

**The
Elizabethan
2001**

Number 720

The Elizabethan

Editor
Designer

David Hargreaves
Lyndsey Turner

Assistant Editors

James Furlong
Alex Millar
Francis Murphy
Thomas Wrathmell
Kazim Zaidi

Proofreaders

Tim Francis
Gill Hardman

Photography

Doug Shaw
Harry Williams



From the Editor

Spirituality, Alston and AS's were among the preoccupations of the past year at Westminster. **David Hargreaves** investigates

What, pray, are spiritual values? The Inspectors' Report, following their visit in September, concluded that we lacked them. This finding has provoked much discussion since then.

One response is the intolerant one. What on earth did these people expect? Given the spiralling decline in church-attendance nationally, and in the tenets of literal religious belief, it is scarcely surprising that Westminster contains its share of doubters. Equally, one or two of the Inspectors work in schools and in parts of the country where regular church-going is a feature of social conformity, itself more obviously prized than it is here. The articulate scepticism of our pupils to such considerations may have unnerved them.

Another response is to get snappily defensive and talk about all the good and genuinely useful work many of our pupils do via Community Service or PHAB or in St Botolph's. Or one can point to the greatly reinvigorated fund-raising that has taken place this year to promote worthy causes. Many pupils are involved, and they do it extremely well.

Such retorts, however, are far too easy on ourselves. London is awash with consumerism, and we know perfectly well that our constituency is particularly affected. It is disturbing to encounter a pupil who seems satiated with luxury and ennui and to have seen and done everything by the age of sixteen. Such an individual is rare, even at Westminster (whatever the Inspectors may have thought), but he or she may be disproportionately influential.

But the huge majority of boys and girls here, just like their parents, their predecessors, and indeed their teachers, have a more diffuse value system. They may be capable of having their heads turned by a smart label, but they are also too obviously caring of each other, and too curious about the world, to be designer junkies. Moreover, in most cases from their first days, their parents have devoted huge care (and expense, no doubt) to stimulating their senses and their intellect. Such effort is

never wasted. If spiritual values involve the abnegation of self and a love of truth, we should take good care to nurture the life of the mind.

Perhaps the most underrated assault on materialism in our society comes through study: it touches on most of the cardinal virtues – not least those of perseverance and humil-



ity. It opens our eyes to the wisdom of others, to the dissemination of subtle, elusive truths. Westminster, if it cares about spiritual values, ought to show missionary zeal in maintaining the most rigorous academic expectations of its pupils. We know perfectly well that two decades of curricular overhaul, for all its accompanying rhetoric, have been motivated by political opportunism and characterised by intellectual banality.

The Inspectors are quite right to speculate on what it is that drives our pupils, other than the lure of lucre. Let us hope they are sufficiently imaginative to find their answer. If parents and teachers can continue to foster rigorous, liberal humanism, our pupils will have earned the enormous privilege their education afforded them. They will be great servants in the world outside Dean's Yard – writers, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, teachers and the occasional virtuoso – mindful of others, impatient of cant, and restless for truth. There, *there*, is the life of the spirit.

Jottings

Recent efforts at fund raising have generated considerable enthusiasm among pupils. Milne's organised a day of gourmandising and live music in Yard and Grant's staged a home-based version of *The Weakest Link*, in which Miss Choulerton achieved the impossible, being both more frightening and obnoxious than Anne Robinson. To the mortification of several contestants, Editor prominent among them, a posse of staff made the long, lonely Walk of Shame. It was one of the most technically impressive and genuinely entertaining events of its kind in years and, best of all, it was also entirely pupil-led. Profound congratulations to Louise Macmillan and Skanda Surendra.

Toffee pudding at Garrigill, wind-swept walks on Hadrian's Wall and Lindsay's driving of the minibus have all been etched into the private histories of nearly three generations of young Westminsterers. The present Fifth Form have mostly missed out on each of these, collateral casualties of the cumulative disruption occasioned by floods, rail disasters and Foot and Mouth. Next year, all will be back to normal.

Is Alston the right place for a country base? As usual, opinion is divided. Most of the argument so far has centred on the preferred location (Wales, the West Country, northern France and the Cote d'Azur have all been mentioned), but there is also a dissenting minority who say that the rural experience has no serious educational value here.

Is it tempting fate to say how civilised football at Westminster has become? It has not passed unnoticed by Old Westminsterers, either. The best teams achieve remarkable results against the top soccer schools in the country. The number of 'B' teams we field at all ages suggests that the nationwide love-affair with the game has been translated here into real schoolboy commitment. Best of all, the prevailing mood of our players is serious, competitive – but also self-

controlled and civilised. Instead of surly, snarling (and highly stylised) denouements at the end of hard-fought matches, one sees handshakes and mutual appreciation. For spectators, time spent at Vincent Square and on away matches is almost invariably a pleasure. More of the same, please.

Pink is the best student publication at Westminster since time immemorial. The whole thing exudes creativity and zest – and the layout has struck green envy into this editor's heart. How restful, also, to have a school publication that scarcely bothered to mention Saturday school, drugs or Abbey. Still, the absence of parochialism didn't quite hold out for the usual north London self-congratulatory *wunderkind*. Pepper's Restaurant in Clapham was recommended as a stop-off point for people living in the area, 'before heading north'. Damned cheek!

It is not a sight to gladden the heart: Sixth Formers, so often the lynchpin of cultural, social and sporting life at the school,



are presently sunk in a morass of AS Levels. It might be easier to suffer the change if one had confidence in the intellectual rigour of the new examinations. Initial impressions suggest that they are chiefly remarkable for managing to be both cumbersome and vacuous. Contrast that with the maturity and effervescence of many of the candidates.

We all have to tread a pretty fine line here – pupils have to be given every opportunity to perform to best capacity, but the thought of that buoyant first year of Sixth Form being turned into some ghastly revision sweat shop would be insupportable. In fact, there has been no slackening of interest in all the usual extracurricular melange that characterises the year, and Academic Options, that splendidly idiosyncratic Westminster institution, has never been more popular. ASs may be a feature of the landscape – they should hardly be the summit, however.

Tim Francis

Tim Francis was cast as Buttons in a Yard production of *Cinderella* last July. It was an impromptu affair, staged by Helen, a Down's Syndrome member of Westminster PHAB with a passion for recreating musicals she has watched on video – literally, line by line.

Now, while Tim is sweet-natured, not even those who love him best would describe him as blessed with infinite patience; while he is big-hearted and brave, he also embarrasses easily. There was no interval in the production, and Tim was on stage the entire two hours it lasted. He huffed and puffed a good deal and indeed at one point tried to make a break for freedom, when the director's very fierce eyes were briefly averted. Egged on by his colleagues (young Witney and myself), both weeping with laughter, he gave Helen her greatest evening that Summer.

I find in that innocent memory a metaphor for Tim's achievement here. All-purpose, never too proud to take a back seat, or even to look a bit of an ass if it served the greater interest, he has been the sublime servant, as well as part of the pantheon, of Westminster School. As Registrar for the last nine years, to many pupils his face is that of a remote dignitary who set them a Maths puzzle the day of their first visit; for most younger colleagues, he is an amiable but reserved bloke, whose elastic morning breaks give him unrivalled access to the single Common Room copy of *The Independent*.

Tim is not pushy: he would probably slip into retirement without a murmur, save to his closest friends. They are unwilling to let that happen. In a few weeks, he will leave Westminster after thirty seven years of service and, with his wife Jenny, go to live on their farm in Essex.

It seems an unimaginable timespan. He came to Westminster in September 1964, the same summer that Harold Wilson managed, by a whisker, to squeeze into Downing Street. It was an era of self-conscious modernism, of the white heat of technology blowing away the cobwebs of Edwardian tweediness. Many professionals of this period, a few schoolteachers among them, shot to prominence on the back of an intellectually thin modishness.

Tim was incapable of such artifice, and averse to self-advertisement. In fact, in his first dozen years of Westminster, he simply applied himself conscientiously to what has been called, rather patronizingly, the 'craft' of schoolteaching. He taught the classics, in which his elegance and accuracy are the stuff of legend - nurturing the bright and diligent with quiet approval, and tolerating the apathetic with Spartan stoicism. Intellectually restless, he also studied for a Russian degree at LSE, devoured its literature and took a year's sabbatical in Georgia, adding a formidable second string to his scholarly bow. Year in and out, he coached football and cricket

teams and sustained their varying fortunes with the same kind of unvain good humour that has been the imprimatur of his professional life. He ran Expeditions and took boys and girls off mountaineering in holidays and half terms; he went on endless exchange visits to Moscow and Leningrad; he attended house and school plays and concerts, became Secretary of the Common Room.

It all sounds straightforward, in a busy sort of way, but that degree of immersion, not always shared by more flamboyant and less fastidious colleagues, exacts a toll. Shortly after he returned from his sabbatical year in Russia, he married Jenny Parrington, a farmer's daughter and a research biochemist. She and Tim upheld each other's tastes and value systems perfectly, and were soon joined by a daughter, Lucy, and son, Andrew. This vigorous, affectionate (and occasionally quite noisy) household has been the undoubted mainstay of Tim's life ever since.

In 1976, John Rae asked Tim to head a new day house, Dryden's. His housemaster's responsibilities were extended five years later when he opened the first girls' boarding house in Barton Street. The latter, especially, was a formidable challenge at a time when most of the overwhelmingly masculine Common Room were demonstrably ignorant of the ways and the needs of adolescent girls.

But Tim was an enormously capable housemaster: at its simplest, he knew that the children of apparently affluent homes can also be deprived; when problems surfaced, he involved himself with compassion, energy and self-effacement. He also believed that the big problems defied simple, unilateral solutions, and if younger or more immature colleagues could not understand that – that was their problem. While Tim has never patronised anyone in his life, whatever the provocations, it would be stretching truth a little to say that frustration never surfaced. I was a bit crestfallen my first term when I asked him to chase up a well-known malingerer in the Remove and met what was to become a fairly famous TPF formula – *Well, I don't know! If he insists on staying at home/doing no work/cutting lessons etc etc – What do you want me to do about it?* (All this in a rather ratty staccato.)

Dryden's boys and girls were famously happy to be in his house: he managed expertly that fine line between running a happy ship, and a tight one – I think if he ever erred one way, Dryden's was always happy. Loyal servant of the school he always was, but his reasoning suggested that most of our boys and girls were bright, fortunate kids who could surmise the key lessons in life without a system of martial law. Nagging pupils – or (quite as bad) its corollary, lionising them – were traits he deplored.

In 1988, Tim replaced David Bland as President of the Common Room, an office he held for the next ten years. It was a pretty political time, and meetings were nearly

always loud affairs and great fun, unless you happened to be the focus of animus, which was one of the less welcome fruits of office. He chaired meetings with patience and dexterity, and showed a paternal forbearance with the Young Turk element. He was less confrontational with the authorities than some thought desirable, but perhaps he had a point. Tim's instincts have always been cautious, but – once roused – he was dogged in championing a cause. In hosting events – and we had lots of them – he was at his best: he and Jenny were ever-genial, quite without self-importance, and ready with a broom and brush at the end of the evening. His valedictions to departing Staff at the end of term were peerless, combining wonderful felicity in prose, touching gentleness of delivery with the occasional splendid blunder.



In 1991, Mark Tocknell – greatly to Tim's delight – was chosen as his successor in Dryden's. Tim carried on running Barton Street for another three years. Perhaps his care and compassion found its quiet apotheosis in the care of those girls to whom, as he ruefully admitted, he quite often lost his heart.

After Gerry Ashton became Master of the Under School, Tim took over as Registrar. Those of us who knew something of his time habits (approximate) or of his shyness at first meetings (sometimes amounting to abruptness) wondered, a little concerned, how it would work out. We should have known better. Prospective families found in Mr Francis a gentle and perceptive host, and the best counter-advertisement for a school sometimes criticised for being too hard-edged. The intimidating administrative challenges of the job have, of course, been meat and drink for a man with his forensic

love of systems. The job is not one which gets easier, but he has blossomed in the role.

Nor have the cares of high office led to any let up in extra-curricular activities. He allowed himself to be roped into various plays (giving a stunning performance in the Mission Band in our 1991 production of *Guys and Dolls*, alongside Willie Booth and Gerry Ashton). He continued his twice-yearly cycling trips to France and Holland, exhausting most of his pupils (*not so fast, Mr f***ing Francis*, one Lower Shell was heard to mutter through clenched teeth on the road to St Malo). He also took over much of the management of PHAB, Westminster's course for older pupils and those with serious physical and mental disadvantages. There is nothing glamorous about working day and night the first full week of the Summer Holiday, but Tim has kept

it up, and never (even when he was moving house that same week) asked to be relieved. Whether organising a transport roster to take people home, dancing his energetic four step at the PHAB disco or presiding at the Sunday entertainment, his energy and mindfulness have given everyone a filip.

Tim spawns stories more than most people – mostly to do with him shouting loudly at people for mistakes which were entirely of his own authorship. But I want to avoid the risks of turning him into a parody. He is a deeply serious man who, had he been more flamboyant and more unself-

conscious in looking after his own interests, might have walked into a range of headmasterships. But, as it happened, he chose to stay at Westminster for virtually all his working life. Perhaps there are moments when that reflection gives him a pang. But I think he made a good decision: one that was true to him, and of immeasurable benefit to us. He and Jenny are good value, great company – and they know right from wrong. Westminster is no more immune to the lure of ephemera and moral relativism than anywhere else: Tim has lent a blend of sociability, gravity and seamliness which has fundamentally affected the character of the school at large and, perhaps, of the Common Room in particular. For each of his thirty seven years here, there are pupils, colleagues and Westminster friends who look on him with gratitude and love.

David Hargreaves

Tim Francis: A Classicist's Recollection

Tim Francis was almost my first point of contact with Westminster; he was my form master, and the qualities he made apparent to my dimly appreciative twelve year old mind are very much the qualities I have continued to associate with him ever since. During that initial rather intimidating lesson he seemed at once to be slightly larger than life, a man with a high regard for truth but also with an impish, irreverent sense of humour, a person of enormous kindness and patience, and a teacher at ease with and understanding of the ways of his charges. To that first impression much else has of course been added subsequently – but it wasn't a bad beginning!

Generations of Westminster pupils have benefited from Tim's wide understanding of Classical matters. He has cast his net very broadly, and his knowledge and appreciation of history and literature frequently put those of his colleagues to shame – quite apart from anything else, the Department's only reliable source for the early Roman Republic is now retiring! Above all, though, he is perhaps a linguist – and a linguist in the old-fashioned sense of the word. Not only in his early years as a teacher at Westminster did he take himself, *in his spare time*, from Russian alphabet to Russian degree, but of late he has begun to immerse himself in Modern Greek. His grasp of the Classical languages is quite simply superb – not just their grammar and syntax, but also the ways in which they can be manipulated. To read one of Tim's translations from English, be it into prose or verse, can be a very humbling experience; felicity and elegance are their watchwords, and they give great pleasure. This is no mere passive appreciation on his part – it is what used to be meant by the word 'taste.'

Over the years Tim has contributed enormously to the Classics Department, and with far more than just his pedagogic and Classical skills. He understands the ways of men (and schools), and has wide experience of discretion and diplomacy; this has made him a wise and valued counsellor to several Heads of Department. We shall very much miss his acuity and perception – so often delivered with a wry laugh, for he is a keen observer of the ridiculous. And so he hangs up the tools of his trade and leaves us for his Sabine Farm. Is it too much to hope that, as he relaxes with a goblet of well-earned Falemian, he might write one of those many books which he so often urged us to produce?

Charles Low

Tim Francis: A Russianist's Recollection

Tim Francis and Russian at Westminster are all but synonymous. His active interest in the language and associated culture began in that distant era when the Soviet Union was run – although 'walked' might be a more appropriate verb – by Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev, whose torpor has subsequently earned the period the tag in Russia of 'the years of stagnation'. How different was Tim's approach to life: not content with his mastery of the Classical languages, he took up the study of Russian and applied through the British Council to spend an extended period in the land of the language's origin, where daily contact with the written and spoken word would enable him rapidly to come to terms with its subtleties and complexities. The outcome was typical of both Soviet bureaucracy and its counterpart in the British Council, for he was duly dispatched neither to Moscow nor to Leningrad, but to Tbilisi: not then to Russia and its steppes at all, but rather to Georgia and its mountains.

The language of Georgia bears no resemblance whatsoever to that of Russia, but, undaunted, Tim quickly immersed himself in the cultural milieu of Tbilisi. He enjoyed the renowned Georgian hospitality to the full and with Russian the lingua franca of the entire Soviet Union, returned from his lengthy Caucasian jaunt with an enviable knowledge of the language he has continued to study and teach throughout the intervening thirty years.

During those three decades the Soviet Union has, astonishingly, passed away, General Secretaries – Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, Gorbachev – have come and gone, and even Boris Yeltsin has now yielded his Russian presidency to Vladimir Putin. Through all this turmoil Tim has avoided the perils of the years of stagnation, while still remaining what he always was: an inquisitive linguist who delights in the minutiae of language for their own sake; an erudite literary scholar with an impressive range of reference, classical and modern; an excellent travelling companion – the original meaning of the Russian 'sputnik' – with energy in abundance to appreciate the trip himself and to ensure the pupils did too; above all, a marvellous colleague, always supportive and never complaining, even when asked to teach a Chekhov play for the umpteenth time.

Tim's kindness, humanity, wisdom and utter decency are a lesson to us all, teachers and taught, and I am sure that when those he has helped to nurture look back on his qualities they will appreciate how fortunate they were to be in his charge. Westminster will be a poorer place without him and he will be sorely missed, not least by the Russian-speaking fraternity.

Hugh Aplin

Tim Francis: A Pupil's Recollection

The payphone was placed in an unfortunate position in 4 Barton Street, next to the partition wall between boarders and the Francis family. This meant that we heard most of what went on in the Francis household when we were trying to call home. But one of the great things about Tim and Jenny was that they were very relaxed about us hearing arguments with Lucy about her homework or with Andrew about his practising the violin. I have to say, I don't know what was worse, the arguments or the violin practice! More seriously, it was nice to be next to a normal family, especially in the first few



weeks of Westminster School. It made us feel like we were still at home, and that we were just part of an extended Francis family. I recall, to my embarrassment, that I had several heartbreaks and tearful moments over Westminster boys. Tim always treated each event with just as much gravity as the last (although these heartbreaks became rather regular at times!). He resisted making me feel like I was just an adolescent girl, discovering boys for the first time! And he always knew which boy it was and what the problem was before I even told him.

Tim's wisdom always shone through. Once, a couple of hours before one House Concert I was having problems with insubordinate Fifth formers, a difficult situation with a friend in Barton Street and a missing violinist who was supposed to be performing. It was all too much for a 17 year old. Tim was unbelievably supportive throughout the situation, and spoke tactfully and appropriately to my parents, who, following Tim's advice, took me off after the House Concert for a night at home to recover. And when I returned to school, Tim behaved like it had never happened.

I always thought that teachers were supposed to hide their personalities in front of pupils, to ensure maximum discipline—that is, until I went to Westminster, that is. He trusted the girls in Barton Street with a level of independence which I would have thought is unique for a boys boarding school in the middle of a big city. We were allowed to fend for ourselves, make mistakes, break some rules, and live surprisingly independent lives—but he always knew what was happening, and always cared.

Charlotte Collet-White (Dryden's 1989-1991)

Mark Williams

The Elizabethan is very sorry to record the death of Mark Williams in July of last year. Mark died after a short illness, having taken up his post as Head of Modern Languages at Bryanston School after a long, successful career at Westminster heading the French Department and serving the Common Room loyally as its Secretary. His contribution to the life of the school was enormous and his hospitality at his supper table in South Lambeth generous and frequent. It is particularly hard for us to accept that somebody so vividly present in our school life as Mark should die at the peak of his

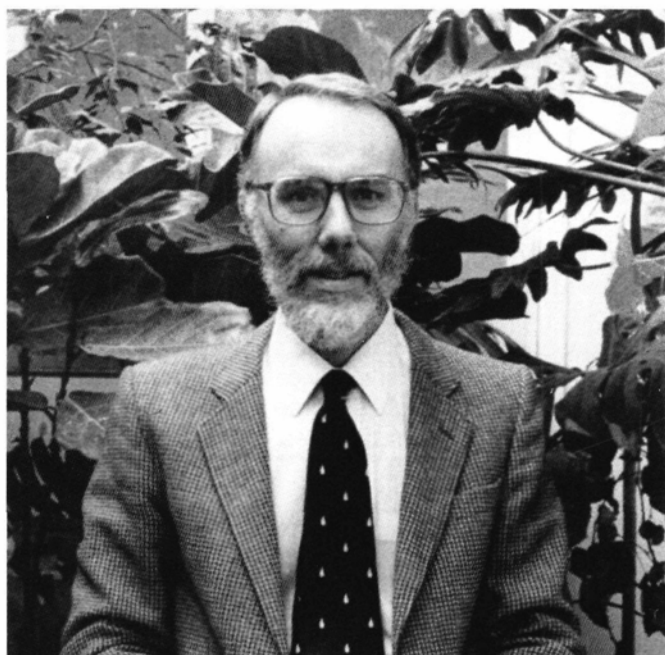
career, leaving his wife Carolyn and their children, Eleanor and Sam to survive him.

Several members of the Westminster community were able to attend Mark's funeral last August at Bryanston on a bright summer's day. The former chaplain of the school and friend, Willie Booth, held the funeral service delivering a powerful and passionate address which commended those life-enhancing qualities of Mark, especially in his final months when he showed immense fortitude and good humour.

We shall all miss Mark and send our love and commiserations to Mark's family and friends, and in particular Carolyn and the children.

Andrew Brown

Andrew Brown was appointed to Westminster in January 1977. He came from Uppingham School with his wife Jane, Molly then four and half and William six months. Andrew joined David Custance in the Biology Department and took over the department. When David became Director of Studies in the 1980s. Another David took another Brown into Liddell's as a house tutor, and there Andrew remained until David and Tess left Westminster. Tim Francis then took Andrew into Dryden's where he is still a tutor with Mark Tocknell.



Andrew admits that he hates all ball games "having never been taught"! His station history began by replacing Michael Hugill as master-in-charge of Leisure Swimming. Then came a move up the ladder when Stewart Murray put him in charge of Team Swimming. Expeditions have always been part of Andrew's Westminster makeup. The list of places includes the Yorkshire Dales, Isle of Wight, Swanage and Alston, but the highlight must have been in the summer of 1985 when Andrew joined the Westminster Alaska Expedition spending six and a half weeks in the wilderness. Andrew's contribution both financially and creatively was centred on his talent as a botanical illustrator. Sales of his paintings raised money towards the cost of the venture, and studies done of the Flora of the Brooks Range were not only enjoyed at Westminster, but later appeared at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Pittsburgh, U.S.A.

In the Election Term of 1988 Andrew took a sabbatical - time to paint both here and abroad and time perhaps to think about his future role at Westminster. He had decided not to take the path offered by David Summer-

scale of becoming a housemaster - that role was not for him, and he had his family to consider. He did return from that sabbatical (some don't) and with Jane working full-time, William at the Under School and Molly here, he settled back into the routine of the school.

During the next thirteen years, the pleasure Andrew has derived from his success as an artist, and the successes of his children, both professional and personal, has been mixed with the sadness of Jane's illness and subsequent death in 1999. The stark reality of her loss still tugs at the emotions. Her life was a perfect compliment to Andrew's: both their characters are seen in both their children, but what we miss is that brand of New England wisdom and wit which Jane brought to every situation.

Recently, as we talked about his stint of 25 years at Westminster, he said "you won't have much to write". Well - there is. During his jubilee of teaching, his department has grown, PSE has been introduced, the role of the form teacher and tutor has been strengthened; Andrew has played his part in all of these developments, and the swimming team competes and wins against other schools. He strives for high standards, a good working relationship with his pupils, and sets himself against 'quick results' and the 'straitjacket' of the new exam system (Andrew's words). In his family life Andrew gives us a prime example of how to make a marriage work and, to use a word I am sure he hates, how to make a success of parenting. He has borne his griefs and triumphs privately, supported by a strong religious belief. He came to Westminster in faith, he emerged from Jane's death stronger in faith, and now in faith he leaves - reassured that the next step is the right one.

That step is to expand himself as an artist. I have read somewhere that Andrew believes his talent is derived from both his grandfathers who were capable draftsmen, and he has told me that his close observation of plants is a form of meditation for him. The results of this talented meditation can not only be seen in frames on walls but also in books and collections both here and in the States. Eight of his illustrations are held in the archive of the Chelsea Physic Garden (he is first Fellow of the Chelsea Physic Garden Florilegium Society) and more are held in the Hunt Institute. His pictures hang on the walls of the school and in the homes of many of us. And now he leaves us festooned with medals from the Royal Horticultural Society, his children established and excitement ahead.

Andrew the friend? For twenty-five years he has been a friend to many, all shades of the community from the youngest to oldest have had the benefit of his integrity, his reliability, his wisdom and his love. And, when the Westminster knot is cut, his support continues. God-speed: we shall miss him.

Christopher Clarke

Fiona Freckleton

Fiona Freckleton's departure from Westminster this year is far more of a loss to the school than her unaffected manner would ever allow one to suppose. She came here in September 1986 and quickly became known as a trusted and highly assiduous Maths teacher. In a department not short on personalities, she was often a favourite among her pupils, who found her both supportive and lucid. But, fairly or not, her real fame in those early years was based on her rowing: she and CD Riches were busy refashioning the Boat Club and the years that followed proved something of an Indian Summer. Fiona struck a fine balance, not just between the demands of Maths teacher and rowing coach, but – perhaps even more painful – between her coaching and personal rowing. When she returned with a bronze medal from the Paris World Championships in 1991, the Common Room broke into spontaneous applause – and David Summerscale decided the distinction was one for which it was worth begging a play.

Whatever the inner tensions these pressures created, Fiona has been ever the uncomplaining and unaffected colleague. David Summerscale perceived her real potential and asked her to replace Peter Hamilton as Housemaster of Wren's in 1996 – the first female member of Common Room to attain such a position.

It was a little moment of history. They agreed that she would carry the title of Housemaster. Who cared? In her three years in the job, she showed she was simply a natural. She had the knack of not invading her pupils' space, but they always involved her - because she was perceptive and caring. It is perhaps also to the point to say that, though she could admonish people, and be unambiguous in her criticism, she never – ever – belittled them. The result was that Wren's was an extremely happy place, and the boys and girls in her house felt (uniformly, I suspect) enhanced by her care and affection. In keeping with the best traditions of housemastering, she was utterly discreet, quite without fear or favour, and never interpreted her pupils' deep appreciation as an excuse for self-congratulation. All that, of course, made her a sublime colleague.

Fiona looked all set for the duration, but as her third year in Wren's approached, she acquired not only her husband, Nigel, but the exaggerated dimensions of someone carrying twins. These emerged in the fullness of time as William and Katherine, and even their mother, no mean multi-tasker, decided it was time to reorder her priorities. I think every single boy and girl in Wren's felt real sadness when she decided to resign, though she certainly never played any kind of cult of personality, and has moved seamlessly into the role of House Tutor there.

The demands of two lively toddlers and a husband haven't really changed her much: true, she's part-time, and her means of transport to school alternate between a people carrier (with twin buggy) and the reassuringly familiar bicycle and track suit. We'd all come to believe this would go on for ever, but the family decision to move to a new job and new life in Cambridgeshire, while welcome for them, is a real blow for us. Unequivocally one of the most talented and outstanding members of Common Room of the past fifteen years, she has a sure place in the hearts of all pupils and colleagues.

David Hargreaves

Sam Hood

Sam has been a notable figure around the School and Common Room since his arrival five years ago : his contributions to life at Westminster have been as vivacious as they have been varied. He happily engaged in trips to Greece and countless Lower School expeditions, was an energetic and popular house tutor, and survived organising athletic events and the Sixth Form entry with his sense of humour – almost – unscathed. But his most prominent role has of course been in the classroom. He is a very clever man, with a deep and scholarly love of Latin literature, but he has never talked over the heads of his pupils – rather,



he has mediated his enthusiasms in such a way that they have come to share them. His standards are high, and he has applied them strictly, but his relationship with his charges has nonetheless remained easy and relaxed.

Perhaps, however, he will be most remembered for his tenacity, indeed ferocity, in argument, be it with colleagues or pupils. It has seemed at times that there is nothing on which he does not hold an opinion : but he is punctilious and rigorous in debate, and his interlocutors can learn much from him of the rules of the game. Given this trait it is perhaps not surprising that he should wish to pursue a career in writing; there, as here, he will be challenging, but also civilised and honest, and we wish him every success.

Charles Low

Ken Zetie

A while ago I was asked about Ken – I had a call from the Head of Science at St. Paul's School. Ken had applied to be Head of Physics there, and indeed that is what he will be from September 2001. Presumably, therefore, my acquaintance at St Paul's didn't take too amiss my initial description of a red-Cordura clad (I said leather, in fact, but it isn't) biker with a pigtail on a big BMW 750 bike. Of course descriptions like this are a bit of a risk, but their Head of Science knows me and I knew perfectly well that what St Paul's was after was a first-rate physicist to run their department, and that indeed is what they have got. My later comments did run to this, I ought to add.

Ken(drick) came to Westminster in September 1997, having been an experimental physicist, a Junior Research Fellow at one of the other Royal Colleges, Christ Church Oxford. One of the great strengths of Westminster (long may it be so) is its attraction for the quirkier members of the teaching profession, and it was quickly evident that Ken would not be any anonymous mediocrity. To write of his Physics and his abilities in it would be presumptuous, so I won't other than to say that the science department has been much the richer for it. In that arena Ken has also been the managing editor of 'Hooke' since 1999, as well as having produced web pages for the Education Guardian, articles and letter in Physics Education, and contributions to New Scientist and to Photonics Spectra.

'Hooke', you may not realise, is a pretty unusual publication; few schools can match it, and it is an important vehicle for tyro science writers. Certainly under Ken's guidance the high standard of its writing has been more than maintained. Contributions to other areas of the school's life abound. He has tutored in College; he has run Upper School expeditions to Skye and to the English Lakes; he has been master-in-charge of fives since 1999. There's been U15 cricket coaching – and juggling, but probably not at the same time. Ken also re-introduced the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme this year. In the options programme he has offered British Architecture as well as cryptic crosswords – as if they weren't cryptic enough.

Hagiographies don't ring true, so where's the downside? Well, I do have to say that Ken once told me more about the green laser at Greenwich than I really wanted to know. He managed to escape garlic butter being tipped over his head when he said something that offended my wife – and sent a most marvellous bunch of flowers the next day. Oh, and there's that dark custard-coloured jacket... If that's all the criticism I can dish, it's a pretty good record for the past four years. Indeed Ken's record has been much better than pretty good. I am sad he is leaving; colourful people are worth having around, and the trite 'our loss is their gain' is true. To Ken we wish every success at St Paul's; to Ken and Jess and Zack and their pet python we wish every happiness in Barnes.

Rod Beavon

Guin Hodges

It is hard to believe that it was only four years ago that Guin arrived fresh from a year's teaching in Jamaica, confident that her experiences there would equip her for anything that Westminster could put her way. She quickly established herself as part of the Westminster scene, joined the Storey's pub coterie and has not missed a single social event of any significance since. She has also become a fine teacher. No matter what time you arrive at the RHSC in the mornings, you will be sure to encounter a lone figure hunched over a pile of marking with bowl of cereal in one hand and a red pen in the other. Soon a stream of breathless boys will start to arrive with late preps or to retake a test! Guin has always been meticulous in her preparation and thorough in her teaching. No student is ever allowed to get away with a poor test result. Remove classes will have enjoyed her scholarly approach, which provides a good grounding for their future university courses.

Apart from teaching biology, Guin has participated in and contributed significantly to a wide range of extracurricular activities including both the rowing and sailing stations. She has been on every possible expedition, including Alston. Perhaps she will be best remembered as the teacher who didn't allow Alston to burn to the ground! She has particularly enjoyed her boarding tutor role and has taken great pains to get to know the students in her House really well. She has contributed to the smooth running of the Sixth Form entry programme and recently launched a Sixth form option in knitting. This has been hugely successful, and the sight of several of the most obviously laddish of lads bent low in intense concentration over some double stitching is not one to be missed.

I am very sad to be saying good-bye to Guin as she leaves us to take up her post in Bogotá, Columbia. It is quite a wrench to lose the only other female in the department, especially as she has become a friend as well as a colleague, though I can totally empathise with her desire to do this. Guin also has mixed feelings about leaving Westminster, and hopes that any of us who travel to Bogotá in the next couple of years will look her up. We hope that she won't get herself kidnapped, as I'm not sure that we could raise the funds to pay her ransom! The Colombians will probably be mystified by her origins; is she Australian or is she Celt?

Jenny Lambert

Jo Ahier

Jo Ahier came to Westminster in 1995 having given up the joys of travelling and working in Greece to join the Geography Department. Word went round quickly that this quietly spoken, self-contained teacher was in fact a former Miss Wales – a rumour that has never entirely died down throughout her five years here.

Her teaching successes have been notable as well as her considerable organisational skills. These were used

to good effect running Alston (who can forget her returning to school covered in soot having spent the weekend scrubbing the walls of the somewhat singed School House?) and taking on the role of Assistant Director of Studies. We all wish her, Adam and Lysander the very best in their quest for the rural idyll and of course good luck in any future beauty pageants...

Claudia Harrison

Walter Fröhlich

Once a year for the past 36 years the same Bavarian has, in varying guises, appeared at Westminster during the same season - early Spring. The first time was in 1965, as a dark-haired, svelte Referendar (student teacher) from the Rupprecht Gymnasium in Munich; the last was in March 2001, as the rather less svelte and silver-haired Headmaster of Puchheim Gymnasium, some 15 kilometers outside Munich. His name is Walter Fröhlich, and the applause from the Common Room, as he left for the final time, was an indication of how much he had contributed to Westminster in the past three and half decades.

But only an indication. Nine hundred and fifty-one German students have been guests at Westminster School during that period, and nine hundred and fifty-one Westminsters have enjoyed the hospitality of three different German schools - three, because Walter, aware of the precious nature of the Exchange that he had started with Christopher Wightwick, selfishly took it with him each time his burgeoning career propelled him to a new school: Unterpfaffenhofen, Carl Spitzweg and, finally, Puchheim. The benefit of such an exchange to Westminster Germanists has been incalculable: four weeks' tuition in German; four weeks' immersion in a different language and culture; four weeks of excursions; a taste of German hospitality (so often more generous than our brand); and the chance of making lasting friendships. It has also enabled Westminster German teachers to refine their own linguistic expertise, and allowed them to attend to the more interesting aspects of German teaching - such as poetry, history, art, drama, cabaret, film, Lieder, opera - knowing that their students could speak the language with great confidence by the time A level loomed. Walter's own contribution has been prodigious. In Germany he always accompanied groups to Salzburg, Regensburg, Oberammergau, Linderhof, Neuschwanstein, Andechs and many other places of interest, such as breweries and Biergärten; and as Headmaster he has for each of the last five years insisted on cycling with Westminster groups across the

mountains to visit Ludwig the Second's castle at Linderhof - a whole-day excursion - even when headmagisterial matters should have detained him elsewhere. And in England he not only escorted German students round all the Cathedrals in the South, introduced them to Alston, accompanied them to the Houses of Parliament and the Old Bailey, but he also preached to Westminster students in Abbey, and taught many classes to Upper School historians on Saint Anselm - in English and with the authority of a leading expert in the field.

Because nearly a thousand Westminster Germanists have been let loose in Bavaria, it is not surprising that problems, misfortunes, calamities have occasionally arisen. One boy, charming but inebriated, decided at midnight to singe all the Kakteenbärte or cactus beards of his host parent's collection that had taken more than 30 years to assemble (that's a bit like singeing all your first editions...); another had his jaw broken by a German boy intent on saving his girlfriend's honour; and another somersaulted from his bike when returning at breakneck speed (he broke everything but his neck) from Linderhof... In London it was no different.

The parents of one English girl insisted on their guest holding his knife and fork properly and sitting up straight at table; one corpulent Bavarian broke eight chairs in his host parents' home; and four were arrested for 'stealing' ashtrays from a pub during a harmless farewell celebration. I can still see them in Cannon Row Police Station, trembling behind bars. In an area pullulating with crime, the police then sent four Black Marias to their host parents' houses, found no incriminating evidence and summoned the delinquents to appear the following morning at Bow Street Magistrates' Court where, having seen the pimps, prostitutes and embezzlers prosecuted, they were each fined £5. In all these cases Walter was understanding, firm and unflappable.

His hospitality was as legendary as his energy, and many Westminster teachers have enjoyed staying with Leo and Walter at Gräfstrasse 53, sitting in the garden or Wintergarten, talking into the night and drinking their way through his cellar of German and South Tyrolean wines. *Habt Dank!*

The Protestant theologian Rudolf Bultmann once predicted that traditional Christianity, with its beliefs founded in the idea of the supernatural, would be 'impossible in this age of electric light and the wireless.' To a certain extent, one might argue that the prophecy has proven to be true: nowhere can the decline of religion be seen so clearly as in the West, where technological development continues at an astonishing rate matched only by the rise of cynicism. Some still cling to a nominal faith, others believe until they reach a point of material satisfaction. But few are those who uphold theism in its traditional form, and fewer still are those who can manage to have a wholly religious conception of the world – or who would aspire to. The last three centuries saw the sacred come under heavy attack from many corners, with some of the assaults inflicting permanent damage. Is there a way forward for modern-day theists? What does ditching religion say about us as a society? And were the band *Blur* on to something when they released the album 'Modern Life Is Rubbish'?

It is worth remembering that atheism, both active and passive, is nothing new. Psalm 14:1 refers to 'the fool' who 'hath said in his heart, There is no God.' In India, a revolt against the increasingly powerful – and financially demanding – Brahmin monks in 500 BC led to some of the warrior caste declaring themselves atheists (*charvakas*). Even Shakespeare, writing in rigidly Protestant England, often managed to evoke the godless mindset – most memorably in the tragedy *Macbeth*:

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the
stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

It was not, however, until the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries that atheism began to be viewed as a real, preferable alternative to the religious outlook which had previously dominated. Philosophers began to highlight inconsistencies in the theology of the monotheistic religions while – later on – reductionist accounts of religion sought to break it down into a product of economic, psychological and/or sociological factors.

Modern life is rubbish

Atheism isn't a new phenomenon - it's been around for centuries. Francis Murphy looks at the questions raised as society undergoes the latest drift from traditional beliefs

This was the age that produced David Hume's challenge to believers in the form of the problem of evil (i.e. if God were both omnipotent and benevolent, then there would be no evil in the world), and later which led to Karl Marx famously describing religion as 'the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of the spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.'

It would be a mistake to think that the voices of believers went unheard during this period, and many of the attempts at showing the worldly origins of religion were demolished either at the time of their proposal, or later, in light of developments. One of the best examples is that of Freud's account of religion, in which he sought to show monotheistic belief as being a case of the Oedipus complex operating on a large scale. His claim might have dealt a more decisive blow had it not been for its reliance on an incorrect view of genetic inheritance (wherein Freud adopted the French scientist Lamarck's view that experiences can be passed down in the genes), an invented history (anthropologists have refuted the historical scenario which Freud envisioned as the site of the Oedipal killing), and the dubious assumption that the development of an individual is echoed in the development of society. But even as Freud finally shuffles off the stage, his claims regarding religion largely dismissed by the academic community, others step out of the wings with their own unique explanations.

At the turn of the century, we are the audience to a (particularly strident) performance from the ubiquitous Richard Dawkins – who talks a great deal of how religion is like a 'virus', and yet does not seem to accept that even if natural selection does account for our present-day neurological constitution, and even if there is such a process as 'cultural evolution' (both claims he has made) then the fact of religion being so widespread must be a sign that it is a part of being successful in the natural lottery of survival, rather than a defect. He also falls into the trap that many other scientists who take on theology have found themselves in. Science becomes not an objective system of establishing facts, but instead becomes a process whereby the crusader scientist can ascribe purposes to each and every one of us – our purpose, according to Dawkins, being to replicate our DNA. It's almost as if the poor man is so astounded by the wonder of procreation that he has concluded – somewhat unscientifically – that it is not only one of the features of human life, but our exclusive purpose, and



that we need look no further in trying to understand human existence. In fact, that's exactly what has happened. How else can one explain his claim that 'we are machines for propagating DNA ... it is every living object's sole reason for living'?

Dawkins' flawed inferences aside, the fact that many reductions of the general phenomenon of religion – especially psychological ones – fail to acknowledge that there are godless religions in the world (many forms of Buddhism, for instance, deny the existence of a deity), instead restricting their reductions to theistic systems, does little to convince one of their ability to discredit religion in its many forms.

Rather more interesting than the inevitably crude attempts to reduce all religion to the sum of other factors is the criticism of religious language which began with the rise of logical positivism in twentieth century philosophy. Although others had previously condemned the language of religion as 'nothing but sophistry and illusion', it was not until during the first half of that century that this accusation was put into a more convincing form.

What logical positivists have argued, based on their understanding of meaning within language, is that religious language tends to be meaningless. A statement such as 'God loves everyone' might make grammatical sense, but since it is neither analytic nor is it self-contradictory, and since it cannot be verified through experience, it cannot be said to be either true or false – and is thus without meaning. Obviously, this criticism would have serious implications for theism of all sorts if it were unanswerable. One response to positivism came from a man who had previously been a positivist himself – Wittgenstein. According to Wittgenstein's later work, language is not something inflexible and universal, but instead acquires its meaning through use, and is rooted within its social

Many forms of Buddhism, for instance, deny the existence of a deity

context. Wittgenstein argued that different forms of life have different corresponding 'language-games', which contain internal rules and logic. A consequence of this, he claimed, was that it was pointless for someone outside a language-game to try to force it to fit to some external standard. For religion, this would mean that religious language is meaningful as it stands, and does not have to conform to the demands of positivists. But there are serious objections to this approach. Many philosophers have rejected it, seeing their discipline as something more than just ordering the language systems of a self-contained 'game' and claiming that philosophy reaches for genuine, isolated truths. Theists are also likely to find Wittgenstein's later philosophy of language disagreeable, claiming that talk of God is not some restricted phenomenon but universally relevant – Wittgenstein's defence may act as a shield against criticism, but it also acts as a barrier preventing apologetics. Some, taking up the challenge posed by the logical positivists' understanding of meaning, might even go on to argue that religious claims are verifiable through experience – perhaps in some post-death existence. What other issues arise when one tries to establish the validity and

relevance of religion? Suffering television owners across the country are used to the sight of Conservative politicians denouncing the erosion of 'traditional moral values' in society, and then going on to link this erosion to the fact that orthodox religious belief is also in decline. Despite the tedious presentation, some are prepared to draw from this a wider point: that religious belief is somehow tied to morality, and that without a belief in God or some sacred code, it is hard to construct a coherent moral vision – a view that Dostoevsky supported: 'if God does not exist, then everything is permitted.' The logical positivists asserted – and some still assert – that morality is also meaningless. The British logical positivist A.J. Ayer came to the conclusion that talk of morals is little more than the expression of personal pref

erences. What other issues arise when one tries to establish the validity and relevance of religion? Suffering television owners across the country are used to the sight of Conservative politicians denouncing the erosion of 'traditional moral values' in society, and then going on to link this erosion to the fact that orthodox religious belief is also in decline. Despite the tedious presentation, some are prepared to draw from this a wider point: that religious belief is somehow tied to morality, and that without a belief in God or some sacred code, it is hard to construct a coherent moral vision – a view that Dostoevsky supported: 'if God does not exist, then everything is permitted.' The logical positivists asserted – and some still assert – that morality is also meaningless. The British logical positivist A.J. Ayer came to the conclusion that talk of morals is little more than the expression of personal pref

erence – since ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are terms with as much meaning as a cheer or a boo, ethical judgements are, in a final sense, meaningless. Most people who live without a faith in the divine are not drawn to such a view of morality – a fact which some see as proof of the inconsistency of the agnostic’s/atheist’s position, but which others would claim attends to the fact that it is indeed possible to have a ‘godless morality’. In a book of that title, the controversial Bishop Holloway points out that even believers benefit from not trying to construct a moral system based on contentious divine commands, and instead advocates

religious complacency, while the Catholic Church’s questionable persecution of scientists such as Galileo has yet to be forgotten. But is there really a need for acrimony? Nowadays many religious believers are keen to stress that the purpose of science is to describe processes, and as such can never really be a threat to religion, which answers the greater questions. Some theists have cleverly employed the latest scientific data to restate an old argument for the existence of a creating force in the Universe which had as its ultimate aim the creation of humans. Starting with the assumption that, as the astronomer Fred

Hoyle put it, ‘an explosion in a junkyard does not lead to sundry bits of metal being assembled into a useful working machine’, many have said that the process of the Big Bang seems to show design. If one accepts that the Universe is not just a ‘brute fact’, as Bertrand Russell – evidently in one of his more imaginative moods – put it, then it is hard not to respond with some degree of wonder.

If we are to make sense of our lives, it is important to possess at least an elementary understanding of the religious traditions that have shaped our culture, as well as others. We may have decided that we are happy in a world where the cross has become a fashion accessory, where the tabloids act as moral arbiters, and where we know people from *Airport* or *Eas-tenders* better than we know our own neighbours.

It certainly says something about Western civilisation (of which Gandhi famously said, ‘it would be a good idea’) that we are prepared to reward

knowledge of trivia with millions while ignoring areas of genuine need. But happy as we may be, incapable of making a distinction between knowledge and wisdom, we should be careful not to assume that the major religious traditions have nothing to teach us. Their images are incredibly potent, and will continue to exert an influence over our lives – the human race has yet to come across an idea as powerful as that of the divine. From the earliest societies to our modern world, there has always been a yearning for a relationship with something greater. It may have changed its form over time, and it may not always be as reasonable as those who experience it might like to argue, but it has often been the driving force behind the greatest achievements and the most beautiful works of art as well as some of the darkest chapters of history – to the contemporaries of Tracy Emin and Damien Hirst, Nietzsche’s claim that ‘art raises its head when religions relax their hold’ sounds decidedly hollow.

Ultimately, it seems that to ignore the religious impulse, to closet oneself in an apathetic life of doing things without any view to the wider context, is to needlessly limit the range of human potential.



a system based on the principals of tolerance and respect – although the implications this has for God’s revealed commandments (as found in Islam, Judaism and Christianity) Bishop Holloway fails to address. Such arguments also tend to ignore the fact that many people need a concrete basis – be it imaginary or not – for their moral decisions, and that those who lack it will never be satisfied with a vague, human-centred system. It is to them a matter of either absolute moral obligations, or chaos. Utilitarians often talk of the need for people to develop a universal rather than personal view if the greatest good is to be achieved; it might be that the God of monotheism, whether we believe in Him or not, is one of the best ways for many to achieve such an overarching vision. Sociologists since Durkheim have argued that the idea of God plays a powerful role in community identity – and since morality is so fundamental to social ties, perhaps it is no surprise that morality without God can seem empty.

An issue which it would be impossible to avoid in addressing the question of religion in modern society is the role of science. Darwin is remembered for having shaken our Victorian ancestors out of their Genesis-based reli-

So unfair

Is football fair? Permanently-injured Nathaniel Pimlott curses

Football hacks are celebrated because of their ability to make terrible puns. Clichés are a football writer's bread and butter. Sport has its own lexicon which is immediately understood by fans: deflections are always *wicked*, crosses are always *teasing* and penalties are always *slotted home*. What's more football journalists are meant to commentate on more than just football but to extract from football truths about *life*. And all with a vocabulary of no more than 500 words.

The reason I'm writing about football, is because I'm not playing it: I have recently been injured for over a year due to knee injury which I sustained in the first match of last season. I am the sort of player who always gets injured. From the first graze in the football games at the age of seven to the slightly more serious injuries at 16, I have always been the Anderton of our year and as a result the butt of similar jokes. It didn't matter whether the injury itself was a sprained ankle or a strained wrist; all that mattered was the fact that I would, inevitably, get injured at some point in the game. It gave certainty to games. I always said to myself that it was because I went in for more tackles than other players or that I was smaller than others or simply I was more wholehearted in the tackle. Yet now as a more experienced and weathered player I feel I owe my ill luck to fate. Fate, and perhaps a little clumsiness on my behalf. But definitely fate. It wasn't my fault I fell on my head when I was two, it wasn't my fault that I broke my leg when I was four and it wasn't my fault that I injured my knee. And yet other people never ever get injured. They play football before they can crawl and all they get is a slight bruise from a bad tackle. Unfair! did you hear me? UNFAIR! What I'm driving at here, apart from the injustice of the gods, is that football itself is a game which while proposing to be uncertain and to do with the skill of the players, is simply unfair. No sorry, not unfair (I must quell my bitterness) but determined by fate and inevitabilities.

I am at the moment on a stunning and remarkable comeback: I've done one training session. This training session is my first ever with the third eleven. I've never been really good at sport although I have mostly been in the prospective 'A' teams of each year. Yet I've never felt at home in 'A' teams. 'A' teams are too aggressive for me (or more accurately, too good) while 'B' teams are friendlier. You don't get sneered at when you trip up over the ball, you get laughed at instead. There's also camaraderie in 'B' teams, especially as one gets older, which isn't present in 'A' teams. Due to my injury, like a good French manager, I have had time to think about football from an objective point of view. This camaraderie, I have

decided, is not due the development of friendships or simply due to being less competitive, rather, a shared sense of certainty in the outcome of matches, similar to why one feels camaraderie with other England supporters. While not meaning to hurt the feelings of third eleveners's past or present I am going to make a damning comparison: The English football team seems to share a lot in common with the third eleven. You see third eleven games have a certain Keeganesque feel to them: the style of the football is similar; when a player gets the football he is terrified by it and boots it up field. More importantly there is the same sense of inevitability: the score will eventually be 9-1 but the first two goals will just be due to a slow start and the coach journey and the next six, well they'll just be terribly unlucky. The last one admittedly will be due to sloppy defending but it was understandable due to the elation after our number 11 having miss-kicked the ball and it deflected off a defender into the opposition's net - wasn't that a superb goal, a wonder to be remembered for ever.

During the writing of this piece I played my first 3rd XI match. It was away against Harrow. On the way the sun broke through the constant cloud cover and made our coach into a little greenhouse on wheels. This boosted team spirit and combined with the shock of having an edible packed lunch, we did the unthinkable. . . talked about winning. WINNING - the forbidden word. Rumour had it, Harrow was a team that was easily beaten. Apparently the Harrow under 14's, when we were that age, had their first ever victory a couple of years ago, against us, which was promising. We were so full of enthusiasm and confidence we even joked about how we would score and about how I would injure myself this time. We were going to win!

Then god laughed and a storm started to brew. One of the demi-gods (actually a referee) spoke and showed us our pitch. Westminster is not a 'hearty' school. We are not thrown out on to windswept sports fields every day. We are fair weather players who are used to playing on pitches whose turf is probably more precious, inch for property inch, than that of Manchester United. By the time we started playing the weather was not fair and this was not Manchester United. More like a ploughed marsh. On a hill. Damn those gods.

We lost 3-1 but as always we definitely deserved to win. Their goals were lucky or offside or both. Our goal was superb. And, of course I injured myself, again, while kicking for a ball that wasn't there. I leave you with some Moleworth: comic hero, seminal private school boy, star and narrator of such profound revolutionary texts as *Down with Skool* and *How To Be Topp*. "It is a funny thing tho your side always gets beaten whichever skool you're at. That is like life i suppose."



Cricket Stereotypes

Cricket at Westminster
is as old as the game
itself, or very nearly,
says **Debashish Biswas**

It was ever thus – or so it seemed: two teams, decked in their spotless white flannels; boring batsmen playing forward defensives, which are gaily clapped by dodderly old men for their exquisite style; and of course, no definite result despite a whole day, or even a whole week's, play.

Cricket, probably more than any other sport, has spawned a wealth of statistics and literature to immortalise all the events that take place on the field. It has done so even in its infant days: one Arthur Haygarth, a worthy Harrovian, made it his life's work to compile a long shelf load of reports references and scorecards for all 'major' cricket matches up to that time. He was certainly not the last of his type, for even today statisticians gripe

over exactly how many first-class centuries Dr. W. G. Grace scored. An effectively chronicled sport history probably holds little intrinsic interest to the layman, but it does mean that the origins of stereotypical customs can be explained and dated.

Cricket at Westminster certainly pre-dates most 'normal' cricket customs. When the AXA-sponsored Sunday League kit was unveiled to the public in spring 1993, it was widely seen as the establishment yielding to its reactionary element because cricketers were not playing in white. This storming of the citadel had been instigated by the Packer circus of the late 1970s during which the cricketing establishment had been held to ransom when

Packer lucratively signed most of the world's top players who were subsequently banned. Not merely did he pay the top international cricketers more money than the sightscreen movers earned – as they had famously not done in the showcase Centenary Test of 1977- he unashamedly made them play in pinks, greens and yellows in order to have a good attendance at the games and high rating for his television channel.

However, this was less of a first than many imagined. Throughout most of the 1990's the back of the ten pound note then in circulation provided evidence that cricket was not always thus. Beside a portrait of Charles Dickens, Dingley Dell were to be seen playing All Muggleton in *coloured clothing and hats*. Indeed, up to the late nineteenth century, cricket was not generally played in any particular colour: Oxford really did wear dark blue, Cambridge light blue and Knickerbockers.

The forward defensive stroke was also less fundamental to the game than armchair cricket followers may like to believe. It came about towards the end of the eighteenth century, at least a century after the first set of laws on the game, due to advances in bowling. David Harris, in particular, changed batting from the art of hitting into the art of stopping by pitching the ball fuller. Around this time, young Westminster cricketers habitually made their way to a patch of land in Tothill Fields and, once in action, would regularly break windows of local houses. Matters came to a head when one

The idea that cricket was a gentleman's game came about in high Victorian times

householder fired a blunderbuss over their heads: the matter was eventually settled in court. Antics by public schoolboys seemed to have been the norm: after a close match between Harrow and Eton, schoolboys burned down the pavilion at Lord's which housed most of the records of the game up to that point. The idea that cricket was a gentleman's game, or one for their sons, came about in high Victorian times - the era of Dr. W. G. Grace, and of Thomas Arnold the famous headmaster of Rugby, whose XI humiliatingly dismissed a very strong Westminster XI for its lowest ever total, 11 all out, in 1854.

For a long time it was believed that the earliest known school cricket fixture took place between Eton and Westminster on July 25th 1796 at Hounslow Heath. Dr. Heath, the Head Master of Eton, had expressly forbidden a match taking place. His aristocratic pupils, most of whom were in their pe-

nultimate week at school were confident that they were too senior to be formally disciplined, disregarded his warnings and blithely continued with their arrangements for a match against Westminster. On their return, they faced summary flogging and expulsion, rather than congratulation. The contrast between this poor reception and the glowing appreciation of David Stranger-Jones' 114*, described by Mr. Jones-Parry as one of the highlights of last Election term, could not be starker.

But for all its gruesome aftermath, it turns out this was not the earliest school cricket match at all, which was, in fact, played at the first Lord's cricket ground, at Dorset Square in August

1794, in which Charterhouse took on Westminster. Annoyingly, the MCC today have only secondary references to the game, because of the fire mentioned earlier, but presumably the numbers of spectators would have made the match lucrative for the ground owners. The Charterhouse side also included at least one second cousin of Jane Austen.

One cannot actually be certain exactly how far back Westminster cricket goes, mainly because of the fire at Lord's, but there are occasional references to it in local newspapers, or in letters and memoirs of leading public figures - cricket enthusiasts, who had attended Westminster in their youth. The foremost players would take part in single wicket games, and gambling in these matches was so commonplace that the changing of odds was more fully reported than events on the field that had led to that change.

William Pitt Lennox and the poet William Cowper were no strangers to Little Dean's Yard or cricket, nor Dehany nor Powlett. As a soldier, George Sackville famously ran away from battle, but as a cricketer there are many citations in surviving records of his prowess, and his portrait hangs today in the drawing room of Ashburnham House. The earliest mention remaining though was of the Duke of Dorset who led Kent against All England in 1735: he had learnt his cricket at Westminster. Their contemporaries would hunt duck or catch rats.

Mr. McKenna and Mr. Gwyer, compilers of *the Athletic Records of Westminster School* in 1898 suggested that the QSS-TBB (College versus Town Boys) match had been played certainly longer than 92 years – that takes it back to 1806, which would make it the oldest annual sporting fixture anywhere in the world. There is nothing definitive, but sporadic mentions are frequent enough in the second half of the eighteenth century to warrant such a claim. In the period until the 1870s, numbers of non-scholars were roughly equal to scholars, but later this ratio increased to levels where the townboys held such an overwhelming advantage that the match was stopped. Now, however, it is set to be revived on Friday 25th May this year, on the same plot of land which was used over two hundred years ago for the same purpose.

This would make the Westminster game the oldest annual sporting fixture in the world

Mobile phones

Communication or just another form of one-upmanship? **Elias Mitropoulos** despairs at how we prostrate ourselves before the mobile

Silence dawns upon the classroom, as the students quietly begin their work. The rare peace and tranquillity calms everyone's nerves, especially the teacher's; there is a mood of relaxed learning. Suddenly the silence is torn apart, as a ring tone, which holds some vague resemblance to the "Bond Theme Tune," shatters the peaceful atmosphere. All eyes turn to the source of the disturbance; soon the perpetrator reaches into his jacket pocket and reveals a mobile 'phone. He bends low behind his desk and replies: "Hello." A moment passes and then the boy's cheeks become flushed with a bright red: "Yeah Mum, I'll call you back."

The classroom erupts with laughter but two people are not amused: the boy sinks into his chair in shame, knowing that next time he should remember to turn his 'phone off before coming to class. The other is the teacher who, having silenced the class, announces: "I'll see you after the lesson," while pointing his finger at the slumped figure in the chair.

The mobile 'phone has entered the school scene. Over the years it has become increasingly important to remember one's 'phone for school, even if this is at the expense of other things, such as books. Whether we like it or not, the mobile 'phone has become firmly established in our daily routines and it will be very difficult to oust it: the mobile 'phone, for the meantime is here to stay. There is no doubt that the mobile 'phone is a very useful



tool; the ability to call anyone from anywhere is naturally convenient, even if it simply means that one no longer has to carry change for those unreliable public 'phone boxes. However it is probably the increased independence that one benefits from that makes the mobile 'phone an essential belonging to any freedom-seeking teenager.

Unfortunately, however, the role of the mobile 'phone has transformed over the years from a useful yet discreet tool to a fashionable commodity that features at the heart of social life at school. Only a small walk around Yard at break-time will confirm this statement: groups of people, standing in circles scattered around Yard, hold out before them their mobile 'phones. The comparison of these 'phones at the centre of such social circles is very symbolic of the importance of the mobile. Upon closer inspection the conversation in such groups of people goes something like this: "Have you seen the new Ericsson T28. It's such a cool 'phone." To which someone replies: "I know a friend who has that 'phone; he has an Arsenal cover for it." A "Wow" then floats out of every jealous, yet admiring mouth. Such conversations are very excluding for those of us who are not blessed with a mobile 'phone and an intimate knowledge of the mobile 'phone industry.

Trying to enter these groups almost always involves the answering of one dreaded question: "Do you have a mobile?" When the truth concerning their sin is revealed, the others are usually, to say the very least, rather unimpressed and return to their previous conversation: "I hear Nokia are releasing a new 'phone." Thus such unfortunate people, who have been plagued with the social disease of not owning a 'phone, are tormented by a conversation revolving around "the new package deal The Car'phone Warehouse are offering," as they aimlessly stand around and try to fit in.

Although mobile 'phones appear to be what distinguishes a social person from a "loner," the truth is somewhat different: in certain circumstances, the mobile 'phone has become the most anti-social thing since listening to a Walkman whilst in the company of others. When a mobile rings the owner is compelled to answer the 'phone even if that means disrupting any current conversation with those present; in this way all onlookers are subjected to a range of meaningless issues, ranging from, "Mum's birthday is tomorrow! But I haven't even bought her a present," to "Did you know that Frank is cheating on Claire with Suzanne?" These onlookers thus feel neglected and try to find something meaningful to do, as they eagerly await the disappearance of the interrupting 'phone into that person's trouser pocket.

However it is not enough just to own a mobile 'phone: you must own the right mobile 'phone. This brings on the problem of keeping fashionable and in style, two things, which spell only one thing for helpless parents: the loss of *more* money. Although seemingly insignificant, it is surprising how much grief can be caused by not owning the right mobile 'phone: it is probably worse to own a mobile 'phone the size of a bottle of Ketchup, than not to own one at all. Therefore the recently purchased mobile 'phone, which would be paraded with pride in front of all of one's friends might in fact have an adverse effect for your social life: "Is that a Siemens?" someone might ask in disgust, or "You paid so much for *that!* You got ripped off."

As a result the mobile, which was adoringly polished clean on the way to school, is now shamefully hidden in the deepest depths of a blazer pocket, relegated from a social ticket to the coolest groups at school, to an added burden.

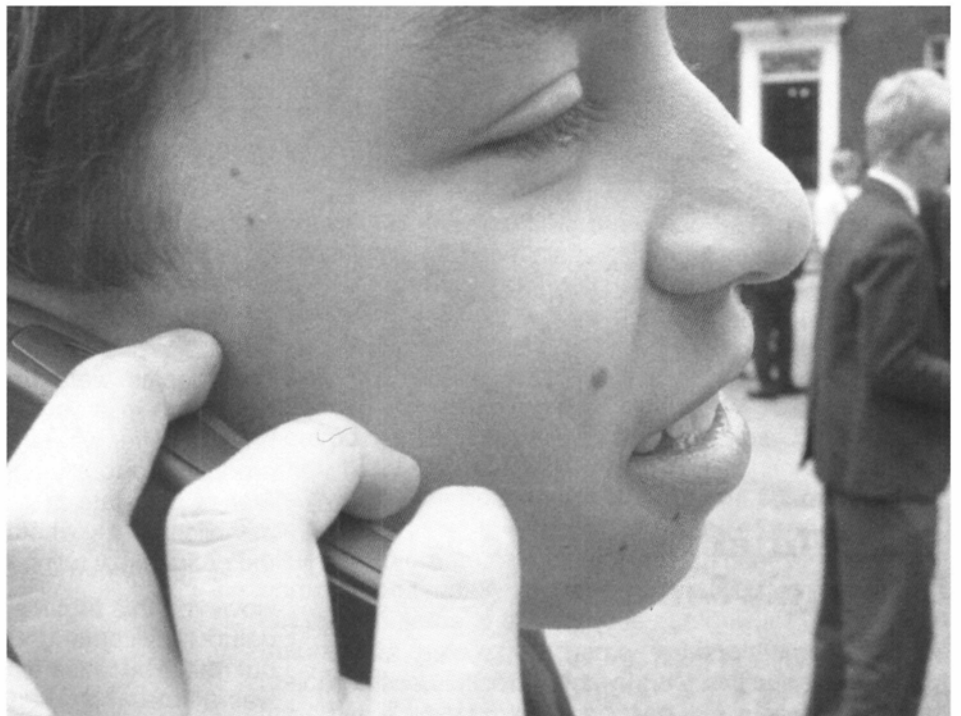
Keeping fashionable with a mobile also depends greatly on the chosen ring tone; this recently has become an essential feature of every mobile. Again a brief walk through Yard will disperse any doubts over this development. A visit to a "mobile 'phone social group" will mean the endurance of a cacophony of ring tones, as everyone is convinced that he or she has to share their unique ring tone with everyone else. It is amazing how

**However it is not
enough just to own a
'phone: you must own
the *right* mobile 'phone**

anyone could even be remotely interested in hearing a ring tone pretending to be the "Star Trek Theme Tune." But even if someone points out that the ring tone bears not even the slightest resemblance to the "Star Trek Theme Tune" then that unfortunate person is scorned with remarks resembling, "You're just jealous because you don't have a mobile." But why would anyone want to own a 'phone, which upon ringing confesses the fact that on weekends that person goes dressed as a Klingon to some Star Trek convention in Bournemouth? However, it has been the "craze" for "Snake" that has really brought conversations amongst friends to the most desperate depths. These conversations which, feature such mouth-watering questions as "What is *your* highest score on "Snake?" and "How can I score more than 500, on level 9?" are completely devoid of any individuality. And honestly, does anyone actually care if someone's top score is 1035, a whole 81 points higher than yours? Frankly, I don't think so: therefore the "Snake-orientated" conversations are almost completely meaningless, as in fact there is not a

single person on Earth who would be interested in "the strategy used when the snake is two-screen lengths."

Therefore, by all means buy a mobile 'phone, but don't let it overreach its actual use; it is a welcome accessory, not a vital organ whose absence would mean certain social death.



Therefore, by all means buy a mobile 'phone, but don't let it overreach its actual use; it is a welcome accessory, not a vital organ whose absence would mean certain social death.

Therefore, by all means buy a mobile 'phone, but don't let it overreach its actual use; it is a welcome accessory, not a vital organ whose absence would mean certain social death.



SOS

Alex Millar watches Society Outwardly Screaming

There is something very wrong with society at the moment: we live in a world where atrocities such as the killing of Damilola Taylor are commonplace and where a substantial minority feel they have the right to destroy or vandalise private or public property. This leads people to question whether things simply aren't what they used to be, to hanker after the good old days of moral values. One suggestion, highlighted by Damilola's father as to why this degenerative process has occurred is the breakdown

of the family unit. It follows that a lack of fear of one's parents could quite easily lead to a lack of fear of authority in general - if one cannot respect the lowest strata of this hierarchical system then how can they respect the top? And yet this cannot be the whole answer: 'fearing our parents' in the sense of respecting them, may very well mean we operate just fine in the rarefied air of the elite. However, as demonstrated by the May Day Rioter from Eton, we have little or no skills socially in the wider circles of humanity, which is unfortunately the only place which matters. And incidentally, those parent-hating youths that go around blowing up cars often have very strong internal, moralistic, values that lead them to turn to such extreme behaviour.

One might agree that scum who kill senselessly fit into Mr Taylor's theory, yet what does this term 'senseless' mean? Killing is nearly never senseless - unless perpetrated by a sociopath and yet, to many of us, the horrific crimes that we see in our newspapers or on the television screens cannot be described as anything other than senseless. So does this mean that we, society, are creating a sociopathic society? And here we see the problem, it lies not solely with our parents but is to do with the wider picture; with our conservative value system we breed hate-crimes, and with our liberal values we breed drug-crimes. So society is faced with the unanswerable question: which of these extremes is worse?

Let us first look for an answer as to why this sociopathic society that we live in today has come about? Along with the glorious democracy that was given to us by the Victorians was the creation of self worth. The price of democracy was therefore that people valued themselves more which, together with the rise in affluence, was the creation of the bomb waiting to go off.

Some would say that this ticking bomb went off following the Second World War where a generation of adults and newly born babies were brought up with the intention that they would live in a way and in the hope that they would never have to suffer what the millions died to end. The war was the product of a totalitarian state, and this phobia developed to a fear of the state in general, and from that, a hatred of the establishment - whether it was the basic unit of the parent or the entire glitzy ruling entity.

However, this argument has a fatal flaw, namely that modern democracy came to this world not because of the fall of Hitler but rather because of the rise of the industrial revolution. This was a time when the world effectively shrank in its perceived size, a revolution not just in science but also in politics - the voice of the people became a genuinely relevant aspect of politics. It was the beginning of a process which has led to the individual's position becoming, in a sense, autonomous.

Yet, this new sense of freedom that came about with the introduction of everyday man's input into the way his life was run, did not break down the society into a heap of smoulder-

ing vandalised factories. Within the Victorian age lay something that was quite distressing in its severity but understandable given the previous years of debauchery under the Hanoverian Kings – retrograde morality aberration. Whilst generational rebellion is an effective constant in human experience, the point is that technological advances usually take place in inverse proportion to moral fastidiousness and yet the sole exception to this rule is the Victorian period. So the Victorian era which ushered in both modern democracy and repressive social conditioning effectively shaped the face of modern moral change for the West.

The good old days of social code ended at the start of the 20th century, in a sort of knee-jerk reaction to the repressive lifestyle of their 1800's predecessors the flower power babies were born. And a period in which the harsh morality of the Victorians was broken down by people such as Freud, who highlighted the faults with such a conditioned state of affairs, was the beginning of the disaster. Yet was this a disaster? The decay of morality is inevitable; it was not so much a collapse as a modification to fit the altered reality of the time. Victorian England was sufficiently powerful that it could impose more restrictions on its people; no one has been as powerful since. This is of course speaking in terms of the West.

An interesting point arises – social conservatism is the same as tradition, but tradition is not the same as morality. Traditions tend to change far more often than morals as traditions are geared to specific times, places and beliefs whereas morals are not tied to anything except upbringing, memory and habit. You can remember traditions, even if they no longer exist, but if you aren't used to the morals, they won't suit you.

Effectively, social conservatism is whatever the status quo is, and conservatism always loses in the long run because morality breaks free. So immediately we see that moral code and social conservatism are not in fact one and the same, it just seems that way because conservatives like to invoke morals. If their beliefs were truly moral, then it doesn't make sense that other people do not agree with them. Conservative 'morality' is what "used to be", hence people tend not to listen to the more outspoken of conservatives as they realise that their beliefs do not mesh. So it is the moralists that run society, not the conservatives. It is simply the fact that at one point they were one and the same that leads to this nostalgic view of the "good old days when people had respect". In reality the good old days are just something dead, and will never come back, because the world has changed.

**For the first time
there has been an
inability to control the
intransient dark
forces at work**

So are we left in a society where moralists cannot control the 'beast' that they have unleashed? No: moralists can always control society as they reflect their society. This has the exception of unpopular dictators, but such leaders are not actually representatives of that culture and even then, they must be very powerful – even Stalin needed the tacit agreement of the peasantry.

How do leaders control a society filled with people who possess self worth? When people have self worth it follows that the leader has to change: most of the time the leader becomes the leaders, authority is split because the spreading of power reduces the risk to the common man, making him feel safer, hence stable democracy and making the common man more powerful. Yet within society there are always those who aim to undermine what they see as being an authoritarian state, because they feel they are being repressed. This comes about due to the fact that self worth is cumulative – once people have a bite of the forbidden apple they want more. However the issue is, for most of the time, not if a few feel oppressed but if the mass does. The problem arises when the culture is uncertain at this point morality becomes uncertain and a strong enough, convincing enough, voice can help write words in people's heads, this is how revolutions work. Overthrowing the culture leads to spare capacity within people's minds, space to write new rules.

Yet at the moment we have a different problem. For the first time there has been an inability to control the intransient dark forces at work - namely the acts of those who feel they can operate outside of society and have no wish to work with society to improve it with their ideas. Cumulative self worth gradually makes it harder to manage such groups within a governmental framework, and the introduction of social responsibility is required. Once again the question comes up – who decides this? Who can you trust? The conservatives who are by definition no longer relevant? The liberals who are too dangerous as they make new rules? So the choice is either hate for one or danger to the self from the other. No one can legitimately answer the question of how to sort out the problems of society; one can only let things go on naturally. In a magical way society solves its issues – the majority of the UK is right wing, yet the socialist ideal of the NHS sits easily with most. Society is filled with those unable to make up their minds and this indecisiveness paradoxically produces harmony. Society can never collapse, although its views may mutate and evolve, it can never split up into bits as that is not in its nature. The good old days of tomorrow will inevitably be those bad days that we have at the moment.

Cave paintings show that since the first humans walked the earth, there have existed right-handed and left-handed people. Throughout history, left-handed people have unjustifiably been treated with scorn and disrespect. It is only fairly recently that people have accepted not only that left-handers deserve equality with right-handers, but also that they deserve respect and admiration; for scientific studies show that they may live longer, be more intelligent and recover better from disease than their right-handed peers.

According to recent surveys, around 13% of adult Americans are left-handed, yet among 80-year-olds this figure is nearer 1%. Scientists such as Coren (who also studied left-handed people's death certificates, concluding that they were 'more susceptible to accidents') use such surveys to support the theory that left-handed people die younger than right-handers. Other scientists cite the suppression and 'correction' of left-handed children in the early twentieth century as the reason for there being comparatively fewer elderly left-handers.

Indeed, some scientists maintain the opposite: that left-handed people live *longer*. In 1991, Olsson and Ingvar, two Swedish doctors, compared a sample of breast-cancer patients with a sample of healthy people. They discovered that 5% of the healthy Swedes were left-handed, but only 1.5% of the cancer-sufferers were. This research certainly suggests that left-handed people are less susceptible to cancer than right-handers, although nobody has since been able to reproduce the doctors' findings.

Medical evidence exists to prove that left-handed people recover more quickly and fully from strokes and other brain injuries than right-handed people. The reason for this is that in left-handed people the parts of the brain which deal with specific functions (such as speech) are often located in *both* sides of the brain, whereas in right-handed people, such functions are usually located solely on one side of the brain. Strokes generally attack only one side of the brain. In a right-handed person, this could be the side dealing with speech. But because a left-handed person's brain shares the speech function across both sides of the brain, a stroke cannot destroy such a function so completely as in a right-handed person, allowing a fuller recovery.

One in three of all American Presidents (and

Can left ever be right?

William Sweet argues from an unprejudiced position that the left-handers will inherit the earth

every single President since 1980) have been left-handed; a much higher figure than 13%. Many more than 13% of the world's most celebrated artists have been left-handed; examples include da Vinci, Raphael, Picasso and Michelangelo. The conclusion appears to be that left-handed people are 'more intelligent' or 'more artistically talented' than their right-handed counterparts.

Two neurological facts could explain this ostensible intelligence. Firstly, the *corpus callosum* – the 'bridge' which connects the left- and right-sides of the brain – is thicker in left-handed people than in right-handers, resulting in more efficient information transfer. Secondly, in right-handed people, the left-side of the brain controls the right-side of the body, but in left-handed people, the left-side of the brain controls the *left* side of the body – apparently a much more effective system.

In the nineteenth century, English convents taught that left-handedness was a gift for the 'spawn of Satan'. Left-handed pupils were forced to write with their right hands (this practise was common in many developed countries until fifty years ago), in many brutal ways. Autobiographical accounts describe how left-handed children would have their left-hand tied behind their back in order to force them to write with their right-hand, or simply have their left-hand caned if they attempted to use it.

Left-handers have been the victims not only physical abuse, but also verbal abuse. It seems that even etymology is against them. The Latin word for 'left' was 'sinister', which has, in modern parlance, attained the meanings 'evil' or 'ominous'. In French, 'gauche' not only means 'left', but also 'clumsy', 'inept' and 'incorrect'. In Germany, 'links' means both 'left' and 'wrong side up', and the closely related word 'link' means 'double-crossing' and 'dirty'. Indeed, even the modern English word 'left' is somewhat prejudiced: its roots are in the old Saxon word 'lyft', which meant 'worthless'. There is also discrimination hidden in the etymology of other English words: 'ambidextrous' means literally 'right-handed on both sides', and 'dexterity' has clear roots in the Latin word for right, 'dexter'.

Many old traditions have roots in a hatred of left-handedness: we toss a pinch of salt over our left shoulder because of the once-



-commonly-held belief that it would dislodge the devil, who hovered there. We shake hands with our right-hands, which dates back from medieval times, when soldiers reasoned that shaking with the right-hand would prevent daggers from being concealed behind the back (the left-hand was not considered co-ordinated enough to manipulate a dagger). In ancient Japan, a man was permitted to divorce his wife, simply if he discovered she was left-handed. In some modern cultures, it is an insult to the host to eat with one's left-hand, which is said to date back to before the invention of toilet paper, when people would simply wet the left-hand.

Left-handed peoples are at an undeniable disadvantage in the modern world. Many modern tools are specifically designed for right-handed people; examples include corkscrews, (most) scissors, can-openers, coffee-makers, computer keyboards (which have the numeric keyboard on the right), (most) golf clubs and many hand-held power tools (drills, saws). On top of this is absolutely anything which screws or unscrews (bolts and light-bulbs, for instance) – such objects almost always require a left-to-right wrist turning action, which is uncomfortable for left-handed people. Since the advent of genetic science, people have wondered whether right- and left-handedness occurs as a result of environmental influences (i.e. being *forced* to use one hand rather than the other) or because of a genetic inheritance (i.e. specific genes make people right- or left-handed just as specific genes give people blue or brown eyes). Human geneticists such as Annett, Levy and Nagylaki have produced evidence which implies a genetic cause in books and scientific journals (including *Nature* magazine). In Scotland, doctors found that 29.5% (more than double the typical 13%) of people with the surname Kerr were left-handed, which also suggests genetic links.

Experiments carried out in the 1970s by two researchers called Hicks and Kinsbourne showed that the 'hand preference of college students correlated significantly with the writing hand of their biological parents but

not with that of the stepparents'; which seems to suggest that handedness is a genetically-inherited trait. The evolutionary reason for the greater proportion of right-handed to left-handed humans is put forth by Huheey, who claims that mothers in the time of cavemen would hold their new-born in such a way that the baby's head was on the left-hand side of their chest, and the mother's heart-beat would be able to soothe the child. The right-hand would thus be free to perform other tasks. Left-handed cavemen were therefore at a disadvantage, being less able to easily manipulate objects. Right-handedness was therefore selectively-favoured.

People in the USA who can only be described as Christian left-handed fundamentalists even say that God and Jesus were left-handed. Apparently – and I cannot personally see the logic – Jesus 'sitteth at the right hand of the Lord' because God is also left-handed, and with such an arrangement, they can 'avoid bumping elbows when they eat'. It appears also that Eve was an 'evil' right-hander who corrupted Adam ('the innocent left-handed party') by eating the forbidden fruit. However, having read the rest of their website, which also claims that 'most advanced alien races are left-handed', their evidence begins to seem rather doubtful...

Their website also claims that 'most advanced alien races are left-handed'

Several conclusions on the subject of left-handedness appear. Scientists disagree over whether left-handed people live longer than right-handers, although many now say that it is a genetically-inherited characteristic. It appears that left-handers can recover more fully from strokes, and some evidence even suggests that they are less susceptible to cancer. Their brains are more efficiently structured, and although it seems rather excessive to suggest this means greater intelligence, it may well explain why they are often more artistic than right-handers. Persecution of left-handedness extends back to classical times, with roots in many traditions and even in current etymology. It is only relatively recently that people have accepted that left-handedness is as right as right-handedness.

The meaning of life

In an urban environment, we cannot avoid ethical dilemmas. **Sarah Pett** negotiates the moral maze of Twentieth Century living

We are barely a year into the new millennium, yet recent headlines have proved it to herald perhaps the most controversial debate in medical ethics thus far: how to define 'life'. For most of the past 1000 years, the answer to this dilemma has been at the hands of the various major religious philosophies. Regardless of their differences, the essential message encompassed by these doctrines is the belief that life is a sacred gift; the power to both bestow and destroy it the right of God alone. It thus follows that religion as a whole strongly opposes any human intervention, popularly termed by the media as 'playing God'. Somewhat redundantly, suicide was for a long time illegal, and abortion has only been made legitimate in the previous century. However, as science advances at an increasingly alarming rate, new boundaries concerning what constitutes 'life' must be laid down.

Although abortion is now generally accepted as a woman's right across the globe, many believe that life begins at conception and therefore that the termination of pregnancy constitutes murder. According to Chinese tradition, a person's age is determined by the date of conception rather than the date of birth, thus conforming to this belief. Yet ironically, due to strict Communist legislation permitting only one child per couple, the rate of abortion in China is extremely high. Not only are accidental pregnancies terminated by couples who already have one child, but childless couples with a preference for the sex of their unborn child often terminate upon discovering that the foetus is of the 'wrong' sex. This practice is so prevalent that it is becoming increasingly difficult for men to find wives due to the severe deficit of women in China. A similar situation exists in India, where a bride's family



must give a large dowry to the groom's family upon marriage. The expense of this can often ruin poorer families, and so female children are considered undesirable. It is common to find clinics, especially in rural areas, which advertise ultrasound scanning to determine the sex of foetuses followed by abortion should this reveal the child to be female. India is the only country in the world where women have a shorter life expectancy than men; a result of the gender discrimination that begins in the womb.

One of the arguments in support of abortion is based on an alternative definition of life as existence independent of the mother, which thus differentiates abortion from murder. This argument is becoming more and more difficult to justify as the survival rate of premature babies continues to rise thanks to huge advances in the care they receive. While pregnancies of up to 28 weeks are routinely terminated, babies born after only 23 weeks gestation survive on a fairly regular basis. It is true to say that without around the clock intensive care, these babies would have little chance of survival, but in that case where can you draw the



line? Taken literally, children of up to 18 or even older could be murdered under the blanket term 'abortion' due to their inability to exist independent of their mothers.

A variation on this concept was behind the groundbreaking legislation in the case of the conjoined twins Jodie and Mary. The ruling that, as Mary was non-viable and dependent on her sister for her lifeblood, she should therefore be separated from her in spite of the surgeons' affirmation that Mary would die as a result of this surgery, effectively defined Jodie as having 'life' and Mary as being little more than a parasite to her sister. It is true that, if left as they were, both twins would have died. It is also apparent that, while Jodie seemed to be an alert and active child, Mary was both lethargic and probably severely brain damaged. It is without question that both twins were in extreme pain as their horrific birth defect made life increasingly difficult to sustain. However whether or not one twin should have been

Taken literally, children of up to 18 could be murdered under the blanket term 'abortion'

granted the right to life at the expense of her sister's life is a question that can never be fully resolved. What indefinable quality made Jodie's life of greater value than Mary's? It is the same quality that distinguishes between killing a 28 week foetus in the womb and killing a 23 week baby outside the womb; abortion from infanticide.

As of January 2001, the Morning After Pill will be readily available to the general public, over the counter at the local pharmacy. In a country where teen pregnancy is rife, this is for many a welcome measure to combat the resulting social problems, stereotyped by the young, uneducated and unemployed single mother living off child benefit. It certainly allows women to avoid the traumatic procedure of abortion. Economically it is preferable to abortion as it is a much cheaper scheme to operate. It causes less guilt and stress, and is less invasive than abortion, which has become so widespread that it is not uncommon for a working woman to have one during her lunchbreak. In some countries, abortion is the most popular form of contraception; in the former USSR, for example, the average woman has 6 to 7 abortions in her lifetime, the mental and physical implications of which are horrifying.

Ethically, however, the Morning After Pill is not so removed from abortion. Taken up to 72 hours following unprotected sex, the user cannot know whether or not she has conceived. Several other factors are also involved: if fertilisation has taken place it may be too late in her menstrual cycle for the zygote to implant in the uterus wall, or the resulting embryo may not be viable and be miscarried. Yet it can be argued that by taking the Morning After Pill, one is assuming that conception has taken place and thus intend to terminate the pregnancy, albeit in its very earliest stage.

Finally, this leads onto the governments' recent permission for the use of embryos of up to 8 cells to be used for medical research purposes. Much like a sperm cell or ovum, these stem cells possess not so much life as a potential for life. The embryos in question originate from any surplus created in preparation for IVF treatment, and would otherwise be disposed of in any case. By using them for research purposes, the subsequent results could reveal potential cures for rare genetic disorders. This would enable many people to benefit from the sacrifice of these embryos. While the concept of stem cell research is difficult to come to terms with, as their alternative destination would be the rubbish bins, it seems to be the lesser of two evils.

It is impossible to reach a concrete definition of exactly what constitutes life, setting down hard and fast rules by which to resolve the dilemmas posed by these issues. However, this debate is very much at the forefront of current affairs, and an issue that will have a great and inescapable impact on society in our lifetime.

Drugs in sport

The sporting world appears increasingly dominated by illegal performance enhancing substances. Dean Chatterjee investigates

The use of drugs to help sporting performance has a long history. From 400BC, mass spectator sport had a prominent role in Greek society, as it does today. Large prizes led to the fall in amateur athletes and the emergence of professionals. Victory in the ancient Olympics ensured rich rewards in the form of money, food or housing.

Not surprisingly, bribery and cheating became the commonplace, and there is evidence that competitors were willing to take performance-enhancing substances, including mushroom and plant extracts. There is also evidence of drug taking in the Roman Empire. Chariot racers fed their horses substances to make them run faster, while many gladiators were "doped up" to make their fights sufficiently vigorous and bloody.

The sporting world considers the deliberate ingestion of banned performance enhancing substances as cheating. Apart from enhancing an athlete's performance, drugs can produce harmful short and long-term damage to the athlete's health. For example, prolonged use of anabolic steroids can cause liver damage, use of diuretics can cause severe dehydration and sometimes death, and beta-blockers can reduce blood pressure to the point where the athlete's heart can stop beating. As a result, each sport has a list of substances that it considers would unfairly assist an athlete's performance, and athletes are subject to testing for banned substances both during and outside competition.

As different substances offer different benefits depending on the nature of the activity undertaken, each sport has banned substances it considers would result in an unfair advantage to the person using them. Athletes are then liable for a drug test.

Sometimes masking agents, such as Bromantan, hide the fact that an athlete is using a banned substance. But this can also be revealed in the test.

Testing can occur in competition either at a national championship event or international event. Some sports, namely football and rugby, conduct random testing on competitors. Most sports require that drug testing be carried out before a world record can be verified. Athletes are selected randomly, although each sport decides how many tests should be conducted. Usually, the first three finishers and a random competitor are tested for each event, as in athletics.

Athletes can also be tested in training. This type of testing is preferred by authorities as athletes taking drugs can stop taking them so that any trace will have disappeared from their body in time for competition testing. Therefore the athlete still receives a benefit from the drug. To explain the phenomenon of drug use in sport two words are required: pressure and money. The second half of the twentieth century has seen sport move from an amateur affair to a world of big business. Sponsorship and endorsements are rich rewards for a select few athletes. This has placed pressure on athletes not only to be successful but also the best at what they do.

Elite athletes are disciplined, motivated and perfectionists. The accolades available to champions are enormous and definitely rewarding. The hunger is intensified, as there is only a limited amount of time to reach the top of their sport. Substances may also be taken to aid the recovery process from an injury, allowing athletes to train harder.

Coaches can be another source of pressure. A successful coach depends on the success of his athletes. If they fail to perform then the athlete may be dropped from the team as the coach rings in a new member from his eager line of younger athletes. Edgar Davids, like many other athletes, is innocent until proven guilty. But is sport losing its attraction as athletes merely play for fame and money? This may not be the case but drugs do leave a very nasty taste in the mouth.

Drugs look as though they are here to stay in sport as well as in the rest of society. If the commercialisation of every type of sport continues then it is likely that we will see more and more use of drugs and more time spent researching better drugs and better tests to detect newer drugs. In many sports now there are whisperings of allowing two levels of competition: one for certified drug takers and one for 'clean' athletes. If trends over the last 20 years can be associated with increasing drug use then it may seem as if this is the case.

So can drug use be stopped? The only hope seems to be if sport becomes so level that public interest dwindles and investment leaves sport, but this seems only a remote possibility.

The Tate's Paris

Olivia Bennett wonders how successful the Tate Modern is at displaying Paris as an ever changing metropolis

'Cities are...places for people who can stand the heat of the kitchen', says Peter Hall. I would agree; the word 'city' normally conjures up images of smoke, industrial skylines, hard looking cats sitting on dustbin lids, and accompanying all this, *noise*. Imagine my surprise then, on finding the only sounds heard in the Paris contribution to Tate Modern's *Century City* exhibition, to be the tentative footsteps of those viewers not quite getting to grips with the ultra-modern, super cool laminate flooring. Such clean furnishing would have been teetering on the bland in the sterilized corridors of Charing Cross Hospital, let alone in a public gallery attempting to display Paris as the bustling 'ever changing metropolis' that it was.

Whilst acknowledging the many benefits of wooden flooring, and recognizing that 'natural grained beauty' might be attractive to some, the undeniable fact remains that cities are neither 'natural', nor, well, 'grained'. They represent growth and human achievement, and at a time when Paris was enjoying rapid industrial and technological development, reflected in the establishment of the *metro*, the cinema, and photography, the world of art was brash and exciting. Delaunay was painting modern athletes, the Cubists favoured scenes from the circus, and the Fauves were concentrating on theatres and music halls. Why, then, is this not reflected in the exhibition's layout?

Maurice De Vlaminck's *Red Trees*, 1906, is a prime example of such vibrancy, comprising huge blocks of bold colour, and the brave application of paint. This had its roots in the experimentation of the Impressionists, and yet at the same time was evidence of the steps towards Cubism, highlighting the fact that the period was one of great change. In the exhibition's defence, it too is peppered with contradictions; old and new, sculpture and collage, large and small.

However, whilst Robert Delaunay's enormous *The City Of Paris*, 1910-12, bravely contrasted the classical *Three Graces* with an industrial Parisian landscape, the viewer was not so much stunned by its size and detail, as disappointed by the huge magnolia void surrounding it. So much space was left un-employed that one was left suspecting that the extortionate entry fee was necessary to enable the gallery to actually pay for more pieces in the future. This hardly gave the impression of the colourful Paris depicted by the Fauves, as in Henri Matisse's *Rue du Soleil, Colloire*. The true portrayal of the 'ever changing' Paris came one step closer to reality in the exhibition of works such as *La Toilette*, 1912, by Jules Pascin. A dramatic generation gap existed between the older painters such as Monet, Rodin, and Renoir, and the innovative, younger artists of the day. In a statement that smacked of the long stand-

ing struggle between old and new, Epstein wrote: 'the rebels were just beginning to gain recognition at the expense of the Academians, but the victory, which was soon to be absolute, was by no means complete yet'. Pascin's painting is evidence of this, for as a result of the widespread scrutinisation of former masters, the voyeuristic view of a woman preparing to go out is updated.

This was reflective of the extraordinary introspection, taking place at the time. Not only was the art of old subject to scrutiny, but also, as Epstein points out, 'the latest scientific theories about electrochemistry, biology...the creations of savages...and the aesthetic vestiges of prehistoric man'. This diversity of inspiration is certainly evident in the content of the exhibition - Picasso's 1907 *Three Graces*, for example, is reminiscent of the so-called 'primitivism' that so fascinated the ethnologists of Paris, as is the work of Modigliani and Ossip Zadkine. While the airy halls of Tate Modern are a far cry from the ethnologists' exhibitions of Paris in 1910, it seems that we in twenty first century London have been proved no more accurate in our representation of a different people.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to imagine that even at a time when shops and waiting rooms did not boast armchairs of any kind, an exhibition of ethnology could have beaten *Century City* for lack of comfort. Just as city workers team glass brick with aluminium kitchen surface, the proprietors of Tate Modern had apparently taken the no less pretentious decision of complimenting wooden floor with [wait for it] wooden bench.

In a world where visitors to London are presented with exhibition leaflets before even passing through immigration, galleries undoubtedly need to be competitive. Lack of comfort and inconvenience contributed to the fundamental failure of Tate Modern to show Paris as no more an 'ever changing metropolis' than Ikea showroom. Surely the conclusion must be that cities are, unfortunately for those wishing to do the artists of Paris justice, impossible to distill.

Gumbleton Prize 2001

Another strong year of entries made judging typically difficult. **Anna Stothard's** poems were, however, awarded first prize

Blue

There is an instant clean fuel
In your unchaotic knowledge,
Tortoise domed and cool.
It webs up somewhere in my head,
Stored as an arsenal of words,
Lacking the structure that you said.
Everything you know is tight as an oath,
Smooth as a chunk of silver,
Long as the coast.
My mind is baby-blue like ignorance,
And all I collect are china-jagged fragments,
From which I try to note intelligence.
Your head is blades, pivots and ledges,
Full of Troy and Achilles,
Muscle knowledges.
You have armour eloquent as tongue.
From the beginning,
There is nothing that you have not won.
If there was a resin of concentrated history,
From politics,
To the ancient goddess Cybele,
You'd reek of it:
And if neat thought could conquer cities as in ancient times,
The world would spin as you saw fit.
While all I seem to do
Is smile and wait and eat and sit.
I don't understand the world as beautifully as you,
For all you've tried to tell me,
My head is as empty as the colour blue.

Tongue

Confused wet muscle called tongue,
More timid than a finger,
More curious than lung.
Always taking control above her station,
Swelling into a heart or an embryo,
Refusing functional submission.
Tongue's a toadstool and a stump.
If she says something flippant I bite her
flesh,
Reminding me that she's blind and deaf.
Sometimes she's eager as a brainless
whore,
To find some new mouth to explore.
But mostly her attractions go to waste,
Cowered in her dewy cave,
Studying the art of taste.

The Trip

the winner of the Vth form short story prize by **Sam Pritchard**

Adventure Holiday boy, 13, found dead in shower following fit of depression.

The coach stopped. I saw Tom peering out of the window, recording every minute detail of the place. It was a complex of dirty white washed buildings, a couple of old sheds and a plain of towering, rickety wooden constructions from which hung an array of ropes. 'Not safe at all' I could see him thinking. Everyone was getting out now, jostling down the isle, grabbing walkmans, sunglasses and gameboys. That just left him. Sitting in his tatty tracksuit, clutching an old rucksack as though it were a parachute. He had always been like that, wearing old clothes, it was as if his parents did not have much money. Mostly quiet, a good worker, but a victim socially.

Tom Roper, clearly under strain of depression, took his own life, hanging himself with a climbing rope. The police who are still investigating would not make any statement beyond remarking that at this stage they did not suspect foul play. Unofficial sources have suggested that either homesickness or failures during activities drove Tom to this tragic step.

"What are we going to have?"

"Fun!" came back the cheer. The tanned young Devonshire twenty-something year old beamed, sporting his clear white teeth. Before him sat forty of us, all sporting black harnesses and large safety helmets. Tom's was too big. It took control of his head, throwing it this way and then that. He picked at the grass, bored, detached from the group, thinking of home. He was always close to his parents, his mother was always coming in to see him.

"Oi, you, pay attention!" barked the instructor. Several faces looked round, there were sneers and laughs. I did not like to do that. I suppose I did sometimes, following the crowd and all that, but whenever you did you felt a pang in your throat. Why him? What had he done? The instructor carried on. I could see him there, biting his tongue, trying to stop the tears from rolling down his face.

An above average student at his top Bedford private school, Tom was described as a happy and well-adjusted boy. The boy's parents, Roger and Mary Roper, made a statement yesterday, confirming that Tom "like any boy had a few problems settling in, but seemed to be enjoying himself" at his £3,000 a term boarding school. "He had been looking forward to the trip and was especially keen about the rafting", said Juliet Williams, who headed the 40 strong school party to Devon. It is believed that only two other teachers accompanied her.

Even from down below I could see his hands were caked in sweat, sliding up and down the rope. His whole body was shaking, paralysed with fear.

"Just jump boy!" the instructor was screaming. Tom was shaking his head, the tears now flowing freely. Somehow a feeble "no" managed to crawl to his lips, now soaked in tears. Then he closed his eyes and turned, grabbing madly at the rope, and tumbling to the ground. The instructor was all over him, in a furious temper, shouting and cursing, but it was all going over his head, his eyes glazed over.

The tragedy raises many questions about lack of safety and care at outdoor adventure centres throughout the country, presenting a nightmare scenario to many parents. The centre staff declined to make any comments on the incident, just confirming that they had full confidence in the quality of pupil care offered at the centre. This message will bring little comfort to the Ropers, and the debate over nation-wide child safety is bound to be reopened.

You could see it in his face all day, the blind hope that when he turned the next corner there would not be someone to insult him, jibe at him or hit him. He was like some small animal, peering out from the undergrowth, praying that the predator was not there to strike the blow. That never stopped them though, countless numbers of them, all just faces to him, embodied in the fear that he held constantly, it was all the same at school. I do not think his parents knew about it.

Henry Philips of the Child Safety Commission said: "It is not the centre alone that should be looking at its policy concerning child safety. Schools such as Tom's have a responsibility in both making thorough checks on their choice of destination and a primary role in pupil welfare during the trip."

It was cold that evening. There were seven in our room, he was opposite me in the corner, it was practically impossible to see him there, his short, thin figure pressed against the mattress, hiding from constant torment. After managing to drift off into a thin mist of sleep I woke up sharply, my eyes in focus made out Tom's thin figure, hunched over, being forced across and out of the room by two faceless bullies, a fist in his back. Shortly I could hear him falling down onto the floor, being urged on by his persecutors with their blows, then several whimpers and then silence. I squeezed my eyes shut tight the two giant figures entered the room alone, then heard the patter of bare feet down the corridor. 'No, I just could not get up, what if they saw and made me suffer the same fate as Tom. But what if he was hurt? No, they would not do that would they, they would not harm him like that.

It was two hours later that I mustered the courage to get up and see where he was. The corridor was dark, and my bare feet moved silently along the shiny floor. I stopped outside the door to the showers, what was in there. 'I could go back now couldn't I?' I turned the corner. His limp body was hanging there, quite still, his pale face forward and his neck throbbing with blood, His eyes were ringed with purple and still wet with tears. The rope was badly tied to the water pipe and a stool lay, a foot below his feet. I fell to the ground, it was as much me who had brought him there as anyone else.

It is at this time understood that the Ropers will take no legal action. "We just want to mourn for him in peace

Ashburnham

This has been an interesting year in Ashburnham. The year started with us losing our glorious leader, Mr. Griffiths (Awwwww), and then gaining a new one, Mr. Jones (Yippee!). Although we all miss Mr. Griffiths and his particularly...individual sense of humour (anyone remember when he decided the house should be re-painted pink? We're still suffering from that one), Mr. Jones is also a great housemaster and we couldn't have hoped for a better replacement. He also had the 6th Form dayroom repainted in *not* pink.

The first major sporting event of the year was, of course, the Long Distance Race down the Towpath. Ashburnham fielded the fastest two runners, Ted Roy and James Furlong, who took first and second places respectively in the Seniors, and also turned out a surprisingly energetic junior team. But we were beaten by Liddell's. Ouch.

Our house play didn't happen. It's that simple. Anyone who turned up on the dates marked in the almanack will know that. Kazim Zaidi, our director and writer, was ill when he should have been writing. The Ashburnham-Milne's house concert was once again very good, with excellent performers from both houses. Yes, Milne's too.

After the excitement of the Long Distance Races, we didn't want to be vulgar and decided to slow things down for the Bringsty Relay. It worked, despite Ted once again being the fastest runner there. We came in eighth overall. On a high note, Ashburnham are usually quite good at football, and this year was no exception. We produced a very weak six-a-side team and didn't achieve anything. However we reached the semi final of the eleven-a-side, beating strong teams such as Grant's and Busby's, unfortunately losing out to Wren's in the end.

We once again did well in the House Fives but, sadly, only came second. Apparently we should have won, Liddell's were just lucky. So, we've had almost a full year of Mr. Jones and we haven't won anything yet, but that's not what it's about. We've always enjoyed Ashburnham, despite what people might say about it, it *is* a good house.

James Furlong and Ted Roy

Busby's

The entrance to Busby's is a dim passageway skirting the back of the Common Room, where little light filters and bikes are stored. They've cut down a tree or two to help the sun get through and placed a wooden bench tastefully on the square of cracked concrete that serves for a garden, but it still retains an air of Dickensian charm.

Music from Chris Ho's room blares out across the passageway (in fact, his quiff is one of the architectural highlights of the house). There's not much variety: Oasis or other faded Britpop. The new matron (Mrs Boyman) meticulously arranges the newspapers either in alphabetical order or according to position on the political spectrum. Through the door padded in snooker table velvet is the housemaster's flat, in which Rachel Mylne gave birth to her third child, Ella, on the study floor at one thirty in the morning on November 16th. Jimmy claims to have heard everything. We subsequently spent the next week counselling him. Poor boy. These are the sights of Busby's this year.

Achievements: the College Street Clarion was restarted, after a lapse of 40 years. It looks very professional: don't try reading it, but the pictures are nice. We won the house footie, the cricket and shooting. Busby's also dominated a somewhat less active station: golf was a prime domain of our Remove, and now Mrs Newton (the station master) knows much more than she ever did about cars, Britney Spears, and Ealing night-life. But despite a casual habit of beating the other houses on the sports field, Busby's is best at music. Our house concert was disbanded by the police after the crowd began to riot, and afterwards it was re-

vealed that the school had violated licensing laws by packing so many people into the hall. Captain Dave and Harry gave a soul-wrenching rendition of their own songs, Jack Farthing's guitar solo also provoked bouts of rhapsody-stricken violence. And there was some classical stuff; that was good too. In the singing competition, we put on a barnstorming version Blur's Park Life, with Ed and Chris strutting up and down displaying their working class credentials. Didn't win anything, but then again the contest was more about politics than artistic merit. The girls are coy about releasing information from their floor (it's a different world up there). Occasionally, someone stumbles up there at night in a drunken stupor and sets off the motion sensor, like at the end of last term. This mysterious individual allegedly still roams the house as we speak.

The house has a new TV courtesy of Cameron Christie, who left last year to do military service in Singapore (poor guy), but bequeathed a 28-inch wide-screen telly as he left. It's superior to the old one in every way. We can change channels now! Thanks, mate! We've also got new staff: Mrs Brown and Dr Milner, who's filled Mr Riddle's gargantuan shoes and moved into the staff flat. It would be a disservice to the Riddler to say that anyone can fill his shoes so casually, but he's certainly developing a nice line in patrolling the corridors late at night, the only important part of the job. So, it's been a wicked year. One thing though: we're still waiting for the long promised digital channels for our flash new telly. Maybe next year.

Paul Kreitman

College

The Lent term this year culminated in a spirited production of Molière's *The Miser* up School. As always, every member of the house was involved, even down to the 'spontaneous' laughter of the audience plants, who were kept amused after four viewings by the hilarious performances of Arda Eghiayan and Murat Kerimol.

It was with the same cooperation and determination that rehearsals went underway for the House Singing Competition at the start of the year and we ended up in second place (we woz robbed) after an embarrassingly realistic and 'tuneful' rendition of *I want it that way* by the Backstreet Boys. On a more classical note, College Concert was particularly successful this year, including a beautiful rendition on the flute of the final movement of Prokofiev's D major Sonata by Anthony Cardona.

Once again, we were brought together with parents and tutors in candle-lit College Hall for what has become our

biennial house dinner. The atmosphere was one of warm joviality and it was a chance for everyone to talk in a more relaxed environment. In Dr Katz's witty after-dinner speech Tom Morrow was the unexpected winner of the 'Tom Morrow Prize' for being Tom Morrow and best Tenner went to Will Irwin. The Eumaeus Prize went to Dom O'Mahony.

In House Football, we made a valiant attempt with our team depleted due to Remove exams, and got to the semi-finals of the plate, beating Milne's and Ashburnham along the way.

This year has also happily seen the birth of Zac Zetie and Edmund Ramsey, who often seems to be on duty in the evenings. We will be sad to lose Dr. Zetie as a tutor when he leaves the school at the end of this year.

FLOREAT

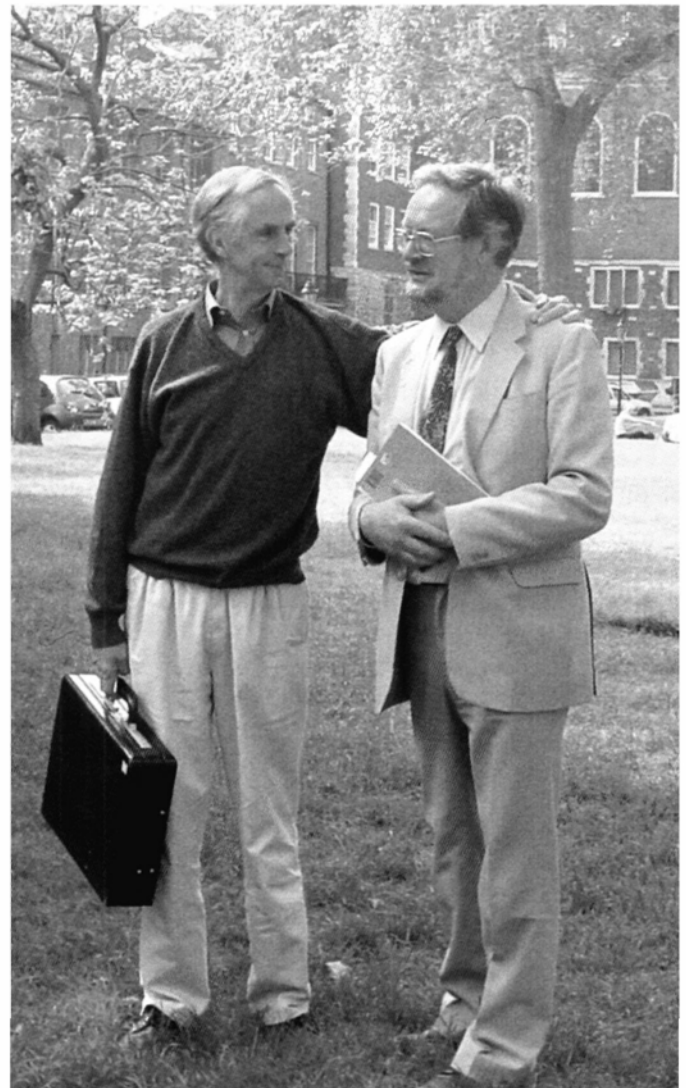
Nat Pimlott and Olly Newton

Dryden's

Well, another year goes by, but what's been up in Dryden's lately? Much as things may seem the same, the quiet achievements and subtle variations to House life deserve a mention before the year comes to a final close. In an outlet for artistic expression, the Sixth Form room has turned into a seasonal kaleidoscope of various wall-decorations, admirably well-maintained. The games room remains as lively as ever with the newly-refurbished pool table, and as for the Remove, the cheese toasties just keep rolling through (contributing to that...indescribable... Dryden's smell). Some things never change.

But this is just the informal side of house life: Dryden's has had its share of achievement this year (don't laugh, you cynics). Whatever your particular verdict on the choice of song for the house singing competition, we managed to hold Jerry Lee Lewis together with reasonable taste and style, and there was a definite improvement on past years. I will here testify that it was worth every lunch-time dance rehearsal (a special thanks to all the fifth formers, you rock). Also needing a mention is the Junior Bringsty relay team, doing the house proud (and shaming the seniors), coming in second and making good time despite rain, sleet and three shades of mud. And most recently, the Wren's/Dryden's house concert was a total success; a full two hours of excellent quality music. The range of talent was wide, as usual, including everything from jazz piano to South American classical guitar, Brahms to contemporary house-grown compositions - and all contributed to an excellent evening.. Best of luck to the Remove in whatever the next years hold; gonna miss you guys.

Amy Bilderbeck



Grant's

Silence reigns in Grant's. All that can be heard is the quiet tapping of boys at work on their laptops. Mr Griffiths floats about serenely, humming a tune, giving a little help on the odd GCSE coursework, perhaps an appreciation of Shakespeare. That is until eight o'clock. Big Ben's solemn bongs can be heard, for perhaps the two or three notes, but then anarchy is at rule. Matron is flattened by a boy trying to manoeuvre his fingers so he can hold three dairy creams, four jammy dodgers, a chocolate bourbon and the compulsory slice of toast, thick with chocolate spread. Such is the diet of a boarder. After the five minutes has elapsed, the biscuit barrel lies empty, the microwave door swings open, bread bags lay ripped open and the chocolate spread sits on the side with a knife running deep into its innards. Typing, munching and humming all ensue once more.

Yes, you guessed it, the average prep-time break in Grant's. And then there are the mornings. As we lie in the warm, cosy environment of our beds, some gentle footsteps come from the other end of the House. Then that very one

phrase. Ten words. The Ten words relished by everyone: "Oh what a beautiful morning, oh what a beautiful day." And then the words, "wakey, wakey, rise and shine, it's the morning of the 29th February".

Despite being in the sixth form I have only been in this house for ten weeks. And no, this isn't my first term in the school; at Christmas this year I made the switch from Milne's. I feel that boarding has not significantly changed my life – sure, I don't have the home-cooked meals, but school food is improving (we are told) and we don't have to clear up afterwards. I no longer have to travel in and away each day, and then of course there are friends for permanent company. The school also seems geared towards the minority, the boarders, with regard to Saturdays and Station. There. The perks of boarding summed up in three sentences.

Sam Pritchard
Edward Mason
Tim Lai

Hakluyt's

Well, we're Hakluyt's aren't we? Need I say more? So far we have won the house singing, the house five and eleven a side football competitions, the Bringsty baton, we did reasonably well in the tow path... and the list continues... just you wait, there is more to come.

Of course, the social scene in Hakluyt's was given a tremendous boost by the TERRIBLE weather. Well, who wants to stand in yard in the rain, right? And we do have the sofas, toasters, kettle etc. to make us worthy of the 'main cotch zone' title. We are, as always, glad to welcome all the new comers, be they fifth form boys or sixth form girls: we are slowly getting to know one another and our myriad of housemasters.

Cue: 'Good morning Mr. Kemball!!!!' 'Good morning sir!!!!!!' 'How are you today, sir?!' in irritatingly cherubic voices, (little boys and girls in halos skip across the stage) followed by: 'Sir... Why do you have a black eye?'

Next year we might even manage a house play but at least we don't have to act brilliant...

Daisy Collins
Gigi Florentin-Lee

Liddell's

In 1846 the buildings of Liddell's were the Headmaster's house and it was in that year the famous lexicographer took up his residence in them. When Liddell arrived he met a Westminster where, according to Buckland, the Dean at the time, 'counterpanes in the dormitory had not been washed for eleven years, School had not been cleaned since Elizabeth died and tyranny and cruelty reigned amongst the boys'.

Liddell was the first non OW headmaster since 1593 when Camden had begun his tenure, a reformer who extended College into the cloisters, but Buckland, Mr Smith advised us, had no aesthetic sensibilities and was fond of corrugated iron; he thought it fair that if the boys inhabited the cloister, they should at least be deprived a sight of the green grass and stately plane trees of College Garden, as such the windows were placed up high and glazed with an opaque substance which excluded even the sky. Liddell also modified the curriculum (reviving the Latin Play), planted the large tree in Yard with its adjacent herb garden that was recently replaced by something more vulgar, and ended the tradition of Exhibition Scholars wearing the purple gowns which made them the butt of so many jokes.

But Liddell also presided over an unprecedented drop in annual intake which reached an all time low of just 23 boys. Many attribute this to the typhoid attack of 1848 that affected Mrs. Liddell herself and killed two College boys, and to the 1853 scarlet fever outbreak which took his own young son. These left Westminster with the lasting image of a dangerous and pestilent place. Those 23 boys, however, still had to pass the entrance examination: 'The Challenges'. These exams spanned two months and consisted of head to head conflict between candidates. Short passages from the Greek Epigrams or Ovid's Metamorphoses were read, then the Challenger (the lower boy) would ask the Challengee questions about the gobbet; if the challenger won, the

roles were reversed. The Head Master was the arbitrator, but each candidate had a 'Help' in the shape of a sixth former who pleaded his case when difficult points were raised. Liddell and Scott's lexicon was of course the final answer on Greek questions, but if an error was found Liddell would always say: "Ah yes, Mr. Scott wrote that paragraph". His young daughter Alice, of course, inspired Charles Dodgson, to compose for her one of our language's favourite children's fancies, *Alice in Wonderland*. Dodgson, a portrait photographer with a terrible stammer, got on remarkably well with young girls, especially Alice, and dreamt up the story after a day's boating with her on the Isis originally calling it *Alice's Adventures Underground*. Dodgson famously published the story using the *nom de plume* Lewis Carol and, allegedly, the Looking glass remains in Liddell's.

Statten Roeg (research by Daisy Leitch)

The 15th of May ended on a bad note when the heavens opened, but I'm sure Dr. Morris wasn't feeling bad at all. It had been a great day for Liddell's in the House Athletics Competition. The juniors wiped the floor with their opponents;

they won by at least ten points. James McNaughton, Yusuf Blunt and Henry Hepworth were all winners of their events, with some great performances. Charles Cooke, George Bacon and Hamza Khan also gave us some extra points. The intermediates didn't have quite so much success, the fact that only around five people turned up from the Shells. Jacques Testard came 5th in the 100m and Rob MacIntyre came 4th in the 200m. Ben Goldsmith came 4th in the 800m and Stephen Wong came 3rd in the high jump. In the seniors, De Jonquieres came 4th in the 100m sprints, Hugh Graham grabbed 2nd place in the 1500m race and Liddell's claimed 2nd in the 4x400m but failed to qualify for the 4x100m final. However, victory in the high jump and second place in the long jump and the Shot Putt gave us a total score of 92 points and placed the seniors 2nd. Liddell's won both the girl events to give us an extra 27 points. In total, Liddell's accumulated an impressive 269 points, beating 2nd place by more than sixty points. Liddell's had won by such a large amount that they didn't even need the Intermediate scores!

Henry Hepworth

Milne's

In my first week at Westminster I became accustomed to people's eyes filling with sympathy when I told them I was a newly initiated Milne's girl. This was nothing to do with my fellow Milne's members but more the infamous Milne's House walk. This may sound fairly innocent but waking up at 7 o'clock on Sunday to trek 17 miles around the countryside is no small feat for a city girl who prides herself on not owning a single pair of trainers, let alone a sturdy pair of hiking boots. Despite this, however much I hate to admit it, it was a worthwhile experience as it allowed me to bond with all my housemates, even if it were only thanks to one of the lovable quirks of our housemaster, Mr Troy. He has instilled in Milne's the custom that, despite the fact that we're a day house, there is a lot of interaction between years, mainly due to his efforts in organising house events such as the house walk and our house quiz. A lot of things can be said about Milne's: The fact we're miles away from Yard; that the Sixth Form has an almost unbeaten track record of losing every sporting event known to Westminster, not to mention our rather tragic rendition of S Club 7 at the House Singing Contest. This said, Milne's does have a great community spirit and a widespread willingness to participate in house events. This was particularly apparent in the success of our cake and sweet stall to raise cash for India. Any housemaster who can persuade adolescent boys to give up their lunch break to sell cakes is worthy of considerable praise and I'm certainly grateful to be a member of Milne's.

Emma Bowdery (Sixth Form)

Life was quiet over in Pooh Corner, tucked away on the edge of the 100 acre wood, next door to the strange, and slightly smelly, warren of Ashburnham. Life was always quiet there and a faint odour of honey (or was it cheese toasties) wafted down the stairs and into the 6th/Remove common room. To the assembled animals it seemed obvious that the piglets upstairs had once again stolen the Remove's Honey Pot.

"Typical", said Kanga, "I miss breakfast to get here on time and there isn't even any honey."

She crossed her arms and stared at the door. Just then Eyore walked in. Eyore was the head of Pooh Corner and, as such, people turned to him to address the problem of the stolen Honey.

"It's the House quiz tonight" stated Eyore in his confident low tone.

"Goody" said Pooh, her eyes widening.

"Much more fun than the sponsored hop in Surrey" drawled Kanga in agreement; she was still angry about the Honey.

"You know they've stolen our Honey again" exclaimed Kanga, remembering why she was angry. "We're the oldest, most responsible animals in the whole 100 acre wood and those piglets think they can ..."

Suddenly Owl walked in dressed in his cape.

"Well" said Owl, "It's five to nine in the morning which is a good time for going to Abbey".

So, off they went to the hollow tree on the other side of the wood. All except Tigger, who was late as usual.

Will Dunbar (Remove)

Purcell's

Deep in the urban jungle, a micro community of adolescent female *Homo sapiens* have established their nest. I have been observing their customs and behavioural patterns for many months, and have learnt a considerable amount about these mysterious creatures and their ways. The results are astounding.

The daily routine of this species displays an orthodox rigidity absent in their male counterparts. They rise with the sun, and cleanse and prepare themselves for the hunt of the day. Preening is a highly developed art, to the point of ritualization, while nutritional understanding is still at a basic level. Feeding is irregular, but this species is characterised by its fondness for nocturnal gorging. The prime energy source is a viscous substance with a high fat content, which after rigorous forensic investigation appears to be closely related to chocolate.

The social patterns of the female *Homo sapiens* vary dramatically. Interaction with the opposite sex is generally prioritised over all other activities; however, at various points in the lunar cycle, they assemble in large groups. These gatherings are characterized by high-pitched noises, resembling laughter, often at extreme decibel levels. The emotional patterns of these creatures are irregular and unpredictable, and while at first they appear to be amiable and docile, they are prone to violent outbursts of varying emotions, often provoked by minor irritants such as mildly humorous remarks concerning their carefully prepared exterior and intellectual ability.

These organisms are capable of highly complex thought patterns and are able to master sophisticated procedures; however they are perplexingly devoid of basic logical problem solving skills. They have both a primitive sense of direction and poor command of the mechanical operations necessary to their daily lives. This renders them dependent on their male counterparts in some areas, particularly those involving electrical appliances and information technology. In contrast, their communication skills are far more advanced than those of the male *Homo sapiens*, which is a significant evolutionary advantage, but can have the negative effect of alienating the less developed males.

Over the period in which I have been observing this subspecies of *Homo sapiens Purcellites*, they have displayed a variety of cultivated skills and achieved much success in various fields of academic and physical endeavour. They are endowed with a great capacity for artistic and creative executions, displayed to great effect in their living environs by means of colourful posters and ornaments. They are also competent at applying this natural flair to their academic work. Several members of the specific group under my careful observation have achieved well in the outside community, notably winning the respect of the elder *Homo sapiens facultus*. Helen Taylor and Natasha Hoare, two members of this community, succeeded in the History of Art essay competitions, the John House and Apocalypse respectively.

Their aptitude for articulation is also evident in their success in English, with Rosemary Dixon coming joint first in the Phillimore and Sarah Pett joint second in the Gumbleton. A feature common to females of all species, the love of the dramatic, was displayed by Georgina Cole's excellent performance in the Sixth Form play *The Children's Hour* and Emily Levitt's direction and performance in the Drama Festival. Many of these creatures show a highly developed musical ability, although this is not characteristic of the tribe as a whole.

Purcellites are present in all the major musical groups in the Westminster community, and also made a commendable effort in the House Singing Competition, where they displayed an unrivalled dance routine! Athletically they have some shortcomings, however a great feat of endurance was achieved by Alla Doubrovina and Natalia Shoutova in the bizarre Westminster rite of passage formally known as The Lyke Wake Walk. Such an astounding collection of talents is rarely found in such a small community, supported by an extremely competitive nature as shown by Mrs Harris fighting it out with Mr Hinze in *The Weakest Link!* My time observing this micro community was both informative and intriguing, advancing the anthropological understanding of this rare subspecies enormously.

Sarah Pett



Rigaud's

Presently, Rigaud's is dining *chez Col-lege Hall*, due to the unsure future of our dining room. While closed for health and safety reasons, the house sorely misses Lunch as a group and its tea with Ivy. Unfortunately, while no final decision has been made about house lunch, no developments can proceed to make good a bad situation - such as converting the hall into a recreation area for boarders with a pool table and wide screen TV (ahem).

The start of the academic year 2000/01 heralded the advent of Mr. McMahon, the successor as resident Tutor to Robert Wilne. While handy to have around to pester for help with Maths, he is also a dab hand at the fussball table, putting most of us to shame (other than we, the authors, who, of course, remain unsurpassed in terms of sheer brilliance....). Departures continue. The end of the year will see Rigaud's ruing the loss of two valued tutors. First of all, farewell to Mr. Hood who, despite having spent only a relatively short time at the school, has entertained us on many a memorable boarders' outing.

Recent times past have seen honour brought upon the house, with prodigious victories in the junior house debating and the senior Bringsty Relay. Our senior fives team (,consisting of five Lower Shells and a 5th Former) was also resplendent. Lent Term 2001 has seen Rigaud's dragged out of the dark ages with the launch of the impressive website, which we are all sure has great potential. Log on now to: (<http://homepages.westminster.org.uk/rigauds/enter.htm>).

Now-on to the slightly controversial matter of the Rigaud's sickness 2001 which, up until this moment, has been shrouded in mystery. We can now reveal that the bout of food poisoning which smote the entire Remove in January was caused by a suspect batch of Kos potatoes which, despite being absolved of all blame by the caterers, has mysteriously disappeared from the subsequent menus. Our thanks, as always, to Mr and Mrs Arthur for being at the heart of the place.

Alex Perry and Edar Mullan

Wren's

Yard is a wilderness of contrasts – her moods are as varied as those in any feminine personality. The sibilant murmur of furtive students, who congregate in packs to avoid detection from predatory teachers, may at any time be broken by the exultant boom of the Under Master: 'Is that regulation bootlace?' For the pupil, haplessly situated at the bottom of this scholastic food chain, travelling 'Up House' seems to provide the only form of precious refuge. Yet Wren's – feigning normality through its cosy address of 4 Little Dean's Yard – has surpassed its familial function and created a microcosm of the wider world with its battles for dominance, power and territory. I am referring, of course, to the offsetting influence of our small and cluttered South West London "day-room" (note again this deceptively inviting label). Claustrophobia has disturbingly established a setting of human condition in which Pinter would have revelled: -

The radio is tuned and crackling melodies reverberate.

1st Wren: How long until break ends?

2nd Wren: Another seventeen minutes.

3rd Wren: Is there any bread around?

1st Wren: No.

3rd Wren: Cheese?

1st Wren: All gone.

1st Wren: Why is the window open? It's already freezing.

3rd Wren: Pardon?

1st Wren: Close the window.

3rd Wren: The window? You've got no right to –

1st Wren: I'm cold.

3rd Wren: Well, put another blazer on then.

1st Wren: At least change the station.

3rd Wren: Maybe tomorrow.

1st Wren: Now look here!

2nd Wren: (*abruptly*) How do you–?

They both look at him.

How do you... differentiate this equation?

3rd Wren: How long 'till lessons now?

2nd Wren: Fifteen minutes.

However, the interaction between aggressor and victim is not confined within respective years. Yes – years quibble. Most notably and of personal significance, we (the quivering nurslings of the sixth form nest) bear the brunt of the fifth form, perpetually engaged in harmful sport and mirth. We cower in fear as overhead the din of tumbling and crashes threatens and induces the very foundations of our day-room to shudder. Perhaps I am exaggerating a jot. But they quite vehemently forbade us use of their table-football showpiece. So, technically, they started it.

Initially, one might have suspected our housemaster of repairing the torn social tapestry and of founding brotherhood under his remarkable qualities of leadership. Yet housemasters are but mere mortals – Mr. Tompkins' attempt at song in Abbey is more than sufficient evidence. No, our tribal unity and loyalty is derived from a cause greater than existence, a cause in the form of Dryden's. Housed under the same roof, our neighbours have hindered us half a million – they hath laughed at our losses, scorned our nation, cooled our friends, etc. I feel that Christmas was ruined for me when our lucidly superior festive decorations sparked destructive jealousy in the hearts of the opposition? Ergo, all for one and one for all is the order of the day – perhaps, Wren's isn't so perilous after all. And sir, if you were to have a few singing lessons during the holidays...

Zeno Houston

Scratch Play: My Boy Jack Drama Studio September 2000

The Scratch Play, now two years old, is a project undertaken by the Remove at the beginning of the year whereby a play is taken - from audition to performance - in two weeks. *My Boy Jack* by David Haig is based on Rudyard Kipling's poem of the same name. The story and the poem revolve around the anguish of the Kipling parents over their boy Jack's disappearance during the First World War. They receive a telegram telling them his whereabouts is unknown and, from that day, they interview soldiers trying to glean information about what may have happened to him. This proves useless, until Guardsman Bowe (Doug Shaw), is brought before them by Mr Franklin, played by Statten Roeg.

Sebastian 'Basher' Savage, who played Jack Kipling, acted the part of an intimidated fifteen-year-old very well. The transformation between him being ordered around by his father to his ordering around soldiers in the trenches was superb. Harry Adamson, who played Rudyard Kipling, was a supremely dominating figure, using a powerful voice and aggressive body language to best effect.

The three soldiers also left their mark. Tom Farthing, also the director, as Guardsman McHugh, was the calm man of the three; Doug Shaw as Guardsman Bowe was a quirky and neurotic character who performed with a wonderfully flawless accent; Nick Keeble played Guardsman Doyle, a provocative and difficult man whose mystifying accent emphasised his oddity. They were well cast and fitted together excellently. Anna-Claire Feld and Jessie Huth, who played Carrie and Elsie - the mother and daughter - were poised and effective. Their profile was not as prominent as the male parts, but this seemed to fit in with the theme in the play of striving to be a brave man.

The play as a whole was interpreted very well. It came to a climax just before the interval, which was definitely at the right time. The soldiers were just about to go 'over the top' from the trenches and there was panic initially but everything became eerily calm when Basher did his monologue. Another, searing, moment came when Doug told the story of Jack to the family. He did it with such intensity and unpredictability that the audience was utterly drawn in by it. His energy compelled you to listen and the other members of the cast helped to centre him also, with their reactions to his story, especially Harry with his tears.

This was an enormous achievement: a play well staged - sufficient props but nothing too complicated, the use of film clips and music to give a different slant, and devastating performances.

Jessica Chichester

The Children's Hour Drama Studio November 2000

Set in a girls' boarding school in the early 1920s, *The Children's Hour* by Lillian Hellman depicts the devastating effects that allegations of homosexual relations could have on people's lives. A young pupil at the school, Mary, convinced that she is being victimised by the staff, persuades her grandmother to let her leave by falsely accusing the two Headmistresses of a lesbian affair. This accusation has instantaneous effects - within days their thriving boarding school is in ruins and litigation only confirms their fate.

This was an extremely challenging play to put on due to both the setting and the subject matter. The play was set on the East Coast of America and therefore the actors had to develop convincing accents, which they managed to achieve, enough to satisfy an English audience.

Many of the actresses had demanding roles due to the character extremes they had to play, from pre-adolescent children to a prima-donna faded actress. The skill of the players shone through - to the extent that those playing children and adults could be easily differentiated. Mary Nighy and Georgie Cole played the two headteachers with great maturity and brought out the contrasts between their characters well whilst maintaining their close, yet awkward, friendship. Mary tackled her very difficult part exceptionally, depicting a quieter, emotionally unstable woman, bringing out the subtlety of her character's love for Miss Grey, and her jealousy over the engagement. Olivia Bennett performed Mary with great energy emphasising her manipulative nature. Shaana Levy played her part as a faded actress very well, striking a fine line between humour and seriousness.

As the sole male in the play Olly Cox equalled the excellent standard set by the girls, and added a further dimension to the action with a sensitive portrayal of the only man caught in the crossfire of allegation and rumour. Naomi Curtis, despite her small role as the maid Agatha, made the part her own and injected some much needed humour into the thick of the drama. A talented cast together with an intelligent interpretation of the script resulted in a moving and memorable performance. Recognition must go to Mr Hemsley-Brown for his understated direction allowing the subtleties of a poignant script to emerge.

**Kate Quinan
Lizzie Sharples**

Don Giovanni Up School September 2000

It was partially with a sense of duty that I took my seat Up School on the opening night of the Drama and Music departments' new opera production. Despite the success of last year's *Sweeney Todd*, it was surely madness or hubris or foolishness to attempt *Don Giovanni*, vocally the most demanding of all Mozart's operas, and psychologically a work that explores the kind of human relationships quite beyond the experience of even the most sexually precocious seventeen-year olds. And then to perform it in a cut English version which would deprive us of Giovanni's *Metà di voi qua vadano*, Leporello's *Ah! pietà, signori miei!*, Donna Anna's *Or sai chi l'onore* and Don Ottavio's *Dalla sua pace* and *Il mio tesoro!* Guy Hopkins and Philip Needham were either off their heads or simply presenting the work for the educational benefit of cast and orchestra at the expense of a captive audience - a common enough occurrence in schools, after all. But it really wasn't like that. When the ear had attuned itself to the small orchestra and the sound of young and, as yet, not fully trained voices, Mozart began to weave his magic...

No *Don Giovanni* will work unless it has a baritone who can sing and act its lascivious hero. Vocally the role is comparatively undemanding, apart from *Fin ch'han dal vino*, an explosion of sheer sexual drive that demands a lingual dexterity to match the Don's amorous prowess. What distinguished Charles Ogilvie's Giovanni was, above all, the clarity of his diction - the result, almost certainly, of his study of Lieder, where words must be projected, where consonants are every bit as important as vowels. It was remarkable how he made every phrase audible above the orchestra, without sacrificing musical line. He sang with an authority beyond his years, and with real beauty of tone. My only reservation was the crooning of *Deh, vieni alla finestra* - though even that was musically done and beautifully balanced with the pizzicato accompaniment. Theatrically, he was more than competent. Sallow of face, he was in turn violent, commanding and flirtatious, and his scenes with Zerlina were virtually devoid of embarrassment - no mean achievement for a schoolboy. *La ci*

darem la mano almost worked as a piece of seduction, and if his hands had roved just a little more, would have done.

Donna Elvira is vocally a much more taxing part, and arias such as *Ah! chi mi dice mai*, *Ah, fuggi il traditor* and *Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata*, all flame with the passion of thwarted female love - far too technically difficult, one would have thought, for an eighteen year-old even to contemplate singing. Amy Russell had other ideas, and not one of her arias was cut - a tribute to her technique and stamina. Her well placed soprano had no difficulty encompassing Mozart's demanding music, and her voice, even when singing high above the stave, remained unshredded, firm and surprisingly beautiful. One of the hallmarks of a good singer is to possess a distinctive, instantly recognizable timbre—and I'm not sure that she doesn't already have it. There was a dramatic fire to her recitatives, but she also acted with moving restraint, nowhere more tellingly than when Leporello elaborated on his master's conquests.

Leporello himself was well taken by Ferdinand Koenig. He only started singing lessons a year ago, and though his voice is as yet not fully focussed, he showed a fine rhythmic sense (particularly in the Catalogue aria), and a real sense of theatre. His scorn for Don Giovanni's debauchery occasionally caused his voice to lose the musical line, but his phrasing was musical throughout, and his diction always clear.

Roderick McKinley's Don Ottavio was a revelation, not so much for the beauty of his singing (he was recovering from a bad cold, and tended to force too much and float too little), but for his characterization. Don Ottavio usually comes across as a wimp: when he should act and avenge his fiancée, Mozart has him sing some of the most ravishing music ever written - a feast for the ears, but dramatically limp. *Dalla sua pace* and *Il mio tesoro* were both cut, with the quite unexpected result of making Don Ottavio a far more fiery and resolute character. Roderick's singing of the duet and the recitatives were refreshingly muscular; and although his cold-affected voice was at times too forced and blustery, this was a well thought-out and convincing performance. The Commendatore has little to sing and little chance to display any theatrical flair, but Jonathan Sells, with his impressive bass baritone, was suitably dignified and sepulchral.

Don Giovanni, Elvira, Leporello, Don Ottavio and the Commendatore were all coached by Gavin Carr, who has for more than five years inspired a great number of Westminster singers. Unknown to most colleagues, and rarely seen outside the music school, except when pacing round Yard with Charlie Ogilvie in an attempt to impart the correct rhythm of *Fin ch'han dal vino*, this fine baritone has won the confidence of so many young singers at Westminster, and made a remarkable contribution to school life; he will be greatly missed.

Kate Paterson has worked for slightly less time at Westminster, but she too influenced many young singers during her time here, including Lucetta Johnson, Emilie Speaight and Jack Holborn. Lucetta astonished the audience in last year's Opera Scenes with her coloratura soprano that could not only hit those high notes in the Queen of Night's aria, but sing them with musicality and feeling. The role of Donna Anna is in fact much more difficult, and requires a singer who can convey grief, anger, suspicion, hate and love - a challenge for any 17 year-old. Her performance was heroic in every sense, and if the tone at the top of her range was at times a little frayed and shrill, that was a small price to pay for such a wholehearted performance.

Emilie Speaight's Zerlina was a delight. She has the true Mozartian soubrette style, and phrased her music with crispness and perfectly judged rubato. Her tone seemed slightly more pinched than when she sang Euridice in Gluck's *Orfeo*, but that could have been First Night nerves. She acted beautifully, and in her flirtatious scenes with Giovanni and Masetto was entirely convincing - showing none of that coyness or archness that ruin most love scenes in School Drama. Her duet with Giovanni was an alluring mixture of guilt, candour and sexual excitement; while in *Batti, batti, o bel Masetto* and *Vedrai, carino* she excelled as a loving and naughty seductress. Masetto was played with



touching ingenuousness by Jack Holborn, just one of many young singers (to be seen in the chorus and orchestra) who will tackle the larger roles when their voices mature.

The cast seemed very much at ease. And the well-martialled chorus not only acted their 'business' with relish, but sang confidently throughout. The dual level stage was used brilliantly, highlighting the various conflicts of the drama, and commenting on the different relationships. Thus it was that Donna Anna and Don Ottavio, during their first encounter with Giovanni, addressed him from the upper level (though they talk of him as a friend, we sense that this is not the case); that Don Giovanni, dining on the higher level, condescendingly moved down to speak with Donna Elvira, then returned to his eyrie to apostrophize wine; that the Commendatore delivered his D minor utterances to Don Giovanni and Leporello from on high; and so on. And the cleverest touch of all was to make Giovanni descend into hell via Room 37, the Classics Room.

Guy Hopkins, the Musical Director, decided to limit the size of orchestra to a mere 29 players - almost exactly the number which Mozart had used for the first performance in Prague in 1787. As the overture began, the sound seemed se-

riously underpowered: our ears have sadly become accustomed to an orchestra often three times that size. But when Leporello began his 'Night and day I slave away' the balance seemed exactly right: every word could be heard, not just in the opening aria but throughout the evening. Without a proper pit at his disposal (let's hope the new theatre will have one), Guy's decision to select a small orchestra was entirely vindicated. The burden, of course, falls on the upper strings, and they performed heroically, with lovely articulation throughout the evening, playing now off the string, and now with true dramatic crunch. Annabel Legge and Alex Moylan, the sole cellists, played with excellent tone and accuracy. The high-lying horns, which during the Act I finale create such a tense atmosphere, were played with astonishing confidence and accuracy by Edward Corn and Miles Hewitt; and the trombones (Charles Corn, Katie Low, Julia Davidson), together with Ben Hartman's timps, produced some blood-curdling noises in the Act II finale. There were also some most impressive wind solos during Donna Elvira's *Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata*, Donna Anna's *Non mi dir* and Leporello's *Madamina*; and Sarah Jackman somehow made her pizzicato violin sound uncannily like a mandoline in *Deh, vieni alla finestra*. Guy's tempi were on the fast side (he was always most considerate towards his singers) but never seemed hurried, and throughout the evening he drew magnificent playing from his small band: excellent intonation on the whole, and some lovely phrasing.

Evenings such as this are born of tradition, and we should remember that it was John Baird and John Field who first dared to stage operas at Westminster, even though their *Magic Flute* used principals from outside the school. The tradition was continued by John Arthur (*Figaro*) and David Summerscale (*Orfeo*); but what Philip Needham and Guy Hopkins have achieved is hardly credible: full-scale performances of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Sweeney Todd* - all in five years. And feeding these productions have been the annual Opera Scenes, providing young singers with the opportunity to perform in seminal works like *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio*, *Carmen*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *La Cenerentola* and *Albert Herring* - all in the original language. The wealth of vocal talent in the school is staggering, and because members of the Lower School see that singing opera is neither highfalutin, dodgy or cheesy, but fun, they are queuing up to participate. It would be nice if the quality newspapers, instead of producing those fatuous league tables of academic achievement, attempted to measure the worth of schools by other means. Westminster would feature high in any order of operatic merit.

Richard Stokes

Drama Festival: Transit Station

Up School
December 2000

Transit Station, written by Kaz Zaidi and directed by Daisy Collins opens with a man sitting on a bench. The dramatic climax is approached when the girl who is sitting next to him starts talking to him. Sounds boring. But the play is written so that, besides the boy and the girl, are also the personifications of their thoughts standing behind them. This allows for the entertaining aspect of self-criticism to infiltrate an otherwise serious play, about the American dream, and its shortcomings. The audience laughs/blushes at the embarrassing blunders of Jack, the main character, when he uses the conversation starter, "Do you want a tissue?" to the despair of his inner-monologue. We all know the feeling.

Half of *Transit Station's* success was that the audience relates to it, the other half is the good acting, directing, and writing. Roughly based on Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, the play is about a young man, Jack. Totally broke, he is forced to give up his dream of 'really seein' America, and has to return to his over-sheltered home-life, to settle down and run the family business. Waiting for a bus home (somewhere between Chicago and New York), Terry happens to sit down near him. Terry is a poor Mexican, running away from her delinquent husband. Jack wants to start a conversation, but it being the wee hours of the morning, and the only other person at the station, Terry is suspicious of him. The two are

sitting so close to one another, yet there is no other action than deafening silence for minutes at a time. The tension builds until the audience is going to crack.

The four characters were acted by Kazim Zaidi, as Jack, Francis Murphy as his thoughts, Ros Urwin as Terry, and Jess Chichester as her inner self. All four were so believable that the audience could sit for over half an hour and nothing happening while still being captivated. Eventually, after the ice is (finally) broken, Jack moves over toward her. He really likes her; she's naive, though running away from a murderous husband. She likes him; he's naïve. In her, he finds something that could take the dullness of living in a middle class bubble away. He asks her to return home with him. The play ends still waiting on her answer

Transit Station is a slice of two peoples' lives. It asks the question 'what if?' Not knowing if they end up together, the audience leaves, reminded of their own 'what if?' situations. The play achieves the goal that all playwrights, actors and directors aim at: to make the audience feel the events on stage as well as see and hear them.

Emily Levitt

The Visit Drama Studio January 2001

When does conventional morality cease to be useful and instead become a hindrance? A time when we seem to be tending towards 'always' as an answer, Friedrich Dürrenmatt's play *The Visit* poses some tough questions. And Grant's chose to hurl them our way with their fine performance of this blackest of comedies.

You wouldn't think that a small, depressed East German town with as uninspiring a name as Guellen could have much to offer by way of a spectacle. But when thrice-married millionairess Mrs Zachannassian returns and offers her hometown a considerable amount of money in return for the disposal of her ex-lover, the tension begins to mount. Tamara Cohen was superb in the central role, holding the audience in a thrall with a performance which exuded opulence and menace. Charlie Hayes was equally accomplished as the cursed Alfred III, who begins to eye his fellow Guelleners with increasing suspicion as they think the unthinkable. Other members of this gifted cast who deserve a special mention include Nick Budd, with his politically-minded mayor who is eager to do the best possible for all but one of his electorate, Jonathan Richards as the schoolmaster who holds onto his scruples longer than most – only then to dump them in a harrowing final scene – and Jessica Chichester as a sinister parson with a curious sense of Christian duty.

This was – as has already been said – a black comedy, and as such had some extremely funny moments, performed with enthusiasm by a well-chosen cast. But to think of it as merely a comedy would be to strip it of its moral force. Does every human have the potential to become a murderer? How much does it cost to turn a layman into a hitman? And is the life of one worth sacrificing for the good of the community? Thanks to the efforts of the performers – and to the hard work of directors, Tracey Morris and Lyndsey Turner – Dürrenmatt's challenges were not obscured.

Francis Murphy

The Miser Up School March 2001

College's choice for a house play was a sassy one. Why is it that some comedy ages so much better than others? Molière's *The Miser* contains that aromatic blend of satire and slapstick which somehow conveys truths as resonant today as in 1668 when it was first performed.

Alex Nurnberg, as Harpagon (*The Miser*) had a formidable challenge, not least to transform himself into a splenetic and misanthropic sexagenarian. Without ever making himself looked schooled, he arched his back and bowed his legs as though every moment on stage was yet another of the dolours life had thrown at him. There was a rasping intolerance in the timbre of his voice which gave depth to the character – and never at the expense of his intonation which was always beautifully crisp and lucid.

This is satire, not burlesque. For all his grotesqueries, there is an underlying plausibility about Harpagon, and in the dynamic of his oppressed household. Cléante, with the expensive taste in clothes which his sombrely clad father so deploras, ought perhaps to have been a rake and a spendthrift, and his sister Elise skittish and promiscuous in their desperation. But Molière paints in subtler tones, and these were skilfully exhibited by their players. Alex Mackenzie (Cléante) and Mary Nighy (Elise) as the son and daughter displayed a judicious combination of exasperation, disgust and residual filial loyalty. But these were no simpering victims, but flesh and blood – and asserting themselves forcefully through their romantic choices. Nor were the objects of their desire any kind of pushover. Lucy McCarthy as Mariane was measured and compelling, while David Reicher as Valère may have been just the kind of senior household servant to elicit the approval of his master, but his peremptory authority over other members of the household quite cured me of any hankering for live-in staff. But this is how it was, and he moved between the role of superior servant and ardent suitor with keen intelligence.

There were some delicious cameos. Jamie Manfield was a fierce constable, and Jonny Goldsmith a most donnish and quizzical officer of the law. Tristan Summerscale as the venal Maitre Jacques displayed beautifully the perilous path of the rat-cunning servant whose close knowledge of the secrets of his employers is both a marketable commodity and a source of personal danger. Arda Eghiayan as Frosine, the go-between, and Martin Malinowski as Maitre Simon, the broker, were two creatures of the gutter, all survival instincts. Murat Kerimol's entrance as Anselme was engaging and just stayed the right side of farce. In revealing himself as that most convenient of dramatic artifices – the long-lost relative whose wealth and consanguinity sorts out everyone's marital and financial future, he left me with the impression that Molière, penning that particular scene, had his tongue buried deep inside his cheek.

Dale Inglis's sets are always wry and knowing – this Paris salon was no exception. The costumes were rather more professional than some house plays have afforded themselves, but this was an expense merited by the professionalism of the whole production, and the players wore them comfortably. Si-nan Savaskan's musical score, performed with all the aplomb one has come to expect of these precocious players, lent both pith and point to all that was happening on stage. Jonathan Katz succeeded handsomely in the task which – I think – he had set himself: to involve meaningfully virtually his entire house in every aspect of the production of a hugely intelligent, but reachable, play. It is a formidable challenge and they triumphed.

David Hargreaves

The Imaginary Invalid Drama Studio May 2001

To tell the truth, I had expected a fairly amusing evening's worth of awkward adolescent boys butchering one of the most amusing plays of the seventeenth century. How wrong could I have been? The Lower School interpretation of Molière's *The Imaginary Invalid* was the wittiest and most polished play I have seen at Westminster so far. The cast were outstanding, the scenery atmospheric, the direction excellent, and the end result an intelligent, hilarious and surreal display of the very best amateur drama has to offer. The play centred on Jack Farthing's memorable performance as Monsieur Argan, hypochondriac par excel-

lence, but provided plenty of opportunities for a range of supporting talent. Clem Naylor shone as his maid Toinette, while Edward Franklin as his daughter Angelica and John Reicher as the scheming stepmother were effortlessly effeminate. Nicholas Budd also made an excellent naughty little sister Louise. By no means any less significant were the more masculine displays of talent by Tom Gill as love interest Cléante, Max Silver as Bonnefoy, Andrew Freedman and Oliver Eccles as the bizarre father-son Diaforus duo, and Stefan Sienkiewicz as Argan's brother Béralde, who saved the day in the final act! Their comic timing and ability to remain in character throughout showed great talent and maturity. All of the cast members were fantastic in the play's finale, a brilliantly choreographed ritual dance. You could never tell that beneath their gawky, malcoordinated schoolboy exteriors lurked such graceful and downright funky moves. Congratulations to everyone involved, and I hope that next year's Lower School play lives up to *The Imaginary Invalid* of 2001.

Sarah Pett

Music at Westminster

Another big year for the musical life of the school: Alex Millar gives us an overview of what the year held

This year has surpassed previous years in the standard of performance and the sheer number of concerts. As usual there were numerous House concerts of extremely high standard, along with the annual concerts: Contemporary Music, Choral and Orchestral and School Concert in St. John Smith's Square. Additionally we were treated to several performances by visiting professionals such as the pianist Joanna Macgregor, whose energetic piano playing was both a show and a performance and the German baritone Stephan Loges.

In addition to this immense amount of music-making, this year saw the introduction of a new concert - the Soloist Concert, which took place in January, where some of the best musicians in the school were able to shine. At the concert, the number of viola players was surprising, and the performance from an Under School boy was especially memorable.

This year the orchestra has surpassed itself on numerous occasions, principally in my opinion the performance of Vaughan Williams' *Pastoral Symphony* in St. John's, Smith Square, which was a wonderful task to be involved in. The performance in conjunction with the choir of Francis Grier's *Around the Curve of the World* was another great success. One of the best aspects of music at Westminster is the orchestra, where challenging music is performed to high standard, and in which many friendships can be formed, and I'm sure that this year's new experimental orchestral tour in Italy should prove to be very rewarding.

The high standard of music at Westminster is very much due to the efforts of students, who in their spare time engage in performances and concerts. To do this at the same time as coping with the many academic demands placed on them is an achievement which is not nearly praised enough as shown by the many Thursday lunchtime concerts - there are always opportunities to perform.

This year some of the best musicians that Westminster has had in recent times will be leaving. Their farewell to the school came in the form of one of the best Concerto Concerts that I have ever witnessed. People such as Edward Corn, Annabel Legge and Bernard Freudenthal have been so influential in the music at the school that their departure is going to leave a large void. Saying this, there is so much new talent in lower years that undoubtedly the void will soon be filled.

I would like to thank the following people who have helped to write the music section: Mica Penniman, Alexander Bradford, Sarah Pett, Francis Murphy, Mark Jolly and Charles Corn, as well as those who have been kind enough to write the reviews, especially members of staff.

The Jazz Concert Up School December 2000

The Jazz Concert was a perfect opportunity for the school's jazz musicians to show their talents, which most school concerts don't allow them to do. The entire evening was a great success, comprising some excellent ensemble items and superb solo performances. The Big Band, who got the evening started with three traditional pieces, caught the attention of the audience and electrified the mood. The other two ensembles - The Basement group and The Missing Link - were extremely impressive and most enjoyable to listen to.

It was quite evident that much effort had gone into these groups, and it was easy to see that all were enjoying themselves. Special mention should be given to Anthony Cardona (Jazz Flute), Nathan Korda (Clarinet and Bass Clarinet), Charles Corn (Trombone), and Tom Wroe (Alto Saxophone) each displaying great virtuosity and musicality.

The highlights of the evening for me had to be the two singers, and Tom Nishiwaki's piece *Oriental Blues*. Naomi Curtis was simply amazing; the clarity of her voice was captivating and a joy to listen to, bringing new life to '*Can't help lovin' that man*' for all the audience. Mica Penniman's performance was confident, enjoyable and extremely impressive. He took control of the whole audience with the charisma that shone through his renditions of '*Love me or leave me* and *Lullaby of Birdland*'.

The speed and agility of Tom Nishiwaki's piano playing was unbelievable, moving over the keys with such speed and yet so effortlessly. *Oriental Blues*, his own composition also allowed Al Moylan to show off his technical proficiency on the Double Bass, with some magical playing making the audience lean forward on their seats to watch as he slid along one of the strings. This concert showed everyone that there was yet another side to music at the school.

Alexander Millar

Don Giovanni Up School September 2000

It was E.T.A. Hoffmann who, in 1815, called Mozart's *Don Giovanni* 'diese Oper-aller Opern', the Opera of Operas. One can see what he meant - never before had an opera contained more chilling music, and of the three comic Italian operas that Mozart produced, *Il dissoluto punito, ossia Il Don Giovanni* considers the main character in far greater depth than in *Così fan tutte* or *Le nozze di Figaro*.



Da Ponte, the librettist of all of Mozart's great Italian comic operas, used his rival librettist Bertati's version of the legend of Don Juan as the basis for his own work. The extension of Bertati's original from one act to a detailed two, resulted in Mozart feeling that this work should be classed as a *dramma giocoso* (a comic opera based around a more serious subject) rather than an *opera buffa* (a normally comic light Italian opera) as it allowed far more potential for expression. Da Ponte claimed that Mozart intended to make this opera a serious one and that it was he who made sure that his work kept its comic aspects. Notwithstanding this claim, we can see the comic and serious aspects intertwined throughout the opera, not only in the characters, but also in the music. The serious characters of Donna Elvira, Donna Anna, Don Ottavio,

against their comic counterparts – Leporello, Zerlina and Masetto, with Don Giovanni a mixture of the two. But it is in the music that we see how cleverly the two aspects of the opera are mixed, the Overture itself is a prime example. It is full of fear and anxiety; the opening section, which is repeated later on in the opera, is some of the most chilling and haunting music written by Mozart, and indeed any of the Classical composers. Yet, seamlessly, after the opening idea has been played through we are brought into a jolly and sprightly section. The structure of the opera is also well assembled; for example, if we only look at the first few scenes then we see the comic playing off to the serious and visa versa. The opening scene, with Leporello lamenting his poor luck in love compared to his master's, moves into a serious part of the story where Donna Anna, Don Giovanni and Leporello engage in a typical Mozartian ensemble of the key soloists.

It is necessary to briefly mention the orchestra in *Don Giovanni* - the work was commissioned for production in Prague, a region not famed for its string players. The string section is presented with many technically difficult passages. The wind section, on the other hand, was extremely proficient, and so Mozart in the Act II finale has an on-stage wind octet playing tunes from operas of the day, including his own *Figaro*. The most important brass contribution is the three trombones, which play in association with the statue of the Commendatore in the final act.

Don Giovanni is an opera for soloists, there are hardly any choruses and each soloist is given plenty of opportunities to shine. When the opera was first performed in Vienna, the Don Ottavio, sung by Francesco Morella, could not master the aria '*Il mio tesoro*', forcing Mozart to write additional arias to compensate. Therefore, in addition to the countless delightful recitatives and ensemble singing, there are 5 truly magnificent solo arias: '*Deh vieni alla finestra*' (Don Giovanni), '*Madamina, il catalogo è questo*' (Leporello), '*Mi tradi quell'alma ingrata*' (Donna Elvira), '*Non mi dir bell'idol mio*' (Donna Anna) and '*Il mio tesoro intanto*' (Don Ottavio), along with the duet '*Là ci darem la mano*' (Zerlina, Don Giovanni).

The first performance in Prague 1788, appropriately attended by Giacomo Casanova himself, was a great success – Mozart wrote: 'My opera '*Don Giovanni*' had its first performance on 29 October and was received with the greatest applause.' If one listens to the entire opera, one can understand why audiences have continued to give the greatest applause ever since.

Alexander Millar

Autumn Concert St John's, Smith Square November 2000

Whilst the opening to Beethoven's 5th Symphony is described as 'fate knocking on the door' the image portrayed is that of an agitated fate desperate to get past the barrier. By contrast, the three slow, loud and ominous chords that start the overture to Verdi's *La Forza Del Destino* suggest a force that is assured of its mission and is in no hurry: a force of destiny that compels the hero of the opera to commit those acts that he is opposed to, with the result that nearly all the characters come to an ill-fated end.

The School Orchestra under the direction of Guy Hopkins had an opportunity to shine, given the huge amount of life, variation and demanding passages in this piece. The four main themes of the overture: tragic, festive, sweetly ardent and the dominant theme of restless turbulence were masterfully integrated so that the overarching unity of Verdi's musical concept was achieved. The beauty of this performance was that the orchestra demonstrated Verdi's ability to write a melody that stirs its audience and paints a picture, when it would have been easy to produce a dull, heavy rendition which is common in performances of Romantic compositions by youth orchestras. Whether it was the ominous presence of fate on the doorstep delivered by the brass, the rushing 'fate' motif on the strings, the famous woodwind prayer theme, the clarinet and harp duet, or indeed when the full orchestra came together, the energy and passion of the music was evident throughout culminating in a whirlwind ending. Special mention should go to the trombone section, the strings led by Alla Doubrovina, and also Phoebe Wallace (oboe), Maudie Leach (clarinet) and Anthony Cardona (flute). The secret to this overture is to give it the ability to express itself whilst taming it at the same time; the School Orchestra, in my opinion, succeeded in this choosing a pleasing speed, the correct dynamics and delivering the passion required for the overture to Verdi's 'opera of ideas.'

Following this impressive start, the audience was treated to a stunning performance by Edward Corn of Richard Strauss' *Horn Concerto no. 1 in E-flat*. Corn delivered a confident and exquisite performance from start to finish, generating warmth and colour in the many soaring melodies throughout. The audience was spellbound in the richness of tone especially in the evocative slow lament of the *Andante*. The concerto hints back to the solo instrument's Waldhorn beginnings, and as a reviewer of the time commented there is 'the spirit and mystery of the forest at its heart.' This was demonstrated best during the *Andante* movement, in the foreign key of A-flat minor, where the dark and mysterious richness of texture was layered upon the listener thanks to some excellent orchestral playing.

The School Orchestra showed that they could perform in the role of accompanist just as well as when they were centre-stage. All sections of the orchestra were utilised in accompanying the solo instrument and all did this to perfection with dynamism and precision. There were some especially good performances by strings and woodwind, both faced with almost impossible passages that were both appropriately delicate and did not break the balance of soloist and accompanist. The end of the concerto with the declamatory horn and orchestra coming together was delightful, as was the amazing speed and accuracy of Corn's playing.

The next half of the concert featured the full performance of the rarely played Vaughan Williams' Symphony no.3 (*the Pastoral*), in the presence of his widow, Ursula. The immensity and successful achievement of such an ambitious task pays tribute to the orchestra and conductor. Not only is this piece technically very demanding, but it runs the huge risk, due to a lack of tempo changes, of losing the audience's attention. However, the orchestra successfully produced the contemplative and quiet aspects of the piece, so that there were many outstanding moments, thus holding onto their audience. For me, the highlights of this performance came during the trumpet solo in movement 2 and the tenor solo in the final movement. James Church's trumpet solo introduced a slow military theme which rose out of the previous richness of rustic colour. It was absolutely focused in attack, phrasing and intonation, and worked extremely well with the bed of sound from the accompanying orchestra. The last movement began with a vocal solo: Alexander Millar's voice



was ethereal, the way in which this demanding solo was delivered showed great skill and huge promise for this young singer. The reduction in sound at the very end of the piece with solo tenor and high strings suggests a brisk departure away from the scene of war-torn France and left the audience with the sense of spiritual completeness. The impact of this was demonstrated by the silence that immediately followed, silence eventually broken by applause from an audience who had been thoroughly entertained.

Maudie Leach and Arash Taheri

Carol Concert Abbey December 2000

The Carol Concert is always a difficult event to pull off musically, due to the size of the Abbey. However, as usual, the music performed was still up to the high standard that we have come to expect at such events. Before the service the audience was treated to the first movement from Brandenburg Concerto no. 4, where the solo violin and recorders mastered the complexity of their parts superbly. The music of the service, as always, was performed to a high standard by the combined voices of the School Choir and the Parents' Choir. Apart from the traditional congregational hymns, the choir performed several pieces alone. The more ambitious of these pieces was the *Magnificat* by César Cui. Sarah Pett rose to the challenge made on the soprano soloist, and the result was successful with the solemn and spiritual sound of the piece attained. The Berlioz carol *The Shepherds' Farewell* with additional instrumentation arranged by Dr. Savaskan, and the *Sans Day Carol* showed how good the School Choir really is, with some wonderful singing which highlighted the delicacy of Berlioz. Special mention should be given to Lawrence Keegan-Fischer, Alexander Bradford and Mica Penniman, the soloists in the traditional carols, each of whom sang marvelously. The Henry VII Choir, the chamber choir, made two contributions to the service, and their performance of *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree* in particular was delivered with great musicality. Just as last year Annabel Legge had her carol performed, Alexander Campkin's *Good Christian Men Rejoice* brought to this year's congregation an impressive setting of traditional Christmas words. Peter Sells, a parent, composed his own Christmas anthem *Christ's Nativity*. The School Choir worked hard to perform successfully this extremely demanding and complex challenge. The music of the service worked extremely well with the traditional readings, and together made the evening a thoroughly enjoyable one.

Alexander Millar

Contemporary Music Concert Up School February 2001

Charles Corn opened the concert with Philip Glass' *Opening Piece* from *Glassworks*. It was a peaceful and serene start to an evening of music making with many varying moods. Anthony Cardona adeptly conducted his own piece, *Study*, to follow. Anthony introduced the instruments one at a time with precision and great care for their timbral characteristics. An evocative piece for tenor and piano, written by Edward Corn, followed in the form of two August Stamm poems set to music. Alexander Millar was a powerful and thoughtful tenor, and was well paired with Jonathan Katz on the piano, who conveyed a wonderful feeling of the tension built into the contrapuntal writing of this first song, *Schwermut*; at the end of the song the intensity remained unresolved. Both poems explored the ambiguities of chromatic modality verging on atonality. The third new composition of the evening was by Alexander Campkin. *The Piano Quartet in E* had energetic harmonic interludes and frequently changing moods. It started atmospherically with a well-balanced sense of modal melodies and varying textures, and it arrived at some very tonal and rhythmically attractive passage-work at its conclusion. The ensemble then played Ahmet Feridun's piece *Switching Off*, conducted by the composer. The piece started with a bold attack in the 'cello part and continued with exciting syncopated rhythms and technically demanding melodic runs.

The concert continued with Berio's *o king*. The ensemble was conducted by Dr Savaskan, and was well held together, especially in the sudden heavily accented interruptions, which are a feature of this classic of mid-'60s avant-garde. Sarah Pett, the soprano, sustained a difficult part with great musicality and perception. She had a keen sense of intonation, despite the gentle but confusingly atonal chords from the other instruments. The last piece before the interval was Alexander Millar's *A Watching Shade* from the 'Song of the Little Hunter' by Kipling. The piece employed a variety of modern performance practices: the tenor sang some of his more exclamatory phrases and the horn his loudest 'calls' into the body of the piano. The concert was resumed after the interval with four movements from Stravinsky's *Pulcinella Suite*. The full School Orchestra, conducted by Dr Savaskan, came together for this most well-known work of the neo-classical repertoire to produce a stylistically well-informed interpretation.

The Corn brothers, Charles and Ed came forward before the orchestra to perform the well-known Steve Reich piece, *Clapping Music*. This piece of '60s minimalism at its most extreme – two musicians clapping a one bar figure while moving out of phase with each other at precisely controlled moments – created a great deal of rhythmic excitement. Annabel Legge's *Aspiring Form* for orchestra showed a remarkable interaction between the conductor and players. The piece was full of atmosphere, enhanced by intense crescendos and edgy harmonies. The last composition of the concert was Bernard Freudenthal's *Dynamic Lines*. A great many musical influences from all parts of the twentieth century were evident – from Stravinsky to John Adams. The conducting, by the composer, was energetic and he brought an animated and jovial end to this annual event of challenging and thought-provoking contemporary music.

Lucy McCarthy

Choral and Orchestral Concert Abbey March 2001

The Lent term concert in Westminster Abbey featured a 'first' - the London premier of Francis Grier's impressive choral work *'Around the Curve of the World'*. As a prelude to this large-scale musical drama the school orchestra played Smetana's 'Vltava'. In recent years we have become used to hearing standard repertoire pieces in our school concerts, and perhaps now take for granted the ability of our young players not merely to manage the notes but to turn out performances of real quality and conviction. That we do so is down to both the players' technical abilities and the secure lead of professional conducting; Guy Hopkins achieved on this occasion a polished and fluid musical line and argument, as well as bringing out some fine sounds and tight ensemble work. The intonation in the woodwind (otherwise thoroughly reliable and energetic) took a little while to settle - the Abbey presents special challenges in acoustics and balance - but this problem was outweighed by the lively dynamics and well judged tempi, finely representing Smetana's river journey.

The main work in the programme was also concerned with a journey. Francis Grier achieved rare distinction as an organist, pianist and choral conductor astonishingly early in life - at 25 he was the organist of Christ Church, Oxford, and already well known as a performing and recording artist. Still in his twenties, he resigned his appointments and became a student once again, turning to theology and philosophy and living in India for four years. Returning to England in 1989 he devoted himself to composition; his choral works have brought him into the front rank of British composers. His major new work, *'Around the Curve of the World'*, is a musical and poetic narrative of travel, exploration and spiritual development; it combines, in a sequence of seven choral sections, which are settings of poems by Sue Mayo, a series of meditations on the theme of emigration, pilgrimage and resettlement with the story of the Canterbury Pilgrims and their journey to New Zealand in 1850. The focus is particularly on the leader of the new settlement, John Godley, and his wife Charlotte. The text of the narrative sections is drawn from primary sources (letters and diaries) of the life of the Godleys, and from biographical works. The music and poetry interact in the depiction of the journey in both its physical and psychological aspects. In conversations I had with some of the performers I felt that they too experienced, in the preparation of this technically demanding and exhausting piece, a sense of pilgrimage and sustained endeavour - some, I believe, only realising and fully appreciating the scale of their achievement on the night of the performance itself.

The effort was amply repaid. There was a wonderful dramatic progression here, presented in a distinct musical idiom which visibly 'grew' on the audience. There is nothing of the avant-garde in Grier's style - rather a direct, sonorous and atmospheric music created to serve the story and the meditative moments that punctuated it. Multiple influences were at work - chant-like and meditative figurations in the narrative lines, evocative rhythmic depiction of the dramatic moments, and (to my ear) a sensitive distillation of 20th century choral and operatic styles, not in any sense pastiche

but still something that made sense in a tradition of inherited musical language. Dramatic unity was helped by Grier's use of motivic themes and repeats and repetitions. The performance contained some really beautiful choral singing and playing too - here the woodwind came into their own, the strings produced an unusual warmth of sound, and a most memorable horn solo accompanied the third choral 'psalm' - 'My breath lies quiet at the door of my mouth/As I ponder the task that you set at my gate./You guided me safe across the seas,/You led me from home to bring me home.'



The professional vocal soloists, taking the roles of Charlotte and John Godley and an emigrant man and woman, were Alison Wells, Paul Whelan, David Hamilton and Dorthée Jansen. They were joined by three Westminster pupils from the choir - Lucetta Johnson, Sarah Pett and Amy Russell. The performance was attended by the composer and by members of the present-day Canterbury Association. A moving introductory note was reproduced in the programme from the 100th anniversary service in 1950, outlining the history of the association and its founding of the province of Canterbury.

The Canterbury Association based its aims and principles on the liberal colonial ideas of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (OW) - namely voluntary emigration, and communal cooperation with the region's native population. The nature and success of the Canterbury Settlement thus stands in contrast to the early days of other British overseas projects. Also attending the concert on this memorable occasion were a large number of the present Wakefield family.

Jonathan Katz

Songwriter's Concert Up School March 2001

Imagine electric guitars farting through overstrained speakers, schoolboys in uniform wailing teenage angst, sometimes through locks of unkempt hair, playing tunes written on the day of the concert itself, while a seated audience looked on and clapped politely in the appropriate places. Although very enjoyable for all concerned, the rock concert of 2000 did seem to conjure this image. For 2001, it seems that the Music Department deemed that a makeover was needed. The name of the concert was changed to the 'songwriter's concert,' perhaps to disassociate the performance from the above image, and I'm sure to give credit to the large number of performers Westminster possesses who write their own material.

As a further measure to improve the ambience and to bring the stars of the stage closer to their adoring fans the performance was carried out on a raised platform along one of the lengths of School, rather than on the main stage.

The overall effect was to create a more intimate setting for what was after all a more intimate affair than in previous years, with all of the acts providing original material. The production was completed with the sound engineering expertise of John Blackwell behind the mixing desk and Sam Pritchard providing subtle but dynamic lighting. When writing this kind of article it makes sense to use the appropriate language for the trade. But there can be no other words for it - Flicker rocked...hard. Whipping members of the crowd into a moshing frenzy, driven by the fervent chord slashing of Arjun Coomaraswamy, and the unique vocal talents of Fred Gordon, College proved that nerds still know how to make a great noise. And they looked great on stage.

The Doug Shaw band, after many changes of line-up, proved a convincing opening act as a power trio (drums, bass and guitar/vocals). Doug proudly announced that his first number had just been finished five minutes before, then launched into two compositions in his own inimitable style, faithfully backed by the school captain on bass and Charlie Bishop behind the kit. Mr Shaw finished with a solo guitar and vocal composition, a real treat for the audience as bass-

lines, chords and vocals came together in an aesthetic synergy which confirmed not only his good taste but his skill in providing a charismatic performance.

The band who announced that they were only playing 'to make everyone else look better', *Square Fish*, put on a show we'll all remember, not least because they finished with an energetic rendition of Oasis' 'Cigarettes and alcohol.' As well as his singing talent, their frontman put on an impressive display of Gallagher-esque soloing, whilst charming the audience with his own idiosyncratic charisma. The only other ensemble performance of the evening came from the final act, a fusion of the Doug Shaw Band and the lyrical and guitar playing talents of Dave Stranger-Jones and Harry Adamson.

The moment which sticks in my mind from their act was the point where a break in Adamson's soulful sermonising gave way to an impressive display of harmony singing from all of the guitarists on stage. It really was the perfect end to a great and varied concert. Not to be forgotten were the solo acts, including a folky performance by Alex Mackenzie, the evocative piano-set words of Charles Corn and the beautiful voice of Stephanie Seager. James Bullock, supported by Julian de Jonquieres showed a hidden talent as a songwriter,



incorporating some modal guitar playing in his composition.

The heartbreaker of the night was Jack Farthing, with his combination of subtle voice tones, simple but very effective guitar lines and chords showing that nylon stringed guitar songs really can make signable material. Let's hope he does get signed, as Westminster has a reputation for providing boy band members which may be due some reassessment. All in all, I think the members of the audience will agree that it was an hour and a quarter well spent. There was not one act that was not up to the task of impressing a demanding audience, as observers from both inside and outside the student body of Westminster School remarked. Even the members of staff present were seen nodding their heads and tapping their feet. And of course some members of the audience did a little more than that.

Jonathan Stern

Opera Scenes
Up School
February 2001

Last year's reviewer of the opera scenes, who had the pleasure to reflect upon Mozart and Rossini, nonetheless expressed a wish for more modern opera in the repertoire, and his suggestion was apparently taken up as this year presented an array of traditional themes and in modern interpretation by Britten, Menotti and by Purcell.

The evening began with an extract from Henry Purcell's "Faery Queen", directed by Tracy Morris. The scene, like the rest of the opera, is all about fun, which makes this choice all the more challenging from the director's point of view, especially since the leading role in the opera is taken by the 'faeries' rather than main characters. This absence of a distinct plot line is perhaps why at times the scene appeared to be a little static and, on the general account of the audience, not quite as uplifting as intended.

However, it was certainly colourful (the faeries were dressed as 70s hippies, and although that sort of dress sense leaves much to be desired, it was definitely very bright), and more importantly, the cast displayed consistently high quality singing in a variety of voices. Most distinguished were the powerful tenor solo by Alexander Millar and the ravishing solo from soprano Naomi Curtis. Accompanied by a harpsichord, these two not only exhibited their rich vocal abilities but also portrayed the joyful and high-spirited character of the music. This came in contrast to Charles Ogilvie's velvet baritone timbre and his portrayal of a poor drunken poet, which he delivered with characteristic ease.

The biggest contrast, though, was yet to come. From this bright scene of light-hearted fun we moved to the heavy, grey, gloomy waiting room of Menotti's 'The Consul'. Directed by John Arthur this scene was as convincing as it was well performed and brilliantly touching. The scene projected a very real impression of loss of hope and the insignificance of a single man in the machinery of a state, conveyed certainly in the music by the soulless repetition of words such as 'your name is a number, your story's a case' in reply to the heart breaking stories of people in the waiting room, and most of all through impressive singing.

It was a stunning performance from Sarah Pett, whose soft soprano voice handled delicately all the difficulties of the part, and who was also remarkably moving in the role of a suffering mother. Lucetta Johnson's portrayal of Magda, a dedicated wife of a troublesome husband, and her thrilling soprano voice were truly captivating. Brilliant and convincing were also the solos from Paola Smith, who very accurately portrayed the cutting and unconcerned secretary of the Consul; charismatic Mica Penniman as a dazed magician, and Ferdinand Koenig, whose masterfully acted and well sung aria ended in a real triumph of bureaucracy over human liberty.

Despite its modern origin, the theme of human liberty in the opera is probably eternal, the music is correspondingly serious and on the whole the scene appeared to give a favourable impression of opera as dramatic form. The third opera scene brought about yet another change of mood. Britten's "Midsummer Night's Dream" under the direction of Philip Needham really was all about fun. Here again the centre stage is taken not by the main characters, Hippolyta and Theseus, but rather by some amateur mechanicals trying to put together a play. Given that the mechanicals clearly have no idea what they are doing, this becomes a satire for 19th century romantic opera, and its performance on the night was thoroughly enjoyable.



Ferdinand Koenig once again demonstrated his outstanding acting skills and ability to entertain in the role of Pyramus, yet this time his renowned acting was matched by that of Alexander Millar who in an orange dress played Thisby. The sense of irony and amusement created by these two was enhanced by the comic performances from Hal Brindley in the role of a brick wall, David Brescia as the Moon, Matthew Brown as a crazy beast, and Jack Holborn as the proud director of the performance. Together with the equally joyful music, some brilliantly rich singing from Alexander and Ferdinand, Hal's glissandos, Matthew's roars, David's falsetto and witty interchanges between Dimitrius (Arash Taheri) and Theseus (Alexander Bradford) this scene was made properly entertaining. The variety of moods and characters presented at this year's opera scenes and the equally high standard of singing throughout were unexpectedly entertaining, even though originally I would have wished for more classical opera in the repertoire.

Alla Doubrovina

A Schubert Liederabend

Up School
March 2001

This was the sixth recital given Up School in an occasional series that stretches back twenty years. We began with Graham Johnson accompanying the American tenor Robert White in a programme of Schumann and Irish folksongs; Felicity Lott followed with Schubert and Poulenc; Ian Bostridge then returned to the same hall where, as a student, he had sung *Dichterliebe*, to give a penetrating account of *Winterreise*; Thomas Allen (not yet Sir) sang Schumann and Wolf, with Malcolm Martineau at the piano; Eva Meier then seduced us with Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler in an evening of cabaret; Penny Mackay and Malcolm Martineau followed suit with a programme of French chansons; and on 20 March 2001 Roger Vignoles presented an evening of Schubert Lieder with the young German baritone, Stephan Loges.

More than 400 people packed the hall for a lecture-recital that began with a chilling performance of *Der Wanderer*. During the first half of the evening Roger Vignoles commented before each song on the pictorial nature of Schubert's accompaniments, and cleverly managed to be neither too condescending nor too recherché: newcomers to the world of Lieder and seasoned professionals learnt much from his comments, the fruit of years of accompanying some of the world's greatest singers. *Der Wanderer*, the most popular of all Schubert's songs during his life time, was followed in the first half by *Erlafsee*, the rarely heard *Auf der Riesenkoppe*, *Ganymed*, Leitner's *Die Sterne*, the evergreen *Im Frühling*, and that miracle of complicity, Goethe's *Geheimes* - all sung with clear diction by Stephan Loges.

The second half explained why: abandoning his score, he gave a fine account of four songs from *Schwanengesang*, and then sang eight songs from *Winterreise*: *Der Lindenbaum*, *Auf dem Flusse*, *Frühlingstraum*, *Die Post*, *Die Krähe*, *Letzte Hoffnung*, *Die Nebensonnen* and *Der Leiermann*. In forty years' of listening to Lieder, I don't think I've ever heard a more compelling performance. Though his voice is still fairly monochrome, Loges delivered these despairing songs with peerless diction, ravishing beauty of tone and a complete lack of sentimentality. In today's concert-halls it is impossible to seat 400 people so closely round the piano, and I imagine that we were experiencing something of the intensity that Schubert's contemporaries enjoyed in the concert-halls of the nineteenth century. The utter silence at the end of *Der Leiermann* spoke more eloquently about such combined artistry than the loud applause that immediately followed. The evening ended with two encores: *Erlkönig* and Goethe's *Wanderers Nachtlied (über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh)*. Both artists commented afterwards on the exceptional acoustics and inspiring atmosphere, so let's hope that plans to entice Wolfgang Holzmair and Imogen Cooper, and Matthias Goerne and Alfred Brendel to the school will bear fruit.

Richard Stokes



The Henry VII Singers

This has been another tremendous year for the Henry VII Singers, thanks to their commitment, professionalism and wonderful singing. In November we gave a concert up School featuring part of Victoria's moving *Tenebrae Responsories*, which the School Society bought for us last year. We also sang Tomkin's haunting *When David heard that Absalom was slain* and ended the concert with the *Stabat Mater* by the Spanish baroque composer d'Astorga. This sublime piece features alternating movements for choir and soloists and gave a chance for many of the Singers to take a solo and also for the audience to hear so many soloists at once, and we were lucky enough to be accompanied by a small, mainly staff, orchestra. We also enjoyed our usual couple of slots in the annual carol service. In the Lent term we started rehearsing for a number of events in 2001 - communion services, a piece by the contemporary composer Diana Burrell as part of the Abbey's Poetry and Prose series, May Day madrigals and our May concert. The latter featured, Buxtehude's delightful *Magnificat* and a spirited rendition of Handel's *The King shall rejoice*, and showed the choir singing at its absolute spell-binding best. The seventeen singers sounded more like a choir of twice that number and the solid choral technique, wonderful musicianship and the sheer joy of the sound they make is testament to a very fine group of singers indeed. I thank them all, and will particularly miss Rosemary Dixon, Anabel Legge and Paola Smith who between them helped make the alto section into one of the best ever.

Gilly French

Concerto Concert Up School May 2001

The Concerto Concert has long been the most important event in the School's musical calendar, giving the main opportunity for talented soloists to shine, when they have reached the peak of their musical maturity. It also provides us mere mortals with one of the last opportunities to look on in amazement at the incredible talents that are shortly to leave. It is a special occasion indeed for a musician, when he or she is called upon to perform a solo, backed up by a full orchestra.

On seeing the programme, an initial shock for me was that there were no pianists or singers performing concertos this year. I can assure you that this fairly unusual occurrence is not a result of any lack of talented pianists or singers in the current Remove; of them there are plenty. So how it came to be that none of them could prepare a concerto in time remains something of a puzzle, but it is surely further testament to the massive pressures on Westminster, outside of the musical realm. But although this year's Concerto Concert was shorter and had less performers than that of last year, this was certainly made up for in terms of the quality and sheer range of instrumental performances.

The concert opened not with a concerto, but with Beethoven's *Prometheus Overture*. Here, despite some questionable tuning at the start, the orchestra delivered effectively the opening, which was slow and lethargic, with bellows from the entire orchestra, which then changed into energetic passages with string and woodwind interaction paramount. With the overture having been concluded, and any initial nerves on the part of the orchestra hopefully having been banished, the main pieces of the evening began, and as the skies outside darkened, so the tension and atmosphere inside the hall increased.

Mark Smith gave a very secure performance of the first (*Adagio*) movement of Haydn's *Violin Concerto no. 2*. Mark played impressively and was enjoyable to listen to. Those watching were already gaining a sense of how frighteningly good one has to be to even contemplate playing in this concert. An excellent performance of J S Bach's famous and instantly recognisable *Double Violin Concerto* followed, by Alla Doubrovina and Bernard Freudenthal, this year's two Leaders of the

of the School Orchestra. It must be noted that the success of the performance owed much to the steadiness of Jonathan Katz on the harpsichord. Alla and Bernard handled all of the usual difficulties with playing such a famous piece seemingly with ease, and even added a certain flair, to a faithful performance of Bach's music, that was refreshing and to see. Simon Ruda then gave a strong performance of the *Adagio for clarinet and strings*, by Heinrich Baermann, attributed to Wagner. It was an interesting change from the more conventional concerto format, and hearing the altogether different sound of a smaller group of string players, with Simon's cool, confident and soothing clarinet playing above them was wonderful. Simon succeeded in creating a powerful sense of atmosphere, and deserves credit for a memorable performance.

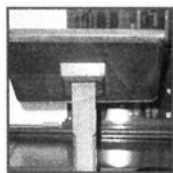
Then arrived the moment we had all been waiting for. It is unusual to have a French Horn player of such a high standard at all, let alone one who has received the sort of acclaim and high praise that Edward Corn has. He is one of those rare figures that only comes along, even to a place of such richness and depth in musical ability as Westminster, once every ten years perhaps. Ed played Mozart's much-celebrated *Horn Concerto no. 4* with all the expected aplomb, coupled with much imagination. It is an immense achievement to go further than that, and to deliver a performance with such a great extent of flair and character, and with all the clarity, perfect articulation and confidence that marks out someone like Ed. It was obvious that he enjoyed every second of his effortless and amazing performance.

Following someone like Ed Corn on stage is not the sort of task you would give to just any musician. This unenviable role fell to Al Moylan, and he proved more than up to the task. With the first movement (*Moderato*) of Haydn's *Cello Concerto in C*, Al really captured the essence of the all-important soloist-orchestra interaction, and he played through passages clearly full of technical difficulties in a seriously impressive and striking way. Next it was George Hull's turn to astound us. Until now, perhaps the Music Department's best-kept secret (there's one in every year!) George played the first movement (*Allegro*) of Weber's *Clarinet Concerto no. 1* powerfully, conveying a very rich sound. The range of the instrument was stretched by the immense difficulty of the numerous semi-quaver passages, which George pulled off with great style. Having seen George in recent concerts conducting with such passion, it was very foolish of me to have been at all surprised by his quite simply stunning performance. He was indeed a revelation, and I feel privileged to have heard him perform in solo.

Finally, it was down to Annabel Legge to end the concert with the *Finale* from Elgar's *Cello Concerto in E minor*. Once again, the piece carried great technical difficulties, and perhaps the seriousness with which Annabel had to tackle them may have detracted from the panache and finesse that we have come to expect from her. But that must not cast any negative shadow over what was nevertheless a very accomplished performance from a very gifted musician. And when she made her instrument cry out passionately with those 'demonic' chords reflecting the first movement's theme, she certainly had the audience mesmerised.

Much credit must be given to a very talented and skilled orchestra, which carries its fair share of promising bright stars, and who supported the soloists on this evening excellently and capably. Credit and thanks is also due of course to Mr Hopkins, Dr Savaskan and Dr Katz for all their valuable hard work with the orchestra, and for their effective direction, and of course to all the Music Department, for creating the conditions required for such a showcase of talent.

Arash Taheri



John Locke Society

The John Locke Society – home of the eloquent speaker, the snappy student and, occasionally, the site of a clash between the two. This year saw a typically excellent collection of speakers addressing the Society, and some very interesting discussions as a result. The first speaker of the year was Angela Mason, founder of *Stonewall*, addressing us on the issue of gay and lesbian rights. Ms Mason described the issues faced by homosexuals in modern society, and pointed to the goals remaining for the gay-rights movement in Britain, and in the broader context of the European Union. There followed a sensitive discussion of the potentially explosive questions of adoption by homosexual couples, and the extension of marriage rights to same-sex pairings (one bizarre question about park benches notwithstanding).

The next two weeks also proved fascinating: Denis Cassidy, ex-Chairman of Newcastle United, described his climb from a humble background to national prominence, and Sir Robert Clark told a captivated audience of his adventures in Italy during the Second World War as an undercover agent. Peter Ogden, millionaire philanthropist, also gave a very memorable talk. He evoked a strong reaction from the lecture room audience on the subject of his education program. State schools select students they consider most suitable to take part in the program – as a result of which the children are placed into privileged schools such as Westminster.

There was an eclectic response, with a few hailing Mr Ogden as the founder of an era of equal opportunities – the majority instead criticising the ‘creaming off’ of the best from the state system, and the idea that the selection process could be more than arbitrary considering the ages involved. The speaker found himself obliged to work hard as questions on the nature of intelligence and meritocracy flew at him – but such is the nature of the John Locke Society!

The next speaker was less controversial. John Monks, General-Secretary of the TUC, impressed the audience by being the first person to talk to the Society in the year without the aid of notes; the fluency of his address, and the vast range of historical information incorporated into his description of the trade union movement, made his feat all the greater. One of the Society highlights of the year was next up: Louis Theroux. Most of the Sixth Form were drawn to him – due mainly because of his high profile in prime time television. Those who had yet to hear of him sceptically awaited a talk full of Westminster reminiscences and boasts of success in a glamorous career, but instead Theroux’s effervescent wit poured out for all to see – the mocking undertones suggesting that we, the awe-struck audience, might well end up being subjects of his next ridicule. He explained that in many cases he

had developed a respect for the fringe groups he had encountered in his work, and his manner won many fans as we listened to tales of American Neo-Nazis and female body-builders.

Michael Williams, the Deputy-Editor of *The Independent on Sunday*, gave a particularly amusing talk on the British broadsheets; there were gasps from some sections of the audience (and hearty cheers from others) when he described *The Times* as ‘*The Daily Mail* in broadsheet form’. We moved into rather more dangerous territory the next week when Ivor Lucas, a British ex-Ambassador, spoke on the subject of the peace process in the Middle East – in both his balanced account and his answers to questions from some of those with connections to the involved regions, Mr Lucas’ diplomatic skills were evident.

Joan Taylor was excellent as she spoke to us about the importance of singing in our lives – although her wisdom was called into doubt when she asked the typically tone-deaf audience of Westminster students to exercise their vocal chords! Perhaps the best talk of the term was next, when Richard Rogers – who seems to have left his architectural fingerprints all over the place – spoke about architecture and city planning. His calls for a more coordinated approach to city development, coupled with a denunciation of the sprawling monsters of America, met a warm response, and his focus on social existence seemed fresh in an age of self-interest.

The Lent Term kicked off with Tom Conti’s anecdote-packed talk on life as a Hollywood star. Robert Lacey, chronicler of the rich, famous and author of a recent bestseller on the subject of Britain in AD 1000, proved a source of fascinating information – bringing to life a period that many thought (mistakenly, we discovered) lost because of a lack of written sources. It was fun to compare life now with life then, and to realise that for all the differences, some things seem to stay constant through history. Certainly, there is no shortage in the annals of human achievement of people willing to do strange heroic deeds – and when Anne Musto, ex-Headmistress turned globetrotter, told us the subsequent week of how she circled the world twice by bicycle, many seemed at a loss in terms of a suitable response. As the meeting broke up, a few facial expressions betrayed suspicions that dementia had been at work!

Then came the mammoth event – in every sense. The room was crammed full, walls lined by the standing bodies of those who had failed to come in time for a seat. There was something electric in the air. The speaker had yet to arrive, and already an awesome silence had descended, students charged with anticipation. Anne Widdecombe MP, Tory Shadow Home Secretary, was to address the John Locke Society.

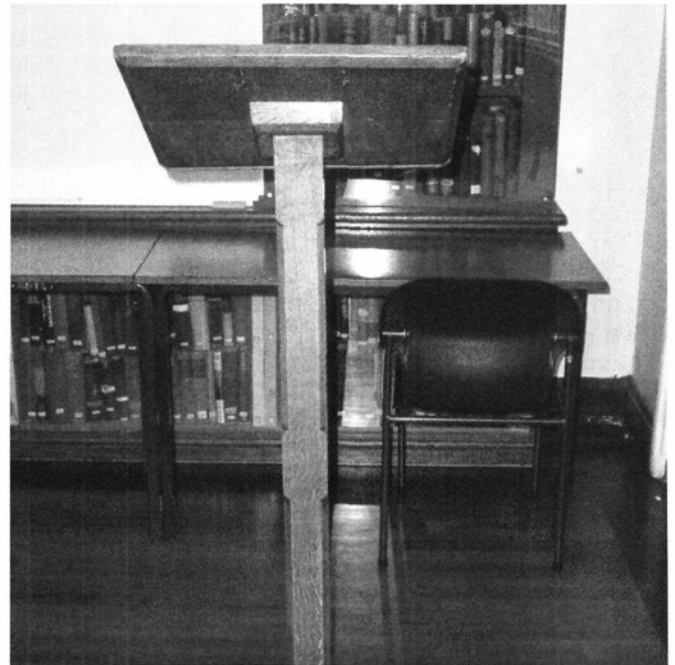
When she finally waddled in, Anne Widdecombe showed herself to be a polished speaker, delivering a concise lecture on drugs and the Conservative Party's apparent ability to solve Britain's problems. The question and answer session was unsurprisingly visceral, and occasionally seemed in danger of turning into an all-out war as Anne and her fans took on the rest of the world. Ms Widdecombe had shown herself an impressive speaker, but many considered her departure more a retreat than anything else.

Matthew Engel, journalist at *The Guardian* and editor of *Wisden*, was frequently hilarious in his informal talk with the title 'Cricket, warm beer and left-wing politics'. Equally amusing in parts – although slightly more focused – were the Remove members who addressed the Society the following week regarding the PHAB (Physically Handicapped, Able-Bodied) program, their coherence astonishing many by undermining stereotypes! Rosie Boycott, having just left *The Daily Express* where she held the post of editor, gave a fascinating talk on journalism and newspaper politics – though neglecting to mention in detail the ins and outs of working for the owner of several pornographic magazines. Continuing the journalistic theme, Jon Ryan, sports editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, spoke on sport and lunacy to a predominantly male audience.

Sir John Drummond, ex-Controller of Radio 3, showed himself to be a glorious snob as he rubbished the incumbent government for their philistinism – taking pot-shots at other politically-correct sacred cows such as 'positive discrimination'. Whilst many found him rather too elitist, his passion for art was clear for all to see, and he was certainly entertaining in his handling of hostile questions. Eleanor Mills (an Old Westminster now at *The Daily Telegraph*) did little to challenge the contempt with which many Westminster students view that paper by placing the blame for anorexic-looking models on the supposedly secretly-homosexual upper classes in Britain, and then going on to admit to her hypocrisy in agreeing to the publication of such images in her newspaper. An intrepid question seemed to finish her off in the eyes of most people, although even she managed to draw a few supporters. The final talk of the term came from a surprisingly uncontroversial Peter Tatchell, who spoke for some time on Robert Mugabe, and the dangers of attempting a citizen's arrest on him. The questions made more reference to Tatchell's gay rights work, but there were – to the dismay of some – none of the shock 'outings' for which he is well-known.

The Election term began with a talk from Frank Prochaska – ardent republican – on the need to rid Britain of its monarchy. Like the public at large, Westminster students seemed reluctant to adopt such a revolutionary stance, although many agreed that the monarchy in its current form is a flawed institution. Harry Fox, speaking the next week, gave

a brilliant talk on surviving the Holocaust, sharing intimate family details in order to convey the true scale of the damage inflicted on all those who suffered. Whereas many speakers over the year seem to have felt the need to adopt facades, Mr Fox was – at times, painfully – honest and straightforward. One sensed a real emotional response from many to his words. Michael Grade, founder of Channel 4, evoked a somewhat different response from the next week's audience – the admiration here was less out of empathy, and more out of a desire to achieve the same levels of spectacular wealth!



As the year drew to a close, we were treated to two more excellent talks: one from super-chef Raymond Blanc, and the other from animal rights campaigner Kate Fowler. Both were lively, interesting and thought-provoking, though it seems fair to say that the two, had they met, would probably not have seen eye to eye; Monsieur Blanc's penchant for foie gras and Ms Fowler's peculiar brand of militant veganism were hardly compatible.

The John Locke Society has once again provided the Upper School with excellent weekly entertainment and education, and our thanks go to both David Stranger-Jones for introducing Society speakers, and to David Hargreaves for his success in obtaining consistently excellent speakers – how he manages to do so remains a mystery!

Francis Murphy
Faye Dayan



History of Art Society

When more than a hundred of us crammed into the Lecture Room to listen to Sir Roy Strong last September; I realised that the History of Art society was beginning to attract a larger following and that many parents were also hooked. In his particularly delicious style Sir Roy spoke contentiously about 'The Spirit of Britain' and the dumbing down of British culture. He ridiculed the whole idea of 'cool Britannia' and any possibility of trying to get everyone interested in art, music and drama by making it more accessible. He was delightfully politically incorrect and the discussion, which ensued, was heated and continued during the drinks party later.

How do you choose speakers for a society, which aims to bring the subject alive for an audience beyond the Academic rigours of the classroom? A History of Art lecture should be a sensual experience and a chance to experience variety. Variety of medium, period, topic and speaker. When we all met again with even bigger numbers in Ashburnham Drawing room on a balmy night in late September to listen and watch "The Religion of Rubens" there was a sense of awe. Statten, in his own inimitable way, had introduced Dr John Drury, Dean of Christ Church college Oxford and governor of the school, as "not Ian Drury of 'The Blockheads' - lets hear it for the Don" and we sat back to marvel at swathes of scrumptious paint. Later that term we heard the modulated tones of Nicholas Roeg on 'The Sound of Claudia Schiffer' and we saw the preview of the film which was reminiscent of the virtual reality film inside Mariko Mori's Dream Temple from 'Apocalypse'. It was an unmissable experience. Our own John House made his guest appearance in January and announced the John House prize before he spoke in his rather louche way about the seamy Bar at the Folies Bergères. Familiar territory perhaps, but delivered with anecdotal references to food in the nineteenth century.

Expansive, wacky Piers Gough, with his infectious laugh and sense of self mockery gave us an entertaining guided tour through his repertoire of idiosyncratic architectural achievements, the tiled bathroom, the fetishistic leather-lined apartment, the loo designed for non gender-specific Martians, the sinewy yellow bridge in east London joining two parks together over a main road. Nick Ross from the company we travel with to Florence in May, spoke about "Wicked Pictures, Censorship and Vandalism" suggesting provocatively that as genetic material for a human being was contained within the sperm, a women was nothing more than the vessel which housed it. The proof was in the drawings he brought with him! The last speaker was Rachel Barker – conservator of modern paintings at Tate Modern. She spoke about the ethics of restoration and conservation and her fascinating research in Canada. The sheer variety of her work was spell binding. One minute she was heaving great pieces of rubber on to the top of a structure, the next minute she was working with very delicate pieces, such as tiny cushions with paintings of icy landscapes on them. Her work at Tate Modern on the conservation of a Rothko ended the evening. The society is open to anyone interested in painting, sculpture, architecture, film, restoration and galleries. Next year the programme is exciting and varied and will be lead very ably by Sophie Priestley.

Jacqueline Cockburn



Debating

While enthusiasm for debating this year has come primarily from members of the Lower School, the 'senior' teams, which included James David, George Hull, Kate Murray-Browne and Frederick van der Wyck met with at least some degree of success. Although Westminster made it through only a couple of rounds of the Cambridge Schools' Competition and the Observer Schools Mace, Kate and Frederick made it to Finals' Day in the Oxford competition and, much to their surprise, did well enough on the day to make it to the Grand Final in the Chamber, the heart of debating at Oxford, as one of only four teams from more than a hundred that had started the competition. Unfortunately, Robert Gordon's College maintained their astounding record (this was their third win since 1995) so there remains room for improvement on Westminster's part next year.

The fact that all four competition speakers are currently in the Remove and will no longer be here next year does not bode well for the immediate future - but the high level of participation by younger pupils should amply compensate for this in the longer-term. Indeed, over the Summer holiday, three of our Upper Shell pupils will be attending the rather ominous-sounding 'Debating Boot Camp' in preparation for another year of national competition, inter-house fixtures and informal afternoons in the Camden Room.

This year has also seen the launch of a competition designed for younger pupils: there doesn't seem to be a great deal of opportunities for competitive debate in London for students in the Lower School. So we 'invented' our own competition, and invited twelve local schools to participate. The Westminster dream team (Harry Williams and Max Kaufman) made it through to the semi-finals of the competition, acquitting themselves admirably in the face of stiff competition from the other schools (as well as a fiendish motion: This House would buy a place in the country). With a little work, this inter-school competition could become a regular annual fixture .

Miss Turner, who took over from Mr White at the end of last year, deserves much of the credit for the revival of interest in debating and hopefully she will be able to continue the progress made already so that eventually Westminster can finally again actually *win* a competition.

Lizzie Sharples



Westminster Model United Nations 8

Westminster's Model United Nations is a chance for us to put those exclamations of 'I could run the country better than that' to the test, and see if we really can solve the world's problems in one weekend. This year's meeting was on 17-18 of March with over twenty delegations participating. The organisation of the event is an immense task with a huge team working behind the scenes during the weekend, to ensure that not only everyone, but every piece of paper, folder, laptop and walkie-talkie are where they should be. Arash Taheri, Secretary General, handled his responsibility with ease, leaving him so much time that he was able to plan a crisis in advance in case everything remained too ordered and peaceful.

The skill of being a chair, member of the Secretariat or part of the technical team is to appear composed at all times even when everyone else is running around screaming frantic orders at each other! This year there was the added difficulty that no resolutions were emailed to us until the morning of the opening ceremony, so that it was necessary to photocopy fifty separate resolutions and then put a copy of each into the relevant folder, all within half an hour. The photocopier jamming repeatedly

did not help matters, leaving us all fairly flustered by the time we were ready to start the ceremony, almost an hour late.

After the chaotic beginning, everything ran smoothly, with all the usual occurrences of MUN: the majority of notes written consisting of attempts to chat up other delegates (the most effective way to form alliances with other countries); continual collective hatred and ridicule of America and of course numerous declarations of war against everyone else. Each committee debated and passed a huge variety of resolutions, from Germany annexing Prussia, to Australia's ownership of the pavlova as their national dessert.

Much credit must go to Arash Taheri and James Forrester for not only organising everyone on the day, but also for all the preparatory work they put in, including ordering pizza for the secretariat and technical team to keep up morale! Dr Kalivas was indispensable as the teacher in charge ensuring everything went as planned in addition to making endless trips to the photocopier for us all.

Lizzie Sharples



School Council

Westminsters are renowned for making their views known, and this year saw official recognition of a trait found in many students. For the first time in the school's history, a School Council has begun to meet regularly, with elected representatives from all years putting forward suggestions with a view to improving school life. What are the proceedings like, you ask? Well, on the whole, they tend to be pretty calm, restrained affairs, with Council members showing exceptional courtesy to one another as issues are discussed. Occasionally, some more emotive topics are touched on, but thanks to the Reverend Mordecai's sterling work as Chairman, warfare has been avoided – so far. The Head Master graces us with his presence every other meeting, and has consistently shown himself open to suggestions for changes to how things are run. Despite the comments of a sceptical minority, the School Council has made its presence known in a variety of manners. Packed lunches have been transformed (in no small part due to the fact that those present at Council meetings are expected to consume them), greater freedoms have been secured for students during lunchtimes, uniform arrangements have been made more explicit, and the permission to park near the school has been granted. Several school-wide debates have also been initiated. It's early days yet, but from the number of suggestions pouring in to year representatives, it looks as if the Council will probably have work to be doing as long as there are people coming to Westminster. The School Council is a valuable addition to the life of the school, and thanks go to those who have made it possible.

Francis Murphy



The Greaze

As I entered Up School I couldn't help but think of 'Gladiator.' Up School, stuffed to the brim with blood-thirsty Westminster pupils, reminded me of the Colosseum; my opponents, each one scarier and more terrifying than the last, reminded me of the armour-clad gladiators of the arena; I am tempted to compare myself to Russell Crowe, but since I didn't win, I think that might be a bit presumptuous. The atmosphere was intense and my nerves were at breaking point. The pancake was thrown into the air, as the whole group flung itself forward aggressively. Soon I was at the bottom of the pile and desperately trying to dig my way out of the pile of human bodies. I threw myself carelessly on the pile and from somewhere beneath me I heard a scream; I had inflicted pain and I was happy. Then the whistle blew, and the fight was over: we all stood up, thankful that we could still use our legs, and awaited the announcement of the winner. I had done nothing more than hurt the odd person, but I enjoyed it, as one should; it was quite an experience.

Elias Mitropoulos



The Henry Tizard Memorial Lecture

The Tizard Lecture is intended to both entertain and instruct; eminent scientists have successfully done this every year since 1963. Last year we had Pisa, and the notable success of its Tower leaning rather less now than it did then. This year the audience – who left in a somewhat more subdued mood than in 2000 – will no doubt be very much hoping for a similar success story. Professor Roy Anderson delivered the lecture, originally entitled 'Mad cows, monkeys, and Chinese ducks – epidemiology of infectious diseases'. That he agreed to do it gave particular pleasure since he was asked right in the middle of his move to Imperial College from Oxford, a move that involved not only him but his entire research team as well. At the time he was planning to talk on the epidemiology of BSE, Aids and Chinese 'flu. BSE was of particular interest to many – could they, with impunity, eat beef? It also seemed that BSE was on the wane, and at the time we arranged the lecture farming was beginning to recover. The lecture would address a problem that looked to have been overcome.

And suddenly there was pan-Asian strain O: foot-and-mouth. Immediately the lecture assumed an unfortunate topicality as the country once more became gripped by daily news of farming disaster, with the number of cases at the time of the lecture being around 400. As I write it is two months to the day since the first report, around 1400 cases have been seen, and we have had nearly two months of official assurances that it is under control. Professor Anderson is much involved with analysing the epidemiology of foot-and-mouth disease; indeed Channel 4 News wanted a live interview with him about two-thirds the way through the lecture. It was, fortunately, pre-recorded instead. He was heard frequently on radio and television for the rest of that week.

But BSE first. The problem with offering a largely lay audience a deal of statistics can be that they have little idea of their true significance and perhaps little idea of how they might be massaged by those with axes to grind. It became plain very quickly that Professor Anderson's presentation was both accessible and axe-free. Some of the data was truly shocking – evidence, for example, that a few farmers had sold cattle on quickly once they saw the first faint signs of the disease, or pictures of disposal workers awash in infected carcasses. Some of the data was encouraging about the likelihood of the disappearance of BSE in the UK in the foreseeable future, and less so about its incidence in Europe. There was some pretty chilling stuff, but some optimism too.

Science is expected to give answers. It is 'right' or 'wrong' in the public perception. It is of course no such thing; at its frontiers science is uncertain to varying

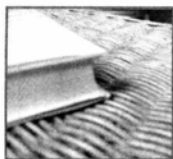
degrees. It gives probabilities, upper and lower bounds for, say, the number of cases of vCJD to be expected over the next ten years. With masterly understatement Professor Anderson pointed out that neither politicians nor newspapers like upper and lower bounds, since they smack of the sort of uncertainty that no government likes to hear and does not want to propagate. Governments have indeed accused scientists of 'being in love with uncertainty'. But that's how it is, and the more people who understand this the better they will be able to evaluate advice and decide courses of action. Professor Anderson gave the upper and lower bounds for vCJD incidence, gave his view on whether it was likely to be at the top or the bottom end (the latter) and quite properly made very clear the problems that are associated with the analysis of tricky data.

The foot-and-mouth problem was at the time relatively recent; the outbreak was officially 'under control'. The Army had not been brought in, and contiguous culling had not been thought of. Nor had vaccination, or at least it had been officially discounted. No longer – the debate is now (late April) just heating up. The story was much the same as for BSE, with difficult data and perplexity in some instances as to how the disease was being transmitted. The images were just as shocking, the implications and the costs just as astounding. Professor Anderson gave his views as to what should have been done early on – advice taken eventually, but not before the disease had spread apace.

Few Tizard lectures can have been as topical as this one turned out to be. That it was delivered in a gentle, low-key manner simply enhanced the impact. We must hope that soon foot-and-mouth disease will indeed be under control and in decline, and that the vCJD predictions are right. The large audience that heard Professor Anderson will be under no illusions as to the difficulties. We will also be clearer about the nature of science and the problems of its interpretation, away from the sanitised examples in the textbooks. Tizard would have approved of that.

The 2002 Tizard Lecture will be given in early March 2002 by Professor Sir Colin Berry (Department of Morbid Anatomy, The Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel) on 'Risk, Science and Society', a topic that follows on well from this year's lecture. Details will be posted on the Science Department website as soon as they are available. If you wish to be placed on the Tizard mailing list please write to the Head of Science or email your request to rod.beavon@westminster.org.uk

Rod Beavon



The Brock Lecture by Norman Croucher OBE

Hit by a train at the age of 19, Norman Croucher lost both his legs below the knee. It became his ambition, however, to climb any one of the world's highest mountains. No one with such a considerable disability has climbed anywhere near this high. His goal, an almost impossible dream.

'You're bonkers!' his mother told him. But his odyssey was to demonstrate great powers of judgement and persistence as he overcame pain, rejection, and extremes of exhaustion. Norman's well delivered talk recounted his story of an arduous and inherently dangerous quest into which he injected a remarkable degree of humour linked to an unquenchably positive attitude, capturing the fun of his journey, as well as the hardship. The title of the lecture, 'Legless but Smiling' neatly captured this approach. It is the slogan of one of his sponsors, a Cornish scrumpy cider manufacturer.

Norman began his training with a punishing walk from John O'Groats to Lands End and then made a score of ascents in the Alps, including the Matterhorn and the Eiger. He has since reached the summit of mountains in Peru, China, the Himalayas, Africa and the USSR and an inspiring selection of slides illustrated these and all other aspects of the lecture. Norman proved to be a master at narrating anecdotes in a

modest but captivating manner. On an expedition to Argentina he recalled how his false leg broke as a result of metal fatigue. A large audience including pupils, parents and Old Wets were held spellbound as Norman related climbing 5,115m with just one leg. Many other stories and adventures followed. In 1995, without bottled oxygen, he climbed the sixth highest mountain in the world, Cho Oyu, achieving his dream and joining, as he put it, 'The Five Mile High Club'. On the descent he survived a night out at 7,800m without a tent or sleeping bag by removing his legs and sliding inside his large, lightweight rucksack.

The seventeenth Brock Lecture proved to be a truly engaging, entertaining and thought-provoking evening. I would like to thank Norman Croucher, the School Society for funding the Lecture and Dan Greenwald (Dryden's) for organising the technical side of the talk.

Details of this year's Brock Lecture which takes place towards the end of Play term will appear on the school Website nearer the time. If you are interested in attending please e-mail James Hooper (hooperj@westminster.org.uk).

James Hooper



The Library

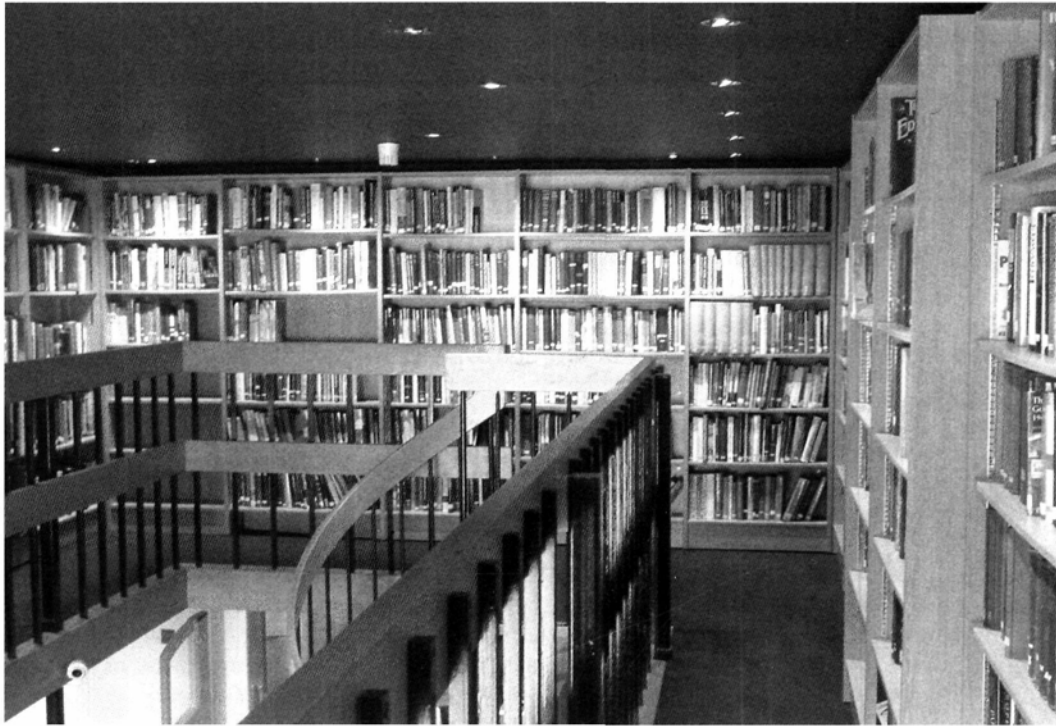
One of the most noticeable changes this year has been the development of what was the old office. We renamed it the Christie room (after a former Head Master) and filled it with fiction in English, new lighting, a new carpet, cushions of the Afghan pony-saddle type, panelling and strong paint colours. We also added a few not-too-well-made but wonderfully comfortable chairs. The fact that the inspection report identified the room as "somewhat after the Turkish fashion" has encouraged among the school community a nomenclature verging, one might say, on the vulgar. But the room is well used and I think generally appreciated. It certainly gives us the chance to promote reading for pleasure, one of our aims.

The inspection also recommended that we form a library policy, something which was due to be developed this year but we brought it forward and asked a few teachers to join the students on the Library Committee and help to produce a document. Policies and the like are notoriously difficult to get 'right' and even more so when independent minds are expected to join together and produce an agreed-upon document but, reader, we did it and I want to thank in particular, Drs Beavon and Ramsay, for their time and help. We now know what we are doing and hope to do.

Other physical changes in the library have centred upon the corridor leading to and from the Christie room, the entrance area and the lighting in the Greene room. **The corridor** which previously had

an under stairs cupboard feel now has a starry sky featuring the Orion constellation as its ceiling (many thanks to Dr Needham) with the walls lined with posters of arts happenings currently on show in London. **The entrance area** is now properly lit, equipped with new shelves and has sufficient space for display in whatever form we wish to present material. It is encouraging to note that a few students have expressed an interest in using the area to put forward their own viewpoints. We want the library to be a part of the school in as wide a sense as possible and further to this end we have encouraged musicians to use the staircase space for informal lunchtime concerts as the acoustics are very good and ideally suited to chamber groups or solos. In the **Greene Room** extra lighting was introduced in particular an up lighter to the stem of the chandelier. The room is now very well lit but we can return to the situation of former days by using the dimmer switch. Mrs Iris Hughes retired at the end of last year and Miss Re-

becca Nunn who has just completed her MA in Librarianship joined us. Miss Nunn holds the position of Assistant Librarian. Mrs Lesley Bateman came as part time Library Assistant and Mrs Bland continues as Senior Library Assistant. As a result of the overall increase in staff we have been able to improve the opening hours of the library.



The web site is progressing with the help of Miss Nunn's ever-increasing knowledge in these matters. We hope to bring all the ideas we have for it to fruition by the end of Election Term 2001 but naturally as web sites become more integral to the work of departments within the school (and the world in general) so we shall adapt and innovate where needed.

The complete overhaul of the stock is still in progress and we are moving at the rate we anticipated. With luck the open access stock of the library should be sorted by the end of next academic year.

After that we begin on reserve and older material. The aim is to produce a library that is well stocked and used and fulfils all that we talk about in our policy (see the web site). It all takes time and is not always the most stimulating aspect of our day but it is essential that we know what we have, that it is secure and that it has been judged worthy of retention.

On the matter of rules and regulations we have tried not to be too prescriptive; after all we want the community to feel welcome and to visit and stay for a time and not only for work purposes. Some users find the rule that we have of demanding that mobile telephones be switched off and expecting personal listening devices to be removed from the ears, a little difficult to come to terms with. It is a frenetic world for us all and possibly even more so for the young and a good part of the frisson of living in the 21st century is the way in which we have accepted the electronic

bustle – the mobile telephone with its text and voice messages, email, constant music through ear pieces, televisions – the bombardment of information and noise. Our library is traditional in the sense that we expect people to read good imaginative literature, to struggle intellectually and to leave some of the bustle of the world behind when they come in. Just for a while one can listen to distant sounds or even, silence. Possibly in the future we shall work and relax with noise but for now we try to keep matters in perspective and give our community the chance, albeit as a rule, to be aware of and listen to the slower pace and sounds of living within oneself.

It is encouraging to note that a lot more fiction is being read compared with the last year. The involvement of staff in the choosing of some of the fiction, the newly decorated room and the library's particular push to having the best fiction available has all probably helped. We are still purchasing widely, particularly in the areas of stock which are undergoing overhaul, fiction, the sciences including mathematics, and books on general social issues. This is complemented by suggestions from students (published on the web site under "Contact us") and staff and in addition to videos, CDs and cassettes.

Hugh Eveleigh

The Westminster Quiz

A £20 book token will be awarded for the first correctly completed entry received by the Editor after 1 September

Geography

1. What is the name of the highest navigable lake in the world?
2. How many countries' flags feature only the colours red and white?
3. Which Arab tribe carved the town of Petra in Jordan?
4. Which river inspired Ernest Hemmingway's story, 'Big Two-Hearted River'?
5. Which Japanese Island was occupied by the USA during the Second World War and was returned to Japan in 1972?

History

1. Which Roman senator exclaimed: 'Carthago delenda est'?
2. Who founded the order of the Jesuits?
3. Who founded Beijing in 1267?
4. Who described war as 'a big game and a good occupation'?
5. Who was the first woman pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean?

Science

1. Which Greek inventor, who had designed the fortifications of Syracuse, was killed when the Romans sacked the city?
2. Who invented, but failed to build the world's first ever parachute?
3. Which mathematician added together the whole numbers from 1-100 in less than five minutes at the age of ten, and got the right answer?
4. What principle concerning air pressure makes flight possible?
5. What is the title given to NASA's programme of exploring Jupiter and her surrounding moons?

Culture

1. Where did Miquel de Cervantes, author of 'Don Quixote,' lose his arm?
2. Who are the protagonists in Velazquez's 'La rendicion de Breda' ?
3. What was Joseph Conrad's real name?
4. What was the profession of Picasso's first wife?
5. What type of film gained William Hannah fame and fortune?

Lyke Wake Walk

Ah, 'the best laid plans of mice and men'! This was the general sentiment of our group as we sat huddled on the humpback bridge in a small hamlet called Low Mill, shivering in the cold and being hosed by the advancing drizzle. Of course, we were lost, nearly 7 to 10 miles from where we should have been – Rosedale Head checkpoint, the third checkpoint and nearly half the way point of a gruelling 42 mile crossing of largely featureless moorland. By 10am, several groups would have been enjoying the satisfying cooked breakfast of sausage and bacon provided by Mr Hooper and Mr Kennedy at Rosedale Head. Instead, five Westminster pupils were emptying their Isostar bottles of all the last drops of energy that they could provide!

The greatest irony of this situation was that our ordeal had started so encouragingly. Equipped with weather-proof maps which we thought would provide us with all the information we would need, since they had been carefully covered with everything from landmark reference to compass bearings, we set out in good spirits from the warm and sleepy village of Osmotherly on the Western boundary of the North Yorkshire Moors. Our spirits had been raised by the sight of warm, bulging pies and delicious cake on arrival in the village after what can only be described as an uncomfortable journey from London.

So, it was with this perfect preparation that Olly, Sam, John, Daisy and myself set off from Osmotherly at 10pm in great spirits. The first stretch of walk was fairly easy to map read, with the group following the long established Cleveland Way path as far as the first checkpoint at Carlton Bank, a stretch of about 15 km. The terrain and temperature seemed perfect for walking at that point. However, as we climbed onto the ridge, an entirely different picture began to emerge. The weather upon the ridge can best have been described as damp mist, a stark contrast to the perfect visibility we had experienced in the lowlands. This mist made the stone paths very slippery and great care was needed also to spot the concealed drainage ditches which hindered our steady progress along the ridge. Indeed, it was even necessary for the leader of the group to shout "ditch" at the sight of an imminent 'ankle-sprainer'. This however became tedious and was soon replaced by more interesting and indeed amusing phrases largely associated with the rowing experiences of the other four.

It was with a mixture of relief and satisfaction that we arrived at the Carlton Bank checkpoint to find that, after being the first group to set off from Osmotherly, we were the first to arrive at the checkpoint and we had not managed to get lost. However, the second stage of the walk from Carlton Bank to Hasty Bank saw the group's confidence and spirit eroded somewhat as we encoun-

tered some testing terrain. This stretch incorporated several steep climbs and descents as we negotiated a series of banks. The most demoralising aspect of this period was that, after making an energy sapping climb, one was immediately faced with a descent and the outline of yet another bank only a short distance away. Indeed, it was during this period that the differences in the ability of the group were exposed and subsequently, the cracks in the group's morale. This did not stop us, however, from admiring the plethora of lights which was, according to the map, the conurbation of Teeside from the Wain Stones, a major landmark of the moor and in itself, a brilliant spectacle by daylight.

Lifted by the hot drinks and chocolate bars which we received from Mr Davies at Hasty Bank and with group morale repaired, we set off across Urra Moor at comparative pace. By this stage of the route, the Moor was becoming featureless and mapwork therefore difficult. However, we were fortunate to still be provided with a well defined path, although we did not really know where exactly on the map we were. This luxury was swiftly lost as we approached Bloworth Crossing where we intended to join a disused miners railway. Unfortunately, at this point we were engulfed by a disorientating fog whilst being showered by rain. In the small matter of the five minutes which it took us to put on our cagoules, I had lost my gloves in the gloom. Amusing scenes followed with the group crawling around on the ground in a desperate attempt to find the gloves! In these conditions, we relied on our compasses to find our way. However, we were not prepared for the nodal point of several paths that is our significant memory of Bloworth Crossing, many of which had similar compass bearings. Needless to say, we took the wrong path and walked for many hours in vaguely the wrong direction and also into the wrong valley, being mocked with every step we took by the smug cackle of the grouse that have colonised these moors.

When we finally found that there was some mobile reception, we phoned Mr Tocknell, who informed us that we should tack East, a tactic which involved us all jumping numerous dry-stone walls and nearly falling down a quarry! With the help of a helpful farmer, we established where we were, by that stage on the wrong side of the map! From that moment on, we realised that the completion of the walk was impossible. Also at that moment, all our mental strength, in terms of the resistance to tiredness and pain subsided. We were soon taken to Ravenscar and then onto Scarborough after calling Mr Tocknell. We were saved the uncomfortable trip home by minibus instead taking the train to Kings Cross, where we arrived tired and weary late that night. In hindsight, it was a great experience, one which I will relive next year when I complete the walk!

Thomas Wrathmell

PHAS

We went to the travel agent hoping to get a holiday. Finding everything out of our price range and nowhere to stay, we bumped into Mr. Hargreaves on the way home. He mentioned that there was accommodation going cheap at school. There was one catch - we had to spend a week putting someone else's interests before our own. On the first night lying in a cramped cubicle in College, tired and fed up, sharing with five other people, one of whom was having a coughing fit, we wondered how we were going to get through the week ahead. At 7.30 the next morning it didn't seem like it was going to be easy, but any awkwardness soon disappeared as we came to terms with our responsibilities and got to know the guests. Despite our preconceptions we even started to enjoy ourselves.

The non-stop programme of events began with Animal Magic, which was the perfect ice-breaker - watching a four foot python crawl across Rev Mordecai's bare stomach left us unshockable for the rest of the course. The morning workshops - Dance Music Video and Art provided a chance to socialise with everyone on the course and provided Doug with many photo opportunities, which of course he *took*. The trips we went on varied from visits to London Zoo to evening theatre trips. One afternoon we even went to see *Thomas The Tank Engine: The Movie* which gave us a chance to catch up on some valuable sleep.

A good atmosphere was built up between the hosts and guests and friendships even began to develop, some of which are still being kept now by post. It was mentioned beforehand that the guests might become too attached, but in fact there was affection on both sides, not surprising when you are looking after someone twenty four hours a day. Rather than being a chore the welfare of your guest became a genuine concern.

The week climaxed on Saturday night with a lively disco and on Sunday with The Big Show. The disco was preceded by a lovely meal in College Hall (makes a change). The show was a fitting end to a fantastic week - a lot of hard work came together from all parties and left everyone with a real sense of achievement.

James Jones

St Botolph's

As the church loomed over us on our first arrival at this crypt-based homeless drop-in centre, we were apprehensive. A briefing from the centre manager did little to calm our nerves, as he explained that we must at all times wear an alarm belt for our "personal security". As if reading our minds, he proceeded to say that there were rarely any 'incidents'; although the previous week had seen someone's head smashed through the window. To be fair he was absolutely right. Throughout my time there, I never witnessed a single act of violence.

The shift started with a meeting, in which each volunteer was allocated a job for the evening. The first week, I was told to hand out sandwiches (leftovers donated by local shops) and fill pots of tea and coffee as they became empty. Half an hour into the evening, I thought things were going fairly well. But then a shrill voice screamed at me. It was Doris - the seventy year old catering manager, who won an MBE in December for working at the centre for 31 years. 'Why are you standing there behind the counter?' I was waiting for the next teapot, of course. Apparently, that was not a very good reason. Doris snatched my tray of sandwiches away and pushed me out of the kitchen. 'Go and talk to them' was her command. This was easier said than done; many were chatting to their companions or reading a book from the centre's library. But I soon spotted a lonely-looking, middle-aged man in the upper chamber. I sat down at his table, and smiled. He smiled back. I was nervous; I could not think of anything interesting to say. So I asked the most unoriginal icebreaker possible: 'How long have you been on the streets?' He was happy to answer. I never caught his name, but this man had been homeless since the age of fifteen. He told me that he lived in an abandoned building a few blocks away. It was with some horror that I heard how he lit fires in the middle of his room to keep warm in the winter; but he had no choice, and it was none of my business. I had fully expected this conversation to last five minutes, but when we had finally drained the topics of anti-capitalism, nationalism and the best place in the world to be homeless, it was almost eight o'clock. We had been chatting for almost ninety minutes.

The people thanked us as they left the centre, many carrying carrier bags full of sandwiches to see them through the weekend. When I arrived home, I went to sleep. Two hours of talking and handing out sandwiches had utterly exhausted me. During my month of visits to the centre, I tried every task; and with time, we all discovered that the most rewarding aspect of our visits was actually sitting down and chatting with these interesting and diverse people. I could not understand why one man always had the latest designer clothes on, until I finally asked, and he spent an evening telling me the fascinating story of credit card fraud.

During the Play and Lent terms, pupils were allocated three week shifts at the centre. But some stayed for more. In particular, Robert Shaw gave up a considerable amount of his own time in going to St Botolph's every single Thursday evening for almost four months. The centre managers are extremely grateful for such an addition to their 'permanent' staff, and for Robert's efforts to help the homeless: his poster campaign at school provided sackfuls of donated clothes. Westminster would like to thank St Botolph's for allowing us to continue coming to the centre, Mr Troy for organising the scheme, and all the members of staff who accompanied us.

William Sweet

Community Service

Community Service is a Station offered to Sixth Formers interested in helping in primary schools in and around Westminster. I have been visiting Soho Parish Primary School since September and have enjoyed meeting the staff and pupils at this warm and welcoming school. Having spent my primary education at a small, all-girls, private school in Richmond, it has been eye opening comparing my experiences with those of the pupils at a mixed, state-maintained establishment. It has shown me the advantages of which I was unaware of being given at the time.

Firstly, Soho has an intake of pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, diverse in race, religious beliefs and social standing. On the one hand this makes for an open minded and accepting environment within the school. However for a significant number of the children English is not their mother tongue. The need to overcome language barriers does initially hold children back from reaching their full academic potential, and integration into the classroom is made far more difficult. The intake process at Soho is non-selective, so while I was assured of having classmates of similar intelligence, with a secure foundation of particular knowledge on which to build, for some pupils no assumptions can be made as to a general level of academic experience at which to begin. The range of ability within the classroom is diverse not only because of the natural intelligence of individual pupils, but also because of varying levels of help, interest and encouragement from home. The school that I attended was 'pushy', but at least I was observed and encouraged as an individual at every stage. I was given opportunities through small classes, and a high standard of teaching that must still be benefiting me now, and my fortunate position meant that were I struggling in any area there would always be extra help available.

The members of staff at Soho are no doubt as dedicated and caring as my primary school teachers were. In many areas they have a more demanding role, because with limited resources, less time to spend one to one with individuals, and without a head start in terms of selecting their intake, they are aiming for the same outcome. Soho is an extremely positive school. I have greatly enjoyed my time there and I hope to continue visiting next year. I have gained from meeting new people whose paths I would not otherwise have crossed, but more importantly I have become aware and very grateful for the opportunities that I have been offered.

Maudie Leach

ICYPP

It was with no small amount of apprehension that we arrived at the small church. This was it – the first step in a journey of Hollywood proportions, set against the glamorous backdrop of Elephant and Castle. Looking at the grotty exterior, we wondered: Could this possibly be the church in which we were going to spend the weekend? We were later to learn the true worth of a building which acts as the spiritual centre for a diversity of cultures. Once inside, the course leaders – Caitlin and Patrick – who were there to oversee the project and guide our experiences, introduced us to the other participants in The Inner Cities Young People's Project. Like us, the other students had volunteered to represent their schools with very little idea of what they would actually be doing. It was called a 'Familiarisation Weekend', but in a matter of hours we felt perfectly at ease with one another, largely thanks to the efforts of the course leaders. Sleeping on the church hall floor and not having any shower facilities also helped – there's nothing like shared suffering to ensure solidarity! Over the course of the weekend, we explored Lambeth, the area we were staying in, discussed our views of Independent and State school stereotypes, and helped out at a community centre in Kings Cross. However, the highlight of the weekend was undoubtedly the African drumming concert at the Royal Festival Hall.

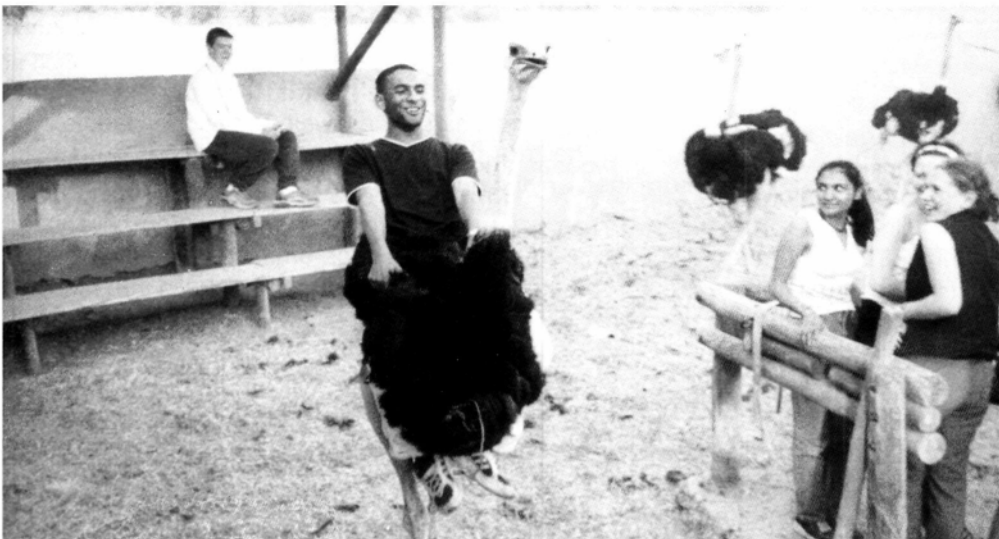
We left the weekend firm friends, and looking forward to the next part of the project – exchanging e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and promising to meet up over the holidays. By the time the second course arrived, we were full of new ideas and issues to share with the group, helped by the fact that we now felt entirely at ease with each other. On the second day, all the independent school students partnered up with a state school student, and went to school with them. We lucky Westminsters went to St. Angela's and St. Bonaventure's Sixth Form College in Upton Park. As far as state schools go, this appeared to be fairly well-funded, with high-tech Smartboards in most science and maths classrooms. We found the cultural and social diversity of this Catholic school strange at first – but it was a refreshing break from the familiar Westminster setting. Overall, it was an eye-opening experience, and was made infinitely more enjoyable by the state school students' willingness to ask us as many questions as we asked them. On the final leg of the course, we spent a week at Charterhouse School, in Surrey. If we had found our state school experience a bit overwhelming, it was nothing compared to the culture shock we experienced here. Being thrown together as complete strangers with what appears to be very little in common might sound terrifying, but if you're an open minded and relatively outgoing person, then ICYPP will prove worth your while. And if that hasn't convinced you, there's some time off school thrown into the bargain too...

Francis Murphy
Sarah Pett

South Africa

Daniel Stoker finds his high hopes of an adventure more than fulfilled

There was one reason for me going to South Africa, to dive with the world's most feared predator of the sea. In the spring of 2000 I had passed my PADI Open Water dive test, which meant that I was able to submerge into the cage with the Great White Shark. I have a keen interest in marine biology and I could not resist this 'once in a lifetime opportunity'.



I arrived at Heathrow check-in on the 1st of August and met up with the 17 other students and teachers that had signed themselves up for the trip. We arrived the following day after a twelve-hour flight to a pleasant wet and windy welcome in Cape Town by our drivers, Trevor and Dennis. Sometime during the two-hour drive from the airport to our lodging, we stopped off at a headland near the town of Hermanus. We were told to look out to sea, and sure enough I could see a number of grey humps breaking the surface. After these humps released enormous jets of air and water, they plunged under the sea, followed by a large, broad tail. These animals were South Right Whales, common in the area during the mating season.

Once we arrived at our cliff-side quarters, which to be honest were a lot nicer than what I had expected, we were issued the itinerary for the next two weeks. I immediately scanned the page in search of the shark diving; Sun 6th, Fri 11th, Sun 13th. For the next three days we did various activities including visiting the infamous 'Barn House Rave'. The next morning, after a number of attempts to wake up, the seven or so students assigned to the after-lunch shift were driven to the local port. The poor people on the morning shift had to be at the port for 7 o'

clock! When we arrived at the port, which consisted of a small seawall, slipway, and a channel cut through the reef, the dive-boat was nowhere to be seen. After waiting half an hour for any sign of the dive boat, a black dot appeared on the horizon.

The morning crew of the boat unloaded and we heard that they had seen one shark and everyone on the boat had been seasick, except the captain and the sailor. Then we were hit with the bad news; the weather was too rough for the cage to be deployed, so no one could dive. Nevertheless, I was still eager to see a shark. So we set out at a very brisk speed on the relatively small boat (~25ft long). After half an hour rising and falling over huge waves we arrived at Dyer Island.

Dyer Island is one of the world's best sites for encountering the Great White shark. This is due to the fact that their primary food source, seals, is in great abundance there. We drove up 'Death Alley', as the channel between Dyer Island and Geyser Rock has come to be known. The sailor anchored the boat and began to churn the water (released dead fish etc. into the ocean). The sharks will supposedly smell the dead fish, down current, and then swim up current following the trail to the source of scent, in this case our boat. So we sat on the boat and waited for a shark to arrive. We waited, and then we waited some more.

After having lunch, a number of people began to feel seasick, and we contemplated calling it a day: after all we had been waiting for over three hours with no sign. And then, all of a sudden, the captain shouted, 'Shark!'. We all jumped to our feet and readied our cameras. Sure

enough, in the distance, was a dark grey shape following the 'fake seal' named Sammy, who comprised of a few bits of rubber tied together to resemble a baby seal. The shark followed the seal towards us, as the captain was reeling the seal in. The shark then proceeded to swim directly under the bow of the boat. It was enormous. The head must have been the size of a large suitcase. The captain estimated the shark to be around 5m (~15ft) in length. That is around the same length as a saloon car! To my disappointment the shark only remained for around ten minutes, making only three passes under the boat. However I was able to get a few photographs.

The next opportunity was in five days time. In the mean time we did various activities, including a dive for those that were qualified. We dived off the shore a little way south of our house. Unfortunately everyone was severely under weighted and a few people were unable to submerge. I remember stuffing the pockets of my BCD with as many rock and stones as I could find in order to weight myself down. Luckily I managed to sink. Once

under, a few of us set off on a circle around the small cove. Unfortunately the current was very strong, which made finning tiresome, and the visibility poor, which meant I was only able to see a couple of very small fish and a shell. Also knowing the fact that about 10km away there was probably a large shark on the look out for a meal was a bit disconcerting. On our return to the shore the tide was nearly out which exposed large rocks that made returning to the beach difficult. Any way the dive was not a total loss, as it was good practice for when undersea conditions worsen.

On the day of the next shark excursion quite a few people were somewhat put off by the seasickness, and so there was only about six on the boat. We arrived at the 'Alley' and anchored. We must have waited for at least another three hours and saw nothing. So we decided to weigh anchor and head back to port. Just as the sailor had secured it, a Southern Right Whale surfaced parallel to the boat! It was massive, probably 40m (~120ft) in length, far longer than our boat. It must have mistaken the black hull our of the dive boat for another whale. Any way it then proceeded to swim off at great speed in the opposite direction.

On the day of the final shark diving opportunity, I was feeling pretty desperate to get in the cage. Again there were only a few of us, but this time the conditions were fine and we took along the cage. We moored the boat near another shark diving boat, and within a half an hour there was a shark attacking Sammy. This time a slightly smaller shark of around 4m (~12ft) in length. The captain gave the sailor the order to deploy the cage. There were three of us who were qualified, so we put on our wet suits and grabbed masks and snorkels. I was the first ready, so I climbed through the opening at the top of the cage and into the cold ocean. Soon Daniel Greenwold and then Patrick Mellor also climbed into the cage.

We waited for around five minutes; desperately searched the surrounding water for any sign of the animal. Then as I surfaced to take a breath, captain shouted, 'There!', and I quickly dived under and looked in the direction he had pointed. And out of the blue came this torpedo shaped shark. It circled the cage at a distance and then swam off. Then it suddenly occurred to me that I was in a steel mesh cage, being circled by Man's most feared predator of the sea, thousands of miles from home. The shark reappeared and this time it moved closer. On one occasion it turned and headed straight for the cage, i.e. us, only to make a last minute dive to pass directly below the bottom of the cage. It then passed one more time before disappearing into the ocean depths. On the journey back to land I could still not believe what had just happened. The trip to South Africa was very enjoyable and I will always remember the encounter I had. People today think I am crazy for going anywhere near the Great White shark, but to be honest I was not at all frightened while in its presence. The whole encounter was incredible.

South Africa

by **Charlie Bullock**

When I signed up for the trip to South Africa, I had high hopes about it. I hoped the weather would be sunny and warm, that it would be interesting and exciting and finally, that to make it special, that the hostels would be comfortable. Now that I am back home, I can say with all confidence that it was invariably windy and often cold and the hostels were more than chilly, drab and rather bare! Ostrich stew is different, as were the meals at *C'est La Vie*. However, the excitement of seeing a Great White so close up is unparalleled. I knew then and I know now that I enjoyed the trip because of what we made it. I have never felt more alive or more included, than with the group who went to South Africa. Nor have I ever enjoyed anything so much and it is hard to think of anything I have missed so much or for so long. If they still don't get it, then my thanks go to Paul, Jenny and Jaideep as well as all the people who went on the trip. It will be a hard trip to beat but I hope more than anything that they will try.

German Exchange

by **William Sweet**

It was a cold February evening which saw the twelve or so sixth form Germanists waiting outside Liddell's Arch for the arrival of their exchange students from *Gymnasium Puchheim* in Munich. After a few rather nervous introductions the partners were paired up and told to go home and 'integrate'. Admittedly the thought of spending a month in the close proximity of somebody with whom I had only very briefly corresponded via e-mail seemed a little daunting that first evening. However, as we all got to know our exchanges better, it was just like having a very polite friend around the house. Most days the exchanges came to school with their English partners and attended lessons together. On some days, trips to most of the big London tourist attractions were organised, the third week of their visit to England coincided with the Westminster half-term-'Exeat', during which time it was left to the host families to amuse the exchanges. By this point we were all sufficiently acquainted to make entertainment no problem. All in all it was a most successful exchange, and the English students are looking forward with anticipation to the return leg of the programme to Munich in July.

Perfect Symmetry

The splendour of the Taj Mahal is encountered on a recent exchange trip to India by **Faye Dayan**

Perfect symmetry. To tell you the truth I'd been expecting a bit of a let down, a slightly more authentic Disney land palace, an over-romanticized tourist haven. But the Taj stared back at me in indignation. The building emitted such a pressure that I found it strenuous to walk towards it. White marble, perfect symmetry in white marble. Two weeks into the trip, the Taj Mahal offered the biggest contradiction yet. It stood amongst the chaos and rabble of the streets, representing order, luxury and peace. Should I have asked for my money back?

The building that was meant to represent its nation seemed to me not to do it justice. I felt annoyed that the country should have to settle for a national symbol that was so.... well wrong. Where was the colour, the smells, the constant hooting and swerving rickshaws. It was as if it was enveloped in a time zone. I was staring up at a symbol of the great Mughal Empire, built by Shah Jehan, as a tomb for his wife. His plan had been also to build an identical opposite version in black, but he was imprisoned by his own son and never fulfilled the task. You see, even after having been there for just two weeks, one thing had become clear...the country had been through so much. I wanted to see a building that could express what I had been trying to pinpoint from my arrival. I sighed at my childishness and took some photos.

Talia and I had arrived in Delhi two weeks earlier. We were staying with an English teacher at the Shri Ram School, Mrs. Kapur. The school was designed to suit the climate which meant all the corridors were open air and assembly was held outside in a central courtyard. The lessons that we attended were very similar in syllabus to our own, which meant that we had no excuse not to follow them. After several demoralizing Maths lessons I told myself that it must have been the heat that was to blame for my inability to keep up, and turned my attention to the guidebook that protruded itself from my bag at my feet. Flicking through the pages of an electric culture I felt a rush of realization – the Taj Mahal could not possibly represent all that I had come to understand India as being. I put the Taj in context of its era, and the book back in my bag.

That weekend we were going north to Jaipur, the famous 'pink city'. Hypnotized by the scene of the Delhi train station at five in the morning, Talia and I heaved our medication-filled bags onto the train. I felt intensely annoyed at the smudges that obscured my vision out of the window. The fact was that these smudges seemed to be ever present, not just on the glass in front of me. They were smudges of pre-conception and assumption, and I was still struggling to wipe my vision clean.

Our first views of Jaipur were from the back of a motor-rickshaw. I

looked out at a pink city, with nothing in the world to cling onto but my backpack. We swerved to avoid a cow that complacently crossed our path and all my fears turned into thrills – this was the best ride in town! Jaipur was a city of exquisite temples and forts, built by the emperors of India. To me it represented a juxtaposition of old and new – the new community of a constantly changing India, living side by side, or in fact inside the ancient pink walls of its history.

This invited the question, how much did modern India live inside its history? It may seem an abstract question, but from two weeks in India I had noticed that history was as integral as food and water to the people I had met. Everyone had a story to tell about their own lives, or the lives of their friends and relatives. Clichéd, perhaps, but inescapably true. I remember a fleeting feeling of disappointment with the English that we should be so obsessed with the present. OK, so that was a sweeping statement, but I still believe there may have been some truth in it. We intensify our thoughts on what 'I' will do today or what 'I' will do tomorrow, forgetting what they did. After rereading this paragraph I believe it may be possible that I have contracted Malaria.

People had warned me about the poverty. 'She's in for a culture shock', my mother's friends had warned. I waited for my culture shock like a child waiting for an injection – inevitable dread. I waited for it as we wandered the streets of Agra and Jaipur. I waited for it as I had my daily bucket shower. It really was playing hard to get. Was I not seeing things as they were? Walking through the village near where we were staying, I didn't feel an overwhelming sense of compassion and pity. The people accepted their fate. This was a country of destiny, a destiny that even I had experienced. I don't know if it existed outside the coast of India, or even Delhi, but while I was there it affected me just as it affected everyone I met. Everything was meant to be as it was.

I had been so wrong about the Taj Mahal. Its architectural perfection was an ideal symbol for a country that was balanced by an omnipotent power of destiny, that held an ultimate control over the chaos and noise that dominated the streets. On the plane home I stared at my tattered postcard of the Taj Mahal – perfect symmetry with frayed edges.

Glen Nevis

by Jonathan Stern

One day if you're bored take a look at an Ordnance Survey Map of the Glen Nevis region of Scotland and look up *Corrour Station*. It's at roughly 4 degrees 40 minutes west and 56 degrees 45 minutes North, and impressively, the station is marked in capital letters, as if to suggest it is big and somehow important. Trust me, it really isn't. At closer inspection of the map you will realise that the nearest town is well... actually there isn't one. Freezing cold, pouring with rain, ex-directory, and certainly ex-civilisation, *Corrour* is a station quite literally in the middle of nowhere. The tiny two carriage Scottish mountain trains pass through the place a few times each day but rarely is anybody crazy enough to get off. Then along came Mr Tocknell ...

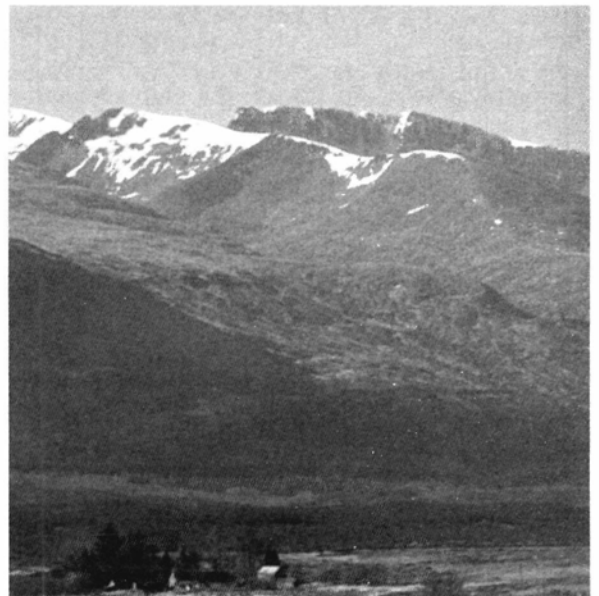
Well actually it wasn't just Mr Tocknell. You see, for some crazy Westminsterers, notably Ben Adcock, Ollie Cox and Katie Low, the prospect of a week's trek from this hiatus of civilisation to the reasonably comfortable (if a little Scottish) charms of Fort William seemed like the perfect summer adventure. In fact the stroll seemed so charming that ex-Westminster Adam Hunt and his girlfriend felt compelled to tag along for the laughs. Well, I suppose I thought it might be character-building.

After trekking for a few hours through the soaking showers, the aforementioned motley crew finally arrived at what walking types will refer to as a 'bothy'. To a trainer-wearing city boy, the empty hut with bare wooden floorboards, lovingly furnished with a simple table, looked more suitable for horses or maybe chickens but I wasn't prepared to say so, especially when it had been decided that the other option, setting up camp in the Scottish rain, would be too difficult and unpleasant. And this is by Mr Tocknell and Adam Hunt's standards... Later that night the Westminster expedition group were joined in the bothy by a rowdy, cheerful and even friendly (at least I think it was a cigarette that I was offered in a dialect I couldn't really understand) party from a local school. While the rest of us failed to understand the native language of this obscure part of the world, Mr Tocknell served as an excellent mediator, securing us the upstairs part of the bothy for the night's rest, cleverly avoiding the furry black rodents which inhabited the floor of our night's chosen accommodation.

Awakening fresh and early the next day, we tackled the Grey Corries, which proved a rewarding day of walking, though a bit of a shock to the physically unfit. Needless to say for the rest of the party it was an easy warm up, and the exercise helped us all to get a good night's sleep back in our luxurious bedding at the bothy. For the next day we were to move camp to the Glen, which was home to our expedition's big prize, Ben Nevis. After a day mounting the mighty *Mamores* and the "ring of steel", our systems were getting used to the strains of dawn till dusk walking, and we were all feeling in better shape. The scenery was certainly worth seeing, and we felt like we were really achieving something. Mr Tocknell's choice of culinary

delights to be eaten in the comfort of the tent flaps of our new nylon and steel palaces were eagerly awaited on this, and every evening of the trip. Never before has pasta followed by dried fruit and custard seemed so appealing, served with a loving choice of complements including tea, coffee and even hot chocolate.

The next day we were treated to a morning helping of that lovely Scottish rain, at which point we decided to have an easy day, climbing rocks in the nearby gorge and enjoying various shenanigans on a rope bridge, after the completion of which we were all still miraculously dry!



And so it was with regret that our final day's walking dawned upon us, but the best had certainly been saved for last. It was the big one, the *coup de grace* of our trip - the mighty Ben Nevis. Now with levels of fitness approaching SAS men (or at least rowers) we made light work of the climb, although it was still very fulfilling. This was not least for the view at the top, and the feeling of achievement at standing at the highest point in Britain. There was also a feeling of superiority among us, that we had approached our prize from the impressive *Carn Mor Dearg* arête, while most of our fleece wearing, (and even) trainer-sporting companions at the top had taken the tourist path.

I don't know which felt better, standing at the top of Ben Nevis or eating that fry up in the café at Fort William on the way back to London, but they are both memorable to me as two of the most pleasurable experiences of my life. And I hope, and even go as far as to believe, that I can say that this is true to some extent for the rest of the party. That and waking up to a hardy Scotsman's cries of "eh-up" while a cup of hot drink was poked through reluctant tent flaps at some ridiculous hour in the morning.

Greek Trip

by **Louise McMillan**

On the 28th March 2001, an intrepid group of travellers composed of a large body of young Classicists and new sixth form girls, left for the wonderful country that is Greece. This pilgrimage of sorts began with a meeting at Heathrow Airport, renowned for its punctual departures and stress relieving boarding area. The flight was slightly rowdy, but the boys were distracted by their many Game Boys and did not make too much mess. We arrived slightly tired but happy into a lovely Greek afternoon, and spent the evening having dinner and wandering around the old part of Athens before returning to the hotel. The boys had fun raiding each other's rooms during the night, but we (the girls) still managed to get a good night's sleep.

The next day, we visited the monument of Philopappos from which we gazed sadly at the banks of pollution surrounding the mostly modern city of Athens. We then finally got to the Acropolis, which was the hub and major part of the ancient city. It was awe-inspiring and better than the posters we had seen back in dreary old England. Mr Mylne, one of the accompanying teachers, explained the intricate differences between Greek and Roman theatres, so that we might identify them correctly in the future. The Agora, our next stop, was where all the public and political meetings were held in ancient Athens. Sadly many of the actual walls and buildings had collapsed by the time we arrived. Although the basic structure was still visible, including the boundary stone beyond which women and under age men were forbidden to enter. The Temple of Poseidon at Sounion was also visited and we saw Byron's graffiti on the one of the columns. The rest of the day passed with sunshine and the fifth form boys were all very happy.

The third day, we were disappointed to discover, was overcast and as we left the city behind us, the rain set in. It was to dog us for the next few days, thus effec-

tively adding to the misery of the trip. We visited the island of Evia briefly and the Byzantine churches at Ossias Loukas, the first of which was built by a hermit using only his bare hands. The ikons (religious paintings prodigiously decorated with gold leaf) were impressive but the rest of the building was ageing somewhat.

We saw the wondrous site of Delphi, where the oracle was once, and held our own impromptu race in the vast stadium with a small prize for the winner (a fifth former by the name of James McNaughton). A general knowledge quiz then took place that evening, to relieve the boredom of the night, which my team (composed of myself, some fifth formers) lost spectacularly (although we got our revenge a few nights later in the hotel at Karitena). We travelled down to Pylos, a lovely seaside town and the site of a the battle of Navarino Bay. We finally enjoyed sun and sea (but sadly no surf), and some of the fifth formers braved the chilly waters (the saner ones stayed on land and played football).



We endured numerous collapsing temples, although the site at Olympia was impressive and stuck in my mind, especially those parts where the columns had collapsed and were lying lifelessly in recognizable sections on the ground below. The rest of the trip was uneventful, apart from a small administration strike the day we arrived in Sparta. We went into the city early, and saw 'Castaway' at the local cinema, instead of visiting the temple and monastery at Mistras. It poured with rain when we did go the next morning, to the extent that we had to cut short our visit.

Our final stop was at Nauplion and Tolon (the nearby town), for some last minute gift and food shopping, namely sweets for consumption on the return flight. Tolon was also a suitable spot for further sunbathing and swimming. We managed to count all the steps leading down from the citadel at Nauplion, getting a large range of results (the actual number is 999 steps). Looks like the Maths teachers back in England will have their hands full with this year's fifth form. Overall, I thought the trip was quite enjoyable, and certainly educational, although all the temples did get a bit much at times. The boys had great fun grilling us girls on our private lives during the almost interminable coach journeys and singing along very loudly to their favourite songs. However, this was only some of them, so we didn't get completely deafened. The highlight of the trip was definitely the theatre at Epidauros on the last day, which has the best acoustics of any ancient theatre in the world. Arda was even brave enough to recite some Shakespeare so we could test them out. I think it was almost definitely worth going, especially all the seafood and Greek salad we got to eat, and the architecture was really quite impressive.

Caving The Art History Trip

by **James Hooper**

'Imagine an underground chamber' wrote Plato in his *Simile of a Cave*. Jonathan Katz, Greg Renwick and the rest of a Westminster party didn't have to imagine one. They were there, in Goatchurch Cavern beneath the Mendip hills. It took a while to adjust from the sunlight of a cold, crisp February morning to the unaccustomed darkness of the cavern. Soon, however we were able to discriminate between the shadows and so began in earnest an enjoyable and enlightening weekend exploring a fascinating limestone world. This proved to be an international expedition as Alex Fry and Rosamund Urwin were accompanied by their somewhat bemused German exchange partners. After climbing down a few rifts and admiring several chambers we ended up in the stereotypical, tight, narrow, Cosmo Scurr/John Hope sized tube known as the 'Drainpipe' before heading out for daylight.

We ate a picnic lunch by the Rock of Ages (named after the hymn composed by the Rev. Toplady (OW) whilst sheltering there during a storm) before Gigi Florentin-Lee and others set off down Sidcot Swallet. This small but interesting, vertical cave was bottomed without much difficulty though James Hooper was heard to remark to Katie Low during a tricky part of the ascent that, "it is not often that you have the Master of the Queen's Scholars standing on your head," (a perfectly legitimate caving technique).

The following day, after a good night's sleep in the MCG caving hut, Shuichi Akito found himself at the entrance of Swildon's Hole. Clad in a wetsuit he stared at the intimidating entrance. A cold stream sinks down a manhole cover and leads down into the depths. Scrambling and climbing down this huge, deep river cave we were drawn onwards by the blackness and the urge to discover what lay around the next corner. Down waterfalls and traversing deep pools of water we went on ever deeper. This cave is very different from the two caves that we visited the previous day and once again we were forced to reevaluate our understanding of this strange underworld. Physically demanding as well as sensually stunning, we finally emerged exhausted but with grinning smiles. Plato would have been proud.

by **Alex Heffler**

Three and a half days in Paris...would it be enough to review a year's work, prepare for the rest of the course and soak up as much of the Parisienne 'je ne sais quoi' as possible? Well, we were going to try; arriving at the Gare du Nord armed with cameras, clipboards, and comfortable shoes, (feeling suitably like English tourists) we began to follow the meticulously planned schedule as soon as we stepped off the train, beginning at the Musee d'Orsay.

Though our group ranged from connoisseurs of Paris and its culture, through previous day-trippers who had headed straight for the Eiffel Tower, and finally to those of us who had never set foot in the city of chic, the enthusiasm and excitement of seeing Manet's *Olympia* or the numerous Gauguins, Carpeaux and Courbets was unanimous. A revision lecture and a well-deserved supper followed the walk back to the hostel, via Notre Dame and Rue de Rivoli; and although some attempted to use their French as well as their art history, it was largely ignored and replies were made cordially in English.

As we emerged from the hostel (perhaps with a little less energy than the previous day) we were greeted by storm clouds, a bitter wind and an early drizzle. However, this was not to deter Mrs Cockburn or Dr Jacobi (who had managed to adopt an unflinching 'speed walk') and we eventually arrived at the Louvre, the museum of museums. The majority of the day was dedicated to this visit but, by the end, it was felt that we had barely scratched the surface and could have easily continued taking pictures of Cupid's bottom, returning to the Venus de Milo, the Mona Lisa or visiting undiscovered rooms. Though tired after our full day, we had a free evening in which to discover Paris for ourselves. We stumbled across a bar, re-named the 'who-died-bar' since it was empty and the waiter was reluctant to serve us so we left and found another bar, and it did not immediately occur to us why there were mini statues of Adonis along every wall. However, some of the boys quickly realized, and said a hasty *adieu*.

The following day (after a slight incident on our return to the hostel with some rowdy German students), we returned to the Musee d'Orsay, followed by a visit to Rodin's house, where during a pause in the rain we could take time in front of the Gates of Hell, wander around the garden and walk to the Pantheon whilst squeezing in a visit to St Sulpice to see the Delacroix.

That evening we were treated to the famous 'La Huchette' jazz club for which Mrs Cockburn donned her leather trousers, Dr Jacobi wore colour and we proceeded to experience some of the atmosphere in which the Impressionists had lived. The following day, (feeling a little the worse for wear) as a late night and exhaustion caught up with us, Picasso's house provided a welcome diversion, and the art within enabled us to appreciate the genius and diversity of his work.

To answer the original question, our whistle-stop tour through Paris only gave us a glimpse of the art and architecture we had come to see, but enough to tempt even the most exhausted of us back and left us with a lasting impression.

Water

by **Oliver Newton**

Whether the smallest regatta on the narrow tree-lined stream at Marlow or the National Championships in a roaring tail wind, the message from our coach, Pete Proudly, is always the same: 'control the controllables and hope for the best'. This year, however, has been one where at times the uncontrollable elements seem to have been mounting up against us. A few tempers have frayed here and there, but the whole of the Boat Club has come through a difficult year not only still intact but fighting hard and ready to accept head-on the battles of summer racing. Despite the disappointing cancellation of the main day of the National Schools' Regatta last year, the Sunday saw a spectacular win for the J16 Pair of James Summerfield and Jack Holborn. This same crew went on to qualify for the under-16 Great Britain Squad for the annual match against France, while the senior four (Olly Newton, Charlie Hayes, Sam Scheuringer and Will Sweet) missed out on doing the same by fractions of a second.

The season's racing culminated in the Henley Royal Regatta, where the First Eight decimated the Windsor Boys' School in the first round, only to be eliminated by the eventual champions. The warm summer faded all too fast into one of the coldest, longest, deepest winters, complete with endless training sessions into the darkness and dewy morning runs. After a few weeks, the routine of hopes being dashed was already becoming dull, as another regatta was cancelled due to flooding and awful conditions. The monotony of the Play Term was broken only in November by the Cambridge Winter Head. This race on the Cam consisted mainly of College crews, but that did not stop the Girl's Eight, coxed by Gigi Florentin-Lee, picking up a trophy, while the J15 Eight came a close second.

The Top Squad decided to get away from it all, and flew off to Philadelphia in the Play Exeat, to stay with the families of the guys from St. Joseph's who beat us at Henley. We held no grudges and had a lovely week basking on the river and being overfed by attentive American pseudo-Moms, probably trying to weigh the crew down. We had an excellent race in the Head of the Schukyll: with a true sense of Westminster politeness, we could but let our hosts come first, but we finished an encouraging third in a very tough Head Race. Throughout the winter, some of our senior oarsmen raced the long Heads used to decide qualification for the Junior National Squad. James Summerfield was invited to a World Potential Camp in sunny Seville, while Jack Holborn and Olly Newton drew the short straw and spent a week on the blazing beaches of the

Eton rowing lake. James and Jack have both been invited to final trials for the Junior World Championships, while Olly was prevented by illness and will try for the under-16 team with Charlie Hayes at the end of the Election Term. The worst of those dark winter evenings came at the time of the Schools' Head, with many of the crew plagued by a variety of sickness brought upon by the cold and the strain of hard daily exercise. Despite a huge volume of exhausting endurance training for all the crews involved, the Head was cancelled a mere two hours before race time because of the appalling conditions on the Thames.

Easter meant a repeat of our annual training camp to Ghent, Belgium, complete with the Girls' Squad and a select group of J15's and J16's. The Girls' Eight once again came home with silverware, having come second in the WJ 8+ event. Ghent marks the milestone in the



year when we really begin to look forward into the Election Term, with dreams once again for the National Schools' Regatta and Henley.

With this in mind, nearly the whole Boat Club descended upon the small town of Valenciennes, near Lille in northern France. Here the J14's ended a stunning year by winning the octuples event against tough competition and all odds are in their favour for the National Schools' Regatta. The J15 pair of Andrew Sanderson and Mathew Grieg-Taylor also recorded some fast times, as well as finishing third in the doubles event. The First Eight roared past in third place in the morning in a category of College and senior crews, only to tear a large section off the bottom of the boat on a submerged object just before the final.

In a year when nearly everything has gone wrong that could have done so, nobody has once let it get them down. It is with this spirit of defying the elements and overcoming whatever is thrown at us that the whole Boat Club now moves on towards their goals for the coming months, and let us hope for success at the National Schools' Regatta and Henley Royal Regatta in early July.

1st XI

Football

by **Jeremy Kemball**

September

Bolton School	(h)	Drew	1-1
Alley's	(a)	Lost	0-1
Hayes Town	(h)	Won	2-1
Ardingly	(h)	Won	3-2
KES Witley	(h)	Won	3-0
OW's		Lost	0-1
Eton	(a)	Drew	1-1
MGS (h) (ISFA Cup 2 nd round)		Lost	0-3

October

Forest	(a)	Lost	1-2
Lancing	(h)	Lost	1-6

November

Highgate	(a)	Lost	1-4
Charterhouse	(h)	Lost	0-3
Aldenham	(h)	Won	5-1

December

Bradfield	(h)	Drew	2-2
-----------	-----	------	-----

January

King's Canterbury	(h)	Won	4-1
Corinthian Casuals	(h)	Lost	1-2

March

St. Paul's	(h)	Drew	1-1
Harrow	(a)	Drew	0-0

P 18 W 5 D 5 L 8 F 26 A 32

Matches cancelled:

Kimbolton, Chigwell, Brentwood, Dulwich, Latymer Upper, Oratory, ISFA six-a-side competition

As you can see from the match statistics, the dominant role this season was played by the weather. From October through to March the rain played havoc with training and fixtures. Even when the weather relented for a short time, the 'foot and mouth' crisis scuppered our carefully laid plans. Looking at the matches won and drawn, it appears to have been a moderate season, but there were many positive aspects too – not least the emergence of a young, confident passing side founded on a sound and organised defence. It was perhaps the consistently good performances of the back four which enabled us to compete favourably with sides when our finishing was below par. Many of the players will be returning next year and with some hard work could develop into a very good Westminster 1st X1.

The season began very promisingly and better than we had hoped for, with excellent wins over Hayes Town, whom we had never beaten and over Ardingly who we had only beaten once in the last ten years. Here the victory was sealed by an outstanding strike from James Jones. A comfortable victory against KES Witley and a tense away draw against Eton were generally regarded as a pretty favourable return for the first few weeks of endeavour. However, in the midst of reasonable success there was a general malaise setting in and the side rather lost its way for the next few games. Up until that point many key players suffered a real lack of form and the goals dried up. The passing deteriorated, and although we had our fair share of possession in the Lancing and Highgate games we seemed incapable of handling their direct and muscular approach up front and created precious few chances ourselves.

The MGS game was a very poor performance and we produced a scrappy and characterless first half display which ultimately resulted in our elimination from the cup. The Forest match was hard to bear as we suffered two unfortunate injuries late on in the game - the second after the substitution had been made. With the scores level at 1-1, David Taylor having scored an excellent goal, we had to play the last ten minutes with ten men. We finally succumbed to a break away goal in the last few minutes. To be fair, Forest probably deserved their victory as they had created many more goal scoring opportunities and only a first rate goal keeping performance by William Wolton kept us in the picture.

The low point of the season was now over and following some changes, the team began to rebuild, a process which continued right through to the end of March. A number of young players were introduced and the side went down 3-0 to a highly successful Charterhouse team. This was by no means a poor performance and the side played some well controlled passing football. Unfortunate defensive errors were to blame for two of the goals and the boys deserved more from the game. Again, we went down to a side which was simply sharper up front and took their chances well, but our passing and movement was on a par with theirs. An excellent win over Aldenham and a creditable draw with Bradfield, where we lost a goal in the final minutes, brought our up-down-up first half of season to a close. We lost the sixes to the weather. This greatly disappointed us, as a quarter-final place last year with the same side, had given us justified cause for optimism.

The Lent Term was again edited by the weather and organising purposeful training in central London with precious few facilities was a stressful business. However, improvements in technique and tactical awareness continued and the results achieved were largely satisfactory. The score-lines may not reflect this, but we were the better side in all of the final four matches.

By the end of season, I felt we had come a long way and could say with justification that we were a good side. The back four of Sheriff Salem, Ed Roy, Sam Stannard and Henry Bacon were a solid but mobile unit and this gave other players tremendous confidence. Our link in midfield



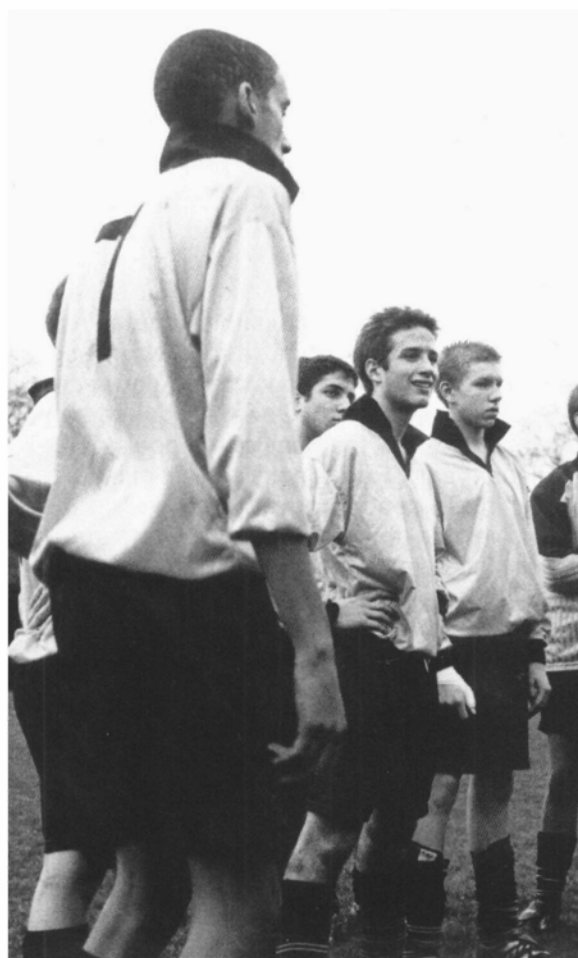
to our front players was frequently absent and we did not exploit the width of the pitch with any confidence. However, the shape of the play was looking good and we were able to retain possession with growing confidence. All of these things will need working on next year. David Weinstein-Linder was selected to play for the ISFA U16 side, which he did with great distinction and many congratulations must go to him for this achievement. I would like to thank Edward Roy for his excellent captaincy throughout the season. Ted was as good a captain as I have known here, in addition to being a very decent player. His all round game was excellent and he was unlucky not to be selected for the ISFA south side. Along with him, I wish all the leavers the very best of fortune in their football careers and want to thank them for all their effort and commitment over the past five.

Thanks also to all the masters i/c of teams for their vital input (JMB, PDH, MHF, AHR, NJH, AJ, JDK, GDW-S, MNR, RRS, ML) and especially to IRM for invaluable support and dedication.

The Players:

Edward Roy, Sheriff Salem, Henry Bacon, Sam Stannard, William Wolton, David Lloyd, Tom Wroe, Fabian Joseph, Michael Cockburn, Cyrus Alamouti, Maram Al Kadhi, David Weinstein-Linder, James Jones, Daniel Freyhan, David Taylor, Chris Abell, William Stevenson, Edar Mullan, David Stranger-Jones, Ed Saunt

Roland Butcher left us this year to take up a post as manager of the Bermudan Cricket team and general overseer for the development of the game at grass roots level. Roland has been a valuable servant to Westminster sport over the last nine years and become a great friend to many of us. Many boys will pay testament to the valuable words of advice he has given from time to time. We will miss him and want to wish him the best of luck in his new venture.



2nd XI 3rd XI

Football Football

by **Jamie Coggans**

This season was an enjoyable one where the squad developed throughout and a high level of commitment was shown. While unfortunately we lost several fixtures in the Lent Term because of the weather and we sometimes lost a match by the odd goal, the team spirit was exemplary and at times allowed us to achieve some impressive results. We started the Play term well with a 1-1 draw to Alleyn's, before being unable to capitalise on a two-nil lead against a strong Ardingly side and ultimately losing 3-2. This was a disappointing result but the team showed great resolve to come back against a competitive Eton side and achieve a 2-1 win. We followed this with another win against KES Witley, and a 1-1 draw against Kimbolton before we suffered close defeats against Forest and Lancing, losing 2-1 in both matches. The Play Term was completed with a 3-1 defeat to Bradfield, as well as a 1-1 draw to a weaker Aldenham side that revealed our inability to finish well-worked chances, a problem that affected us throughout the season.

The Lent Term saw a 2-0 win over King's, Canterbury as well as a hard fought battle against St. Paul's, which ended disappointingly in a 3-2 defeat. A record of played 12, won 3, drawn 3 and lost 6 could have been better but there were high points nonetheless. We benefited this season from a strong defence and by playing a back three consisting of Scarfe, Coggans and Gow-Smith were able to concede fewer than half of the goals of the previous year. Reilly held the midfield together in the centre and adapted well to the defensive role required by him; Guy's great fitness and determination made him a handful for defenders, and there were some good performances from Ruda. Up front, Shapland's pace was threatening, combined with some classy goals from Ratcliffe.

Many thanks to the coach Ian Monk for all the time and effort he put in to making this a successful season. Finally thank you to all the lads: the commitment they have shown has been excellent and I have thoroughly enjoyed captaining them, and wish them all the best with their football in the future.

by **Nick Brough and Julian de Jonquieres**

The season began with a very different squad to the one that had seen much success from last year. Most were new faces from the Sixth Form with only a handful from the Remove. The back four of Meyer and Sarkissian along with the partnership between Goldsmith and Brough, that had proved so successful in last year's game away at Ardingly, failed to repeat the clean sheet at home against the same side in the first match of the season. This game revealed our obvious tactical weakness, our only goalscorer in the match, James Church, was unfairly substituted immediately after his superb lob of the Ardingly goalkeeper in the second half. The 4-1 defeat was followed by the welcome arrival of Mr Barot, whose technical excellences helped coach the team into a much stronger side.

Our next match was against a very strong Eton side. The team's new found strength became quickly evident being 2-0 up at half time. This was thanks to a goal from the speedy David Reicher in his new position up front, and a penalty kick from Will Leavitt. Complacency and a resilient Eton side soon forced the scoreline to 2-2 before a brilliant own goal as a result of a sliding tackle on the edge of the area from Sarkissian sent us into our second defeat of the season.

An adventurous 3-5-2 formation against KES Witley saw an easy 4-1 victory for the side in a performance that could have easily echoed last years 9-0 victory. For the second time in a week an own goal was scored, this time by Brough as he failed to scoop the ball out after the three-man defence failed for the first time late in the match against a heavily manned KES attack. A much anticipated match away to Highgate was unfortunately cancelled along with matches against Brentwood, Chigwell and the Oratory, the latter due to the foot and mouth crisis. With the squad plagued by injuries a depleted side saw a crushing 9-0 defeat away to Charterhouse with Tickell unlucky not to get on the scoreboard.

Fortunately the team was able to come back with one of the best performances of the season, winning 2-0 at Aldenham. Tristan Lillingston and Julian de Jonquieres each had a superb match scoring a goal apiece. De Jonquieres' strike from a free kick, well outside the area, into the top corner proved decisive as the two performed admirably across the length of the pitch. Pike kept up his consistent reliability in goal with a juggling act on the line to keep Aldenham at bay. Also deserving a mention is U15 man who defended extremely well in the sudden call up. After the high of the Aldenham game and with a full strength squad plus Edar Mullen, an experienced defender, we set out with high expectations to Harrow. In some freezing cold weather and on a pitch not suitable for the match the team worked hard against a very physical side used to the conditions, and some high wind but came out 2-0 losers.

Our last game of the season was one to which we looked forward keenly, since it was only our second home game of the season and one against a team of very similar standard to us. The omens were

good with the best weather and also the highest attendance we had had that season (6). Despite this we lapsed into a regular problem of letting go an early goal due to some slack defending at the near post from a corner. A second St. Paul's goal quickly followed before we took more control of the game 10 minutes before half time. A sustained spell of pressure resulted in a fantastic set piece move that Dominik Stepien did well to finish just before half time.

Suitably rallied the team came out strongly in the second half. The counter-attacking play of St Paul's was proving a problem for our defence, however, and they soon broke through to score a third. Showing the spirit which has been a constant feature of the 3rd XI this year we pushed forward again culminating in a penalty that Lillingston coolly converted to make it 3-2. With support growing on the sidelines both teams had their periods on the ball and we came close several times but on another quick counterattack St. Paul's punished our tiredness to record a scoreline of 4-2.

Our heavy reliance on the left footed duo of Stepien and Turton became all too evident during their absence through injury but was relieved by Nat Pimlott in the last few matches who joined the station late but had a couple of very solid games at left-back. Dean Chatterjee was a regular on the other side of midfield and put in some consistently good performances including captaining the side against a strong under 16B side (in which he scored both goals). Meeran Atar, Ed Macdonald and Santiago Lago all became vital parts of the team providing skill and good vision on the ball.

As usual, many thanks to Mr. Hargreaves whose input and enthusiasm was extremely appreciated and who accompanied us on all games except for those during the period of his mid-term illness. Thanks are also due to Mr Barot who has brought an extra dimension to 3rd XI football in organization and training as well as being a very vocal touch-line manager.

Squad:

Pike, Hartman, Sarkissian, Brough, de Jonquieres, Meyer, Turton, Stepien, Tickell, Pimlott, Chatterjee, Lillingston, Lago, Reicher, Macdonald, Atar, Church, Mostaque, Malamatinas

U15 A Team

by Nick Hinze

This has been an exceptional season at U15A level in many ways: the weather has been exceptionally bad, leading to a great deal of frustration and disappointment at times; however the football that was played was exceptionally enjoyable, as was the spirit and general gusto within the squad. If I cast my mind back to before the rain started I can visualise our first comparatively sunny away trip of the campaign - our brand new pink kit was more than a match for the yellow and blue of Ardingly, and we were more than a match for them on the pitch, but two lapses of concentration in defence gave them a draw. This was to be the story of several of our games - of our seven draws, at least four should have been won.

By the time we travelled to Eton the rain was falling and we were without Chris Karageorgis, who had attempted to breach the Ardingly defence in the final minute of the previous game with a characteristic battering-ram-like charge that ended in a painful collision with the goalkeeper. Robin Low relinquished his goalkeeper's gloves to give a passionate performance up front, but we were defeated heavily. Another drubbing followed, this time at home by a superhuman touring side from Auckland. The players could have been forgiven for feeling slightly downcast at this point, but galvanised by the return of captain Jack Wolton in the centre of defence and the inclusion of Tom Borsay in midfield, we efficiently despatched KES Witley 6-1, with Pip Wroe notching a hat-trick. The taste of victory was sweet, and our best run of the season followed.

We next earned a tough 1-1 draw away against Forest. Impressive victories over Kimbolton and Lancing followed, with Karageorgis back in the side and scoring freely. The game of the season was undoubtedly the 3-3 thriller against Highgate which featured some fantastic football and was played in a fine spirit - I can't remember a more enjoyable encounter at Vincent Square. With our confidence riding high and some excellent team play we then defeated Charterhouse soundly, Matt Webb scoring a particularly outstanding individual goal by cutting in at an acute angle. Next to the slaughter were Aldenham; another solid team performance saw us cruise to a 4-0 win. Bradfield were an altogether tougher prospect however, and we were on the receiving end of a 5-1 thrashing, despite the heroics of Robin Low playing his final game in goal.

At this point in the season, most pitches were so waterlogged that the prospects of any football quite literally washed out. In fact we didn't play another match until well into the latter half of the Lent term. The lack of match practice showed and we were embarrassed 5-0 by Harrow, which was undoubtedly our poorest display of the year. The restoration of pride and the return of the passion began with a scoreless draw at St. Paul's, our new goalie, John Bussetil, somehow keeping a clean sheet in the mudbath. The term ended with three more draws, games we could have won but too often the finishing touch to good moves was lacking. However the performance away at Dulwich on another difficult pitch, despite ending goalless once again, was most memorable for our aggressive yet stylish football.

Overall this has been a very pleasing year. Yes, we should have won even more games than we did, but we must not forget that this U15A side have only been defeated three times by other schools on our circuit this season - a truly wonderful achievement. Also just as pleasing was the team spirit and general commitment - the sometimes taxing away trips have been tremendous fun this year. It was also pleasing to see several of the skills and tactics worked on in the training sessions utilised effectively on the pitch. Having such an exceptionally strong U15B side meant that

there was plenty of competition for places and players available who could comfortably slot into vacant positions in the U15A side when necessary. Robin Low played the majority of the season in goal; he is a commanding and acrobatic keeper, but the lure of scoring at the other end proved too much for him. However, John Bussetil made the position his own in the Lent term and improved enormously as he grew in confidence and experience.

Jack Wolton was the foundation of the defence and was an inspirational captain. He certainly is the best centre back I have seen at Westminster - outstanding in the air, and very strong with the ball at his feet. His regular forward charges often left us somewhat exposed at the back, but were nonetheless exhilarating! Will Oates was an ever-present tower of strength alongside him, although later on in the season he showed that he could be equally commanding in a central midfield position, using his aerial talents and ability to distribute the ball both short and long to good effect. Fortunately we were blessed with another fine central defender in Nezam Bagherzade, who got stronger and stronger as the season progressed. The duties at right back were shared between Fred Gordon and Deepon Sen Gupta, whose gritty and often cavalier performances contrasted with Fred's intelligent but equally determined style of play. At left back Jack Farthing never missed a match and never gave anything less than his all. His cheeky, skilful, yet tenacious approach bemused many an opponent, and with a rich sprinkling of occasional catastrophic errors and moments of sheer brilliance he ensured that the touchline faithful were always entertained.

In an ever-changing midfield line-up there were several regular stars. Olly Garthwaite could always be depended upon for a high-octane tiger-like display in the centre, but often he would have to play on the left where he was less comfortable but equally committed. Tom Borsay claimed a place in the first team early in the season and remained a permanent fixture throughout. He relied mostly on his all-round strength to make an impact on the game, but when really on song he showed a very good touch and vision to go with it. Ned Younger was in and out of the side due to injury but on his day he was our most creative force, and towards the end of the Lent term he was also finding the physical edge that his game had lacked earlier in the campaign.

On the right hand side Matt Webb usually performed with enormous skill and equal passion. The best moves the team put together this season invariably involved him at some point, usually delivering the ball from the right flank. Kareem Ahmed, Alex Zafiriou and Jake Levy were all quality midfield players who didn't quite manage to hold down regular first team spots, but were always ready to do battle when required. Alex was versatile enough to play more or less anywhere on the pitch, and Jake, whose skills had become legendary in the U15B side was beginning to make the transition to the U15A team well.

The attack was lead throughout the season by the deadly partnership of Pip Wroe and the irrepressible Chris Karageorgis who was seemingly incapable of scoring unspectacular goals! Pip's main strengths were his pace and cool finishing. Chris could hold the ball up and lay it off very effectively and shoot powerfully with both feet. Both strikers could be a little selfish with the ball at times, but when they did work hard off the ball and bring the midfield players into attacks, the football could be of the very highest order. All that remains is for me to thank and praise Paul Whittle for his excellent and patient coaching throughout the season, Andrew Johnson for his calm assistance and unprecedented success with the U15B team, and Jack Wolton for his dedicated captaincy.

The Bringsty Relay



U15 B Team

by **Andrew Johnson**

Let's face it, starting with the statistics in a Westminster School football report can be both depressing and a little dull. On this occasion, however, there is no better way to begin. This season's U15B squad played 9 fixtures, won 5, lost 3, drew 1, scored 38 goals and conceded 23. Embellishing such statistics is not really necessary, but I'll have a go all the same. The results were generated through collective effort and so attention must be drawn to the most notable team performances, the back to back thrashings of Lancing (8-2) and then Charterhouse (9-2.) It is also worth considering that of the nine results only the last one (a draw against City of London) was achieved at home. The team not only performed with appetite, technique and largely constructive aggression, but did so regularly after long coach journeys. Following the unfortunate Eton defeat the team learnt to 'get off the bus' mentally as well as physically with obvious and considerable success. Readers who are aware of the manager's Premiership allegiances might chuckle at such an away record with a degree of vindictive irony.

There is, however, only so far I can go in this report before having to mention Danny Bamford. Danny scored in each and every game and ended the season with a goal tally of 16 – an average of almost 2 per game. Quite some record made all the more impressive by Danny's willingness to work hard for the team and hunt for the ball during matches (if not always during practice...). Murat Gokmen captained the team effectively and despite the not totally unjustified criticisms from some teammates regarding his possessive attitude to the ball, he slotted a worthy 9 goals himself (including a spectacular 4 goal haul against Lancing).

Special mention must also go to Azzam Al Kadhi for his goal keeping. Perhaps not the most physically imposing of goal minders, Azzam repeatedly made crucial saves and never bowed to the pressure of others' bickerings. I hope he will grow in stature as a keeper from now on (pun absolutely intended.)

Ultimately the B team benefited from strength in depth in the year group as the numbers hovering between the A and B squads proves. Time and space do not permit equal comment on them all, but the names deserve a place in print. Thanks and congratulations from me (and the cumulative goal difference of football station) must go to those mentioned already as well as to the following:

Bilal saving tackle?! Khan, Sanjay magic boot Pindoria, Bertrand 2nd XI Nicoli, Nick rock Budd, Sam midfield dynamo Green, Ben I love playing on Saturdays Paget, Karim inspired sub vs Dulwich Ahmed, Keren just one more touch Mitchell, Fred that goal vs Dulwich Gordon, Jake hammer of the Carthusians Levy, Deepon ankle breaker Sengupta, Nezzam language Bagherzade, Robin off the post Low, Alexander utility Zafirou, Ned cameo Younger, Tom the beef Borsay, Christian I didn't do it Malagon, Theo super-sub 1 Hessing, John-William super-sub 2 Chaldecott, and Ned not of the Antarctic Scott.

Final thanks must go to Nick Hinze and Paul Whittle for their support, coaching advice and above all for the dropping of so many outstanding players who I could then put in my team. Now will somebody please get me a team like this next year and a decent sense of humour.

U14 Football

by **Jim Kershen**

Having been somewhat spoilt by the quality of the previous few seasons it is perhaps a little disappointing to be writing about a losing season for a Westminster U14 football team. However, this is by no means to deride the effort, enthusiasm and no little ability of the players involved in a season deprived of any continuity by the record-breaking wet weather.

It all began brightly with a 3-2 away win at Ardingly in the first match, where James Lloyd-Thomas dominated the midfield. This was followed by the historically tough trip to Eton. In the driving rain Charles Cooke gave Westminster the lead only for the opposition to gradually take control of the match as they ran out comfortable victors, and exposed some worrying defensive frailties into the bargain. Westminster bounced back well with a 4-2 victory at KES Witley where "Rashidian's rocket" and "Scrace's

Scorcher" were the pick of the goals. At Forest, Westminster once again scored first only to be overwhelmed by the stronger side who exploited some lethargic defending to win 5-1. A fifth away trip in a row followed with the long journey to Lancing where the game lay in the balance until five minutes from time, thanks to two goals from William Irwin and some brave goalkeeping from Tim Lai. Unfortunately two late goals from Lancing's Eastern European 'Sports Scholars' gave them a 5-2 victory that was not as comfortable as might appear on paper.

Perhaps the most disappointing performance of the season came in the first home game against a Highgate side which was undoubtedly weaker than our own. In the perfect example of a game of two halves, a 4-2 half-time lead was transformed into a 4-6 defeat courtesy of some shocking defending.

There followed, with some trepidation, a difficult trip to Charterhouse. The highlight of the game was the first of several outstanding performances in the Sweeper role by Henry Hepworth. Despite battling bravely, Westminster were defeated by the slightly harsh scoreline of 3-0 when a draw seemed possible for much of the match. The Play Term ended with a match against an undefeated Bradfield team that was one of the strongest U14 sides I have ever seen. They had swept all before them averaging 10 goals a game and were led by the current Arsenal U15's Captain, who also happened to be the son of ex-England international Neil Webb. Taking this into account a 7-2 loss was not as bad as it might appear at first.

The Lent Term fixtures were unfortunately decimated by the weather, with only three matches possible. This was a great shame as the team was just starting to settle into the 3-5-2 formation, and was playing some really good football. This was particularly the case in the 4-0 victory over Latymer Upper, where Cooke netted a brace and Yusuf Blunt scored an excellent solo goal. This game was also notable for a clean sheet on debut for Louis Jagger in goal after Lai had hung up the gloves to play out-field. The trip to Harrow brought the team back down to earth with a bump. A closely contested game stood at 2-3 with little more than 10 minutes to play until Westminster finally wilted under intense pressure and conceded three late goals. The season ended prematurely with a match on a bit of a quagmire at Hampton. However, it ended on a high as Westminster played like a competitive and well-organised outfit displaying no little technical ability in the bargain. The 3-1 victory was notable for a stunning 20 yard strike by Hepworth and a last-gasp predatory finish by Irwin.

Looking at the bare statistics, it can be seen that the side started and finished well, but lost their way in the middle portion of the season. In truth, there is no doubting that the quality of their play improved markedly the longer the season went on. Almost all the losses were sustained against schools with more quality, quantity and facilities to call upon, and, matches against a few of the weaker sides, where victories would have been expected, fell victim to the elements. So, there are definitely more positives than negatives to take out of the 2000-2001 season, and I look forward to watching with interest the progress of this current crop of U14 footballers. Well done and good luck in the future.

**Overall Record: Played 11 Won 4 Drawn 0 Lost 7
Goals For 26 Goals Against 42**

The U14A squad was:

T. Lai; L. Jagger; O. Capel; H. Hepworth; T. Hunter-Jones; Y. Blunt; J. Lloyd-Thomas; A. Rashidian (Capt.); A. Joseph; B. Scrace; C. Cooke; W. Irwin; R. Runge; S. Smith; T. Gill; J. Alexander; M. Zamkowsky; J. Reicher.

1st XI Cricket

by Mark Feltham

In spite of one of the wettest starts to the season for many years the first eleven have enjoyed a successful half-term. With limited practice we performed creditably in our opening game reducing The Lords and Commons to 70 for 4 at lunch before the weather intervened. Fine opening spells by Biswas and Yell were well backed up by Japhet and Ell to make runs hard to come by. The fielding also looked sharp as it was to do in all our games to date with barely a single catch going to ground. Hall and Stevenson have consistently performed well in the covers and the wicket-keeping of the captain has also been a factor.

Merchant Taylors' have been one of the toughest teams we have faced in recent years. Consequently the mood in the dressing room was up-beat when we dismissed them for 151 in our next game. Six wickets for Japhet well supported by the other bowlers and excellent fielding left us in a winning position. The target was, however, to prove elusive with Westminster bowled out for 111 and only Stranger-Jones of the batsmen scoring more than twenty. We were only two overs short of holding out for the draw but consoled ourselves with the fact that we had put a good team under a lot of pressure.

In our next match we faced an adult M.C.C. side containing former professionals and strong club cricketers. This has habitually been a one-sided affair with the M.C.C. usually beating the school by some margin. Yell and Biswas exploited early movement in the air and off the pitch to take four wickets between them in their opening spells. Japhet and Woodrow supported well to reduce the M.C.C. to 94 for 7 at lunch. We continued the good work after the interval to bowl the opposition out for 134, a modest total and their lowest of the last fifty years. The M.C.C. opening bowlers soon had our batting in disarray taking wickets at regular intervals to have us at a paltry 32 for 6 at tea. What was to follow will be remembered as two of the finest hours of Westminster cricket. After tea Stranger-Jones and Yell started to chip away at the total. The wicket had settled down considerably and the score had reached 65 before Yell was dismissed. Japhet then joined the captain and supported him admirably as Stranger-Jones launched a carefully measured counter-attack. Batting with maturity the pair saw us past the 100 mark and on towards the target. No further wicket was to fall. Stranger-Jones finished unbeaten on eighty having driven and pulled the opposition bowling to all corners of the ground. His innings met with universal acclaim. However, this was a team win with all the bowlers contributing well and the fielding providing considerable pressure.

It was back to earth with a bump as we played host to Alleyns on the following Saturday. The opposition bowled well to keep us down to 60 for 3 at lunch but spirited batting from Stevenson, Butler and Clark saw us through to 163. This was to prove insufficient as Alleyns reached the target with seven wickets in hand. An injury to Yell prevented him from taking the field for their innings and his penetrative bowling was missed.

So to Aldenham where on a damp wicket Biswas bowled magnificently, taking 6 for 22 as the opposition were dismissed for 110. We had little trouble in winning the game, reaching the target with nine wickets in hand and several overs to spare. Stranger-Jones made another unbeaten half-century and Pike showed himself worthy of his place with a solid thirty not out. Just prior to Exeat we lost to the Old Westminster's who, despite marathon spells of bowling from Ell and Japhet, compiled a total of 234 for 5. The School was bowled out for 160 with Pike top-scoring with 40.

All in all this team has played good quality cricket with a fine spirit. Whilst the contributions of the Remove players have been decisive in our victories the presence of six Upper Shell in the side bodes well for the future.

Many thanks to all the staff involved in cricket this year and thanks also to Debashish Biswas and his tireless team of archivists who have successfully produced a web-site summarising the history of cricket at the School. This can be found under the homepages section of the School intranet.

Tennis

by **Simon Craft**

Tennis in 2000 was once again extremely popular. There was a good deal of talent spread amongst the various age groups with the Fifth Form positively brimming with potential for the future. Amongst many gifted players, Varvarin, Younger and Cochran stood out, and represented the School well on several occasions.

Unfortunately, due to the fact that the Lords and Commons were only able to play in the morning, we had to cancel this traditional opening fixture, and we began the season with our annual match against the American School at Paddington. On this occasion we made up for last year's defeat with a conclusive 8-4 victory which underlines the strength flowing through the different year groups.

Indeed, there was much good tennis played by the girls. Daisy Leitch and Neda Eslamian, in particular, played consistently well throughout the term and were instrumental in the 3-1 victory over Queens College on 16th May. Later that afternoon the 1st VI played the OWWs and per-

formed extremely well, although going down 6-2 to a very strong opposition. The potential amongst the youngsters became apparent on Saturday, 20th May when the Under 14s crushed Harrow 10-2. This was particularly pleasing given not only Harrow's very comfortable victory the previous year, but also the traditional strength in numbers of the Harrovians.

On Thursday, 8th June, our Colts/Junior Colts VI demolished Highgate. Varvarin and Cochran won all their three sets, and the combinations of Younger and Webb and Hessing and Salem also played very encouragingly. Although the School came off second best to the Common Room, they were successful against UCS toward the end of term. In the 1999 season we had lost all our matches to the North London sides and the victories of 2000 show the strides our players have made.

Many thanks to all concerned for making the station so enjoyable and particularly to Will Matthew who proved an excellent captain, deputising for Jacob Willer who was sadly absent through illness all term. Ted Roy also deserves a mention for consistently impressive and competitive performances at 1st VI level.

Shooting

by **Thomas Wrathmell**

This year has seen encouraging progress for every member of the station. After the unfortunate departure of a key team member and captain Mark Jolly in the Play term, the A team has recovered well with an improbable victory, by just a single point, in our only fixture against the more experienced Stock Exchange Rifle Club in February. This recovery has to be credited somewhat to our new coach who has been the catalyst for rising averages and personal bests for most members of the station. A notable performance this year has come from Alla Doubrovina. I feel that she deserves a special mention as she is leaving us in the summer.

She has been a key member of the team for two years and her remarkable standards and consistency have ensured that few have been able to beat her scores throughout the season! She will be difficult to replace, but the promise of new recruits, notably Andrew Courousopoulos, Kenichi Akito and Louise McMillan should mean that there is healthy competition for team places next year when we shall enter the British Schools League for the first time and play additional fixtures with schools such as Wellington and Harrow. If we can at least hold, or indeed improve our standards, there is no reason why we should not achieve some success next season!

This year has also seen the arrival of a professional shooting coach who has been helping pupils of every level to become more confident in their technique and their handling of a rifle. Thanks, as always, go to Mrs Jackman for running the Station with such finesse.

Fencing

by **Patrick Agar**

This year has seen a combination of success and development for the school's fencers, in both team and individual events. The most notable were the 1st places for the U18 and U16 teams in the National School Team Event and a 2nd place for the U14 team in the same tournament, all at foil. There was also success against Eton with the final score of 3-2 team wins for Westminster. There was again a strong showing from the foilists but congratulations must focus on the U14s for whom it was their first school match and they pulled it off with a solid win 45-32. There were further individual successes at several tournaments, with Dominic O'Mahony getting through to the last 64 of the Slough Open, gaining many ranking points in the process. Robert Shaw, Andrew Holgate, and Dominic participated in the British Youth Championships, coming 9th, 6th, and 3rd respectively.

Matthias Williams and Dominic O'Mahony were also in-

vited to be in the English squad for the Home Internationals, where they came second losing narrowly to Scotland. Things were therefore looking very good going into the Public School Championships, at the end of last term and we made a good showing at the epee, before going onto to dominate the foil event, in which we won the foil shield for the third year in a row. This left us on the last day needing to produce a good performance in sabre but unfortunately we were overwhelmed by weight of numbers from Whitgift, who went onto to win, and we ended the tournament in second place. We did however win the 'Paddy Power' cup for our strong junior team.

The fencers in the Lower School are maturing well and this is reflected in the increasing confidence and ability they show in competitions and at station. These achievements leave the team ideally placed for the coming season.

Fives

by **Ken Zetie**

It has been a year of mixed success for the Fives players. We have had some excellent wins, notably against Harrow, Emanuel, Aldenham and Charterhouse. These were balanced by losses to Eton and Highgate, and thrilling, but narrow losses to Mill Hill and St Olave's. In addition we now have a regular fixture against City of London, who use our courts on a Wednesday, and we have restarted the fixture against St John's School in Leatherhead. Next time we must visit their rather unusual courts! The upper school players have, as always, managed to combine hard work on their game with a healthy sense of fun. In particular there is a strong sense of competition whenever they are playing against staff members! We have a strong U15 team and once again a very good



crop of U14 players who show great potential if they stick with the sport.

Matt Wiseman has again been our coach, providing a healthy mix of disciplined training and match practice. Alex Mackenzie (College) has been Captain of Fives, assisted by Imran Coomaraswamy (College) as secretary, and the pair played together in the Nationals. Next year Paddy Ell (Liddell's) will be Captain and James Japhet (Milne's) will be secretary. Sadly this is my last year of Fives ...at least of the Eton variety. Michael Milner will be taking over as Master in Charge, and I wish him the best of luck – he has a fine group of players and staff to work with.



Back cover illustration: *Allium christophii* Trautv.

Original illustration 29.5 x 42 cm

This illustration is of a species of onion that is found growing wild in northern Iran and the former Soviet central Asia. It is grown in gardens in the west because of its large inflorescence and almost globular seed heads which persist through into autumn. I painted a specimen growing in the Chelsea Physic Garden, founded in 1673, Britain's second oldest botanic garden (after Oxford, 1621). This painting, together with other of my illustrations, is held in the archive of the Chelsea Physic Garden.

Andrew Brown