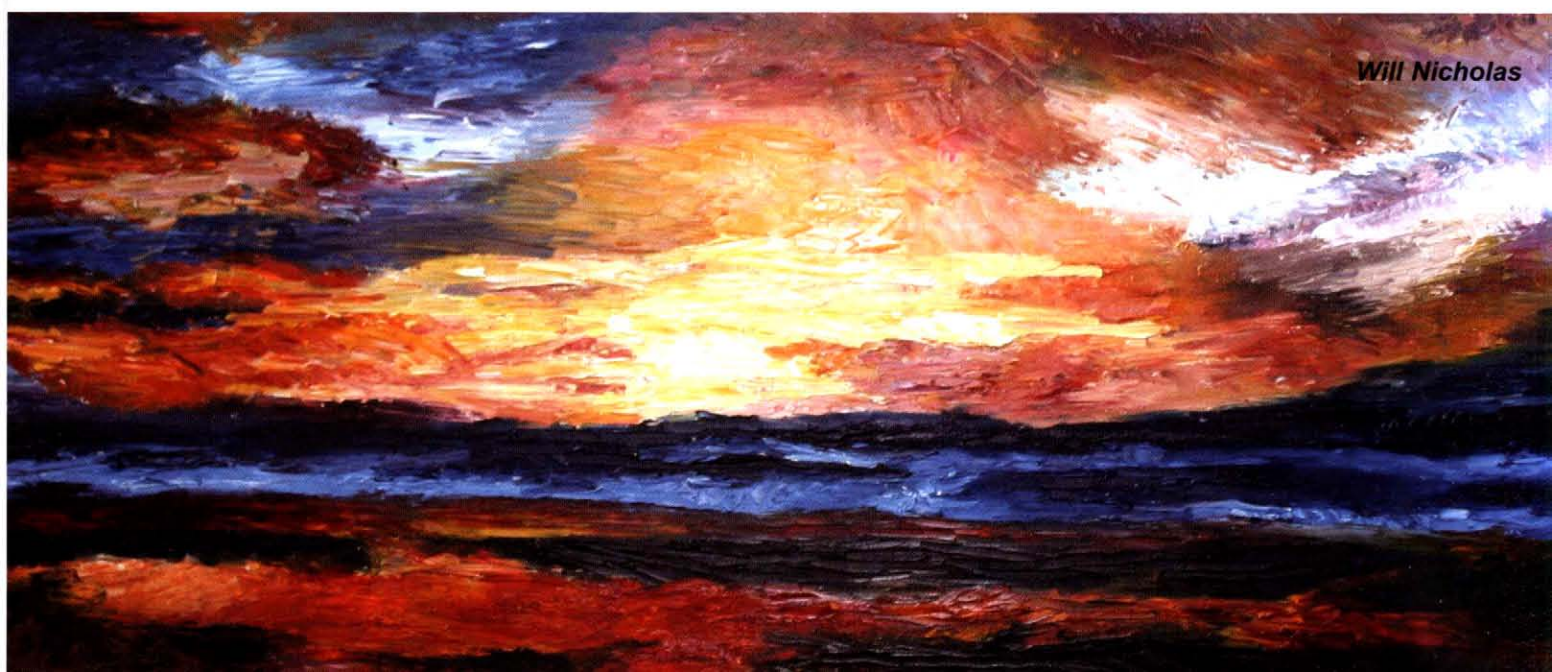
Edmund Ho



Freddie
Marriott



Ben
MacPhee



Will Nicholas

Founder's Day



Nick Bevan, former Headmaster, returned to Shiplake College to give the Founder's Day address as the College celebrated its 49th anniversary. "There was a time when Founder's Day didn't exist. There were no flags or celebrations. The College's eccentric founder, Alexander Everett had great imagination and vision but he didn't make a practical success of running the College. He had run off to America before the end of the first year. Forty years later he wanted to visit the College he had founded and I was delighted to invite him back."

Mr Bevan explained how so many people had contributed to the success of a developing educational establishment that was looking ahead to its 50th anniversary in 2009. "During the difficult years of the 1990s, when recession hit independent schools and their parents, the College owed its survival to the late Jim Mansergh, a Bursar who resisted my temptation as Headmaster to spend, spend and spend."

Gregg Davies, the current Headmaster, paid tribute to Nick Bevan's 16 years as Headmaster. "Parents who visit often comment on the College's friendly ethos and how polite and welcoming the pupils are. During my four years I hope that I have continued to engender that spirit but it was my predecessor, Nick Bevan, who created that atmosphere."

After a Founder's Day Service, Nick Bevan met the current Upper Sixth form, the majority of whom had joined as Year 9 pupils in his last year.

Mr Bevan now lives in North Oxfordshire and is very busy as a Governor of a number of schools, a Magistrate, a member of parish and church councils, and as a rowing coach at St Edward's School, Oxford.

Remembrance

"No man is an island, entire unto itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main...Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind ..."

These words, written in the early seventeenth century by the English poet John Donne resonate through the centuries and form a fitting start to my talk today, which is to build upon the themes of Remembrance of which we have heard so much recently and in Sunday's Remembrance service.

Donne's point is obvious; we are not alone; we form part of the community of humanity. Whatever we think of our fellow man, our neighbour or foreign countries, we are all, essentially, in the same boat. We need to feel wanted, loved, and above all else, we need to feel remembered.

Ninety years on, the services of Remembrance assume greater and greater significance in the calendar, in the TV schedules and in schools and the collective consciousness, even though only one man – Harry Patch – is alive today, who actually fought in the trenches. It is as if as a society we have a need to "remember" wars which none of us ever witnessed. The process of remembering is in fact a projection, perhaps of our own desire, to be remembered when we go the way of all flesh. For - apart from taxes - death is the only certainty in life.

Not surprisingly then, society has had a long association with the twin necessity of armed forces and the tragic deaths of youthful soldiers; the cult of heroism serves to disguise or at least validate the pain of the loss of young men, right from very early on.

The famous epitaph for those Spartan heroes killed at Thermopylae in 480BC, serves to record their loyalty and duty to future generations:

"Go tell the Spartans, thou who passest by,
That here, obedient to their laws, we lie."

It was Dr Johnson, the great 18th century man of letters, who said "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier" but it was also Dr Johnson who wrote, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel" and it was patriotism which inspired so many thousands to join up in 1914.

"East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
None that go return again."

Words from Houseman's *A Shropshire Lad*, a haunting elegy to lost youth and the "Blue remembered Hills" written actually in 1886 almost 30 years before the war started. It was to become a bestseller in 1914 when middle-class England flocked to wallow in the cult of romantic death, personified by Rupert Brooke, who hoped for a "corner of a foreign field that is forever England".

The poet who perhaps inspired the greatest notions of jingoistic Empire was of course Rudyard Kipling but he actually had an understanding of what it was to be "Tommy Atkins", the common British soldier, mocked for guarding us when we sleep and hustling us when we're drunk:

But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll –

The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums begin to roll,

O it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll.

Brooke died in 1915, cut down by fever, not a bullet. Housman was a Cambridge don who died an old man.

It was Kipling's only son, Jack, the short-sighted eighteen year-old whom Kipling had pulled strings to get into the Irish Guards, who was killed in action in 1915. This broke Kipling's heart - and he never found his son's body. He became a major part in the Imperial (now Commonwealth) Wargraves Commission, dedicated to reburying the thousands of dead in the familiar white headstones and beautifully kept cemeteries with which we are so familiar today.

The Edwardian romance of war very quickly gave way to the horrors of war and it was the men who were there who wrote best about it – Sassoon, Graves, Gurney and the greatest of them all, Wilfred Owen. After Owen, who died in the last week of the war (his mother received the telegram as the bells rang for the Armistice on November 11th), the poetry, in Owen's words, is

"not about heroes. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The poetry is in the pity."

Since the days of Brooke, Kipling and Owen, attempts to reconcile heroic deeds and duty with tragic loss has taken on a more cynical edge. In the 1960s Philip Larkin wrote sarcastically of the "solemn-sinister red-wreathed rubbish" of Remembrance Sunday but he also wrote the hauntingly beautiful poem *1914*.

As changed itself to past
Without a word – the men
Leaving the gardens tidy,
The thousands of marriages
Lasting a little while longer:
Never such innocence again.

And so, to the present. Mr Walne spoke movingly, on Remembrance Sunday reminding us that a British soldier died only days ago, the 83rd to die in Afghanistan since 2001. The “thin red line of heroes” Kipling wrote of a 100 years ago are out there again today, fighting at close-quarters in the most intensive battle zones since the Second World War.

They earn a bit more than Kipling’s “shilling a day”, and are subject to the usual disastrous shortages of equipment that seem to be a soldier’s lot throughout time. If the politicians had read their history books, they would perhaps realise that the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan contain the graves of many British soldiers from imperial wars of Queen Victoria; an entire British army was defeated in Afghanistan at Gandamak in 1842, where only one man survived. The same hostile terrain was the deathknell of the Russian army in 1980 and the beginning of the end for the Soviet Union.

Ironically, the poppies grow, row on row, in Afghanistan, but I don’t mean the sort of poppies in Flanders Fields, and the harvest is a bitter yield indeed. History repeats itself; first time it is tragedy, the second time, it is farce. We repeatedly fail to learn the lessons of the past.

Dr T S Purser



Whitsun Rounders

Teenagers are notoriously difficult to prise from their beds at any stage of the day but Robert Prance had seventeen and eighteen year olds queuing up to get out of bed at six o’clock in the morning.

“Nine years ago a group of us thought it would be a good idea to climb a hill to celebrate Ascension Day. For two years we went to Stonor Park before Foot-and-Mouth regulations restricted our access. So it was then that we started the tradition of coming to Maidensgrove early in the morning instead,” explained the Chaplain.

This year there was another change to tradition. On the 1st May the College had walked twenty miles, for charity, along the Thames Path from Moulsoford back to Shiplake, and the Chaplain had feared that an early game of rounders might prove too much. So the event was postponed for a week and used to celebrate Whitsun instead.

After an early morning prayer, as deer grazed on the horizon, the rounders battle began. This year’s game saw the skills of Charlie Ingham-Clark’s XV versus Joe Holmes’ XV. In the battle between Charlie’s Angels, the Head Chapel Warden’s team and Joe’s Giants, the Deputy Head Chapel Warden’s team, the Giants won 45 – 43 in a high-scoring match.

Stirring the Christmas Pudding

"And now for some sultanas," announced Robert Prance, Chaplain, as he invited members of his congregation to step-up and contribute to the Christmas Pudding. Cookery became worship when pupils and teachers took part in the tradition of "Stir-up Sunday" which had been moved to a Thursday. The age-old Christmas ritual usually takes place on the Sunday before Advent begins.

Steve Beaumont, the catering manager at the College, was on hand to ensure that all fifteen ingredients were included in the right proportion. Appropriately the recipe began with Jane Burt, Orchard House Matron, adding the sweet stuff, the sugar. The mix was concluded by Gregg Davies, the Headmaster, who added a quarter-bottle of brandy.

As dozens of pupils took it in turn to stir the pudding, The Reverend Martin Connop-Price watched the outsize cookery demonstration and had the difficult decision of deciding on a charitable destination for the pudding. Eventually he opted for the Lashbrook Nursing Home. Throughout the day pupils took it in turns to stir the pudding before the kitchens spent eight hours on cooking the pudding. Steve Beaumont believes that it will provide over 40 servings.

"Making a Christmas pudding is a good visual representation of the role of the disciples. They were very different men but each brought a distinctive ingredient to spreading the Gospel," said the Chaplain.



Jesus the politician

At the time of the London Mayoral elections and with Hilary Clinton battling against Barack Obama, the Chaplain asked how Jesus would fare in the modern world of image and spin.

Today presentation skills are so important and you have to ask how would Jesus have fared? I suspect that the medical wing would recommend that he needed a square meal. His matron would have suggested a shower and there is no doubt at all that his Housemaster would have put him on the list for a haircut.

Nor was Jesus a master of spin. He told the truth and he often told people what they did not want to hear. Yet almost two thousand years on Jesus is still winning votes. People, in their masses, believe in the truths that Jesus told us ...



Guitarists serenade worshippers before the Burr family service

Holocaust Memorial

Stephen Trueman read Shimon Goldharber's story at The Holocaust Memorial Service

My name is Shimon Goldharber. I was born and lived in the city of Komorov in Poland with my mother, father and two brothers. When the war broke out the Germans came to Komorov. The atmosphere was very tense but at that time we had no idea of what was coming.

The Germans left after a few weeks and the Russians came. The town breathed a sigh of relief but this was to be short lived. It soon became clear that the Russians were preparing to leave.

My brothers and I, like many other young men in the town, wanted to leave with them but my Father was strongly opposed having lived through the Stalin's murderous deeds in 1936. Despite all our pleadings he would not leave and so we remained.

Soon after the Russians left the Nazis returned. This time they meant business. Their first act was to round up all the elders of our community and shoot them in cold blood. This caused panic.

The Earthquake began at the end of 1940. The Germans started rounding up Jews from adjacent cities and deporting them. No one knew where they were sent but it was not long before we heard that they had all been murdered.

In June 1941 Germany and Russia went to war. We could see the German army advance eastward. At the same time the planned and systematic extermination of the Jews began.

Gestapo HQ was based in the city of Tishavitz but every now and then the Germans would come to Komorov. When they did, they wreaked havoc creating fear and panic.

I remember one German in particular. His name was Shultz and he was a vicious man. Whenever he came no one was safe. He would indiscriminately pick people either from their homes or on the street.

Old and young, it didn't matter. He would line them up and shoot them. Just for his own pleasure.

At the beginning of 1942, on a Saturday night, Shultz came to Komorov. He was looking for blood.

My father and a number of other men were in an apartment saying prayers at the end of the Sabbath. Shultz forced his way into the apartment and shot dead six of the men there and then. My father was one of them.

We took my father's body to our house and as is traditional, watched over him all night. We buried him the next morning and entered into a period of mourning for seven days.

It was at this time, whilst we were sitting shiva, that an old friend of mine, Jacob Rodman called to pay his respects.

He brought news of a place called Auschwitz. He told us that people were taken by trains that went directly into the camp. From there they were taken straight to the showers and gassed.

We had no idea at that time of the extent of the killing. We had not heard of Auschwitz and had no idea it was an extermination camp.

The whole idea of planned mass murder was impossible to comprehend.

We didn't know what to do.

Soon the Germans started rounding up Jews from Komorov.

My brothers and I, and some other young men in the town, had a job collecting scrap iron for the Germans which they used to make munitions.

We had to wear a green stripe on our sleeve to identify ourselves but this enabled us to move around more freely and gave us a small degree of protection.

In this, the first round up, the other iron collectors and myself pleaded with the Germans not to take the women as this would greatly hurt our work.

Incredibly they agreed and five girls were allowed down from the trucks. Among them was Hannah Furer and Paula Landau. I do not know if they survived the war but I do know that they would have been sent to their deaths if they had gone on the trucks.

The Germans had by now completely cleared the adjoining town of all Jews and we knew that we were next. A group of young men including my brothers and I decided that we were going to make a fight of it.

We bought some ammunition and guns and each night we went out to hide on the road which we thought the Germans would use to approach Komorov.

We thought that we would see the lights on their trucks and would be able to run back and warn the people that the Germans were coming giving them some time to hide.



Holocaust Memorial



We went out each evening for two weeks. Then suddenly we were completely surrounded by Germans. It happened so quickly that we had absolutely no time to warn anyone.

And so the killing began.

The Germans entered all the buildings in Komorov. They found those who had been hiding, dragged them into the street and shot them. The killing went on day and night without stopping. They went from house to house indiscriminately murdering people.

My mother Hava was dragged into the street and shot. I could do nothing to stop it.

My brothers and I decided that we would escape into the nearby forest and join the Partisans who were forming a resistance movement.

When we got to the forest the Germans were already there looking for partisans. We all ran but I was shot. I lay where I fell.... for three days..... unable to move. On the 3rd day I saw a man, a Partisan, walking in the forest carrying water.

I called to him. I had had nothing to drink for 3 days.

The man recognised me. His name was Zvi Na-or. He told me the unbelievable news that my older brother Ephraim was alive and nearby in the forest with a group of Partisans.

This news gave me strength to summon all my energy and with Zvi's help I was able to join them.

You cannot imagine the joy that was felt in the camp that night. My brother had seen me fall and thought I was dead. He was dumbfounded to see me walk into the camp.

Before Zvi found me I had a dream or maybe it was a vision. To this day I do not know which. I do know however that it was to have an enormous impact on my future struggle to stay alive.

In the dream my father came to me. It was so real. He said that I must fight to stay alive. No matter what hardships I faced in the future I was never to give up.

The partisans took me to a medic called Fletcher. He treated my wounds. I knew that I would be a burden to the partisans and didn't want to hold them up so my friend Jacob Rodman, who had managed to escape from the forest, took me to a Polish farmer he knew nearby in the hope that he would hide us. Of course for payment.

He was not Jewish and hiding us was a great risk for him personally. If the Germans had found us they would have shot him as well as us.

However he did hide us for several days. Whilst we were in hiding my youngest brother came to us with the terrible news that our eldest brother Ephraim had been killed. This was on the 5th night of *Chanuka*, the festival of light, in the Hebrew year 5703 which corresponded to December 1942.

Soon the Polish farmer came and told us that the Germans were in the area and that it was no longer safe to remain. We would have to leave immediately.

We smuggled ourselves into a work camp. We thought as workers we would be safe from selection and deportation. We were wrong.

Hardly a week had passed when selections started in the camp. The Germans started taking those who were sick or too weak to work. It was not difficult to imagine their fate.

Conditions in the camp were appalling. You cannot begin to imagine the cramped conditions, the lack of food, the non-existent hygiene, the smell of death and decay that pervaded everything. Infections were rife and would spread like wildfire.

One day Typhus broke out in the camp and my friend Jacob Rodman became ill. One morning he was taken out of the line of workers. I never saw him again.

My younger brother decided that he was going to make a break for it. He was very agile and managed to climb over the fence that surrounded the camp and jump down the other side before the Germans spotted him and started shooting. He ran in a zig zag pattern somehow avoiding their bullets.

He made it into the woods but was immediately caught by a Pole who handed him over to the Germans. They shot him.

It was March 1943. My entire family had been murdered. My despair was complete. I was totally alone.

Even though it was difficult beyond comprehension the vision I had in the forest gave me the strength to carry on. The conditions in the camp were terrible and I saw time after time men being removed from the lines of workers marked to die. I knew that before long my turn would come.

Suddenly in June 1943 all the Jews in the camp, myself included, were taken to a concentration camp. It was called Majdenic.

On our arrival we were made to strip. They shaved our heads and sent us into the showers. We were given the black and white striped uniform of concentration camp inmates.





Holocaust Memorial



We hardly recognised each other. The conditions in Majdenic were even worse than the previous camp. We were forced to work and given barely enough food with which to survive.

I had been there about a month when a rumour went around that a special committee of Germans was going to select 1500 men to work in another camp.

Even though I had no idea what or where the work was, I thought it could not be worse than here and so I made a big effort to be one of those selected.

On the day the selection took place I rose early and forced my way through the hundreds of men already there to get close to the front.

The Germans ordered us to remove our shirts and hold them in our left hand at the side of our body. When we came to the head of the line we were told to run as fast as we could. The fastest were chosen.

In order to hide the highly visible scar I had as a result of being shot in the forest I decided to hold my shirt on my right side instead of the left as had been ordered.

When I got to the head of the line the officer started screaming at me telling me that I had been ordered to hold my shirt in the other hand and he started to whip me. I started to run like I had seen a ghost. I was selected.

We were given some bread before being herded onto trucks to be taken to the new camp. I met some old friends and for the first time in years our hopes began to rise. We arrived at the camp which I will always remember with loathing. It was called Skajisco Kamien.

We were put to work in a factory making ammunition powder for explosives and artillery shells.

Here I got a terrible shock. The men who I saw working in the factory had all turned yellow and become ill and jaundiced from the powder. I knew a similar fate awaited me.

I had fallen out of the frying pan right into the fire. The work was unbearable and again we were barely given enough food on which to survive.

I became weaker day by day and three times I tried to escape. In the concentration camps the Germans appointed Jews to police Jews. These policemen were called Kappos. They had special privileges and more food. They were hated as much as the Germans.

When I was caught for the third time the head Kappo decided to punish me by giving me lashes. I was furious. I would not let a Jew whip me. If it was going to happen it would have to be done by a German.

Incredibly there was a woman, I don't know who she was but she must have taken pity on me. She had the power to stop them whipping me and also released me from the terrible work in the factory and gave me a new job. I was to bring the food to the prisoners.

Towards the end of 1944 the Germans were losing the war. We could hear the sound of the approaching Russian guns. However the Germans had not given up on us. They decided to move the factory to a new position, but they wouldn't take the weak with them.

Selections started again.

Those who worked in what we called the yellow wing – the jaundiced ones, were to be killed. One day before selection I sat in the shower and pinched and pounded myself for ages but to no avail.

The yellow colour had permeated into my skin and I was immediately selected to go into the left line which meant death. The Germans had already started shooting men in that line. I ran to the right side three times and three times I was returned to the left.

On my fourth attempt for some reason I was allowed to remain. I had survived again.

During the following months I was taken to Buchenwald concentration camp and then to Thereisnstadt.

Conditions in both camps were terrible. Death and despair was everywhere.

People were little more than walking skeletons fed on starvation rations. We could hear the guns of the approaching Russian army getting closer and closer.

Then one day they were there.....the Russians.....in our camp.

We were free. I had survived ... my entire family had been wiped out but against all the odds I had survived.

Last year Shimon passed away peacefully in his sleep.

Confirmation Away Day

Harvey Richardson reflects on a visit to Sherborne, Salisbury and Winchester



On Friday 9 May a group of Shiplake boys set out on the Confirmation "away day". During this away day we reflected upon our forthcoming Confirmation whilst visiting Sherborne, Salisbury and Winchester.

After a long journey of about 100 miles we arrived at the little village of Henstridge near to which the three counties of Dorset, Wilshire and Somerset all meet. The *Virginia Ash* pub provided us with an excellent supper of various steaks, sausages, scampi, and so on. We were extremely well fed and were also able to play some football in the large car park.

At just after 8pm we arrived in the Courts of Sherborne School, reputed to be one of the oldest public schools in England, where we attended their 9pm Candlelit Communion, a voluntary service which takes place at Sherborne every Friday night. We were welcomed by their Chaplain and enjoyed a very peaceful service, a bit like our own Wednesday night service, joined by some eighty pupils of Sherborne.

A member of the Upper Sixth gave the address, something which often happens at Sherborne. After the service we were taken away in groups to stay the night in one of the nine Houses. The School is set at the very centre of the town and Houses vary from being right in the middle to half a mile away.

The day afterwards we had breakfast in the large modern dining room, and then the group proceeded onto Salisbury Cathedral.

Here we were lucky enough to be given the chance to climb the 332 steps up the Cathedral tower, which also has a large Spire, that stands at 404 feet, making it the highest spire in Great Britain and the second largest in Europe.

Our tour guide was an expert in architecture, specialising in the Salisbury Cathedral's structure. We were able to fully grasp the extent of 60 years hard work. Without the help of modern technology and tools, the Tudors still managed to construct the finest example of Gothic Architecture.

We proceeded onto Winchester Cathedral, which has the longest Church nave in England. We then had a half hour silent meditation during which time we were able to contemplate and reflect upon our relationship with God and our relationships with those around us. At 5.30pm we attended the Choral Evensong led by Winchester's amazing choir which has the reputation of being one of the finest Cathedral choirs in England with most of the eighteen treble singers being some years younger than ourselves but with an ability to perform very complicated music.

We arrived back at Shiplake at about 8pm well-prepared for the next day and the wonderful service, made even more amazing by the sun's rays and warmth.

Thanks go to the Rev for organizing the trip and all those whose hospitality made the trip a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Over 6,000 miles

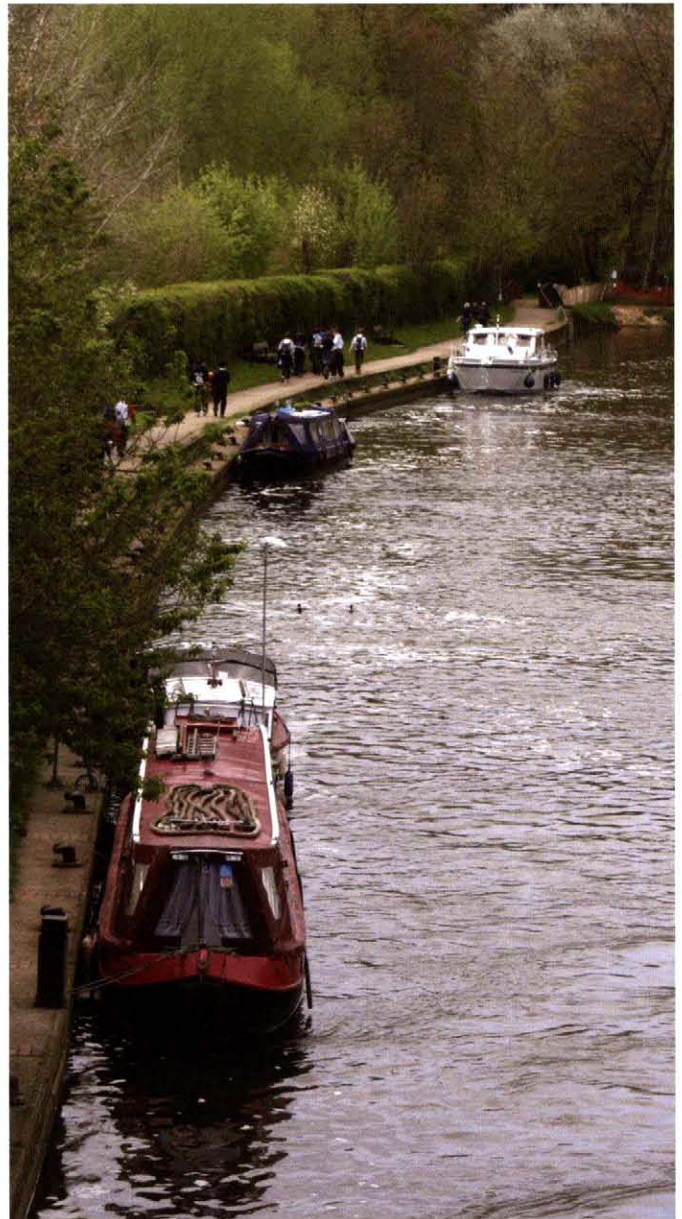
Pupils, parents and teachers set themselves the task of completing over 6,000 miles along the Thames Path as they left Moultsford School. They were walking to raise funds for the Multiple Sclerosis Society, The Chiltern Centre, Help for Heroes, The National Deaf Children's Society and the NSPCC.

Some of the pupils who had chosen and championed the charities set a fine example. Daryl Richards, who had passionately advocated the Multiple Sclerosis Society gritted his teeth to complete the 20 miles of mud and mire in 3 hours 6 minutes, just 7 minutes behind James Luscombe who was the first to finish in 2 hours and 59 minutes.

Lizi Orpwood, who had spoken on behalf of Help for Heroes, also ran her way along a route made treacherous by heavy overnight rain and frequent showers. Hugo Gentilli, an ardent supporter of the NSPCC, had already raised over £10,000 by completing the London Marathon.

For the first two hours the walkers and runners enjoyed pale sunshine but by the time the front-runners stopped for lunch at Whitchurch Bridge the Thames Valley was filling with ominous dark clouds. The wind freshened, the temperature dropped and the sharp showers began. Every time the walkers thought that the sun was about to dry their sodden clothes another shower arrived.

After the long loop through the Thames Valley Park, over Sonning Bridge and awaiting the first glimpse of the College's skyline, the walkers eventually trudged up the steep hill from the river to check in and receive their well-deserved certificates.



A Slice of Saturday Night

Book, music and lyrics by The Heather Brothers

THE COMPANY:

Eric "Rubber Legs" de Vene
Garry
Terry
Bridget
Sharon
Sue
Rick
Eddie
Penny
Shirl

Tom Morgan-Harris
Freddie Greaves
Tom Beacham
Laura Cotton
Emily Hatch
Brittani Lea
James Gifford
Ed Pinker
Lorelei Bere
Totie Southwell

Other parts played by the company....

Rupert Adams, Kate Aldridge, Sasha Burgess, Freddie Durant-Pritchard,
Annie Elphick, Nick Harper, Fliss Lowes, Tori Merson, Toby Raper, Olivia
Rose, Patrick Weiss

DIRECTORS - Catherine Saker and Charley Smith

MUSICAL DIRECTOR – Jonathan Ling

BAND: Nick Aspey, Jonathan Ling, Jack Thompson, Paul Wisby

Choreography: Jean Harper

Dance Captains: Brittani Lea and Ed Pinker

Costume: Jean Harper and Marion Dilloway

Technical Director: Charley Smith

Lighting: Jamie MacLeod and Harvey Richardson

Director's Assistant: Oliver Watkins-Murphy

Front of House: Emma Arnold, Eleanor Butt, Robert Prance

An Amateur
Production by
Arrangement with
Samuel French

I had a 'slice of good fortune' to see *A Slice Of Saturday Night*. For those of you unfamiliar with this musical, just think *Grease*, and you'll get it straight away. I saw the original cast in London many years ago, and while it may not be the most memorable show, it has that one great ingredient, energy! The show was staged 'in the round' to give it that club atmosphere, and this presented the directors with a problem. In a small setting like the Tithe Barn Theatre, the cast almost outnumbered the audience! That said, the numbers made no difference to the appreciation of those present.

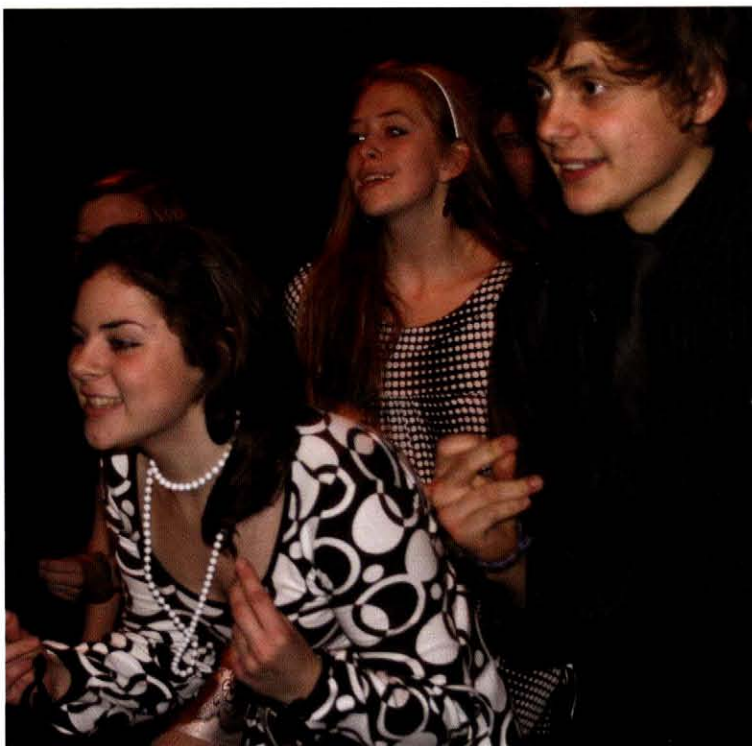
The Shiplake cast were not even glimmers in their parents' eyes when this show was written, or indeed could not possibly be familiar with life in the 60s. This made it all the more amazing that they got the genre just right. The opening number, *Saturday Night*, set the scene perfectly. The costumes, especially the girls in their black and white Mary Quant dresses, and the boys' winkle pickers and duck tail haircuts, were right "on the money".

The club owner and Master of Ceremonies, Eric 'Rubber Legs' de Vene, was played superbly by Tom Morgan-Harris. With his crepe soled, leopard skin shoes and greasy hair, he gave us just the right blend of menace and period pastiche. He couldn't know it, but he was the spitting image of the actual owner of the *Whiskey A-Go-Go* back in the 60s! The story is a rite of passage for youngsters in those far off days, when most seemed to look and behave like adults but were actually rather naive. Here, I have to pick out Garry, played by Freddie Greaves. He played the part of a cocky young teenager who thought he could 'pull' anyone.....and mostly managed to do just that! Emily Hatch, playing Sharon, has a really great voice which she used to the full, as did Bridget, played by Laura Cotton. Ed Pinker played Eddie, the guy who bets he can 'pull' Bridget, and very nearly succeeds! I must make special mention of Rick played by James Gifford, a nice young man who was not quite as blatant and crude as his friends. James' singing was of top quality and in his Bob Dylan cap he certainly looked the part.

Other prominent cast members included Tom Beacham, Brittani Lea, Lorelie Bere and Totie Southwell, and with the addition of all the chorus characters, they gave us an evening to remember.

The show was directed by Catherine Saker and Charley Smith, and they should be proud of themselves. What they did was to give the Shiplake students their heads, with just the right blend of direction thrown in. This made for enthusiasm and energy, without which many shows just crumble. As I said before, I saw the original show and it was not up to the mark in these departments. The closing number, *Saturday Night Go Go* was the best of the lot. It made those of us who were 'there' originally, remember the vitality and innocence of those far off days. Well done Shiplake and Catherine and Charlie- if I had a hat I would have taken it off to you. This *Slice Of Saturday Nights* gone by was better for me than the current 'slices of Saturday' served up on our TVs; but then live performance is (nearly) always better, isn't it?

Mike Hurst





Rough For Theatre II by Samuel Beckett

Croker stands for thirty-five minutes, considering suicide, whilst two French bureaucrats from the black and white world of the 1920s theorise and debate over the flotsam and jetsam of his life. Croker is set to jump but Samuel Beckett's Bertrand and Morven display a disturbing indifference to his fate. Echoing their detachment a love bird sings whilst its mate lies dead at the bottom of their cage.

Rough for Theatre 2 is rarely performed and to the best of Head of Drama, Catherine Saker's knowledge it has never been performed in a school before. Shiplake College may have been making educational history as they took on an often overlooked piece from the Beckett catalogue. Directed and performed by the students, the piece offered an unusual experience for the audience who sat in separated seats, sensitive to the isolated world of Croker but simultaneously party to the discussions, as if it were their lives under scrutiny.

Tom Morgan-Harris, as the more practical and more thoughtful Bertrand, and Freddie Durant-Pritchard as the emotional Morven put in flawless performances. The duo may have forgotten the motionless Croker but the audience were impressed by Nick Harper's intense concentration as he stood at the window of the sixth floor apartment, about to jump.

Beckett tests actors with changes of tone and pace. At times the script is pure vaudeville as Bertrand and Morven almost become a comic duo, racing through the repartee in their strangely symbiotic relationship. As Bertrand strives to discover some redeeming feature among the ordinariness of the Croker's life, Morven discovers triumphantly that he was once presented with a watch and that he hadn't returned it, which must, they decide, count for something.

Then a sudden realisation of how ridiculous life can be or a moment of despair, and the dialogue becomes fractured. The verbal badinage dries up and the actor has to bring the audience into what has suddenly become a painful and lonely world.

Freddie Durant-Pritchard, with hair glued back into a style lost sometime in 1924, reads through the yellowing records with gusto but at times dissolves into despair. At one point he all but implodes when he can't find a verb in a sentence. The irritations are trivial but the frustration is tangible, consummately displayed through particularly expressive hand gestures as Morven constantly stacks and sorts his files on the life of Croker, now reduced to mere paperwork.

Bertrand, played by Tom Morgan-Harris, takes a more considered interest in Croker's fate, bordering on the intellectual, but it is still 35 minutes before he walks across the room to inspect the potential suicide victim, leaving the audience puzzling over what he finds.

Rough for Theatre 2 is demanding theatre. Stark white light from desk-top angle-poise lamps spotlights the protagonists against an austere black background of dreary office life. There are no distractions and nowhere to hide. Beckett's script gave these two young actors the toughest test of their theatrical lives until the audience shattered the final dark brooding silence with a cathartic crescendo of applause.

M Edwards

Photograph by Graham Young

The knives are out in *Service 14*

The knives are out in the latest production by the Year 12 drama students as waitresses, chefs, maitre d' and expensive wives clash amidst the lively hub of a top London restaurant. *Service 14* is a wonderful play, devised by the students themselves, about ambition, adultery, fantasy and, of course, food. In this slick production the heat of the kitchen lends fire to the relationships between those who work in the restaurant; the waitresses dream of perfect lovers, the maitre d' enjoys carnal embraces with the head chef's wife and disappointed wives and divorcees gossip over candlelit tables.

This play is more than a play: the stage is a kitchen in which chefs Beacham, Burgess, Adams and Merson prepare the food rushed by waitresses Elphick, Rose and Hatch to hungry audience members. White drapes, fragrant lilies and the strains of cool *bossa nova* help to transform the Tithe Barn into the palace of gastronomic perfection that is *Service 14*.

Two characters manage to avoid becoming embroiled in the play's adulterous affairs: part owner of the restaurant, the vulgar Spicker (played by Freddie Greaves) and his long suffering assistant (Chessie Haines). In spite of their detachment from the sordid goings on of the kitchen they make a real impact on the play. Spicker's comic outbursts, displays of bravado and threats to innocent diners/audience members were hugely entertaining.

The audience, those eating and those watching, clearly enjoyed themselves. The play was a triumph for Ms Saker and the cast who completed their AS course in fine style.

M A Taft

*The Restaurant,
West End, London.
Passion & intimacy runs
through it.*

The Menu

Gazpacho Soup

Scallops with Wild Boar and Pea Puree

Asparagus with Poached Egg
and Hollandaise Sauce

Braised Pork Belly with Five Bean Casserole

Pan Fried Sea Bass with Basil Pesto
and Roasted Pine Nuts

Roast Tomato and Goats Cheese Salad
with Walnuts and Pears and Chicory

Crème Brûlée

Summer Berry Soup

The Cast

Rupert Adams

Kate Aldridge

Sasha Burgess

Tom Beacham

Olivia Bellhouse

Annie Elphick

Freddie Greaves

Francesca Haines

Emily Hatch

Fliss Lowes

Tori Merson

Edward Pinker

Olivia Rose

Totie Southwell

Choir provide highlight of the year

GCSE and A level music students kicked off the concert season with a small recital in the Great Hall on 18th October. This evening reminded me of the quantity of vocal talent at the college. Two highlights were Totie Southwell singing *Angel* by Sarah McGloughlin and a performance of *Somewhere Beyond The Sea* ably performed by Sam Neale (voice), James Luscombe (bass guitar), Curtis Tseng (drums) and myself on piano.

Last year's Christmas Concert was transformed into an Autumn Concert and was held on Sunday 4th November, again in the Great Hall. Here we were entertained by several ensembles which meet for regular weekly rehearsals: the Wind Group (Oliver Fogden – bassoon, Freddie Wilcox – clarinet, James Warren – flute) directed by Brian Foakes, performed *Seaside Sketches*; the Shiplake Singers (an adult choir rehearsing every Monday evening in the Music School between 8.00p.m. and 9.15p.m.) sang *Justorum Animae* by Stanford and the College Choir performed *In Christ Alone* with Jonny Potts at the piano. This concert was also the first occasion for most people to hear the talent of our new year 9 music scholar, Harry Griffiths, who gave beautiful renditions of Elgar's *Ave Verum* and *I'll Walk With God* by Brodsky.

The early date for this Autumn Concert gave us plenty of time to prepare some excellent music for the Carol Service, which was held, as usual, in St Mary's Church, Henley. Two choirs were formed for this event; a new Chamber Choir, directed by Louise Rapple, rehearsed most of the 'choir only' items, and they were joined by the massed voices of the College Choir for a rendition of *When A Child Is Born*, made famous by Jonny Mathis so many years ago!

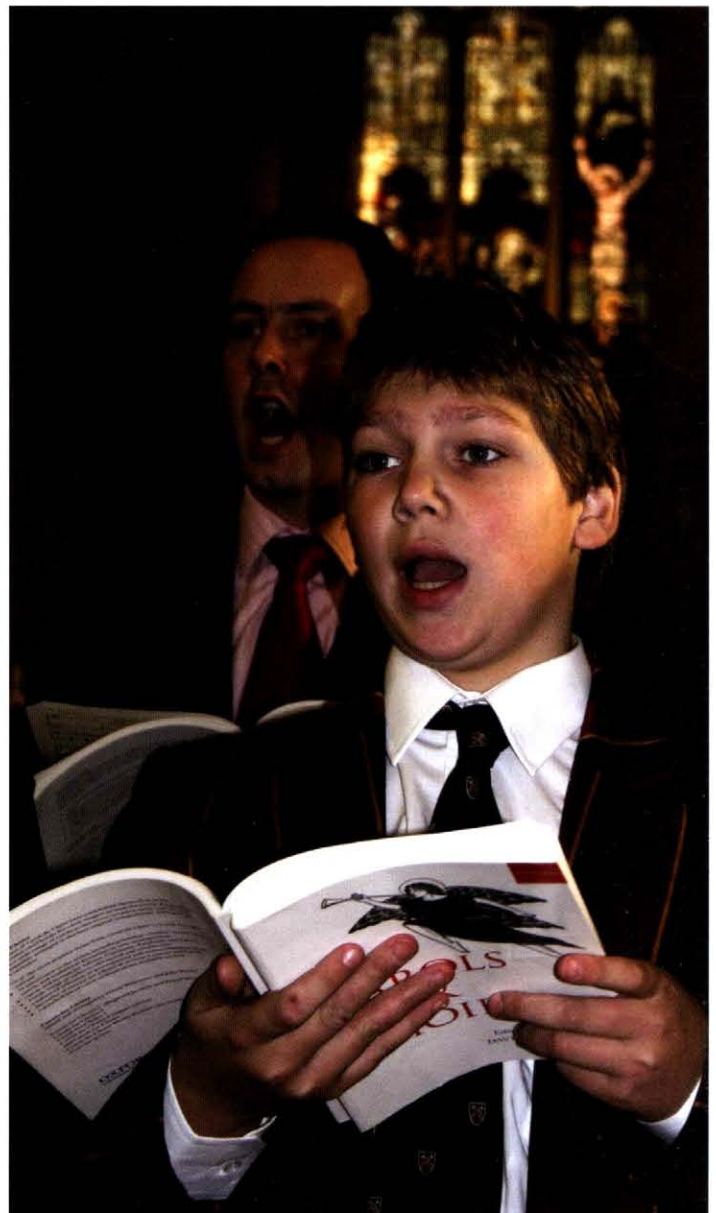
The Chamber Choir rehearsed twice a week at lunchtimes, and they excelled themselves with performances of old classics like *O Come O Come Emmanuel*, *Infant Holy*, *Birthday Carol* and the *Sans Day Carol*. Harry Griffiths performed the traditional solo at the start of the service and held his pitch perfectly, getting everything off to an excellent start.

At the other extreme, the whole college came together to sing *Unto Us Is Born A Son*, written by Colin Mawby, and as usual, the passion and conviction were there, if not always the perfect intonation and other subtleties which are usually mastered by more experienced choirs!

Highlights of the Spring Term were the House Singing Competition, held on the afternoon we broke up for half term and the Spring Concert on Sunday 9th March. At the latter event, the Wind Group performed the Allegro from Mozart's *Divertimento No.2 K229*., Paul Wisby's Guitar Group played Clapton's *Tears In Heaven*, and the Jazz Group tackled *Maiden Voyage* by Herbie Hancock, again, supported by their leader, Paul Wisby.

For this performance, Sam Neale's voice was replaced with the beautiful tone of James Cowing's alto saxophone, and he impressed the audience with his improvising ability. As for the solo items, there were several performances given by Laura Cotton, who sang and played the piano. She used the concert as pre-Grade 7 exam experience to play two of her pieces, and she then sang Schubert's beautiful *An Die Musik*, expertly accompanied by Robert Prance. Also, in a school so dominated by guitars and drums, it was refreshing to hear the violin (James Gifford) and the bassoon (Oliver Fogden) played with confidence in this setting.

Harry Griffiths



The Snake Slithers Into Town

Snake Davis slithered into town with seductive and bluesy notes that you knew you'd heard before, maybe on a Paul McCartney album, perhaps on 80s Eurythmic's vinyl and definitely on Amy Winehouse's latest release.

"Only my mother calls me Chris," said Snake. "I got the nickname from the way I move round the stage."



From the very first passionate note a privileged Great Hall audience knew that they were listening to a skilled session saxophonist at the height of his profession as he played the night away on tenor, alto and soprano saxophones as well as transferring his talents to a Japanese bamboo flute.

Snake's credits are a Who's Who of contemporary music. James Brown, Smokey Robinson, Chaka Chan, M-People and B*Witched – he's been there providing the backing as they record. As well as being the resident saxophonist for "Tonight with Jonathan Ross, Snake has also presented a saxophone "Masterclass" for ITV.

Between eight to ten hours a day of lung-sapping practice got Snake to where he is today as he served his apprenticeship in the clubs of London, Liverpool and New York.

And the strangest place he has even asked to play. "It was down a Welsh slate mine but we couldn't take any electrical equipment down with us as there was just too much moisture."

The House Singing Competition 2008 was adjudicated by Iain Carnegie, Director of Music at Reed's School, Cobham.

Iain has a wicked sense of humour as well as a keen ear and this provided for an entertaining and perceptive judgement at the end of the afternoon. He was quick to recognise that Shiplake has a wealth of singing talent.

As for last year, each house was expected to produce a rendition of the same song; this year it was *Do Wah Diddy*. They were then given the freedom to choose another song which could involve either the whole House, or perhaps a more select ensemble. Instrumental participation was optional, and only a small amount of credit was available for this.

The focus was on appearance, quality of sound and clarity, as well as performing from memory. Everett created a muscular arrangement of *Build Me Up Buttercup*, Welsh sang *Brown Eyed Girl* with great confidence, Burr tackled an ambitious arrangement of *There She Goes*, Skipwith delighted us with *Wonderful World* and Orchard more than filled the stage with their massed choir to sing *Every Breath You Take*.

The results were very close, but Skipwith came out top, followed by Burr and Orchard in joint second place. It was a very enjoyable afternoon and set everyone up in the right mood for a half term break.

My thanks go to all the Housemasters and boys and girls who worked so hard to put these performances together in only one week. Everyone should feel proud of their achievements. I was particularly pleased that there was little staff involvement this year.

During the Summer Term the annual Battle of the Bands returned, again just one day before half term. It was decided that due to the severe imbalance of ability between the Houses this should not be an inter-house competition, but rather just an opportunity for any bands to come together to perform in the Tithe Barn with a professional sound system and engineer, as well as a good crowd of noisy supporters! My thanks to Paul Wisby for organising the event and for playing guitar for some of the acts, and to his friend Mark for doing the sound and for offering words of wisdom to all the performers at the end of the evening. The 'Best Individual Performer' award went to Sam Neale. Further details about this event can be found separately in this magazine.

For me the highlight of the whole year has been the formation and subsequent transformation of the Chamber Choir under Louise Rapple's direction. The singers have been selected by audition and after a period of regular rehearsals (always difficult to achieve in a busy school), the choir have really started to sound very good indeed. They performed at several events, including various important services such as the Carol Service, Confirmation, the service by the river, and the Leavers' Service, and they now represent the very best of Shiplake music making. So, I thank Louise in particular for her work with this group, but I also thank Paul Wisby for everything he does to support the department, whether it be rehearsing bands after hours, or assisting Music Technology students with recordings late into the night, well after most staff have gone home. As I wind my way to Bangkok in August I know that I will have left the department in safe hands and my successors will have a very good team with which to work.

J G Ling



Tamesis

If you've never been to a concert given by Tamesis Chamber Choir you may not realise that part of the pleasure is the anticipation - knowing that you are likely to experience something rather special. Their concert, *Songs of Love* held in Shiplake Church on Friday 14th March, was no exception. This young choir under the baton of Louise Rapple, musical director, deliver a high standard of performance and look as if they enjoy it at the same time.

The first half of the programme celebrated sacred love, and included a sensitive interpretation of John Ireland's moving anthem *Greater Love Hath No Man*, along with two contrasting versions of an old Cornish poem set around the words 'this I have done for my true love' and 'tomorrow will be my dancing day', by Holst and Gardner respectively. Also on offer were pieces by Wesley and Blair. Soloists from the choir sang with confidence and clarity.

During two short interludes Shiplake College Chamber Choir sang four pieces, also directed by Louise Rapple. It is good to see young people discovering the joy of singing together and they showed great potential - I have no doubt we will hear more of them in the future.

The second half of the programme, devoted to a more earthly love, opened with *I love my love*, a Cornish folk-song arranged by Holst which highlighted the pure quality of the sopranos. The songs of the Thirties and Forties are always a treat - Tamesis captured the swinging mood of such greats as *Blue Moon* and *Night and Day*.

S Kilgour

Battle of the Bands

The Tithe Barn was packed for this year's Battle of the Bands. Mark Warwick, from Boilerhouse Studios provided the sound and also acted as judge of the award to the evening's best performer. The prize for best individual performer was a guitar from Mark's stock.

Josh Cantor returned to the College to kick-start events with an original composition for 12 string acoustic guitar.

Out in the real world Josh has completed a course on constructing guitars, and in September Josh has been given a place studying guitar at the prestigious Institute of contemporary music performance in London.

Electro Alex, aka Alex Campbell, took on Muse's demanding *Exo Politics* and made a great job of it. James Cowing and Curtis Tseng' contributed to the evening's eclectic mix with a rendition of Jaco Pastorius' *The Chicken*.

Orchard's Year 10 was very strong with Tom Woodford, Alex Roberts and George Twydell joined by James Love as they produced their cover of Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit*.

Comedy was provided by Tom Beacham and Freddie Greaves who had worked hard with Kate Bush's *Hounds of Love* to interweave elements of others songs into their performance to keep the audience amused.

Skipwith's Sean Horwood, Max Giesen and Ed Johnson were joined by another returning Old Viking, Dan Tookman, to form Skipwith Extreme. Undoubtedly one of the stars of the night was Sam Levell who stepped into the breach all night. "Tell me how it goes?" was Sam's leading question as he helped to make the night a great success. He was part of James Kneifati's All Stars who played a great version of Tears for Fears' *Mad World*.

College House demonstrated that their hours in the Music Tower had not been wasted with Jack Thompson, Jack Mercer, Freddie Durant-Pritchard and inevitably Sam Levell playing *The Bends* and *Don't look back into the Sun*.

But at the end of a hugely enjoyable evening it was Sam Neale's vocals that impressed the most to proudly take hold of the coveted guitar.

P Wisby



Henley Festival Literary Dinner

The Great Hall of Shiplake College provided the perfect spot for the dinner of the inaugural Henley Literary Festival. The brainchild and as a result of several months' hard slog by one of our own governors, Sue Ryan.

The Literary Festival ran from Friday 21 to Sunday 23 September and the dinner on the Saturday evening was one of the highlights of the weekend. Beginning with drinks on the terrace, on what was a truly wonderful autumnal evening, the chattering guests made their way into the Great Hall to the sounds of oohs and aahs at the stunning setting and the marvellous artworks by many of our students which adorned the walls. The college catering department supplied an absolutely superb five-course dinner.

The evening was opened by author Andrew O'Hagan, who shared some of his thoughts on why he had become a writer and what a writer's life is like. He also mesmerised the gathering with his rendition of some of Robert Burns' poetry.

Other speakers included local actor Simon Williams (some of you will remember him from *Upstairs, Downstairs*, while those of you under 45 will have seen him in *Holby City*). He spoke of the delight of being able to attend a literary festival in such beautiful surroundings and wished the project every success for future years.

The chatter at the tables was of the various Festival events we had all managed to attend, regret at those we had missed, and a resounding 'yes, please' in answer to the question, 'Should we do it all again next year?'

Joanne Humphrey

Andrew Hagan



General Sir Mike Jackson

In publicising his recent autobiography, General Sir Mike Jackson answered questions about his life as a soldier ranging from The Troubles in Northern Ireland, where he was present at Bloody Sunday, through the invasion of Kosovo to the challenges of Islamic Fundamentalism that he faced as Head of the British Army.

A man of intellect with a booming and commanding voice, he also praised today's Army, 'I know of none better', while expressing his thoughts over the future peace and stability of the world, highlighting Iran and Pakistan as being of particular concern.

Neil Walne, Bursar

Mike Atherton and Marie Helvin

On the Sunday of the Henley Literary Festival I was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to listen to some of the speakers.

Mike Atherton, a former England cricket captain has recently written a book investigating the uneasy relationship between gambling and professional sport. He spoke about his life as a cricket player and more specifically where cricket was heading in terms of match-fixing and corruption. Although I am not a great cricket fan I was fascinated and enjoyed the talk very much.

I also had the opportunity to listen to Marie Helvin, a former supermodel who has been pictured in *Vogue* magazine. She had an interesting life story and spoke about the fashion industry and its demanding lifestyle.

Brittani Lea

Battlefields Tour

Twenty-four Year 9 boys set off early on the first Saturday morning of half term for a tour of World War One's Western Front battlefields.

The ferry journey from Dover was a lively affair as English rugby fans, on their way to Paris for the World Cup final, entertained us with renditions of 'Swing low Sweet Chariot'.

Upon arriving in France we crossed the border into Belgium and headed for the town of Ypres, the scene of four years bitter fighting and devastation during World War 1. Then we had a tour of Ypres' battlefields. The seemingly countless military cemeteries a reminder of the loss of life suffered on these fields.

In late afternoon we arrived at Tynecote, a cemetery and memorial to soldiers from the United Kingdom and New Zealand who died at Ypres, many at the Battle of Passchendaele. Here we laid a wreath at the memorial to Eric George Cheasley, a resident of Shiplake village, who died at the Battle of Passchendaele. He, like 35,000 other soldiers at Tynecote, has no known grave. At eight o'clock we listened to *The Last Post* at the Menin Gate in Ypres, a memorial to 54,000 soldiers whose graves are not known.

Before departing for Calais on Monday afternoon we visited the preserved Canadian trenches and tunnels at Vimy. This gave us a very clear view of the front-line and at one point Canadian and German trenches were only 20 metres apart! We then visited the Canadian memorial at Vimy Ridge, a spectacular white monument that looked so impressive against the cloudless blue sky.

After recovering from England's defeat in the rugby we travelled on the Sunday morning back into France and headed for the Somme. The scene of World War One's most terrible battle. Before lunch we visited Newfoundland Park, a Canadian memorial. Here the battlefield has been preserved allowing us to see the German and Canadian front-line trenches.

After lunch we moved on to view the Lochnagar mine crater, which is so huge it really has to be seen to be believed. We travelled around the fields of the Somme and viewed an old German machine gun post used during the Battle of the Somme. Situated in vast open fields it was easy to see why so many thousands of British soldiers were killed by machine gun fire. Finally we travelled to Thiepval Memorial, a huge monument to the memory of 72,000 soldiers who died during the Battle of the Somme and have no known grave. In the evening we enjoyed supper in the French town of Arras.

J. Cooksey



Weave your web

Year 9 students enjoyed a cultural extravaganza as they set out on a co-curricular visit to the *Louise Bourgeois Exhibition* at Tate Modern. Accompanied by the English and Art Departments our boys enjoyed a must-see show described by one reviewer in *The Observer* as “thrilling - as exciting a show as I've seen in the last five years”.

Louise Bourgeois is one of the world's most respected sculptors and the exhibition offered an unprecedented opportunity to explore her powerful and inventive works and themes from a literary and artistic perspective.



Every boy in Year 9 relished the opportunity to examine and explore the gigantic spiders, secret rooms and alien shapes as a stimulus to help them produce original creative poetry or prose. Armed with their workpacks, Year 9 completed creative investigations: they discussed and described their thoughts whilst standing under a menacing 60 foot spider; they examined their unease at peeping into someone's secret room and expressed their uncertainty of knowing whether some of the rooms were in fact prison cells.

To complement the experience the English Department then pursued the theme of 'Spin Your Yarn or Weave your Web', asking students to explore their responses from unusual and imaginative perspectives in either poetry or prose, culminating in a presentation of written personal responses to the exhibition.

We would work for nothing

We drove for two and a half hours in a minibus to Malvern in Worcestershire. In the new Morgan Cars Aero 8 we would have got there a little faster but Mr Daniel and Mr Edwards might have worried about scratching the paintwork. A litre of paint costs £1,000 for Morgan's latest model and the car requires 8 litres in total. *Top Gear* Presenter, Richard Hammond is one of the 100 buyers who has put down his deposit for an Aero 8.

Morgan cars should be a thriving, profitable business. Order a Morgan Car now and you have to wait a year. The company has taken one hundred £25,000 non-returnable deposits on a limited edition of the Aero 8 which sells at £110,000 and the company celebrates its centenary in 2009. Yet Year 13 Business Studies students learnt that the company has just recorded its first profit for three years. There are troubles at the foot of the Malvern Hills.



Morgan remains one of the great enigmas of British business. It is the oldest privately owned Motor Company business in the world with thousands of fans. Dixon, our semi-retired guide, had bought his Morgan for £350 at the age of 21, and had just turned down an offer of £60,000. “The shares are kept within the Morgan family. They don't want to bring in outsiders who will want change,” said Dixon as he stood in admiration, watching a craftsman snipping and crimping a piece of aluminium. Each chassis made from Lincolnshire Ash is hand-crafted by one workman.

It is a masterclass, and it takes Morgan's apprentices five years to learn the trade, but business brains wonder whether every component really has to be so lovingly created. It is labour intensive, 160 employees create just 14 cars a week.

In Malvern the locals are queuing up to work at Morgan and once they are in they don't let go. The longevity record is 65 years. You get the impression that these employees would still come in to work on their beloved Morgans even if they weren't paid.

Toby Raper

Geography at Magdalen Farm

Magdalen Farm field centre, with its rural environment and accessibility to the Dorset coast, offers opportunities for a range of geographical investigations. Therefore Mr Caston took the AS students to Magdalen. The trip is in its eighth year and involved visiting a number of locations, stretching from Thorncombe to West Bay. We were blessed with reasonable weather for the time of year.

On arrival we had a quick class room introduction and were allocated our rooms. We had a good centre teacher nicknamed Farmer Giles who took us under his wing.

Before we knew it we were back in our warm buses heading off to a very little village called Thorncombe. Giles allocated us certain areas to take our data from by marking it on a hand drawn map.

To our delight the food at Magdalen was brilliant and completely organic. Bed time was waiting for me at this point but work was lingering above my head. Another hour of work could have been done without but we had no choice and like the mature 6th formers we are we got on with it.

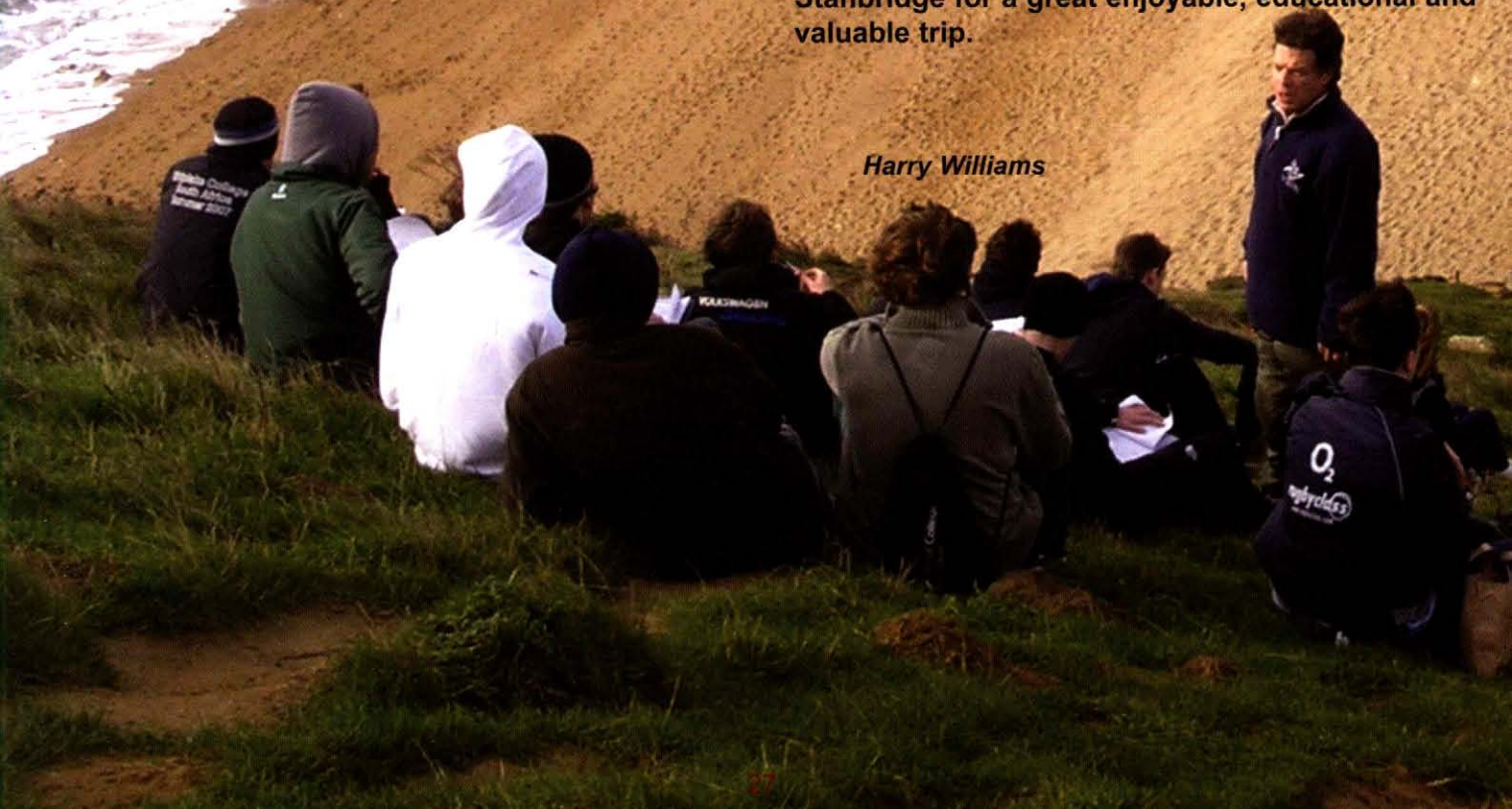
West Bay was our next destination. This was known as our Physical Geography day. We explored the different techniques of coastal defences and management. We drove through the famous town of Axminster and then arrived at West Bay. It was cold but we survived with our note pads in hand and woolly hats on head.

The coastal side had had many different defences such as the very expensive sea wall. After we filled out our drawing of the town from a cliff side we were sent to get some much needed munch. An hour later and we were back on task collecting more primary data.

Breakfast and sandwich-making was a warm waking on our next day. A river survey was next on the agenda. We had a massive walk to explore the progression of a river. There were three segments of the river that we investigated. One area was much deeper with a higher level of erosion which caused some distress for the Shiplake pupils. Once the data was collected we had a quick drive down the road to view some river management. Giles then gave us the option to walk in any direction we wanted. We walked towards the mini buses. Cold and tired we slumped into the class room to enter our results and headed to dinner. After our revitalising food we finished the night with a lesson.

The trip was extremely valuable to us all especially for the skills paper coming up in the summer. Many thanks to Mr Caston, Mr Pavey and Miss Stanbridge for a great enjoyable, educational and valuable trip.

Harry Williams



Iceland 2007

Geographers and non-Geographers signed up for what is now becoming Shiplake's regular autumn trip to Iceland. After flying into Reykjavik the group, led by Tom Caston, Head of Geography, made for the Perlan viewing platform. They pulled down the woollen hats and pulled the thermals tighter as they experienced the biting wind and rain that was going to become the chill climate for the trip.

A visit to Nesjavellir power station, which uses geothermal energy, proved thought-provoking. A single geothermal power station in Iceland produces as much carbon dioxide in a year as a coal fired power station will in 5 days.

Iceland is abundant with many different geological landforms and the party were amazed by the Kerid volcanic crater.

The hot pools, although initially intimidating and quite a culture shock, soon proved a favourite source of relaxation after a busy day of visits. A huge snow field provided another form of entertainment as the tour bus stopped and the group embarked on a snow ball fight of epic proportions.



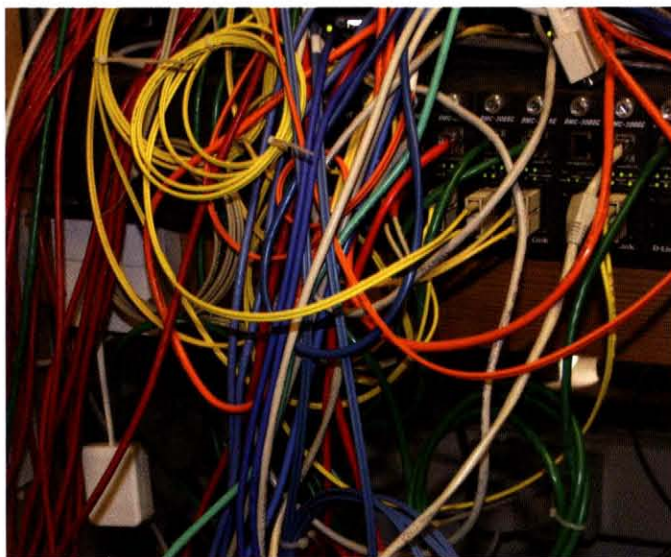
Of servers and squirrels

This was the year when Big Brother finally arrived at Shiplake. Teachers praised the installation of the AB Tutor Software in the Computer Rooms. "One of my best Christmas presents," said one teacher as he viewed all twelve screens of his class from the teacher's monitor. Teachers also have the power to lock screens and display the phrase "Attention Please" whilst they teach. They can block specific user access to websites and display instructions on specific screens. It is an innovation that has greatly increased pupil productivity.

The College has a vulnerable open campus and the installation of a Number Plate Recognition Camera, situated by Welsh House, has enabled the monitoring of traffic onto the site. The start of a long term program for installing IP cameras has also enhanced site security.

Two years ago the College made a significant investment of capital and time in Serco Learning's e-Portal and Facility Software which provides the power to track pupils from first enquiry, through education and out into the world as a member of the alumni society. Increasingly teachers are beginning to appreciate and utilise the power that instant access to additional information brings. Housemasters and tutors can rapidly check on whether a pupil is receiving Excellence Awards or Infractions and look back through past reports. Increasingly a body of evidence informs decision-making concerning pupils. Already, though, we have had to move on. Web Alumnus straddles the divide between alumni database and social networking website and the Old Viking Society are beginning to make use of the latest piece of technology to continue and renew their relationships.

Our enquiries to Serco are increasingly met with the comment, "That's interesting. We haven't been asked that before," suggesting that the College is ahead of the game and making better use of the software than many schools. Yet much remains to be done.



The new system highlights gaps in current processes and procedures. Changes in job roles and responsibilities may allow areas of data management to slip through the holes. Consequently a number of process owners have been appointed to take responsibility for specific areas such as lesson registration, external examinations, results analysis and discipline.

The purchase of a new telephone system has provided a great leap forward in communication. Many more members of staff now have a direct line and teachers now have the ability to ring their own phone to pick up messages from anywhere, as long as they can remember their password.

Alongside all the innovations the regular maintenance has to take place as well as extending the scope of ICT Services. The English Library and Sports Studio have benefited from the introduction of a number of networked PCs; the network has been extended to encompass Court Mead, the Headmaster's residence; Wireless Networking has been provided in the Learning Development Classrooms and improved in Skipwith, Welsh and Orchard reducing their 'black spots'.

A large black spot occurred in College House one day during the Summer Term. The lack of network connectivity in this area was tracked back to a break in a fibre cable – the teeth marks around the break suggested squirrels had taken a liking to the taste of the cable!! After digging a new trench and laying more fibre along a different route network connectivity to College House was restored.



Staff returning after their summer sojourn will be doing battle with the latest Microsoft Office software – Office 2007. They have all had access to Microsoft's on-line training to prepare them for the change in the look and feel of these well utilised products and will no doubt be receiving a lot of help from their pupils who will have adapted to the new software like ducks to water.

Ruth Cotton

Time well spent

The Year 12s finished their exams this summer in the happy thought that they could return home, put their feet up and enjoy a well-deserved rest from their hard labours. But the College had a better idea – an activity week that would enrich their understanding of 'how to make friends and influence people' to repeat Carnegie's 1936 title.

The 'make friends' part was led by Helen Christmas, an experienced Housemistress and teacher, unanimously appreciated by the pupils as having a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of co-educational sixth forms. The arrival of girls in our sixth form can create mutual challenges which need airing; the small groups offered constructive and mature suggestions, yet to be revealed, on how to tackle them! We shall certainly endeavour to introduce more of these sessions at an earlier stage. 'Gender relationships in the workplace' is a serious issue and both male and female were made aware of the need for mutual respect and the ease with which misconceptions can be formed.



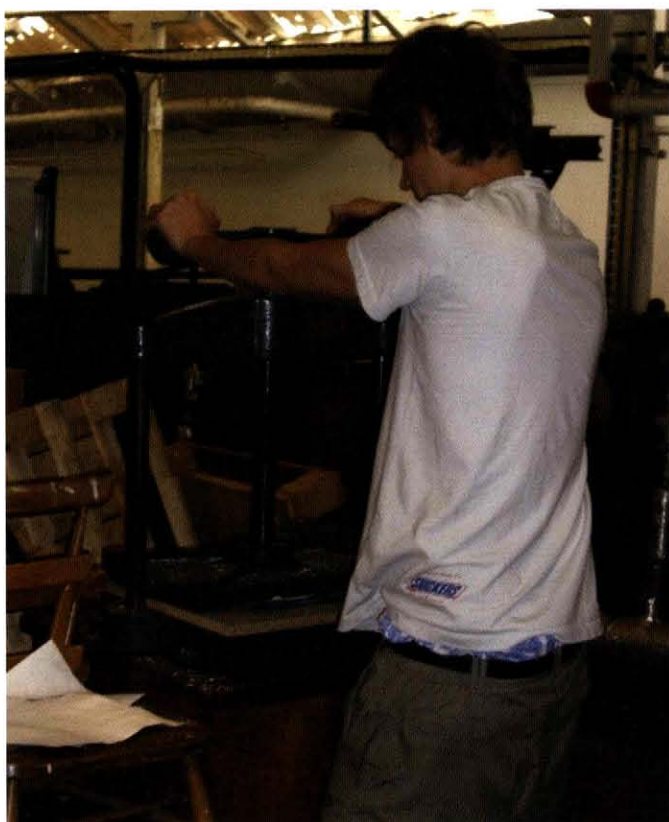
Team work and problem-solving

'How to influence people' was inherent in several of the other highlights of the week. We became the first school in the south east to benefit from the expertise of a financial advisor recruited by pfeg (Personal Finance Education Group), a charity funded by the FSA to increase public understanding of the maze of financial responsibilities of 21st century living. The pupils were given expert advice on how to manage finances when parents are no longer within easy reach for the ready hand-out!

Several governors arrived on the Friday to contribute their expertise, Richard Lester on Law, Sue Ryan on journalism and David Dalzell on setting up and running a small business. The pupils made the most of the opportunity to learn more about the world of work, and the need for transferable skills that will allow them to move around the job market where a job for life is a distant memory. These sessions came the day after a careers day when interviews, UCAS application and the dreaded 'personal statement' were the focus.

Amanda Spurrier from ISCO (The Independent Schools Careers Organisation) guided the pupils through the application process, how to write persuasively about oneself, and gave examples of what makes an impressive CV. Carnegie's title remains as reliable a focus for young people today as 70 years ago - it still all comes down to how to make friends and influence people!

L G Cook



A visit to a paper mill gave insights into business and the media industry

Are you man enough?

"Right. GO. One - Two. One - Two." High-decibel Royal Marine commands reverberated through the Shiplake playing fields as CCF cadets gained an insight into the commando state of mind. There was a sharp dose of military discipline too. "No back-chat. Ten press-ups. NOW."



Two marines distilled the three day Potential Royal Marine Course down to a 90 minute test of endurance as they pushed Shiplake's cadets to their limits. "Are you man enough?" asks the Marines recruitment posters and the grimacing, sweating cadets, gritted their teeth as they were pushed to their limits.

Without equipment, but with endless imagination, the marines created test after test out of human gym sculptures of piggy-backs, fireman's lifts, tunnels and human obstacle courses. Push-ups, sit-ups, sprints, circuits of the athletics tracks, relays and shuttles pushed the exhausted cadets again and again. By the end of a tiring afternoon they should have had an answer to the question.



Bed and Breakfast for £1.50 per night Not for Civvies

There were twenty-two to a mess when Shiplake College Naval Cadets bedded down for an overnight stay on HMS Bristol at Whale Island, Portsmouth, and there were still three bunks to spare. The boys looked like sardines crammed into a tin but they soon settled down for a good night's sleep after a full day's lessons at school, the drive down to Portsmouth and an evening devoted to safety with a weapons handling course.

The 7,000 tons destroyer, which was withdrawn from service in 1991, has 460 berths, and over 14,000 cadets have the unique experience of sleeping on the ship each year. A bed for the night costs just 48 pence, with all the hot water you can use, and a full English breakfast costs a further £1.02.

Army cadets are now trained on how to get the most out of their 4,000 calorie ration packs. Boil-in-the-bag meals for both evening and breakfast aim to give cadets a massive energy burst. "The packs are designed to feed a young man aged 18 to 30 who has been involved in active operational duty," says Brian Sheehan of the Defence Logistics Organisation. Wind-proof matches and water purification tablets are other essentials in the pack.

Shiplake cadets reached straight for the Yorkie bars when they had a training session on how to feed themselves whilst on CCF exercises. Some Yorkie Bars carry the slogan "Not for civvies." No one quite knows what Central American hurricane refugees made of these when they were supplied with the packs.

Army rations recently underwent their first major rethink since the 1960s, to reflect the more sophisticated eating habits of today's squaddie. Boil-in-the bag steak stew and pork casserole are proving popular, palatably moist alternatives to the old freeze-dried options.

The packs comes in a brown biodegradable cardboard box and is ideal as a fire starter to get the whole meal going.



After breakfast the cadets began their programme of communication and team-building exercises. Their first mission involved launching an egg from a second storey window with two balloons, two pieces of string and A4 paper to ensure that the egg had a safe landing. Then it was onto the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer, an indoor small arms training simulator.

In the afternoon the cadets took on HMS Collingwood's Obstacle Course. High "A" Frames, water filled pits, cramped concrete tunnels, cargo nets and a ten-foot wall were just some of the challenges faced by three teams in a closely fought competition.



Mrs Foakes demonstrates that officers sometimes create a deluxe version of the ration pack.

CCF Summer Field Afternoon

Years 10 and 12 of the RAF and Army sections of the CCF spent the afternoon at Bearwood College for an extended CCF afternoon.

The first option was on the 25m indoor range, with Flight Lieutenant Bridgeman and Major Hose, where each cadet got to fire 20 rounds of 0.22 ammunition from a competition shooting rifle. Exercises on the range included grouping, snap and rapid fire practices, all geared to testing marksmanship and swift and effective shooting. Many cadets were able to achieve scores high enough to win one of three types of marksmanship badges for their uniform brassards. It has been a while since we have had access to a range on a Field Day and with the close proximity of Bearwood College we hope to be able to use this excellent facility on a regular basis and we must thank them for their hospitality.

Another challenging stand was a series of leaderless tasks presided over by Mr Starr and Mr Walne. They were designed to help develop individual and team problem solving skills and worked well as one of a number of activities crammed into what was a short training afternoon.

Many thanks to the Officers and Staff of Shiplake College CCF and of course the cadets, for yet another excellent Field Day, with special thanks to the Headmaster and to Captain Peter Owen of Bearwood College CCF, for all of their help and support and for allowing us to have such a wonderful afternoon there.

The Naval Section spent the afternoon on The Thames, navigating locks and practising motor-boat handling skills in preparation for their role as water-borne safety for the College's 20 mile charity trek.



Record Gold numbers



This year we have had a total of 89 pupils involved in the Award at Silver and Bronze levels. Various different areas need to be covered in order to complete an Award, and different year groups are involved in different areas.

In Year 10 everyone has chosen to do the CCF as their Service element and they have been learning about their particular discipline ready to start teaching the new recruits next year. The main activity for Year 10s, however, has been preparing for their expedition assessment in Brittany in June. They have learnt about how to put map reading into practice, the country code, first aid and safety on mountains. They all successfully completed a practice expedition in the Brecon Beacons in March, in what must have been some of the worst weather on a trip for years – snow, wind and even the sighting of a tornado!

The Year 11s have been completing their Service section and doing the other two parts of the Award for Silver, Physical Recreation and Skills (hobby). They need to have shown commitment in these areas rather than initial competence, but they have all set themselves targets to reach in each of these disciplines.

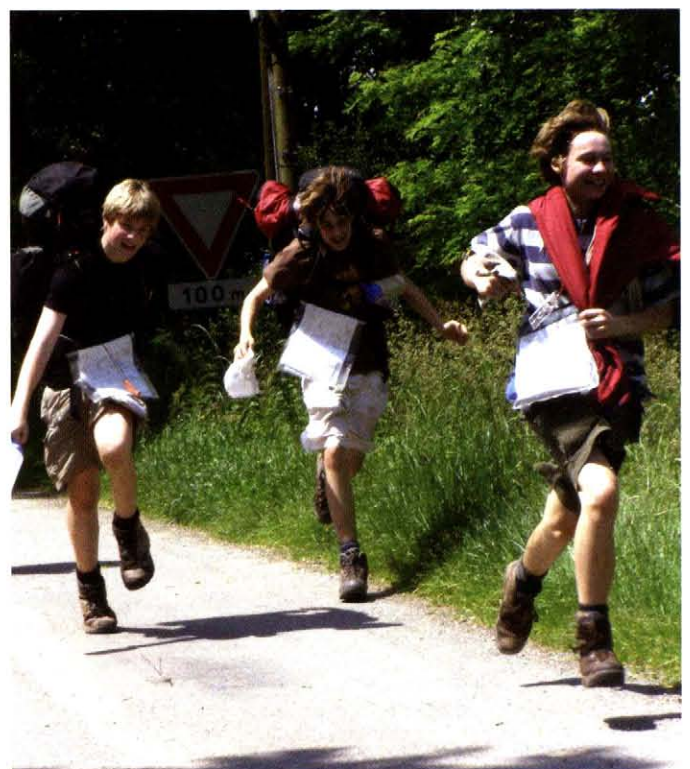
The Gold Award requires even more commitment, and I am not surprised that of the fifteen Year 12s that started in September only ten are left after the first year. Because of the length of time needed to complete each section participants have to be involved in them all from the start, with the exception of the Residential Project

There have been regular meetings for delivering the expedition training plus an hour a week in each of the Physical Recreation, Skills and Service sections. They went to Brecon for practical expedition training and were helped by Army instructors to improve their skills. They will be going to Brittany for their expedition assessment in September.

We had our largest Gold Award group for some years starting last year, and only one has dropped by the wayside in Year 13. They successfully completed their expedition assessment in September and have now almost completed their Award. Those who are successful will have the opportunity to go to St James' Palace or Windsor Castle for their presentation ceremony.

An essential part in all this activity is commitment from staff at the College. A large proportion are involved in regular training in the Physical Recreation, Skills and Service sections, and it was wonderful that nine staff were prepared to give up part of their Easter holiday to help run the Brecon Beacons trip. With new regulations coming in to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the need for up-to-date qualifications in general, a number of staff have been involved in training during the year, including the College running a mountain first aid course and three staff becoming Accredited Assessors for expeditions.

B L Foakes





South African Rugby Tour

Twenty four players and four staff took off from Heathrow Airport bound for Cape Town with the development of Shiplake rugby very much to the forefront of their minds.

Driving from Cape Town to our first hosts, Bosmansdam High School proved to be a real culture shock; a truly multicultural and economically diverse society with multi-millionaire pound estates at one end of the spectrum and the tin huts of the shanty towns at the other. Bosmansdam gave us an early indication of what touring was going to be like with a strong running, abrasive game which we struggled to combat. The lashing rain drifting off Table Mountain capped off a dismal day for the visitors.

A couple of days later the tour party headed into Langa Township to be confronted with the full extent of certain elements of this great nation's deprivation. We were warmly welcomed into their homes and small businesses and even dined in one of their flourishing enterprises, a local restaurant. The game against the Lagunya Development Squad allowed almost every player in the Shiplake Senior Rugby Squad to take to the pitch and make a positive contribution to a much stronger display and a worthy win.

With a break before the next game and the cable car to the top of Table Mountain out of action the entire touring party took to walking up one of the well-trodden routes to the peak. The backs arrived at the top in a little under 50 minutes whilst the majority of the forwards, ably led by Coach Unsworth, took a more "scenic" route and finished the ascent in a little under 2 hours.

With morale high we drove into a wet and windy Stellenbosch and quickly got billeted out to various parts of the town. Some players were royally fed and watered at this stop, whilst others received an even warmer welcome. At this stage the squad were just about hitting their straps and played some fine, controlled rugby in the first half of the match against the local High School. Unfortunately, we were unable to close out the game, faltering poorly in the final quarter.

Life in boarding school in the UK is very different from that in South Africa. The pampered luxury of home seemed a dim and distant memory on entering the town of Despatch, a real Afrikaan heartland just outside of Port Elizabeth. Despatch were ranked 3rd in the country so we played their 3rd XV and what a game! After taking an early lead, Despatch rallied strongly in the second half bringing one or two first-team players off the bench.

The game ebbed and flowed in the final minutes until ultimately we gained a long-range penalty shot at goal with no-time about to be blown. Jack Broome stepped up to the plate and calmly slotted the winning three points; his subsequent celebration was a little less calm!

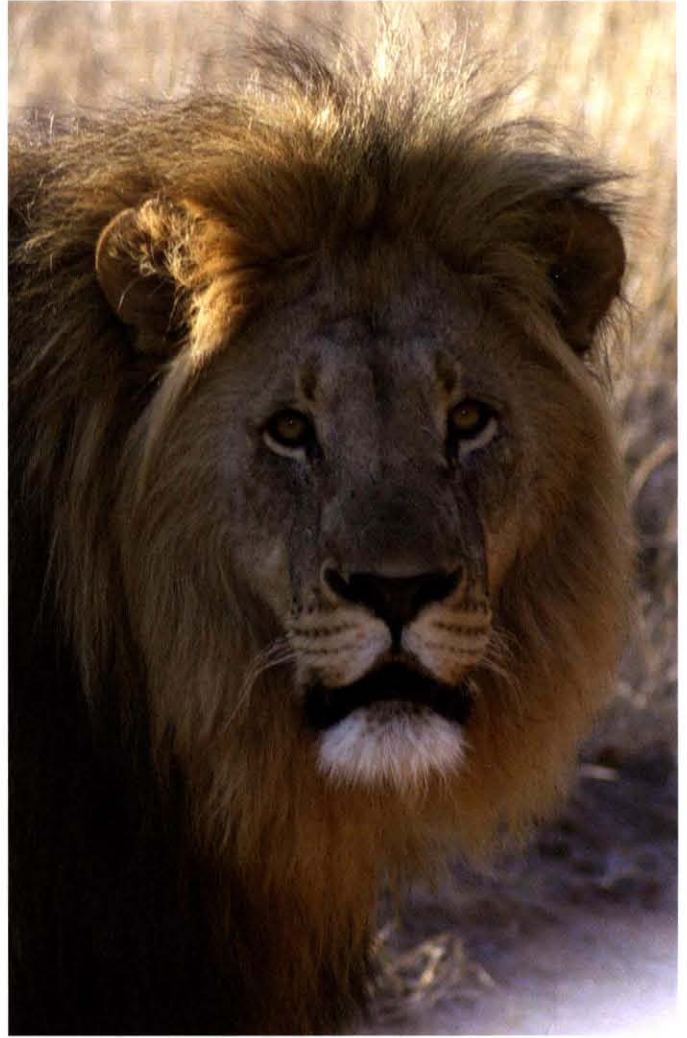
The judge and jury sat for the first time that evening and the tour party's two cross-dressers were suitably fined; the tour captain by this point was struggling with a really thorny issue.

The flight to Johannesburg brought us to the culmination of the playing side of the tour with one final match against Menlo Park and onto the well-earned R & R phase with a safari and a day in Sun City. Menlo played a brand of rugby that we would all wish to aspire to; fast athletic running on and off the ball with the ball in hand even deep in their own half. Despite the heavy defeat, the whole squad could appreciate the quality of the opposition that day.

Mabula Game Reserve enabled us to see the "Big Five" from very close range during the dawn and dusk game drives; the lions retiring for a well-earned sleep after a night on the prowl being a particular highlight. From Mabula, the senior rugby squad concluded its tour in Sun City with a dip in the pool and Jeremy Pattie on vocals.

May I take this opportunity to thank Tom Morgan-Harris for leading such a successful development tour; his captaincy on and off the field was exemplary. In addition, many thanks to Martin Unsworth for his continuous humorous banter and also enabling me to break the world record for sleep deprivation. And, not forgetting Mr Gregg Davies, Alison and Anna; giving up the best part of three weeks of your holiday to come on tour must have been purgatory – thank you very much!

R B Curtis



Sir, do we have to go to the beach?

The time had been set for a walk down to Sandy Lane beach, a white gold crescent of sand leading down to the azure Caribbean but the boys just couldn't face it. They were exhausted by cricket and a tour of Barbados beaches. The last thing they wanted was yet another Caribbean beach.

Cricket began with a warm-up game on Good Friday. We hired Holders Hill and its Desmond Haynes Pavilion for the day. The Manager's International XI batted first. Handelaar and Black began with good spells but Caston and Hurst put on over 80 for the first wicket with Caston going on to notch up his first half century of the season. The Manager's son hit a brutal 54 before Phillip Doyle contributed a hard-hit 49.

James Wood and Richard Armstrong also put on 80 for the first wicket, both scoring over 40. Then Ryan Handelaar took on the run chase but 245 provided too much for the touring team and they fell 30 runs short.

The benefits of a warm-up game were evident the next day as Shiplake took control on the field versus Windward CC but slowly the heat and some aggressive Windward batting took its toll as the home team reached 171 from 30 overs. Shiplake began slowly but steadily. Armstrong found the gaps in the field before Handelaar and Luscombe hit some huge blows to bring Shiplake back into contention. In a thrilling finish Shiplake finished on 158.

Two days free of cricket gave the chance for a visit to Crane Beach and some body-boarding on one of the world's Top Ten beaches before the party arrived at Gibbs beach for a BBQ hosted by James Curry's parents. The next day the group took to the *Good Times* catamaran for snorkelling, swimming with turtles and sailing along the Caribbean coastline.

The team seemed ready for the challenge of Foundation School but the home team soon batted Shiplake out of the game and 205 to win proved too much as Shiplake could only muster 94.

Everyone was looking forward to the final game against Queens but torrential overnight rain left the pitch waterlogged so the cricketers took to the seas again for more snorkelling and a glass-bottom boat trip, a relaxing end to a very enjoyable tour.

Squad: R Armstrong, J Black, P Brazier, J Cowing
J Curry, B Downey, R Handelaar, J Luscombe
O Watkins-Murphy, T Whittingham, H Wilson, J Wood

Tennis in Barbados

On our first afternoon we got used to the heat with some testing training from Nick Brown who once made it through to the third round at Wimbledon. The next day we were able to play on the courts at Holder's Hill whilst the cricketers played their game.

Our first game was versus the adults of the Windward Tennis club. Two of the doubles matches went to tie-breaks, which we lost, so we had to wait until Easter Monday for our first victory over the St James' Tennis Club.

Our third fixture was versus Lester Vaughn School but we struggled with the extreme mid-afternoon heat. It was hard to believe that just 24 hours later our match versus Queen's School was cancelled due to huge pools of rainwater on the courts. And we even played cricket on the beach!

Squad: E Bowers, F Robarts, H Lewis, J Crawford,
J Shakeshaft, R Skinner, C Young





Shiplake's first girls' sports tour visits Barbados

We arrived in St. James Barbados on Wednesday 19th March and had a brief evening to acclimatise. The next day after a shopping trip to the local supermarket we prepared for our first match against Springer School.

Their courts were worn and had holes in the side fencing, as well as a goat grazing in the shade next to them! After a quick warm up we got stuck in, but the heat and humidity soon got to us. They took an early lead and had the upper hand; after the first two quarters Springer had a lead of 10-5. The game wasn't over and with some fresh legs on the court we gave it our best shot. With us unused to the conditions they clearly had the upper hand and we only were able to gain another two goals in the last two quarters; the final score being 17 - 7 to them.

Friday was an early start with a jog at 7am. After this we all sat down to breakfast and spent the day exploring the local area and convenience store. That evening we went to a local restaurant for dinner and returned to the apartments for a karaoke night with some of the locals as well as a bit of dancing!

We spent the next morning relaxing in preparation for a match in the afternoon; this was unfortunately cancelled which left us with a free afternoon. We took the opportunity to go into Bridgetown where we drove around the shops and harbour. We ended up at 'the boatyard' and spent the afternoon on the beach followed by cocktails as the sun set.

On Easter Sunday the whole squad took a trip on an island tour. We visited the world-renowned Crane beach in the morning and spent the afternoon on a semi private beach with the opportunity to take part in water sports or relax on the beach. We also enjoyed a barbecue, cooked by Mr and Mrs Curry in their private apartment.

The next day we were back into 'game mode' and had a match at 9am, against Shamrocks, a team from St. Lucia who were also on tour in Barbados. We played this at the Barbados National stadium. It was a hard-fought match and praise must be given to the squad who played, in my opinion, their best game of the season. The opposition were closely matched to our ability, luck, however, favoured them and we just couldn't manage to get the goals in; the final score of 19-4 not reflecting our abilities.

A relaxing morning was needed, and well deserved, on Tuesday; and was enjoyed by most round the pool or under a palm tree! In the afternoon we played Deighton Griffiths. Everyone was exhausted going into the match with a couple of the team not feeling well, and tempers were on a short fuse. However after a team talk before playing the team pulled together and started the match positively scoring the first goal. This raised our spirits and we continued positively for the rest of the match, resulting in the first win of our tour, the final score being 16-4 to Shiplake.

Barbados

In the afternoon we enjoyed a trip to Oistens, a small fishing village that was hosting a festival. After a few hours of shopping and enjoying the local culture we sat on the beach for dinner and headed back to our apartments to relax for the evening.

Our last full day on the island was taken up with our final match in the afternoon against Lodge School. We tried hard, against their good opposition. The players were a little more aggressive than we were used to but we responded well. The match was close with the scoring shifting between each team. In the last half, however, they switched, putting on a much stronger, and older, team. We were out of our depth and despite winning the second quarter the final score was 16-8.

Although disappointing not to win the final match we went out for dinner that evening and had a small awards ceremony. Nafissa Mustapha was unanimously voted player of the tour, with Brittani Lea being voted most committed player.

Other mentions must be given to Annie Elphick who received player of the match against The Lodge school as well as Melissa De Haan, who showed remarkable improvement throughout the tour. Thanks to Mrs. Foakes for accompanying us, but especially to Miss Erasmus, who was there for the early morning runs, the rest of the training and who has generally been a fantastic coach all season. And last, but not least, to all the girls in the squad, who have put in tremendous effort all year which our season reflects. Good luck next year!

Laura Cotton



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California Dreamin'

Twelve oarsmen and two coxes flew to California for two weeks' race training and the chance to compete in the San Diego Crew Classic during the Shiplake College Easter holiday.

They were guests of St Ignatius School in San Francisco, each boy staying with a rowing family, including some who'd visited Henley when St Ignatius won the Princess Elizabeth at Henley Royal Regatta in 2005, as well as USA National Championships. They train on a beautiful but small lake in San Francisco, not long enough for a full 2000 metre run.

The Shiplake squad had a week of early starts, working up for the big event 500 miles further south, and the boat speed steadily increased. Although outclassed on the day by older, bigger US crews, the time of 6 minutes 35 was described as "very encouraging" by coaches Sally Unsworth and Jason Foster.

Shiplake rower Jack Thompson, one of the successful 1st Quad, was invited to fill a vacant seat for the University of California Santa Barbara – who were impressed and said "it's all down to Jack that we did so well".

As well as the training sessions, the squad explored the remains of the island prison at Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay, went on a 25 km cycle ride over the Golden Gate Bridge and enjoyed warm Californian hospitality from wonderful host families. Some A level revision was squeezed into the gaps and on the long flights there and back.

The link between the two schools, which started when Martin Unsworth interviewed the US crew on Henley Regatta Radio, after they knocked out Shiplake in their first race in 2005, is now very strong, and the two schools hope to see each other again, on or off the water, at Henley in 2008.

Squad: J Albon, T Frossell, A Kolbl, R McKellar, A Middleton, J Goddard, A Winslade, J Briggs, J Harvard-Taylor, J Hanson, C Ingham-Clark, J Holmes, F Hunting, J Thompson

C A M Lowndes



Frustrating but rewarding



Following the successful senior rugby tour to South Africa in the summer the competition for 1st XV places was always going to be heavily contested. This proved to be the case in the four warm-up fixtures against Abingdon School (L 15-20), Henley College (W 7-3), Desborough School (W 12-0) and Hampshire Collegiate School (W 41-0) with a total of 26 players all getting the chance to cement their claim.

The regular season started poorly against a strong Reading Blue Coat side (L 12-23); an inability to look after the ball for any length of time reducing Shiplake's capacity to apply pressure consistently upon the opposition (a facet of our game that only really came together after half term). However, things looked much brighter against King Alfred's School (W 54-3) in the first round of the Oxfordshire Cup; with everyone playing a full part in a resounding victory.

The first exeat came and went with Shiplake facing one of Merchant Taylors' School (L 15-36) strongest XV for many a year. Shiplake started impressively in this fixture, dominating the forward battle and starving the opposition of any ball whatsoever. However, the travelling team's strength in the back-line and superior fitness began to take its toll as the game wore on, culminating in our heaviest defeat of the season.

This tough encounter gelled the team in many ways to out-perform Pangbourne College (W 17-14) the following weekend. Jack Broome slotted a penalty from the sideline in the dying minutes to seal the game and a memorable victory. Although never reaching the same dizzy heights, the 1st XV eased past a fiery Cokethorpe School (W 21-16) in the next match.

Half-term breaks always cause problems in continuity and this season was no exception. Two close defeats, Magdalen College School (L 13-29) in the County Cup and Milton Abbey (L 12-13), left many feeling dispirited by an inability to keep playing to our set rhythm of strong, direct running and close support. Both games were very much there for the taking and the re-match against Magdalen later in the term could not come soon enough.

Comfortable wins over Windsor Boys' High School (W 7-0), Sir William Borlase's School (W 21-7), Reading School (W 34-17) and the Old Vikings (W 21-0) were interspersed with defeats against Bloxham School (L 7-24), where we played some of our best rugby of the term in the first half of that match, Henley College (L 19-22) where a last-gasp try sealed another disappointing day after some superb work up front and Reeds School (L 6-21).

Without doubt the most thorough performance of the season was the re-match against Magdalen College School (L 8-10). Shiplake came into this match with all guns blazing both in attack and in defence; repeatedly gaining good yardage with the ball in hand and repelling the opposition's attacks with some positive, yet thoughtful, defence. An opportunist try put Magdalen into the lead late in the game but there was still time to apply the necessary pressure to win the game. The 1st XV threw everything into the final minutes and were rewarded with a penalty right under the posts. The rest, as they say, is history.....

My thanks go to everyone who has made a positive contribution to the 1st XV this term; a very frustrating but, nevertheless, rewarding term. Good luck to all the leavers in their future rugby careers...enjoy your rugby!

Squad: T Morgan-Harris (Captain), J Albon, A Prescott
J Broome, M Pullen, H Gentili, G Whittingham
J Hicklin, J Hyde, M Holiasmenos J Weaver
H Jolliffe, T Raper, F Marriott, P Webb
J Mercer, A Middleton, H Williams

R B Curtis

Enjoyable 2nd XV Season

Second fifteen

T Raper
I Waters
M Vuarnoz
G Whittingham
H Williams
T Laurenson
J Mercer
S Burgess
A Tang
C Yearley
T Frossell
G Goddard
H Ventura
T Syms
J Hyde
A Kay
O Gordon
C Webb
J Pattie
M Giesen
A Norton
P Weiss
F Greaves
W Nicholas
J Green
F Fontannaz
L Downey
S Imlay
F Hunting
A Galloway
B Harper

For the second fifteen it was a most enjoyable season to be part of. The boys worked really hard and played each and every game with real conviction. Their skill levels improved enormously by the end of the season and our performance against Reeds' School on the final day of the season showed just how much this team came on.

Toby Raper, the captain, was awarded half-colours. Toby Frossell took the player's player award, with Oliver Gordon identified as the most improved player and Anthony Kay given the award for the player with most potential.

A record of eight victories and just one defeat demonstrated how successful and cohesive this large squad proved to be as the season progressed.

B D P Pavey & G S Lawson

And a 3rd XV too ...

This season a large competitive 2nd XV squad meant, that with the help of some U16 players we could field a 3rd XV for the first time for many years. Our first fixture against Wellington College went very well a great start to the season with a narrow loss 20-19. Next we travelled to Milton Abbey, where in a close fought and end to end match we emerged as winners (7-15), scoring three tries. Our next fixture took us to Magdalen College on a dark afternoon. Again we competed well in a close and very competitive game. We were trailing 15-5 at half time, but began a strong fight back in the second half. Camped in their half for much of the game, Goddard eventually crossed their line, Downey converted but unfortunately we couldn't cross their line again and we lost (18-12).

Our final fixture was a home match against a large and well drilled team from Reeds. We tackled well and never gave up, but they dominated the first half and eventually our heads dropped and we ran out losers (56-0). The fact that so many players returned to rugby this season exemplified the positive atmosphere within the squad and it was clear that the 3rd XV enjoyed their rugby. It is hard to single out any players, but for me the most improved player would be Sam Imlay and player with the most potential Bradley Harper who gave his all in every game. Alongside them several players, including Goddard, Downey, Fontannaz (Captain), Green, Nicholas, Galloway, and Hunting showed effort and commitment, tackled hard and competed well in both the 3rd and 2nd XV's. I enjoyed coaching the squad this season and thank them all for their efforts during training and good sportsmanship on the pitch.

Squad : C Deakin, B Donald, Ben; L Downey, F Fontannaz, E Frezza, A Galloway, G Goddard, J Green, B Harper, F Hunting, S Imlay, E Mufaddal, J Presley, J Uprichard, W Nicholas, E Westnedge

G S Lawson

The Rugby Club Dinner



Improvement for the 16As

This was a season where vast improvements made by a squad that it has been a pleasure to work with. They were superbly captained by Sam Holloway who fully deserved his colours along with Robert Wright and Alex Baker. Most improved player was Charlie Emerson, very closely followed by Robert Skinner, Steven Powell, Jordan Foster and Nick Harper but all the names below deserve a mention.

Highlight of the season was the perhaps unexpected but superb win at Magdalen College School. The squad now have every right in being confident about playing senior rugby next year. I would again like to thank coach Andy Jones for the excellent work that he has done, particularly with the forwards.

Squad: A Galligan, C Payne, F Robarts, R Wright, S Powell, C Emerson, A Baker, B Hornsby, S Holloway, T Whittingham, B MacPhee, J Foster, R Roets, B Brassey, R Skinner, N Harper, J Luscombe, C Thomas, A Majeed, S Levell

A Dix

Commitment from the 16Bs

Highlights of the season were a tremendous victory over Magdalen College and a fantastic game against Bloxham, which resulted in a last minute try being conceded and subsequently a loss.

The team grew in stature and ability as the season progressed, with skills being sharpened through some highly competitive games of touch rugby and rugby league. By the end of the season some of the squad could have taught the England side about lines of running. What was lacking in pace was more than made up for in commitment and this was exemplified by the front row of Neale, Bassett and Lane.

Squad: S Neale, O Bassett, S Lane, J Purton, J Shakeshaft, M Bywater, O Schofield (Captain), S Levell, S Wheeler, J Ductor-Peters, B Pinto, O Gould, C Drysdale, T. Imlay, E Harris, B Downey, H. Wilson, F Robertson-McIsaac

T P J Caston



Hard fought victories for 15Bs

The under 15 B's had a testing start to the season as they were on the receiving end of three heavy defeats. However, the squad put in hard work to improve both attack and defence and eventually ended the season with five wins and five defeats, demonstrating a huge development in their skills and toughness on the rugby pitch. The highlights of the season were the hard fought victories over Bloxham (19-12) and Magdalen (24-7).

Squad: Q Lalani, H Mills, P Brazier, R Coppock, T Bownass, J Macleod, D Bell, B Piasecki-Jarvis, R Armstrong, F Wilcox, T Woodford, S Evans, J, Jenkins, M. Syroupolou, O Fogden, J Ferguson, C Sparks, E Allen

S Cane-Hardy

A closely-guarded secret

The official playing record of the U15C team is a closely guarded secret, but I can report that the match of the season was a 52-7 whitewash of Bloxham school. The team delivered, in a sublime 50 minutes of rugby, all the passion, skill and commitment that had been so evident on the training pitch but which had, until now eluded them in matches. All players displayed great enthusiasm throughout the term and were never found wanting when faced with combined training sessions with the A and B teams.

Squad: A Chen, G Reeves, N Hartley, T Morgan, J Warren, J Sneller, E Sykes, E Johnson, H Coaker, C Sparkes, G. Twydell, G Howarth, C Moffatt, C Troup, Q Lalani, J Jacobs, S Hashimoto, D Bell, N Sarkytbayev, N Woodford, E Allen, T Bayliss, H Mills, A Roberts, A Somper, R Pears

N J Brown

U15As win the Oxfordshire County Cup

The side kicked off their campaign against strong opposition in the form of Abingdon School, but emerged victorious 26-8. This was the start of a magnificent season that saw the side Win 14, Draw 1 and Lose 1, scoring 466 points, conceding only 100. The only hiccup along the way, and an experience this talented side will hopefully learn from, was the loss away from home to a skilful Reading Blue Coat side. The team smashed reputedly strong opposition in the form of Pangbourne (46-0), Magdalen (36-0) and Bloxham (38-0), and it was the defensive record against these sides that says the most about this team.

The backs performed well throughout the season, and the combination of Southwell and Wood at halfback is one that will only develop further as they move up the school.

In the centre, Hegharty's defence was rock solid, and he carried superbly, giving the forwards a target, making powerful runs again and again. Outside him, Sam Quelch proved to be a devastating finisher, amassing 21 tries, 25 conversions and 2 drop-goals along the way.

As the season progressed the forwards came to the fore and dominated every side we met. It is not just about size: this set of players used power and strength, but also skill to punish opponents. Led by the Captain, James Dobree-Carey, who set an outstanding example all season, was ably assisted by the immensely powerful Elliott Quelch, who hammered hapless attackers and turned over ball frequently.

The others, including Humphreys, Roels and Vizard showed their qualities in the loose, and King and Du Thoit were solid in defence.

This team have earned a lot of praise, and rightly so. Their sheer desire to win and keep going for the duration of a match, whatever the score, marks this team apart, as well as a cohesiveness that belies their years. These traits will stand them in good stead for the future and I hope they will remember this season with pride - well done!

A M Hurst



Winning rugby from the 14As

The U14A had an excellent season winning 11 out of 14 fixtures and playing some highly entertaining rugby. The first half term saw the squad finding their feet, developing as a new team, whilst since half term they have been unbeaten. They are a promising and talented squad that I'm sure will go from strength to strength.

Squad: C Morley, L Maguire, B Francis, H Griffiths, A Turton, . Holloway, D Gooddy, A. Law, A Barker, J Wright, W Laurenson, M Thomas (C) H Laflin, B Hearn, J Cowmeadow, H Grummitt, Z Bigley, R Fitzhugh, C Crane, T Thornton-Smith, A McAllister, T Hewins, O Horsburgh-Wade, A Campbell.

U14Bs provide strength in depth

A very pleasing season with lots of players making the A squad and providing real competition for places. The Bs played attractive rugby throughout and were well coached by Mr Gronmark. The highlights were some excellent wins against Bloxham and Magdalen College. Well done to all those involved in the B squad and I look forward to further success next season.

Squad: T Hewins, A. McAllister, G Shaw, C Dempster, J Dempster, A Campbell, C Miller, T Cottrell, L Collins, B Hearn, L Szewczyk, M Smith, W Holloway, J Love, A Clapham, A. Settle, C Kerrigan, A Turton, I Brown

D T Swan

U14 West Country Rugby Tour

Twenty Year 9 rugby players set off for a two day rugby tour of the West Country. After arriving at our base in Bath we were soon ready for bed, tired after our victory over Claire's Court that day.

On Thursday we had two training sessions at King Edward's School in Bath. The morning session began with touch rugby, where we concentrated on running with the ball in two hands and working on our attacking running lines. We then focussed on contact work and fitness. After a tough two hour session we drove into Bath to look around Bath Rugby club's ground, the Rec. We were shown around by Martin Purdy, the Bath lock.

On Thursday afternoon we had another training session in which we spent time on attack and defence and then split into forwards and backs. The Forwards focussing on leeching and the backs on executing attacking moves. An exhausting day ended with a trip to the cinema, where, after a personal recommendation from Mr Curtis, we watched *Ratatouille*.

Friday began with the team leaving Bath and travelling to Gloucester, where, in the morning we trained with Gloucester academy coaches. We then visited Kingsholm, Gloucester Rugby Club's ground and had an opportunity to see the new £10 million stand. After lunch we prepared for our match against the Crypt School. Our 47-7 victory was very pleasing as we demonstrated plenty of the new skills and moves we had practised in training. The forwards were completely dominant and the backs looked dangerous when the ball was moved wide. The tour ended with us watching Gloucester defeating the Ospreys in the Heineken Cup and experiencing the fantastic atmosphere at Kingsholm.

Everyone had a great time and really improved their rugby skills over the two days as we continued our successful season with a very successful tour. Thanks must go to Mr Brown, Mr Unsworth, Mr Cane-Hardy and, in particular, Mr Curtis.

The U14Cs - After Molly Bloom's monologue at the end of Ulysses by James Joyce.

O that awful defeat on a balmy warm September day yes but then they started to play like demons inspired by England's obduracy in October against Australia 11-9 they fought back to 10-21 against Merchant Taylors' Baxter's mazy runs Butterfield's slot like conversions, Spittles' wild running saw Bloxham and Pangbourne all put to the sword like slaughtered lambs blowing up early they can tackle too watch Lester and Gabe munch even huge chaps then sprint to the next ruck so won 2 lost 4 but the best season ever for the renegade Cs yes I said the best yes.

C E Alcock

During the first term the netballers played two games. The first game was a home game against our old(er) rivals Reading University. Although we lost the game the girls had a point to prove and surprised the opponents with very good defence and attack skills.

The second game we played D'Overbrooks also at home. The pace was fast and in no time they were 7 – 1 down. The game ended in a 16 – 3 win for us. Well done to Laura who umpired the game. Despite not having our full team, we played really well, and this was our first win – but not our last.

Our first match after Christmas was against Leighton Park. Our match against them last year ended in a strong defeat so we knew that this game certainly wasn't going to be a walk in the park. With a new team formation we started the match and were quickly behind with Leighton Park scoring the first goal. However, this did not put us down. We pulled up our socks and even though we did not win we put up a brave effort.

On Wednesday 20th February Shiplake netball squad played Pangbourne College at Pangbourne. After the previous loss the team had a score to settle. The team pulled together and were ahead most of the game. Going into the final fifteen minutes the team were all feeling tired from the aggressive play and some final substitutions were made after a couple of frustrating mistakes on our behalf the netballers managed to win the ball back and score. With their lead slowly slipping away they threw all their energy into the game in the last few minutes and scored three more goals- unfortunately this wasn't enough and in the last few seconds they scored; making the final score 19-19.

The last game of the term was against Henley College. The game was again played at a very fast pace which led to some unforced errors. Henley College used this to their advantage and managed to score some goals. In the end it was the determination and enthusiasm of the Shiplake girls that led to their 19-11 win over Henley College

This year we have been blessed with two excellent coaches. During the first term Nikki Orr was the coach. Unfortunately she had to resign due to a new career. After Christmas, Jo Lyons became the new netball coach and very quickly settled in. I would like to thank them both for all the effort they put in. It is greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank all the girls who participated this year. I feel that we had an enjoyable season, and we have shown great improvement in our netball skills, even the fitness!!

Lizi Orpwood

Squad: O Bellhouse, L Bere, L Cotton, M de Haan, J Drage, A Elphick, F Haimes, B Lea, . Lowes, L Meier, A Merson, T Merson, J Moore, N Mustapha, L Orpwood, M Richmond, O Rose, T Southwell, C Stow, R Walmsley, K Winthrop



1st XI exceed expectations

Despite the early apprehensions from many, the 2007/08 season was very successful with eight wins, three losses and two draws. Memorably, in the first game against Pangbourne, the team showed good spirit and perseverance that continued throughout the season.

A senior player, Toby Raper led well from the back, with some very good stick saves and aerobic skills which set a high standard for the rest of the players. The back three aided this, and the constant fight for position between Anthony Kay and Ollie Gordon made both players perform extremely well, notably against Milton Abbey where the 3-0 win was achieved through a lot of excellent defending that created attacks. Harry Williams and James Luscombe did very well together up front; James's close ball skills made Shiplake look very threatening in attack, while Harry Williams was always a natural goal-scorer - his three goals against the Hockey Association in a 3-1 victory showed this and together the pair were dangerous to any side that Shiplake faced.

Archie Prescot worked tirelessly on the wing, often using his pace to beat opponents and place immense pressure on opposing defenders. In contrast Sam Imlay on the other wing used great skill to upset defences, so the two were a very effective partnership and their effort was appreciated by coaches and players alike.

The midfield-trio of Jack Broome, Callum Thomas and Mike Pullen worked exceptionally well. Callum Thomas and Jack Broome pushed forward with strong attacks, shown particularly in the 5-0 win over Kelly College. Mike Pullen played just in front of the defence, helping to break down many opposition attacks. A special mention must go Adam Davies who, although injured for much of season, proved vital when he was fit with an outstanding array of skills. The mini-tour weekend away to Dorset/Devon was a great success on and off the field winning all of the away games, and the team bonded well throughout this period.

Joe Weaver, Captain

Squad: J Weaver, T Raper, A Kay, O Gordon, H Williams J Luscombe, H Williams, A Prescot, C Thomas, J Broome, M Pullen, A Davies



Adam Davies creating problems for a defence

This team did exceed all pre-season expectations. As written above, the players worked very hard, played with determination and thrived on good team spirit. However, the key factor in the team's success was the inspiring leadership of the captain, Joe Weaver. His powerful displays in the heart of the defence, where he not only made crucial tackles and vital interceptions, but also regularly turned defence into attacking opportunities, brought out the best in his team. His passion and enthusiasm were apparent to all, and he richly deserved the Players' Player award and his Blazer Badge at the end of a tremendous season.

P C J Gould, Coach

2nd XI: Starting from scratch

This was the first year, as far as I can remember, that we had to start completely from scratch as nobody had played for the 2nd XI before. It took quite a few games for the side to get used to the quicker pace and sharpness of the passing but midway through the season we began to gel as a team and began to compete at this higher level.

We were rewarded for our efforts by beating two of our closest rivals, Reading Blue Coat 3-1 and Windsor Boy's 1-5. Hopefully we have now laid the foundation for a more successful season next year.

Squad: S Burgess, C Payne, C Sampson, J Wilcox R Handelaar, T Imlay, O Watkins-Murphy, F Robarts J Hopwood, R Roets, O Gould, B Downey, B Kelly

A very enjoyable and successful season for the thirds in 2008. The whole squad represented the school and themselves excellently with several key players demonstrating a future in the sport. Captain Ali Galloway was consistent, reliable and dependable throughout. The forwards developed a great working system. Mongan, Giesen and Foster have become a unique front line. We are expecting lots of goals next season ! There was a lot of movement in the squad this year with players getting the opportunity to play for the two's. Nick Harper moved up from the fourths mid season. His determination to improve, and win, always kept the mid field going.

The thirds worked with three keepers, Kelly, Brough and Shakeshaft. Ms Southwell will be looking forward to working with all again next year.

Squad : L Bere, B Downey, J Foster, F Fontannaz
A Galloway, M Giesen, N Harper, H Lewis, S Mongan
J Presley, B Pinto, S Wheeler

15As learning winning ways

Last year, though we tried hard and played quite well at times we sadly lost all our matches. So the first challenge this year was to get to win our first match! Some great ideas and changes from Mr Mannix, our coach, really started the team off well and we all had a newfound confidence in our ability.

Though we fought well against Pangbourne we lost a close first match and heads did go down a little. We then came up against a much better side next, in Lord Wandsworth College, and lost again. There was a feeling that we had been here before!

Between us, Mr Mannix and I made a few changes and the team's heads were up again for the match against Mill Hill (a team which had easily beaten us the year before). We played well, running our luck at times, but we came out worthy winners (1-0) and the dream had come true we had won! The team, with its new found confidence never looked back and went on to win seven matches and only lose three. Beating Stowe, for the first time at U15A level, in perhaps our best match.

It was a real team effort and it is not easy to pick out individuals especially after such an amazing season when every member of the team played a key role in our success.

Mr Mannix had said that 'losing can become a habit'! But through some great determined play, and good team spirit, we were able to now make 'winning' our new habit!

Squad: E Bowers, J Southwell, F Wilcox
J Dobree-Carey, J Wood, R Armstrong, D Hawes
H Richardson, D Bell, N Sarkytbayev, G Reeves
A Humphries

Ed Bowers

Tough times for the 15Bs

The under 15Bs, captained by Nick Hartley, had a disappointing season as they lost all six matches played. However, a number of the boys were playing hockey for the first time and there were clear signs of improvement throughout the squad. Almost all matches were played on grass, which at times tested the team's patience. Despite this, they maintained a positive attitude throughout the season and developed an excellent team spirit. The best performance came on the Henley astro and a narrow 3 - 2 defeat to Windsor Boys'.

Squad: T Morgan, B Piasecki-Jarvis, O Fogden
Q Lalani, C Moffat, N Hartley, E Johnson, J Jenkins
E Sykes, S Hashimoto, P Brazier, J Warren
J Ferguson, S Quelch

S D Cane-Hardy

14As grow in confidence

The U14s began the season with a disappointing experience at the hands of Lord Wandsworth College and their multitude of county players with a 3-1 loss. This result was put into perspective when they played the U15s and ran out worthy winners. The confidence gained from this inter-school match enabled them to go through the rest of the season picking off their opponents with relative ease. The U14As played some direct hockey, getting the ball forward quickly from defence and constantly pressurising their opponent's goal.

The whole squad is blessed with a great deal of athleticism and there is certainly no shortage of talent. Therefore, with a little more control on the ball and a stronger passing game, we can expect this team to mature into one of Shiplake's better 1st XI squads in due course.

Squad: C Morley, M Thomas, L Collins, B Francis
J Cowmeadow, C Crane, W Laurensen, T Cottrell
H Laflin, Z Bigley, T Hewins, T Butterfield

R B Curtis



House Hockey

14Bs become a team

The U14B hockey team developed hugely over the course of the season, with ball skills and awareness improving considerably. Even though there were a few defeats, the team continually fought back in each game and, in turn, played better as a team. Most of the matches were played on the grass pitches, which proved to be difficult and a tricky test of the players' skills. However, the last match was played against Windsor Boys' School on their astro and this proved to be the 14Bs' best performance. After going a goal down, the team showed their fighting spirit, put the ball where they wanted it and gained a very creditable draw – and perhaps were unlucky not to have won the match. The players will all be looking forward to improving their play next season.

Squad: I Brown, C Uprichard, J Cam, O Sanders
E Rodriguez-Toubes, L Tindall, H Griffiths
L Maguire, A Govani, D Rubin, T Thornton-Smith
T Noyce, M Smith

H Wells



Shiplake enjoyed a great medal haul at the Independent Schools Ski Championship. Gioia de Courcy Wheeler (above) led the way with a Gold Medal.



The Baldry Trophy for Inter-house Sports Competitions

Welsh 57 Everett 38 Skipwith 29 Burr 28 Orchard 27

Games we should have won

With only four leavers from last year's 1st XI, there were justifiably high hopes for a very successful 2008 season. Just six wins and ten losses suggest that this was perhaps not the case; although this does include the first 'warm-up' game against Henley C.C. and all Twenty20 fixtures.

Close games where we came away thinking that 'we should/could have won' included the 20s game against Abingdon, a very exciting but last ball loss against Reading, a last-over loss against The Oratory and a reasonable run chase eventually against Magdalen. Another close but deserved loss was against the OVS, when the 1st team was embarrassing let down by three players.

There were fine wins twice against Pangbourne (Raper 48*, Williams 3 for 5), St. Benedict's in the 20s (Webb 44, Imlay 54, Williams 3 for 16), Henley College (Webb 46, Broome 41*, Webb 3 for 5, Raper 3 for 12), Blue Coat (Broome 47*, Raper 59) and the Wanderers (Imlay 71, Webb 75). Other fine individual performances included Broome's 57 against Magdalen and 59 against Reed's, Williams 50* chasing Wellington's 266 off 20, (Raper 52, Webb 51, Williams 3 for 28) and Luscombe 3 for 24 all against the SOA and Imlay's 44 at The Oratory.

Toby Raper captained exceptionally well on the field, especially when given a chance by some players who might have had better seasons if they had concentrated on their own games a little more. The top four batsmen averaged in the twenties, which is not really high enough at this level (Broome the highest at 28) and the highest wicket takers were Webb (19), Raper (18) and Williams (17), supported by other superb bowling at times from Handelaar and Luscombe.

The season has perhaps shown that next year's players will need to be more consistently focused in all training sessions and with their own physical and mental preparation for matches for more success. That said this has still been a very enjoyable term in the company of some very dedicated and talented players. Thank you to all players and supporting staff.

Squad: T Raper (Capt.)***, S Imlay**, P Webb**
J Broome (Wkt.)**, L Downey**, J Hyde*, H Williams
G Whittingham, S Burgess*, J Luscombe, R. Handelaar
H Jolliffe

*** Blazer Badge
** Full Colours
* Half Colours

A D Dix

Photo: Toby Raper in Twenty20 mode



Promising start for 2nd XI

The season got off to a good start by overhauling Pangbourne's total of 110 thanks to an unbeaten 50 from Joe Weaver and excellent bowling figures of 4 for 7 by James Black. Although we lost our next game to Magdalen College, we put up a good fight and managed to get to within 14 of their total of 184. (Whittingham 57, Weaver 31 and Jolliffe 37).

The game against Bloxham ended in an exciting finish with the opposition needing 7 off the last over to beat our modest total of 136. In the end we restricted them to just 6 and so a tie resulted! (Gould 37, Curry 20). Another close game against LVS saw our meagre total of 111 (72 of which were scored by just two players; Weaver 41* and Imlay 31), overhauled for the loss of 9 wickets (Gould 3 for 11).

We posted a very respectable total of 170 against Reed's School (Beacham 56, Curry 43) but some poor fielding and mediocre bowling enabled Reed's to knock them off for the loss of just 4 wickets.

Henley College proved to be a tougher opposition than normal and we never really looked like getting their total of 137 even though Tom Beacham offered some resistance with 51*.

Overall then, although we didn't win many games it was a very enjoyable season and played with great enthusiasm and spirit.

Squad: H Jolliffe (Capt.), T Beacham, T Whittingham
J Black, O Gould, M Vuarnoz, J Curry, T Imlay,
J Presley, O Watkins-Murphy, J Weaver, B. Mitchem
A Galloway, D Brown, J Ductor-Peters, B Downey

R C Snellgrove

Run-machine Wood leads the way for the 15As

The under 15As had a mixed season winning three, losing six with one draw and a tie. The highlight of the season was the win against Reading School, which demonstrated the potential of the team. There was a noticeable improvement in the squads fielding and there were a number of excellent catches and run outs, particularly during the early part of the season.

The captain, James Wood, had an outstanding season with the bat, scoring 570 runs, including a brilliant 103 to set up the victory against Reading School and 93 not out against Abingdon School.

Other noticeable performances came from Peter Brazier who scored 67 against Pangbourne, Richard Armstrong's 4 for 26 against Forest School and the bowling of James Dobree-Carey throughout the season. Despite some tough fixtures the 15As maintained an excellent team spirit and showed some real progress throughout the term

Squad: J Wood, R Armstrong, P Brazier
J Dobree-Carey, A Humphreys, S Quelch
J Cowing, C Sparks, . Wilcox, A Somper, C Moffatt
H Richardson

B D P Pavey

Ebullient 15Bs

The U15B had a typically ebullient term, playing four matches and winning one, with one cancelled to rain. The first match, against Bloxham, did not set a high enough target (84) though for the 15Bs this was a good score (Bertie Piasecki-Jarvis 27 not out). We put Reid's out to bat first - big mistake - and their score of 256 was completely out of reach.

The home win against Long Close school was achieved with seven wickets to spare and the final match against Oratory provided the tightest of matches but again our target of 132, an excellent score, was not high enough and Oratory won by five wickets, despite outstanding fielding at the end.

Squad: . Morgan, B Piasecki-Jarvis, N Hartley,
T Woodford, E Sykes, E Bowers, Q Lalani,
O Fogden, J Warren, E Johnson, J Ferguson,
. Heggarty

T S Purser

14As show potential

The U14As had a mixed season. Although results were not favourable there is much potential within the side. Well captained by Ben Francis, the A team had late season victories against Oratory and Pangbourne.

Defeats against Abingdon, Claires Court and Reed's could have easily been victories with a little more concentration at vital times, whilst a wash out at Reading School after being in a very healthy position, after a Matt Thomas century, was very unlucky.

Overall there is much to look forward to within this year group. There are a core of talented players who should take this team forward to more success next season.

Squad: B Francis (C), H Laflin, . Thomas,
H Breckenridge, H Grummitt, L Collins, C Crane
O Horsbrough-Wade, T Thornton-Smith, T Butterfield
Z. Bigley I. Brown A Campbell, C Baxter

Nine runs away from a 100% record

The U14Bs were just nine runs away from a historic unbeaten season, wides and no-balls denying them victory against Reading School. They had begun with a jittery 2 wicket win away at Bloxham, followed by a clinical 10 wicket demolition of Reading Blue Coat. The cost of these victories was that Collins and Thornton-Smith were promoted to the As, but the team settled under Billy Hearn's assured captaincy, once they recovered from the Reading defeat.

With the batting improving, the team decided that batting first and dominating was the best strategy. Unbeaten fifties from Love and Baxter, plus 42 from Campbell, saw them to 194 for 4, from just 25 overs, as they overwhelmed Abingdon.

Another big score of 144 for 9 seemed enough versus Oratory but it took some outstanding catching and two run-outs to cling on for a nine run victory. Finally Pangbourne were beaten by 83 runs. Once again Miller showed what an invaluable all-rounder he had become and Shaw demonstrated how much his batting had developed while Brown grabbed 3 for 7.

Squad: B Hearn (Captain), C Baxter, T Butterfield
I Brown, A.Campbell, L Collins, J Cowmeadow
C Crane, A Govani, W Laurensen, J Love
L McGuire, C Miller, H Reid, E Rodriguez-Toubes
G Shaw, M Smith, T Thornton-Smith, L Tindall

M Edwards

Junior Tennis

This year the junior tennis team has been very successful, making a lot of progress with the help of our professional coach. The junior tennis team has won three out of seven matches. This is a great achievement because last year we won only one match. We couldn't have won all the matches without having Christophe Bellec and d'Indy Enguerrand our two French boys, giving great support to the Shiplake side. It is very sad that they are leaving at the end of this term because they could have brought more success in the future.

However, we cannot forget our second pair George Reeves and Joe Jenkins, because they both got vital wins for the junior side.

Tom Cottrell and Teddy Hewins from Year 9 have shown great determination to get into the side. It will give them confidence because they will probably be the future pair 1 and 2 for the junior team.

Ed Bowers



George Reeves training hard

2nd VI spirit

The 2nds played with good spirit in many of their matches. The overall result this season was winning 1 out of their 4 matches. However, this result does not reflect the team's performance this term.

Many of the pairs had close sets up to 7 – 5 with impressive play. Good performances from Ollie Gordon and Callum Thomas who often led as the first pair. The 2nd's most encouraging result this term was gaining an impressive victory against Lord Wandsworth 6 – 3.

Pressure on the 1st VI

For the 1sts there was much pressure this season to perform in order to achieve as good a season as the undefeated one last year. The season started well, with some very convincing wins such as 9 – 0 against Pangbourne and 8 – 1 against Reading. All three pairs played with great determination throughout the term. The most improved and promising pair were the new third pair this term consisting of Chris Payne and Ben Brassey who have excelled this season.

Although the team won many matches, due to shortages in players, because of exams, we unfortunately lost the last two matches, one very close against Abingdon and one against Radley who were a strong side. This gave an overall result of winning five out of seven matches. Although we didn't have an unbeaten season, each of the three pairs consisting of the first pair Sean Horwood and Aliaks Barouski, second pair Francesco Robarts and Anthony Kay and the third pair of Chris Payne and Ben Brassey should all be very proud of their performance this season.

Sean Horwood

Aliaks Barouski from the 1st VI



New boats, new oars, new launch and boundless enthusiasm

It was always going to be a difficult season following in the footsteps of 2007 but despite those three gold medals from the National Schools Regatta hanging over us there was once again success at every level in the club.

Numbers rowing at Shiplake continue to grow thanks to boundless enthusiasm in the face of adversity from the coaching staff. We were lucky enough to be able to accommodate these rowers with the purchase of two new boats, new oars, new ergos and a new coaching launch. None of this could be done without the tireless work and fundraising of the Shiplake College Boat Club Supporters Association. They were delighted to name the new eight after former Headmaster Nick Bevan at the Shiplake College Regatta in June, which again was a huge success thanks to the weather and shrewd commentary.

J14s make an encouraging start

A large group of boys started sculling this year, with even more boys joining as the season has progressed.

Both the A and B octuples have had some fine and frequent racing even though the water conditions have not always been kind. Both boats have made the finals in the majority of their respective events with the highlight being a win for the A quad at Reading Amateur Regatta against a high class of opposition. The Cs have also been going well under the fatherly eye of Mr O Sullivan, and were unleashed at TVP.

This has been a particularly encouraging year group. The boys' attitude to learning and their work ethic in times of difficulty (floods, cancelled races, huge ergos and long runs) has been exemplary.

They finish their season as sound technical scullers who have a great rowing adventure ahead and look forward to J15 rowing.

J14 A crew: R Fitz-Hugh, A Turton, A Settle, C Simpson, A Clapham, D Gooddy, A Barker, J Wright, J Wise

J14 B crew: C Kerrigan, J Oke, C Gabe, A Lloyd, L Szewczyk, A Law, J Dempster, C Dempster, D H Williams



Celebration from the J14 squads

J15s: Defending the National Schools' title

The season started as we are beginning to expect with the river being flooded and limited time to train on the river. Nevertheless the boys got stuck into lots of ergos and plenty of hill runs all crucial in building a high level of fitness for the season ahead.

Fortunately the flooding soon subsided and we are able to get out rowing in preparation for the Head Season. Our first Head was Hampton Head this showed that there was plenty of work to be done on our technique but the crew had huge potential to have a good season.

Our training for Schools Head appeared to be going well and we were closing the gap on our opposition based on our result at the Reading University Head. Unfortunately despite a reconnaissance mission to familiarise ourselves with the Tideway course we hit a buoy in the race which snapped a blade and took us out of the race. This was incredibly disappointing but only strengthened the desire of the crew to prove themselves during the regatta season.

An excellent Easter Training Camp was held at Shiplake which saw us covering huge distances and a real increase in boat speed. Not even the snow on the last day of the camp stopped our final time trial at Dorney Lake. I am convinced that although this camp was very challenging it is crucial in preparing for the regatta season.

Our first test of the regatta season saw us invited to a private race at Dorney between Hampton, Bedford, Abingdon St Paul's, Eton and Radley. By the end of the day we finished as the second fastest J15 crew behind Hampton; an excellent start to the season and a real confidence boost. Further regattas at Wallingford and Bedford saw us finish second again at both events. Although disappointing to finish second at three consecutive events this made the crew even more determined to win National Schools' event.

I was also delighted to see the emergence of a J15 Coxed Four that raced very creditably at TVP and Thames Ditton Regatta. I hope these boys continue to row as it is essential that we have a strong squad to select crews from next year.

National School proved to be a disappointment with all the racing being cancelled, however, thankfully a rescheduled event was organised for the week after. The boys acquitted themselves excellently at this event and although they finished in the bronze medal position they should be incredibly proud to be the third quickest J15 8 in the country.

It has been a huge privilege to coach these boys and I am sure the story is not finished for them. They must look to continue to build on their successes and aim to build a very strong and competitive First Eight in a few years.

J15 A Crew: C Troup, E Quelch, J MacLeod, A. Roels S. Evans, E. Allen, C. Andreau, R. Coppock, T. Bownass

J15 B Crew: A Chen, T Du Thoit, J Hazell, J Southwell R O'Connor, B Holloway

Bronze for the J16s

This group has had a good season and they have risen to the challenges placed in front of them each time. With the influence of coach Josh Davidson from Leander Club they were not short of inspiration.

The season started in February with a solid performance at Reading University Head, followed up by third place in J16 1st Eights at the Schools Head on the London tideway, only a few seconds behind the winners. This made for a promising summer term, but unfortunately external pressures in the form of exams halved the squad.

Undeterred, a quality coxed four was formed and by hard negotiating Miss Arnold managed to secure the J18 squad's boat and so ensured the best possible equipment for the boys.

After reaching the final at Hammersmith Regatta the coaches decided that the crew needed some hard training to turn their potential into medals. While the J16 B crews raced at Thames Ditton Regatta the coxed four focused on training for the National Schools Regatta.

They were hugely disappointed that the appalling weather conditions on Saturday meant that they cancelled their race on Sunday, but once again the crew re-focused itself on the hastily organised replacement – the Eton Schools Regatta.

At Dorney Lake the crew followed up their gold medal from National Schools last year with a bronze, and although they were a way off winning gold they held on strongly to make the bronze medals theirs. They will make a strong contribution to next year's J18 squad.

J16 coxed four: C Emerson, A Baker, R Wright, S Holloway, R Murphy

J16 double scull: M Bywater, R Skinner, F McIsaac-Robertson



J18s: It takes dedication

It was one of the biggest J18 squads in living memory and the coaches were delighted when at the start of January there was enough bodies for a first, second and even third eight. However reality soon kicked in when the dedication to turn up once a week, let alone twice a day, was severely lacking in some. Despite this, cajoling and threats from the coaches kept together a second eight for the Spring term until illness took the final crutch the week before the Schools Head.

Elsewhere the re-branded Headmaster's Eight became a Headmaster's Four and raced at Thames Ditton Regatta where they delighted and surprised everyone with a win over Eton. This was a good reward for those boys who felt that the commitment of the First Eight was too much for them, but who still enjoy their rowing.

The Girls' Squad were hoping to build on where they left off last year, but unfortunately other duties got in their way. But the new Year 12s of Maddie Reynolds, Fliss Lowes and Kate Aldridge enjoyed their time at the boat house and will hopefully continue to motivate themselves and others next season.



J18 Squad:

J Hanson (Captain of Boats),
J Holmes
J Thompson
A Middleton
R McKellar
J Briggs
F Marriott
J Albon
C Ingham Clark
A Kolbl
J Harvard Taylor
A Winslade
M Tyrwhitt-Drake
T Frossell
J Goddard

Testing conditions at the National Schools' Regatta

The First squad started the season in October with a fantastic win at the national Pairs Head in Senior 4 doubles for Jack Thompson and James Hanson. The squad raced two quads at the Fours Head and several other time trials in the Autumn term, including winning two events at Marlow Fours and Pairs Head, while setting the overall fastest time of the day in the process.

Morale was quickly invigorated with a tour to California during the Easter holidays. Here the Pacific sunshine, warm hospitality of St. Ignatius Prep, San Francisco and insightful guest coaching of Jason Foster significantly raised the standard of the crews and prepared them well for the race at the San Diego Crew Classic Regatta, a fitting end to the trip.

Broken down into two fours, a quad and a pair, the squad then raced at Hammersmith Regatta and cleaned up, winning all three events. Clearly this was a standard that could not be maintained and what followed was a frustrating term for all involved. Difficult draws at Wallingford, Bedford, Eton Schools and Marlow Regattas plagued the crews as an eight and quad swapped personnel in an attempt to find the fastest combinations, but two events at the two big races of the year will stick in the memories of those involved.

The first is at Henley Royal Regatta. The First Quad lost two of its key rowers and then missed out on qualifying by only 15 seconds. But the First Eight raced on Wednesday and led off the start rowing neatly and powerfully to be a length up at halfway. Then RGS Worcester responded and came back level and eventually took the lead to win. They won again the next day, comfortably this time, to race on Friday at Henley with just three other British schoolboy crews. "If only..." seems to have been the motto of the season.

The second is at the National Schools Regatta where months of preparation were blown away by Nottingham's finest north-easterly. However what the First Eight could not prepare for was the character and resilience they showed in making sure their boat crossed the line and got to the bank in safety, despite being half-submerged by the waves. They showed a strength that cannot be forged from countless ergos and they should remember and be proud of it in the future.

S Dennis



Sunrise training

Paul Emerson

Paul Emerson began as the dashing young PE master who became Master-in-Charge of Rugby. During the Emerson era schools feared a visit to Shiplake as rugby was a religion with well-trained teams producing many a convincing victory. In an era before computers, Paul's logistical arrangements, completed in his neat handwriting, were always impeccable.

Paul took on the school shop in the Jubilee Building and it soon became a case of "Open All Hours" as Paul provided uniform, sports kit and plenty of food. At break and lunchtime the school shop became the social hub of the College. Pupils enjoyed his wit and wisdom. He knew the pupils well and was always a good judge of character as a pupil made his first visit to the shop to receive. They enjoyed looking at his archive of past photos, relishing the team photos where Paul had the long-forgotten commodity of hair.

Time moved on and Paul's three children Ben, Kirsty and Jack all passed through the school. Rugby changed too and Paul, ever a visionary, spotted the opportunities provided by the professional game. He used his experience to become a sought-after touch judge. Paul travelled Europe as he officiated in the Heineken Cup and the English Premiership. The sight of Paul, with his flag out, became a frequent one for those watching Sky Sports.



John Winters



"A lifetime in IT is too long for anyone," said John Winters as he arrived at Shiplake, selling his thriving business to launch his Mathematics teaching career at Shiplake.

Adding a teaching qualification, a PGCE from Buckingham studying alongside a busy Mathematics timetable, presented few problems for a man with a MA from Oxford University.

John quickly became a stalwart of the Senior Common Room. He took on responsibility for ensuring that the flames of the SCR fire were licking the kindling before 7.00 am. Then there were the occasions when he was still putting Burr to bed long after sunset.

Senior Management soon recognised John's potential for smooth logistical organisation and he took on responsibility for implementing new software to produce the timetable. As an amiable and amenable colleague, John worked hard to satisfy numerous requests from his colleagues to adapt the timetable to the needs of each department.

Although John's list of responsibilities grew and grew he became increasingly busy with the CCF Navy section and he particularly enjoyed the away days down to Portsmouth and the intricacies of navigation charts.

His own sharp intellect made him a gifted teacher of Mathematics, always devising and trying new strategies to help pupils cope with concepts that they found challenging. Lunch-time clinics and early evening extra lessons turned Ds into Cs or even better.

John is looking forward to joining his two sons at Abingdon School; not only is he rubbing his hands at the forthcoming parental fee reduction, there is also the little matter of simplified travel arrangements!

Adam Hurst

Initially Adam arrived to help out with some Hockey coaching for a term but the arrangement developed. Adam liked Shiplake and Shiplake definitely liked Adam.

Adam is as close as you get to the 21st century version of Renaissance Man. He also embodies the attitudes of a bygone era with his Corinthian Sporting ideals which epitomise the very best of amateur sport. Remarkably he coached an amateur rugby sevens team, Apache, who competed with professionals around the world.

With an English degree from Reading, expertise in a whole host of sports and a supremely eloquent background as a radio presenter, Adam was a useful man to have around. He played cricket, football, hockey, rugby and tennis for the staff teams, always with an effortless grace. He also reigned supreme on the squash court.

He soon proved to be a very popular English teacher. It was largely due to his enthusiasm, imagination and sheer perseverance that many GCSE, AS and A2 candidates achieved their potential.

Yet it was for his sporting prowess that Adam will long be remembered. He coached the 1st XV backs and when he took on full responsibility for an U15 team he guided them through to an emphatic victory in the Oxfordshire Cup.

Adam joined forces with Peter Gould to produce Shiplake's first ever unbeaten 1st XI hockey team and he helped to coach on the Hockey Club's first overseas tour to Barbados.

Beginning as a cricket coach, specialising mainly on batting coaching, Adam was then drawn to the Tennis Courts. He coached the 1st VI to their unbeaten season in 2007. However, some of us did enjoy the sight of Adam being run round a baking Barbados tennis court by former Wimbledon giant-killer Nick Brown.

Back in the UK Adam was a very effective residential Welsh House resident tutor, helping several generations of Welsh new boys to settle.

"I've never had a Gap Year," says Adam as he leaves to coach sport around the world, hopefully meeting up with the Shiplake Hockey on their tour of Malaysia.



Sarah Stanbridge

Sarah had a busy introduction to teaching at Shiplake. A Post Graduate Certificate of Education at Bristol University provided Sarah with a change of direction after work as a PA and Studio Manager. In the classroom Sarah has been keen to gain knowledge of a range of teaching techniques and resources and also sampled some of the Geography Department's popular field trips and theme days.

Beyond the classroom Sarah has thrown herself into the non-stop life of a boarding school. She has introduced a Climbing activity (thanks to Queen Anne School's hospitality) and coached rowing on the river. Sarah has also been a conscientious Everett tutor.



Carl Lyon

Carl Lyon leaves Shiplake for a six-figure salary on the Arabian Gulf. Unfortunately for Carl he will be paid in united Arab Emirate Dirham rather than sterling as he takes on responsibility as a Housemaster at Repton School, Dubai.

Four years ago Carl arrived at Shiplake to take control of a rapidly growing Information Communications Technology. Examination results have continued to improve and the department has continued to develop and expand its accommodation.

When Carl was appointed as Chairman of the Development Committee. It was recognition of both his vision and ability to co-ordinate the teams who were developing the future of Shiplake College.

Carl left Oundle School, a bastion of boarding education, and soon made his mark in Burr House. He was a busy man but Carl still found the time to complete an MA in education and publish ICT text books.

Yet it was not all work and no play. There were trips to Brazil to see his wife Cindy's family. During term-time Carl was frequently found in the Sports Hall coaching Badminton and he was always eager to pull on his football boots to live out his Anfield dreams as striker for the staff soccer team.

Carl needed his dry sense of humour and all of his diplomatic skills as he took on the role of Leavers' Ball organiser, battling through the end-of-term tiredness to produce a memorable last night for a generation of leavers. There will be no shortage of visitors from the Senior Common Room as Carl heads for the Arabian Gulf.



Carol Forde-Halpin

Carol joined Shiplake three years ago as a teacher in the Learning Development Department and Maths Department. She took on responsibility for helping pupils across the curriculum and extending the range of support provided to both pupils and their teachers.

Learning Development's success depends on a sensitive blend of data from testing and learning experiences, combined with understanding each pupil as an individual. Carol was adept at creating warm, supportive relationships with pupils, but they knew that she had high expectations. She extended the range of the department, providing assistance for those pupils who struggled with Mathematics, helping them to develop a positive approach to the subject which enhanced their self-esteem.

Carol's very positive approach to life in general and consistently constructive approach to working with the pupils was evident in her work within the curriculum and pastorally. She always has the pupil's best interest at heart.

Married to a Housemaster at The Oratory School, Carol had an instinctive understanding of boarding school life. The fact that her husband Gary had played prop for Ireland and London Irish also kept her in tune with an establishment where sport runs through the blood of most of the pupils and teachers.

Carol and her family are moving to Wales and we wish them good luck in another venture, in another country..

Deryn Stewart

Deryn had the difficult task of starting at Shiplake in October. An exceptionally large Lower Sixth, with an unusually high number of pupils opting for Media Studies, meant that Shiplake had to recruit an additional part-time teacher at short term. Deryn's hard work and enthusiasm were invaluable as she took on a large set, with a diverse range of abilities. Deryn was always willing to experiment with new teaching techniques and provide challenges for her classes.

Deryn was always willing to take the community's dogs for a walk and she eventually succumbed to the temptation and acquired Alfie an amiable black Labrador who became a popular friend to all at the College. A great lover of the outdoors, Deryn qualified in Mountain Leadership skills, and also helped out with the College's Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

Paul Rowan



"Enthusiasm is infectious," Paul Rowan once said and there can be few people who continually exude greater enthusiasm than Shiplake College's departing Head of Mathematics.

In Paul's action-packed three years at Shiplake he worked hard to make Mathematics more accessible to every pupil and strived to make sure that pupils understood how highly Mathematics skills are prized in the working world. Paul saw his reward as his hard-working department increased the pass rate for Mathematics GCSE. In his final year his department pioneered the introduction of modular GCSE Mathematics for Year 10 with some quite remarkable results.

Paul was a popular Everett House and then Welsh House tutor as he was always able to strike up a conversation with even the most recalcitrant pupil and develop a relationship.

Table Tennis was Paul's greatest sporting talent and he astounded pupils with the diversity and power of his stroke-play. Paul was in his element in Shiplake's sporting environment. He loved football and was always a willing soccer referee and happy to indulge in a tactical assessment whether the game was Burr versus Welsh or Manchester United versus Barcelona.

When the day finished Paul didn't go home to Banbury, he went to his property development in Caversham where he painted, tiled and built a conservatory.

Sadly, Paul has decided that the time has come to move back closer to home and the Stowe School Mathematics department is delighted to welcome him to their ranks.

Jonathan Ling



Jonathan arrived at Shiplake from Reed's School in 2006 to take over from the one and only Malcolm Woodcock as Director of Music. Following in the footsteps of a Shiplake legend, who had led the department for over three decades, was always going to be a challenge.

Jonathan immediately announced his own individual approach by installing electric keyboards in the Music Department and encouraging his pupils to produce a delightful Autumn Concert.

It was evident that he was willing to encourage every musician, whatever their talent and potential. Co-ordinating a host of peripatetic teachers, within the confines of an ever-changing weekly routine challenges every Director of Music in the country but Jonathan soon proved that he could ensure that his pupils received as much music as possible.

All the time Jonathan was supposed to be making preparations for his marriage to Sharon but music for the Arabian Nights (a superlative collaboration with the Drama Department) and the music for countless services ate into his time. Then Jonathan became a member of "JG and the Ding-a-Lings" the band for *A Slice of Saturday Night*, the Sixties Musical.

Jonathan was a pupil at Shrewsbury School, where he was taught geography by former Shiplake Headmaster, Nick Bevan, and he departs for Shrewsbury School, but this is Shrewsbury School, Bangkok.



The Reverend Rupert Jarvis

The Reverend Rupert Jarvis has been appointed Assistant Chaplain and Head of Religious Studies with effect from September 2008.

Reverend Jarvis was educated at Harrow School. He then went to the University of Wales (MPhil) and later to St Andrew's where he gained an MA (Hons) in Philosophy and Theology. He is currently an Army Chaplain to Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry Regiments and Chaplain to Army Training Regiments in Pewsey, Wiltshire.

He is married to Eliza and has two young children. His interests are rowing, running, cookery, singing, shooting and French 19th Century novels.

Miss Jillian Stanley

Miss Jillian Stanley is taking over as Head of Geography with effect from September 2008. She is currently a Geography teacher at Bournemouth School for Girls, having taught at Reading School before that. She attended Channing School, London and Bedford High School. In 2000 she went to Durham University where she gained BSc (Hons) First Class Degree. She obtained a PGCE at Oxford University Department of Educational Studies and was placed on the Government's Fast Track Teaching Programme.

Jillian's interests are competitive sailing, mountain biking and walking. Currently much of her time outside work is spent renovating a property.

Mr Hugh Mackworth-Praed

Mr Mackworth-Praed will be joining the Mathematics Department in September 2008. He has been the Director of Rowing at Pangbourne College for the last four years and is also an Assistant Maths Teacher.

He lived in Spain until he was 16. He attended Eton College as an Oppidan Scholar and then went to Durham University where he gained BSc (Hons) in Engineering. In 1995 he went to Magdalene College, Cambridge where he studied for his PGCE in Mathematics.

Hugh's interests are mainly rowing: in 2002-2004 he rowed for the GB Lightweight Team. His other interests are painting (watercolours), sketching, design, cookery and outdoor pursuits.

Miss Amy Wanless

Miss Amy Wanless has been appointed Teacher of Music with effect from September 2008. Amy has been a Music PGCE student this year with placements at Slough Grammar School and Southborough School.

She went to Royal Holloway University of London where she gained BMus Hons and later she obtained a Masters Degree in Historical Musicology and Performance Studies. She is currently completing her Secondary Music PGCE at Roehampton University.

Amy is getting married next year and her hobbies and interests are reading, playing in orchestras and cooking.

Mr Keith Settle

Mr Keith Settle will be joining Shiplake College in September as a Mathematics teacher.

He was educated at Bexley Grammar School and the University of York where he gained an Economics degree. In 2005 he attended St Mary's University College London to gain his PGCE in Secondary Mathematics. Keith is currently teaching Mathematics at St George's College in Surrey.

Keith is involved with D of E expeditions and is a very keen rowing coach having coached crews in the Coupe de la Jeunesse. His interests are rowing, coaching, walking, cycling and theatre trips.

Mr Douglas Seymour

Mr Douglas Seymour has been appointed English Teacher with effect from September 2008. He has been Head of Media and taught English at The Licensed Victuallers' School in Ascot since 2003.

He was educated at Northwood Boys' High School and gained Matric Exemption in 1992. He went to University of South Africa and gained a BA Degree in English Literature and Psychology.

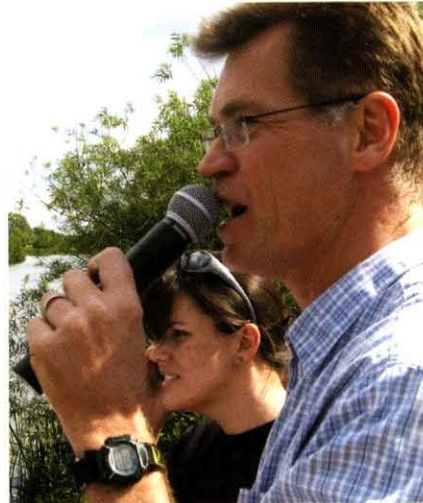
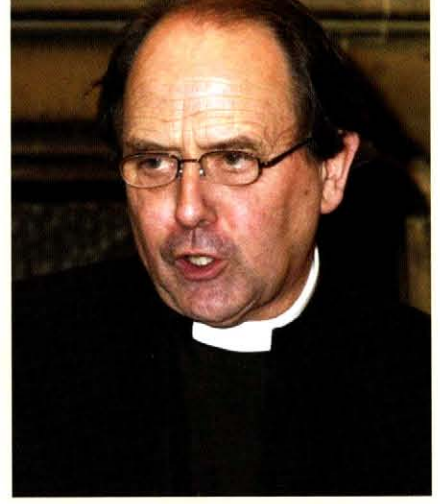
Douglas has been involved with coaching rugby and cricket since 1999 and is a keen distance runner and golfer. He is married and has a 13 month old son, Dennison.

Miss Katherine Harper

Miss Kate Harper will be joining Shiplake in September as the Director of Music. Kate is currently Head of Music at Highfield Prep School. She has also taught in Chile, Malawi and Russia. Kate attended Helenswood School for Girls in Hastings. She gained a BMus Hons degree at Surrey University and gained a Secondary Music PGCE at Cambridge University. She has recently been appointed an Examiner for the Edexcel Examination Board.

Kate has a variety of outdoor pursuits including diving (Scuba Diving PADI Open Water Diver Qualification), walking and skiing. Kate has travelled extensively within Eastern and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe, Australia, Thailand and South America. During these travels she has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro and has trekked in Patagonia.







Sixth form artists

Top left: Patrick Weiss

Top right: Laura Snellgrove

Bottom left: Lorelei Bere

Bottom right: Toby Frossell

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