

# riverbank

Autumn/  
Winter 2012



Gregg Davies, Headmaster

Once again we have had a busy start to the new academic year at Shiplake. The College has a record number of pupils – 400 – and I am delighted to have welcomed a number of new members of staff: Mr Austin Kersey joined us as Director of Sport, Mr Paul Jones as Director of Music, Mr John Davies as Head of English, Mr Liam Morgan as Head of History and Mrs Justine Parrott as Head of Modern Foreign Languages. We also welcomed Mr Jack Caine to teach IT, Miss Jess Golding joined the maths department, Mademoiselle Claire Guilbert joined Modern Foreign Languages and Miss Rebecca McKellar is teaching chemistry. Mrs Niki Jai returned to us to teach Btec Business and Mr Darius Bluck is teaching Economics.

I am always surprised at how many activities, trips, matches and events are fitted into the busy term and I hope that you will enjoy reading a selection of news on the following pages.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Gregg Davies'.

## Olympic Bronze Medal for Will Satch and George Nash

Former pupil Will Satch and his rowing partner George Nash won an Olympic Bronze medal in the men's pair in a superb race at Dorney Lake.

Will, 23, and George, 22, had only been rowing together in the pair since the start of the year, when fellow GB rowers Pete Reed and Andrew Triggs Hodge moved to the men's four.

Will, who learnt to row at Shiplake said after the win: "I can't really believe it. Six months ago I didn't think I'd even be coming as a spare. It is a dream come true."

Satch's mother Sally, who teaches at Shiplake, watched the race from the Family and Friends stand with Will's sister Jo Unsworth, a current Shiplake pupil, who also rows for GB. Sally commented after the race: "This is a massive shock. Initially they were told to train for Rio and don't worry about these Olympics. I've got utter respect for what those two boys have done."

Headmaster Gregg Davies said, "This is an unbelievable climax to a fantastic season. I am so pleased for Will and George and look forward to following their future rowing careers."



Photo: Will and Sally at Dorney courtesy of Peter McConnell.





# Iceland Trip

*G L Seccombe, Head of Geography*

At the beginning of the October half term holiday 30 GCSE and A level Geographers and four staff flew from Heathrow to Iceland for a five day trip.

The youngest inhabited island in the world at only 24 million years old, Iceland is the size of Ireland but has a population only twice that of Reading. But that doesn't mean there isn't much to offer - after four days of sightseeing we hadn't even left the south west region!

With no volcanic eruptions to worry about we landed at Keflavik Airport and were immediately greeted with icy Arctic winds as we headed into the heart of the capital Reykjavik. Early the next morning we began our journey along the country's only major road (the N1- very creative!) towards the town of Vik. On route we visited stunning waterfalls at Seljalandsfoss and then Skogafoss before a walk on the Solheimajokull glacier.

After staying overnight in an incredibly remote hotel, day three took us to the black beaches of Dyrholaey

and some of the roughest sea conditions any of us had seen before heading back to Reykjavik and an evening visit to the public swimming pools heated by geothermal power.

Day four saw us complete the famous 'Golden Circle' which includes the most popular tourist spots in the country. Starting with a visit to the Hellisheidi Geothermal Power station, we then moved onto see Gullfoss (The 'Golden Waterfall') and the famous geothermal Geysirs where we were treated to regular eruptions of water up to 30 metres high before a walk through Þingvellir National Park, the Nordic Parliament site on the Mid Atlantic Ridge. On the last morning we visited the Gunnuhver hot springs and geothermal area before relaxing at the Blue Lagoon spa prior to our flight home.



# Battlefields Tour

*L. Morgan – Head of History*

Over half term we took 28 Year 9 boys on a tour of the First World War battlefields (25th-27th October).

Our very early start meant that we could cram a lot in to the time we were there – and Mr Cooksey, our guide, was able to point out many interesting things along the way. As we were crossing on the ferry we imagined what it would be like for the thousands of British soldiers who made a similar journey just less than one hundred years before us.

We stopped on our way at Langemarck, the large German cemetery, and Tyne Cot, where still today the boys could see how the clay soil, so difficult to drain, so easily turns into a mud bath. One of the boys



noticed a grave of a soldier just fifteen years old – not much older than he was.

After some free time shopping at Ypres (where the boys seemed to enjoy the chocolate shops with their free samples!) and a chicken and chips dinner we visited the Menin Gate, a memorial to those lost but never recovered.

On day two we spent some time on the Somme, the sight of the biggest single disaster in British military history. The boys were lined up and told stories about some of the soldiers who fought exactly where they were stood and studied photographs and maps to trace

the battle. We saw the largest of the many mine craters where in one explosion 60,000 pounds of high explosives were detonated, as well as Newfoundland Park, the Canadian memorial.

On our way home we got to explore the trenches at Vimy ridge, and were able to visit the tunnels that were dug underground and to see how close the two sides got to each other.

Thanks to Mr Cooksey, our guide, and Mrs Stratton for organising this interesting, moving and no doubt unforgettable experience, especially in the run up to Remembrance Sunday.

## Travel & Tourism Students Visit Bath and Stratford

Having chosen to study BTEC Travel and Tourism as a Sixth form option, 18 students spent three days learning what it meant to be a tourist by visiting some of the UK's most popular tourist attractions outside London.

Leaving Shiplake early on Thursday 20th September, the group travelled to Bath in order to visit the Roman Baths, walk around the town and try to get an understanding for why approximately 5 million people got there each year. With these 5 million people spending on average £348 million per year, it was clear how crucial tourism is the local economy.



After staying overnight in Bath and taking over a superb yet small Italian restaurant, the group moved north east the next morning to Stratford-upon-Avon. Birthplace of two of the UK's most famous sons (William Shakespeare and Mr Seccombe (Trip Leader)), Stratford is one of the most popular destinations for international tourists coming to the UK and travelling outside London. The group started with a tour of Shakespeare's birthplace before a walk around the town led by

Mr Seccombe and local resident/ Learning Development department teacher Mr Cooksey. Walking along the River Avon the group visited Holy Trinity Church where the Bard was buried and the recently refurbished Royal Shakespeare Theatre. In the evening, after taking over another restaurant, the group went back to the theatre to watch a superb production of 'Twelfth Night'.

Day three started early with a visit to Warwick Castle, where the group learnt about the history of the Castle and enjoyed the variety of attractions and exhibitions within the Castle. After spending three hours exploring the Castle it was time to head back to Shiplake after a thoroughly enjoyable three days. The students will be reflecting on their experience and what they have learnt about the tourism industry in upcoming assignments.



# CCF Away Day

As part of their Proficiency and Advanced Proficiency training the Y11 and 12 RN CCF cadets spent a day in Portsmouth Historic Docks.

The morning was spent visiting the Royal Navy Museum and in particular the Nelson Exhibition Hall. Undoubtedly the Royal Navy's most influential and famous leader, exhibits ranged from his dress uniforms through letters home from far flung ports, to locks of his hair, shaved after he fell at the battle of Trafalgar.

Unfortunately HMS Victory itself was closed for refurbishment, so the next stop was the Action Stations. A converted Boathouse, Action Stations, brings the modern Royal Navy to life with a mixture of physical challenges, simulators and technological experiments. Several cadets enjoyed the challenges of one of the largest indoor climbing towers in the country. Over twenty activities in the interactive gallery included an astronaut's view of the world, the science behind propulsion, a battle with the Royal



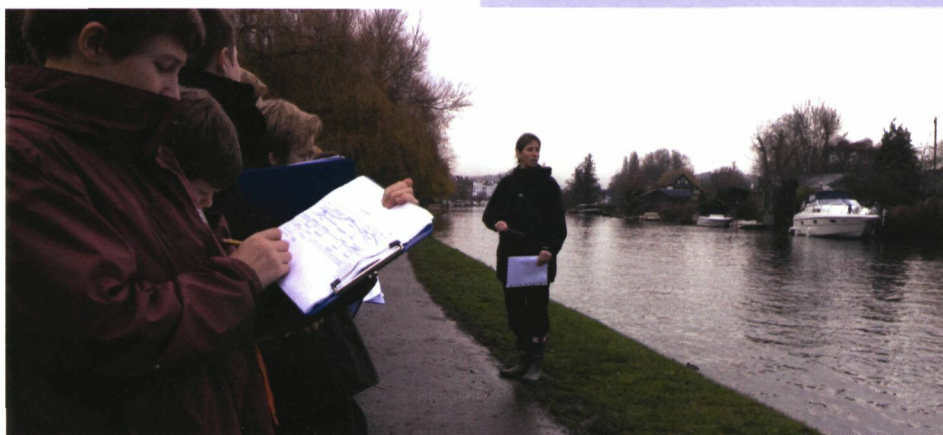
Marines, commanding a warship and flying a helicopter.

After lunch the cadets visited HMS Warrior, the world's first iron-hulled, armoured warship powered by steam as well as sail. Built to counter French naval developments, when launched she made every other warship obsolete. She is the only surviving member of Queen Victoria's Black Battle Fleet. The cadets toured all four vast decks and could feel what life was like as a Victorian sailor onboard a 19th century warship.

The 11 cadets in the RAF Section also had a packed programme when they visited RAF Benson. They had a tour of a Merlin helicopter and then flew low over the Oxfordshire countryside in a Puma helicopter. An introduction to air traffic control, both visual and radar, helped them to feel more confident when in the air. Other highlights of the day were an excellent lunch in the Junior Ranks dining room, with plenty of second helpings and target practice on the electronic firing range.

## Learning in the Rain

On a day of torrential rain, with the level of the Thames rising, it was appropriate that Year 8 should study precipitation travelling to a river channel when they visited Henley's River and Rowing Museum.



Practical experiments gave the boys an understanding of erosion, transportation and deposition along the river channel as part of their Flood Workshop.

Sadly the boys could not shelter in the classroom all morning and a river walk to Marsh Lock prompted discussion of how different types of material could be used for creating embankments. The walk concluded with the Lock Keeper demonstrating and explaining how the lock functioned.



# Adapt, Improve and Overcome

Cadets applied the camouflage cream, undertook patrols and cooked high-calorie meals as they rapidly gained field-craft skills on the first CCF Field Day of the year.

Moving around six very different stands, commanded by ten senior Cadets from Year 13, the cadets learnt new skills as they worked towards acquiring the Army Proficiency Certificate. Some cadets proudly clutched their targets all day, after success on the ten metre range, peppering the bulls-eye with shots from their air rifles.

Sergeant Egan ran some fascinating sessions on Basha Building and Platoon Harbours. 'Adapt, improvise and overcome,' he told cadets as they attempted to build their basha in the woods by the river. The riverside vegetation was severely pruned back as cadets cut-out foliage for their camouflage having liberally applied the camouflage cream under the experienced tutelage of

Captain Bowbrick.

Ration packs for troops on Arctic duties contain 12,500 calories per day but Shiplake's cadets were given some culinary tips on how to prepare the standard issue 6,500 calorie ration pack. They needed the calories for their introduction to patrolling as they walked and crawled through the 4 basic manoeuvres with Sergeant Lane instructing them.

Team values are at the core of the APC so there were some competitive games played in the Sports Hall as the cadets continued to learn the importance of playing for each other and providing encouragement and support in a team situation.



# Digital Pathways Workshop

Originals of the Magna Carta, Mercator's World Map, Robert Falcon Scott's last letter to his wife, some Beatles' lyrics and Leonardo da Vinci's notebook were some of the treasures viewed by Lower Sixth Form students visiting the British Library for a Digital Pathways Workshop in support of the AQA Extended Project Qualification.



The main purpose of the day was to develop digital research, referencing and investigative skills. Areas covered included how to use a search engine and how to establish the trustworthiness of websites. A search of a well-known chemical website showed that it had been hacked by an environmental group and using *VisualTracer* pupils were able to trace the URL to India. There were handy tips on useful websites and digital presentation tools.

All pupils chose an artefact to research and finished by giving a short presentation to the rest of the group. Topics included: the Great Fire of London, Anne Boleyn (presented using Facebook!) and Shakespeare's Folio.

This was a day that all will find extremely useful for future sixth form and university studies.



# Wild Weather on Whole School Walk

Shiplake College pupils had a different Monday morning feeling as they pulled on their waterproofs and trainers to embark on a twenty mile sponsored walk from Moulsoford back to Shiplake. With a Met Office amber warning in place for the South East the Thames Path was a slippery quagmire in parts.

'When we decided that the walk should take place I felt slightly uneasy,' said Gregg Davies, Headmaster. 'But our pupils rose to the challenge magnificently. The determination to complete the walk was very impressive. Even in the very worst of the weather there was far more laughter than whinging.'

The College's motto is 'Example teaches' and the teachers led the way. Martin Daniel, Head of Economics, completed the treacherous route in



under three hours and he was followed home by Simon Balderson, Housemaster of Welsh House. Although it was not intended to be a race Rory O'Connor, from Year 10, was the first pupil back. Jo Unsworth, first of the girls, was the third pupil overall. It was a good day for the Sixth Form girls with six finishing in the top thirty places.

'Many of the pupils were surprised at how well they had done. At a time when educationalists are calling for more character-building challenges in schools, I think that many of our pupils discovered today that when they dig deep they can accomplish what they had previously thought impossible.

We know the Lower School pupils have energy when we see them running everywhere at school but to see eleven and twelve year olds complete this walk was remarkable.' said Gregg Davies. 'In total over £16,500 was raised for four charities: The National Autistic Society, Gap Africa, Combat Stress and the Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children.'

While nearly 400 pupils, teachers, parents and teachers walked, the rowers put in a good 22 mile training stint from the Oxford Brookes University Boat House near Wallingford, back to Shiplake.

## Seeking a Site for a Llama Farm

'There's something going on today,' said one of the locals, finding that Midhurst's Budgens was rather busy for a Monday morning.

Over one hundred Shiplake pupils had arrived for an economy version of *Supermarket Sweep*. Carefully planned menus, with a budget of £5 per head per day, heavily pasta-based, were augmented with a few treats as

the boys shopped for their Bronze and Silver DofE expeditions.

After sharing out the rations between their groups of six or seven, and cramming them into the last space in their rucksacks, the groups set off on their routes across the South Downs.

A variety of missions, including finding sites for a llama farm and a music festival, were successfully completed. With mist shrouding the

landscape the walks provided a thorough test of the map-reading and navigation skills learnt in preparation for the expeditions.





# Year 8

## Mosque Visit

Year 8 found themselves learning some Arabic when they visited the largest mosque in Western Europe which is located in Morden, South London. As the boys took a tour of the mosque, library and exhibition centre, they learnt of some of the key elements in Muslim Culture and that the key tenet of the faith is peace.

Capable of holding 10,000 people at prayer the Shiplake visitors found the tour around the prayer halls one of the most interesting parts of their day. Taking their shoes off the boys tried not to point their feet toward the Qibla, the arch which faces toward Mecca.

The women's prayer hall had a crèche with triple glazed glass to allow the children to play and make noise

while their mothers prayed in peace.

The men's prayer hall had a large dome on the roof to amplify the sound in the prayer hall and to look beautiful and can hold up to 5,000 Muslims for prayers.

Hearing the Adhan, the call to prayer, was a new sensory learning experience for Year 8. Watching 150 worshippers, kneeling shoulder to

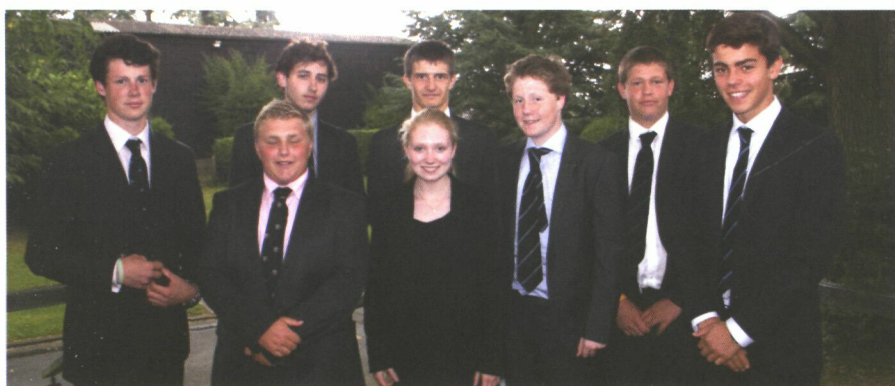


shoulder, performing the Rak'ah, in total silence, provided a powerful visual image that will last long beyond work on Year 8's Tolerance and Islam Unit of Work.

To read Elliott Jordan and Marcus Hillman's report visit: [www.shiplakeyear7and8.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.shiplakeyear7and8.blogspot.co.uk)

## Loitering with Intent

For the second year now a cohort of Shiplake College Year 12 pupils have been training with a professional school counsellor in readiness to become the new school Peer Support Group.



Communication and listening skills are at the core of the training provided by Debbie Lee, School Counsellor at Matthew Arnold School in Oxford. Preparing the group for all eventualities and handling other pupils' problems (great and small) sensitively is central to Debbie's remit. One of the hardest skills which she aims to teach is being at the right place at the right time and

reading the signs as to who needs help. She refers to this as "loitering with intent"! The ability to go into a group of pupils and check that all is well and all are happy without appearing pushy is an important part of the way the Peer Support group work. They are also available in the boarding and day houses and have a secure email address to which pupils can submit comments or requests.

It is hoped that this group will provide another layer to the already extensive pastoral support network at the College. Shiplake is proud of its pastoral network, though not complacent. We are always looking for ways to enhance it. This year we have added a series of "Forums" where pupils from one year group meet to discuss issues and pressures particular to that age. By the end of this term, each year group will have had at least one meeting, some two. In addition, the school now has a fortnightly "Theme" around which assemblies, tutor time and some PHSE lessons are based.







## Joint Concert with Queen Anne's School

Purcell's *Rondeau from Abdelazar*, essentially a guide to the potential and power of the orchestral form, provided a suitably grandiose opening to Shiplake's Joint Concert with Queen Anne's School held in the resplendent Great Hall.

A change of mood, to the comic, came from George Graham's trombone as he played *The Acrobat* leading into QAS' flute ensemble and *The Hippopotamus Song*. Passion returned, set deep in the Amazonian rain-forest for those who remembered *Garbiel's Oboe* in the film *The Mission*, this time performed beautifully by Ashley Copeland.

It was Ragtime once again when Paul Jones, Shiplake's Director of Music, joined Matthew Aldridge, George Graham and Greg Holt for Joplin's *The Entertainer* summoning up the spirit of The Roaring Twenties.

A hushed audience were hugely impressed by the technical proficiency of pianist Sammy Mendis when he performed J.S. Bach's *Courante* from his *English Suite No 2*.

It could have been any one of three instruments for Josh Hirst but he opted for the clarinet and the *Larghetto* from Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet*.

Shiplake's Rock Choir made their debut, just six hectic and fun weeks after their formation, with a contemporary medley featuring Snow Patrol, Kings of Leon and Coldplay.

The combined orchestra returned for the finale playing *Palladio* by Jenkins which had found 1990s fame in a television diamond commercial, an appropriate conclusion to an evening full of shining performances.

## Inspirational Jazz



You expect supreme technical proficiency and the ability to make the complex look simple from the National Youth Jazz Orchestra but Shiplake College's GCSE musicians were astounded by the sheer exuberance of the performance.

They were privileged to be in the Kenton Theatre audience prior to the NYJO's big-band, foot-tapping evening performance. Since 1965 the NYJO has given the future cream of British Jazz the opportunity to play off each other and to blend their skills and sounds into a band with ever-changing and fascinating group dynamics.

At the heart of the performance was

Duke Ellington's *Queen Suite*, written in 1959 and then extended in 1971 and 1972. Ellington had clearly been captivated by his meeting with the British Monarch and he presented the only pressing of the record to Queen Elizabeth. It is only since Ellington's death that the record has been commercially recorded.

M4 traffic marred the afternoon as the band's vocalist failed to make it to rehearsal but the rest of the band, largely sixth form and university-age musicians, provided plenty to inspire. The finale of the *James Bond Theme* finished the afternoon in a style typical of OO7 and it was appropriate that local jazz musician Alan Graham, who has mentored so many of the local musicians in the band, had played on the original recording half a century ago.





## Music Recitals

Outstanding performances on works from Mozart to Morricone were the hallmark of a very enjoyable evening of GCSE and A Level music.



The highly accomplished George Graham began the evening with the spirit of the late romantics personified by Saint-Saëns.

*Junction Five* and *Situation Comedy*, jazz offerings from John Rae, provided the opportunity for a clarinet duet from Charles Marsden and Tom McCooke followed by a trumpet solo from Greg Holt.

There was Fauré on the flute from Freddy Ellis, traditional *Oranges and Lemons* on a piano shared by Tom Lewis and Aamish Luna. Following on from Alex Williams' *Tears in Heaven* piano solo Matthew Aldridge provided an excellent recital of Mozart's *Romance* for French Horn.

Bunty Rowbotham's *Moon River* paid tribute to the recently departed Andy Williams before Chris Baker and his bassoon time-travelled us back to Mozart. There was a touch of Vivaldi from Joe Wu to contrast with Ashley Copeland's contemporary Morricone.

After an assured *Imagine* from the Year 11 ensemble it was left to Annabelle McIntosh to send an audience home delighted with her *Bach Adagio from Sonata in E*.

The very next evening there was an upbeat tempo and an increase in the decibel level as the BTEC and GCSE performers stomped onto the stage. Soon the audience were pounding their feet to some contemporary classics with covers of Snow Patrol, Cold Play, Kings of Leon and Guns 'n Roses. Originality and creativity came from Dan Noble and Will Tse playing their own *Spanish Mix* composition before Nick Bond played the guitar and sang along to his own *The 2nd. Second*.

## All Souls' Service

'When I tell people that I am the Chaplain at the Duchess of Kent Hospice they often respond by saying "that must be a sad place to work". In fact it is a happy and rewarding place to work. I enjoy helping at difficult times. People need to be talked to and supported when they suffer bereavement,' said The Reverend Judy Davis.

The Reverend brought in what looked like a huge picture of a peacock from a distance. On closer, detailed inspection, the congregation could see hundreds of pairs of hands. Evidently the result of hour upon hour of painstaking work

from patients with limited time left in their lives.

'From a distance they all look the same but when you look closely you can see they all are all different. When you look closely at a group of people you see that they are all individuals with different needs,' said the Reverend Judy.

Over 327 names had been entered in a book of remembrance by the Shiplake pupils and local parishioners attending the service. Every member of the congregation took the opportunity to light a tea-lamp in memory of those departed. The service was superbly organised by Gilson House and the girls sang the Benedictus beautifully.

## The Future's Just Begun

Never has Slade's line, 'Look to the future now, It's only just begun' seemed so apt as when the audience belted out the last line of Slade's perennial *So Here it is Merry Christmas* at the end of the Winter Concert.

Earlier in the evening the audience had listened to the App Orchestra performing *Jingle Bells* on downloads to phones and tablets with drums, keyboards and xylophones all featuring as Paul Jones conducted his Year 9 orchestra of the future.

Late November and the Christmas decorations were just appearing so there was a strong theme of winter including the Shiplake Girls' Choir singing *Winter Wonderland* and the Orchestra playing *Winter* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. There was a peek ahead to the season's festivities with a traditional brass arrangement of *Ding Dong Merrily on High*.

Yet as the end of the year approaches it is also a time to look back on a wonderful year and the saxophone group gave us a reminder of the celebrations of 50 years of James Bond with the powerful *James Bond Theme*, inspired by their recent visit to see the National Youth Jazz Orchestra.

Big choirs grow in popularity and the presence of Louise Rapple's Community Choir, for *Maiden Most Gentle*, and The Rock Choir singing *Winter Winds*, *Chasing Cars* and *Many of Horror* contributed to make the number of performers taking to the stage probably the biggest, and the most inclusive, event in the College's musical history.





## Overwhelming Victory for the Green Peppers

Simon Balderson, Welsh Housemaster and Harry Leeves, Head of Welsh House, were given just £1.27 each for a dish when they competed in a cook-off as part of the Harvest Family Service led by Welsh House.

“It was a very effective way of getting the point across that £1.27 is the sum that much of the world exists on every-day. The fact that our two competitors had such a princely sum for just one dish as part of a meal, rather than food for the total day, hammers home the deprivation of absolute poverty,” said Reverend Stephen Cousins.

The congregation were given a picture of a green pepper to vote for

Harry and a red tomato to identify Mr Balderson as the winner. Harry’s healthy tuna, rocket and green leaf salad scored a convincing victory over Mr Balderson’s biscuit based dessert.

With generous donations from the parish community the Parish Church was packed with a variety of groceries. Welsh House helped the Chaplain pack up the boxes and transport them to the Reading Drop-In Centre.

## Theatre in Education

“Performing before an audience of ten and eleven year olds is probably as nerve-wracking a task for these GCSE students as any formal examination assessment but they came through with flying colours,” said Catherine Saker, Head of Drama and Theatre at Shiplake College.



Comedy, physical theatre and story-telling were all techniques incorporated when the Shiplake College GCSE Drama class, from Year 11, devised a performance for their Theatre in Education assignment. Their mission was to perform an educational piece of theatre for the Year 6 pupils at Shiplake Primary School.

The theme of the piece was *Giving Advice on Independence* with the aim of educating ten and eleven year olds on how to go out with their friends and enjoy themselves whilst keeping safe.

‘It is a challenging mission as the actors have just one chance to perform their piece, to the audience, in a venue without lighting and costumes. This group had just two props, a football and a violin case. Then, as with all visiting theatre companies nowadays, they had to provide the Primary School with a workshop pack that the Year 6 teachers could use with their class after the performance,’ said Catherine Saker.



# Anti-Bullying Week



“Any school that says that bullying does not go on is kidding itself but we believe that bullying is not a serious problem at Shiplake College.

Our work in the Peer Support Group suggest that most of us are happy most of the time but we have to keep working on ensuring that we build good relationships,” said sixth-former James Rossi-Bull when he introduced a series of drama sketches for junior pupils as part of Shiplake’s programme of events for Anti-Bullying Week.

Whilst taking a Senior Assembly fellow sixth former Kabir Dhillon had warned, ‘The common culture in schools is that secrecy and ‘dobbing’ people is completely unacceptable and should not be done, but what we may not realise is that what is banter for us is bullying and victimising for another. Being in the top part of the school

means that we need to be able to step in when someone needs us and help resolve problems or just listen to someone who is upset.’

Trudi Lister presented a trio of tragic case studies where young people had taken their own lives after they had found themselves unable to live with the bullying any longer.

‘The Peer Support group put together a programme of drama sketches illustrating cyber-bullying, physical bullying, verbal bullying and exclusion. This has been reinforced by a competition for every tutor group to communicate the themes of Anti-Bullying week through any media they choose such as a poster, a poem or even a short story,’ said Nick Brown, Senior Housemaster, who organises the training programme for Year 12 Peer Support pupils and who meets with the members of the group on a weekly regular basis.

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Jess Golding, once a Climate Change Researcher, and now a Mathematics teacher, delivered a powerful message in assembly as part of the College’s two week programme focusing on recycling.

‘Our climate is changing. There are photographs around the College showing how you can expect climate change to affect you and what impact it will have during your lifetime,’ said Miss Golding referring to disturbing images of the havoc caused by hurricanes and flooding.

‘If you throw away a can, it goes into landfill and can still be an aluminium can in 500 years time, still not decomposed, yet recycling a can saves enough energy to watch television for 3 hours.’

A litany of frightening statistics emphasised that we must take greater care of our planet. One million sea creatures die annually as a result of plastic debris. Half of the world’s tropical forests have been destroyed due to deforestation. Trees are being cut down at a rate of 100 acres a minute, the equivalent acreage of a country the size of Ireland within a year. It is estimated that by 2030 90% of the tropical forests will be destroyed.

Every single person can contribute by helping to recycle plastics, foils, paper, cardboard and glass. There are now 110 green bins for recycling deployed throughout the College.







# Frostbite Regatta Lives Up to its Name

Eighteen Shiplake College rowers returned exhausted but satisfied after 12 days of intense training and competition along the USA West Coast.

Flying in to San Francisco, the rowers were met and hosted by the Marin Rowing Association. Beginning with a 12 km row on their first morning, ignoring any possibility of jet-lag, the boys moved on to an extensive series of pieces in the afternoon. MRA recently won the Head of the Charles by an impressive 33 seconds but Shiplake certainly held their own in a series of side-by-side racing.

Moving on to Sacramento there were more hard kilometres as the crews prepared for the Head of the American, held in very hot conditions where the 1st VIII finished 4th and the 2nd VIII finished 24th out of 32 crews.

After the Head of the American the squad also took time to enjoy the wonderful sights of San Francisco with a memorable cycle ride over the iconic Golden Gate Bridge. For the return trip some boys completed the demanding additional cycle ride whilst others chose to relax on a ferry ride from Sausalito arriving back into San Francisco on a beautiful Californian evening.

Fisherman's Wharf was also an important destination where numerous restaurants have an awe-inspiring view over the harbour. Alcatraz also proved to be a popular attraction

although thankfully everyone was able to leave at the end of a grim but fascinating tour.

For the second half of the trip the squad arrived at Seattle to be welcomed by the Green Lake Rowing Club that regularly visits Shiplake when competing at Henley Royal Regatta. This proved to be an unforgettable experience for the boys as staying with families gave them the flavour of American life. The Halloween Party and Pasta Party were also highlights of the tour.

It was not all hard work and no play for the boys as a member of Green Lake arranged for a VIP Tour of the Boeing Factory, the largest construction facility in the world. This experience is usually reserved for Heads of State and other dignitaries so the group were extremely privileged to have this wonderful access. In addition to this the boys took in the many sights that Seattle has to offer including the Space Needle and the Pike Place Market.

The final few days proved to be action packed with the opportunity to have a training session boating from the University of Washington which is considered by many to be the top rowing university in the USA. This was followed by a tour of the university campus concentrating on the sporting

facilities including a visit to the 70,000 capacity stadium for their American Football team. The boys were also impressed by their strength and conditioning facilities. The afternoon was a real international event with a series of short races against Green Lake from USA and Brentwood College School from Canada.

This proved to be the warm up act before the Frost Bite Regatta in which crews raced over 1000m. The crews raced in VIIIs and IVs and picked up a number of 3rd places but were unable to win an event. True to tradition the final races of the day were cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

The main competition of the weekend was a 5km race known as Head of the Lake which is raced around Lake Washington and Lake Union. Both crews were determined to put in a strong display at this event and the coaches and rowers were not disappointed. The 1st VIII finished an impressive 4th in their event out of 11 in what was a very strong field and the 2nd VIII finished 8th out of 19 in their category.

Overall the tour was a great success and it gave the boys a really different perspective of living and racing in a different country. This experience will stay with the boys for many years and will prove to be a real highlight of their time at Shiplake College.



# Celebrating 50 Years of Shiplake Rowing

Nine crews took to the river for an OVS Regatta. There was a hard fought competition between Old Vikings crews reuniting from as far back as 1986. The successful 1964 IV had a more leisurely nostalgic outing as did the 1973 VIII who had T-Shirts printed for the occasion.

In the evening 230 guests gathered in the Sports Hall for dinner accompanied by a spectacular big-screen display recording 50 years of Shiplake Rowing History. OVs lent on a bar creatively converted from an old boat by Hugh Mackworth-Praed, 1st VIII coach. Old Vikings had travelled from Canada, New Zealand, USA, Dubai, France and Poland to be present at this historic occasion.

After a superb meal guests settled for the entertainment. Jonty Hearnen, Master-in-Charge of ceremonies for the evening, announced that the celebrations were a little premature, research had revealed that the Shiplake Boat Club had not entered a race until 1963. Mike Shingler, part of the first IV to win a race for the College,

recalled how Sam Hall, their coach, frequently used to fall from his bike as he raced along the tow-path bellowing instructions. Not knowing how big the Reading Regatta cup was, Hall had offered to fill the trophy with beer. When the crew won the event he was surprised at the size of his bar bill.

For Shane O'Brien, Gold with the New Zealand IV in 1984 and now a Headmaster in Dubai, he said that returning to Shiplake "felt like coming home". Thinking back to his victory in Los Angeles he described how it difficult it was to come to terms with family and friends treating him so differently. There was even a victory parade on the back of a tractor. Shane recalled coaching Will Satch in his Shiplake days and giving Mark Hunter MBE a



job coaching at Shiplake 'before he was famous.'

Ben Hunt-Davis MBE chronicled his tough route from selection for Shiplake's J14B VIII to Olympic Gold in the GB VIII in 2000. He summed up the disappointing years prior to the Sydney Olympics, "If you keep doing the same things, you keep getting the same results." The training, the philosophy and the result changed in Sydney.

Once the Rowing Honours Board had been unveiled dozens of guests rushed onto the stage to see their names. The final words of the evening came from Jonty Hearnen quoting The Sunday Times on Will Satch, "The future's bright. The future's ginger."

## John Howell MP visits Shiplake

"If you don't vote you don't have a voice; you have no right to complain," John Howell OBE, Henley's Member of Parliament told Shiplake College's senior pupils.

He called upon each of the pupils to engage with politics, "We all have a duty to do our best to tackle the problems faced by the poor, the hungry and the oppressed, be they at home or overseas," he continued.

"How we deal with issues is a mark of a civilised society. Often it is the spirit of the law that matters more than the letter of the law," Mr Howell proclaimed.

He explained how it was an MP's duty to meet their constituents to engage in face-to-face discussion. I can't represent every single opinion in my constituency. I only have a single vote, but I can make a judgement." In a recent Parliamentary Recess Mr Howell visited 80 villages in 8 days in search of opinions.

After thanking John Howells for his visit the Reverend Stephen Cousins



reiterated the message. "It is particularly important for the girls in the sixth form to use their vote. So many women, sacrificed so much, not so very long ago to win the vote. It would be wrong to waste that hard won right.



*Photo: An impromptu tactics session with the aid of some cream-pots.*

# Holland Hockey

When Shiplake College's 13-man squad of U16 Hockey players arrived at Rotterdam Hockey Club they soon realised that they were in a hotbed of European hockey.

They were individually greeted with a welcoming handshake from GB Olympic Hockey Captain, Barry Middleton, who plays for Rotterdam. With seven astro pitches and 24 teams playing every Saturday, Rotterdam is Holland's number one hockey club and has state-of-the-art club house and facilities to match.

In a well-matched game against one of Rotterdam's junior teams Shiplake took an early lead as the teams played



three 20 minute thirds which allowed plenty of time for coaches' input and substitutions to give each player some game-time.

Barney Aldridge, Captain, and Matt Herbert, Vice-Captain, set a fine example to their squad in terms of both effort and skills. By the end of the third quarter Rotterdam had clawed their way back into the game to win 3 – 1.

A day off from hockey gave the squad the chance to enjoy a day at the

huge Efteling Theme Park and queue for some jaw-dropping rides.

The second match of the mini-tour, versus an U16 team from the Wassenaar club, begun with torrential rain and both teams played some exciting attacking hockey but neither could make a key breakthrough in a high quality game. A 0 – 0 draw was a fair result in a game that neither team deserved to lose with Dan Deakin voted Shiplake's Man of the Match.



## Bishop Colin Blesses Prefects and Chapel Wardens

"Leadership is seldom easy and requires the support understanding and co-operation of others," Bishop Colin of Dorchester told Shiplake College's Prefects and Chapel Wardens.

'Leadership at it best requires dedication, humility, good humour, a sense of service to all those around you, compassion, honesty and no small courage.'

'With 29 Year 13 pupils taking on the mantle of authority and responsibility in these positions, nearly a half of the Upper Sixth will have invaluable experience of managing and motivating people. After a tough selection process we provided leadership training for the chosen prefects but they have already found that helping to run a school of nearly 400 pupils is a tough and tiring challenge. There is no doubt that

at the end of this year they will have learnt much that will help them as managers in the future,' said Rob Jones, Deputy Headmaster.

Bishop Colin spoke of how one of the essential characteristics of leadership is humility. 'Recently we have seen that being able to say sorry if you are a politician is not easy but a community suffers if you are not able to hold up your hand and say sorry. Most of you will have had the need to apologise drilled into you by your parents even if at times you have reluctantly spoken the word through gritted teeth.'



# Howe Selected for England Development Squad

Tom Howe has been selected for the Senior England Development Squad. Seventeen year old Tom will travel with the squad to take advantage of training in Dubai's balmy winter temperatures.

The Development Squad will be training with the England Sevens squad.

Tom will recognise the familiar face of Chris Cracknell, a former Shiplake College pupil, who, whilst injured, is currently training the England Sevens Development Team.

Tom's rugby calendar is becoming increasingly busy. After selection for the England U18 squad Tom has had to enter training camps and the fixture schedule into his packed rugby diary. Tom has played for the Wasps A Team coming off the bench to score in his debut versus London Irish. Recently Wasps called

him up to give him a taste of professional training when he joined the squad in their preparations for the Wasps LV cup match at the Cardiff Blues.

'These are exciting times for Tom but I have been impressed by his maturity. He has knuckled down at school, getting on with his academic studies and has consistently performed for the College XV. Tom has tremendous potential as a rugby player but he and we are very aware that the career of a rugby player hangs by a very precarious thread,' said Sam Beckett, Shiplake College's Head of Rugby.



## Tennis at the O2

The evening began with Lindstedt and Tecau beating Marray and Nielsen, in straight sets, when seniors from Shiplake's Tennis Club visited London's O2 for an evening of the ATP World Tour Finals.



Andy Murray's match versus Wilfrid Tsonga was the main event with Murray requiring a straight sets victory to guarantee a place in the final four. Initially it seemed that Tsonga, with his explosive game misfiring, was going to offer little resistance.

With 17,000 spectators crammed into the O2, and almost all of them supporting the Olympic Champion, it was inevitable that Murray would produce the now familiar heart-stopping moments.

Murray breezed through the first 6 – 2 set but Tsonga fought back to win a tie-break in the second and he earned himself a set-point at 6 – 5. Regaining his focus Murray blasted through the tie-break (7 – 3) to send the Shiplake College Tennis club seniors home happy and looking forward to emulating the best of the professionals' play next summer.



## **Waterloo Road Star Describes Shiplake's Head as 'Inspirational'**

Waterloo Road actor Alec Newman has described Shiplake's Headmaster, Gregg Davies, as one of the most inspirational people he has ever met following his day at Shiplake College last term.

Gregg met Alec on Christmas Eve and after chatting, Alec asked Gregg whether he could visit Shiplake to find out more about running a school. As a result, he and fellow Waterloo Road star visited in March to spend the day with Gregg, pupils and staff.

An article on Alec's visit appeared in the *Daily Record* in September 2012.

To read the full piece please visit <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/entertainment/tv-radio/waterloo-roads-alec-newman-goes-1297551>.



Photo: Gregg Davies with Alec Newman and Daniela Denby-Ashe.

## **Parents' Association**

The Parents' Association has had another brilliant year with lots of events and support from parents.

The Summer Ball was a fantastic evening with around 170 guests attending. As ever, Thomas Franks produced superb food and there was an amazing band which kept the dance floor full from the first note to the last. The money tree and silent auction worked well and resulted in the Parents' Association donating £2000 to the Kumali Mission Hospital in Uganda on behalf of all parents.

Sadly the summer BBQ, which for the last three years has been a huge success had to be cancelled due to bad weather but look out for the 2013 date.

Welcome cream teas were held for all new parents in September and were well attended.

The Headmaster's Quiz night had an Olympic theme this year and was a sell out. The vast majority of people wore red white and blue and a great night was had by one and all.

The Christmas Fayre proved another success for both stall holders and Christmas shoppers. Most of the stall holders have already asked if they can come back next year and a few asked if we would think about a Spring fayre!

For further information about the Parents' Association please contact the Chair, Moya Flynn, on 0118 940 2455.

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