

THE OUSEL

2023-2024





THE OUSEL

THE MAGAZINE OF BEDFORD SCHOOL AND THE OLD BEDFORDIANS CLUB
NUMBER 996 - AUTUMN 2023 - SUMMER 2024

FROM THE EDITOR:

Whilst taking the opportunity to work in the sanctuary of the library garden – and having been there for some time - I pause to look around. Close by, a squirrel assesses me with a contemptuous eye and an audible ‘buzz’, alerting others to the presence of an intruder before scurrying off to find its own quiet spot. By this point fully distracted, I take in more of my surroundings, inhaling the crisp autumnal air that whispers through the trees. Trees whose leaves were green mere moments ago, surely? – but are now vibrant shades of amber and scarlet, as if in anticipation of long nights complete with woolly gloves and glittering sparklers. A glimpse of dull metal before the roar of a lawnmower nearby – more rustling and scurrying as, once again, our squirrel is disturbed. I sit and take it all in, the richness of life all around me. In this moment, I am completely alone, yet not lonely. “This”, I think to myself, “is peace.” I smile to myself, enjoying the serenity just a while longer.

On hearing the school bell chime, signalling lunch, I make my way back to the hustle and bustle of the school library, readying my senses for the diligent tapping of fingers on keyboards, the chug of the printer as it churns out last-minute prep and the ‘beep’ at the desk as a pupil borrows the last book in a series they have otherwise devoured; this book’s return will be a bittersweet moment, I am sure. The sense of fulfilment, joy and peace that reading brings, tinged with disappointment - perhaps this is a series that can be read again?

Fast forward two more terms and the school year comes to a close, to begin anew where chapters are yet to be written. We hope you enjoy rustling through the pages of the latest Ousel, by way of reviewing what has been a great series – and that you might be able to do so in a peaceful garden somewhere, away from the contemptuous glare of a squirrel. ■

LxC

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The Ousel magazine regrets any mistakes made; all errors are made unintentionally and in spite of multiple checks. All views expressed are those of the individual concerned and should not be taken to represent the official position of either Bedford School or the Harpur Trust.

Bedford School is part of the Harpur Trust.

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VIEW FROM THE HEAD MASTER'S STUDY



The view from the study this year reflects a different face behind the desk for those looking back into the study. It is a huge privilege to be stepping up as Acting Head Master this term during James Hodgson's sabbatical.

The literal view from the study window is probably quite similar for whoever looks out – written at a November

lunchtime before a Games afternoon as the weather turns colder. Boys walk in every direction with remarkably different approaches to an icy wind: thick coats, scarves and furrowed brows for some; carefree sports kit and an insulating layer of mud for others. Movement past the window is characteristically Bedfordian: neither a run nor dawdle but a purposeful stride. A cluster of boys emerge from a debating club, clearly still in good-natured dissent; a cello and a golf bag just miss skimming each other's wheels as their owners circumnavigate two boys with outsized art folders. An Upper Sixth boy passes in animated conversation with a Remove Form boy from his tutor group as they return to their boarding house, both waving hello to a white-coated science technician they pass; a boy scurries towards the kit store to return a tent, glancing across the fields as a rugby whistle sounds in the distance. Laughter peals out from two boys testing each other on their lines for drama (or is it for a vocabulary test?); two others return from their community partnership in a care home

on De Parys Avenue; a rower dutifully walks his bike along the path, waiting to get close enough to Burnaby Road to jump onto the saddle and cycle away to the river.

While bound by shared values, collective achievements and strong loyalty, the uniqueness of each boy in my view from the study is truly inspiring and encapsulates our ambition for all our boys to find a passion *in* life and *for* life during their time at with us. I hope you will get a sense of the variety of our boys' passions in the pages that follow – with my thanks to all those who have contributed in words and images, but more importantly in all the guidance and inspiration they have given our boys.

We continue to celebrate the individuality inherent in our community and the strong sense of belonging for all. We are a proudly diverse school – staff, boys, families and Old Bedfordians alike – and we recognise that the stories shared in this volume can only ever represent a mere microcosm of school life, and hint at all the stories waiting to be told in our boys' futures.

Tomorrow's historians may return to this edition of *The Ousel* as the time where the portends of VAT on school fees and loss of business rates relief for independent schools materialised. Our plans to mitigate these new challenges are being enacted accordingly, and we remain committed to ensuring an outstanding Bedford education remains as affordable as possible. Our history has been defined by resilience, adaptability and excellence, and by keeping our clear eye to nurturing the individual passions for all our boys that will last for their lifetime, we can plan for our continued strength. Floreat Schola Bedfordiensis. ■

Sam Baldock
Acting Head Master & Vice Master



FROM THE DEPUTY HEAD (ACADEMIC)

Bedford School boys once again shone with an excellent set of results in 2024. At GCSE, almost half of all examinations were at grades 8 or 9 (A* equivalent); a record 23% obtained the highest possible grade, with eighteen boys achieving a sweep of eight or more 9s.

For our Sixth Form leavers, 79% of all A-Level grades were at A* to B. Their results represent the highest secured since A-Levels were reformed in 2017 (outside the changed arrangements during the pandemic) and will see the boys go on to study a remarkable range of courses at league-topping universities.

Popular destinations this year include Durham, Imperial College London, King's College London, Lancaster, Leeds, Loughborough, Newcastle, Queen Mary University of London, Edinburgh, Bath, Birmingham, Cardiff and Exeter. An enormous thanks must go to our excellent Careers team and all other colleagues who have supported our boys to negotiate the ever more complex system of university entrance once again both in the UK and further afield.

Two years in, A Level Media Studies is proving a real hit with Sixth Form: we now have four classes. This year, we launch two BTEC National Level 3 qualifications: Sport and Exercise Science, and Business (Enterprise and Entrepreneurship); both reflect major strengths of the school: our national reputation for sport and a long-standing strategic focus on fostering entrepreneurship. With possibilities offered by degree apprenticeships and a rapidly changing landscape, we want our boys to have the best possible route to the best university place.

Our curriculum continues to evolve. Our new Floreat programme of academic enrichment launched with great success at the end of the year, welcoming its first cohort of subject ambassadors. Every boy in Remove Form will study unique courses our teachers have developed in Artificial Intelligence and Entrepreneurship. All three of these new programmes have been immeasurably enhanced by specialist input from across our school community, including from Governors, parents and Old Bedfordians with relevant professional expertise. We are hugely thankful to them in supporting our efforts to remain utterly committed to a core strategic aim of the school: to provide the best possible curriculum to prepare our boys for a challenging and changing world. ■

LTR







SPEECH DAY 2024

An edited version of the Head Master's address to the school on Speech Day 2024

Welcome to you all for our Speech Day and prizegiving ceremony.

After introducing the Governors and the guest speaker, William Kendall (OB), the Head Master continued:

Three Sundays ago, I got up early, went to my desk and spent a whole morning researching the differences between joy and happiness. I had read an article by Sir Anthony Seldon, one of this country's pre-eminent Head Masters, in which he insisted that education should be a joyous experience. What a perfect place to start a Speech Day speech, I mused, not least given that one of our own highlights of this academic year came from, of all places, an ISI inspection.

You may remember that the first question on the parent survey was: do you agree, strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree that your son is happy at school? No fewer than 98% of parents agreed or strongly agreed. Now that is a pretty good figure, I think, but (if your children are anything like mine) some boys might

argue that their parents have no idea. So what about their views? Well, out of over 1000 responses, 96% of boys also said they were happy at school. Now, as a school we automatically look and say, well, how can we improve for the other 4% - and we really do look at it that way; every single child matters.

Nevertheless, in a post-Covid world ravaged by teenage mental health issues, these figures buck a global trend - and I strongly suspect that if you were to ask 1000 people anywhere in the UK the same question, I am not sure you would get those results.

So, back to that Sunday morning, and a phone call to my daughter in Australia. I told her I was planning to speak about happiness and joy in schools and she was on great form - "Dad, you've got it all wrong", she said, "they are two very different things". And thus the morning developed... "Happiness can be fleeting. You might be happy one day; and unhappy the next. Those boys' ratings might be based purely on the fact that it was roast lunch that day - if it had been mince and





◀ new potatoes, heaven help your inspection!” She had a point; even the ancient epicureans, who were one of a whole host of philosophers searching for a happy life, liked a good dinner party.

“But secondly”, my daughter went on, “why aim for something which is at its very heart simply acquiescent?”

We ultimately agreed that what we should be looking for is what Sir Anthony had said all along, a sense of joy. Joy is deep-seated and comes from a sense of purpose. Joy finds meaning in suffering as well as in fun; it deals with relationships as well as self, finding space for a full range of



emotion, from anger to happiness. It feels more authentic, because you need to work for it – identifying your own inner values and strengths and aligning your life with them – just like, in fact, all of our boys explicitly do in the Lower Sixth when they take the Ivy House course.

I have often said that we aim here at Bedford for happiness and success, in that order. But in fact what we really seek to cultivate, at the very least alongside those two, is joy. And I think we do it rather well. To almost every parent who investigates this school for their child, I say that, first and foremost, we would like boys to finish up here with a good sense of self-knowledge and self-worth, able to walk into any room anywhere and hold a conversation. We want that conversation to be meaningful and authentic; and that requires our education to be the same.

And everything we do here, therefore, is geared to helping boys find out what they are good at, to make it part of their lives and to act in a responsible and social way in the world around them.

Examples of that this year might be the wonder I walked in on one lunchtime in the Science department, where boys were sequencing snowdrop DNA never before sequenced – I have rarely seen boys so fired up with academic fervour; somebody in there may one day discover a great medicine of the future. Or the National Schools Regatta, featuring 80+ boys who had never set foot in a boat before coming to Bedford, and for whom rowing was now a genuine passion. Or the BSIP (Independent Project) presentation evening which showcased real inner interests in subjects as far flung as the work of trauma surgeons to machine learning to supersonic travel. The Detweiler competition, involving over 100 boys, showcased talent and passion across the Arts; and if you have a love of the Arts, you have something to bring joy to your whole life, not just for a day. Or just this week, I attended the IB CAS presentations, where boys reflected on their time working in the local community – it was clear that their experiences had brought genuine joy to themselves, as well as to the people they were working with. This is an education which seeks to provide opportunity, to draw out talents, to build confidence, to find meaning and to bring joy. And, whatever the next few years bring, I can assure you that we will never lose sight of those core beliefs.

So to all you wonderful young men who leave here today, I do hope that you have found, and continue to find, joy in your lives, wherever you end up being and whatever the circumstance around you. I wish you luck!

Aaron Lim then played a piece from the Hungarian composer, Dohnányi; and the Head of School, Aiden Ainsworth-Cave, spoke before the Head Master continued by paying tribute to teaching staff leaving at the end of the year (more information can be found in 'Staff News').

In further thanks, I'd like to mention briefly three more groups of people. The Old Bedfordians are hugely supportive, helping out with careers events, advice, talks on academic subjects; they have hosted receptions all over the world, and they have been good to us financially as well. I'd like to thank Richard Northern and Craig Mitchell in particular in their roles as President and Chairman for all their support; Craig finishes this year and his service to the school, in conjunction with his wife Krystyna, has been amazing; also to Roger Marks, in his role as Chair of the Bedford School Foundation Trust.

The Governors are an extraordinarily talented, committed group of individuals who give up a huge amount of their own time and expertise. Much of their excellent work goes unseen by most of the community, but I see a lot of it close up, and we are incredibly lucky to have them. This year, I'd like to mention in particular Anne Egan, who retires from her role after outstanding service to both the School and the Trust; and to John Holland-Kaye, who has put in weeks of voluntary time and has been an invaluable source of wise advice and kind support to me personally. Like many roles in leadership, the only people who really know what it is like is those who have done it – and I hope it has not been too much of a shock! To them, and to all Governors, and on behalf of all of us, thank you.

And lastly, but by no means least, to parents. I thank you all for your support this year and the trust you have

shown in us. We, for our part, are well aware that we have the most responsible of jobs, as well as the most wonderful.

In the spirit of reflection, we have pieced together a few highlights of the year gone by. (scan the QR code to read our 'Year in Review')

And on that note, and in an attempt to impose some academic rigour on the proceedings, Luke Rogers, in his role as Deputy Head (Academic), will take my place at the lectern as I ask William to step forward to present the prizes.

After prizes were handed out and OB William Kendall addressed the audience, the Head Master made his closing remarks and announcements for the coming year:

I have two short ceremonial duties to perform. Could the current Head of School please come to the stage. Well, Aiden, your time is almost up! And I am delighted to say that we have Richard Northern here, President of the OB Club, who would like to present to you, symbolically, on behalf of your whole year group, an OB tie.

I will now announce next year's Senior 4, and invite next year's Head of School to the stage to receive a handover from Aiden, and to lead us all from the stage.

Next year's senior 4 are, in fact, for the second time in the last ten years, a senior 5!

They are:

Alfie Gittens, Kona Dlomu, Thomas Taylor, Millan Verwoert (who will be Deputy Head of School); the Head of School for 2024/25 will be Tanay Rai.

Thank you and have a great summer. ■



SARNEN 2024

During the Easter Holiday, the squad embarked on our first international training camp since the pandemic to Sarnen, Switzerland. The excitement was immense with the change of scene from the River Great Ouse to the clear, flat water in the heart of the Swiss Alps.

We were met on the first morning with some of the nicest conditions we'd ever rowed in. However, our minds changed once the wind shifted, and we were found in the centre of the lake with waves crashing over the sides of our boats. Sensibly, we decided to stick to the sides of the lake for the rest of the day, since bad conditions would never be able to take us off the water.

Calmer days followed. However, conditions reminiscent of British fog and occasional drizzle were present. The early starts meant we went out in small boats, with a 'relaxed' paddle up the 6km stretch of Lake Sarnen. Our hard work was rewarded with the sweet smell of the local bakery that drifted across the top end of

the lake, and the beautiful misty views of the surrounding Swiss Alps. Afterwards we paddled the long way back to the boat house.

Our luck with the weather changed towards the end of the week. A heatwave arrived with clear blue skies, the best weather we'd see all year. Being out on the water all day meant we saw a variety of different levels of sun burns and all-in-one tan lines.

Staying in the Swiss National Training Centre, we got the full Olympic training experience, with 6:00 am wake ups and three tough sessions a day. Progressing lots in the five days of intense training, this set us up perfectly for the successful regatta season on the way into the summer term. Despite the tiring sessions and hard revision for upcoming exams, we still managed to find the energy to play a hard-fought football match with the locals. Lasting all evening, and going right down to the last goal, I know the boys will say this was the highlight of their trip, despite the final score.

This trip will be one of the highlights of our school careers, and I'm sure no one will forget it any time soon. As a squad, we'd like to thank the school, coaches – Miss Owens, Mr Colliver, Dr Suthers, drivers – Mr Apps and Mr Maltby, and parents for making this unforgettable trip to happen. ■

Michael Moretto





LA CORUÑA EASTER 2024

During the first week of the Easter holiday in 2024, students embarked on an exciting Spanish Study Visit to La Coruña. This adventure blended intensive Spanish lessons at a prestigious language school with a vibrant mix of cultural excursions and sporting activities. Staying with host families provided pupils with a priceless experience, one that we believe will ignite new and lasting friendships.

The itinerary was rich with linguistic, cultural, social, and sporting opportunities. Highlights included a day trip to the charming city of Santiago de Compostela, where pupils explored its magnificent cathedral, university buildings, and cobbled streets bustling with tourists and students.

Throughout the week, our pupils immersed themselves in twelve hours of lessons. These sessions were conducted entirely in Spanish by native-speaking teachers, ensuring an authentic and immersive learning experience.

A surfing lesson on a cloudy Sunday afternoon quickly became a standout highlight, along with

an exhilarating football match against a local team. The packed schedule also included visits to the aquarium and the “Domus-Casa del Hombre” Museum, a captivating fashion exposition, and ample opportunities to indulge in delicious ice cream. The week culminated in a tapas cooking lesson, where pupils learned to prepare traditional Spanish dishes, adding a flavourful end to their adventure.

This trip was an enlightening experience for the pupils, offering them a glimpse into the hidden gem of Galicia and the Costa Verde. The Ben Smith Academy ensured that our experience was enjoyable, educational, and impeccably coordinated.

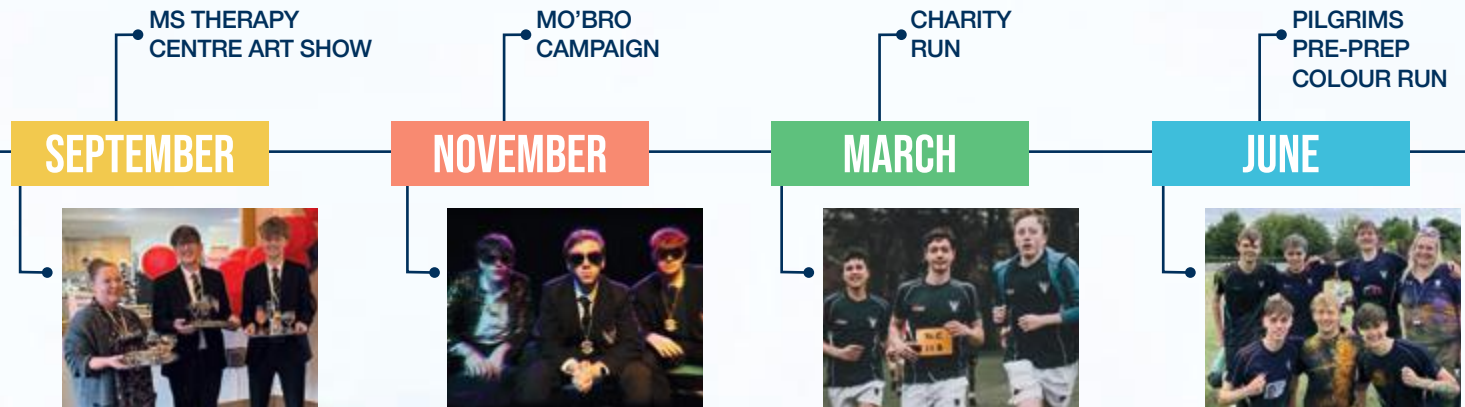
Special thanks go to Miss Ventura for accompanying the group and to the pupils themselves, who were enthusiastic participants and wonderful company throughout, embracing every activity and appreciating every opportunity. ■

PAW



CHARITIES ROUNDUP

BEDFORD SCHOOL CHARITY TIMELINE 2023/2024



It has been another fantastic year supporting local, national and international charities through our fundraising programmes.

We have sold thousands of cakes and bakes, supporting MacMillan Coffee Morning, Movember, UNICEF and Save the Children (Children in conflict), Q:Alliance, Faces, Bedford Foodbank, BRASS and the Ethnic Food Bank on World Day for Cultural Diversity.

In September, Miss Fleming and I took Louis Cooke and Oliver Phillips to the Bedford MS Therapy Centre's annual art show preview evening, handing out refreshments and helping facilitate the bidding on artworks. In June, Will Hayward, Fred Dickson, Charlie Eggleton, James and Ed Dagg and Oli Smith went to Pilgrims Pre-Prep school to support their Colour Run in aid of Making Me, a local charity supporting children's mental health and wellbeing. These L6th were students at Pilgrims, so both staff and boys enjoyed reminiscing! It was great to be part of this charity event - the Pilgrims students loved interacting with/ throwing paint at the boys!

We have donated textbooks and library books from the Prep and Upper school to Castle Newnham School and The Grange Academy in Kempston, as well as collecting prom dresses that 'go to the ball' once again in a new initiative run by the Harper Trust supporting school leavers across Bedford Borough. We have collected food items for Impakt housing and support, as well as rehoming DoF kit and winter clothes to the Stomp project in Bedford.

This year's charity run and house relays involved the whole school community, with houses choosing their own charities and themes, identifiable by their fancy dress (Sandersons minions being a personal highlight). Freddie Drake-Lee led a warmup to

MO'BROS 2023

£19,339!

The Bedford School Mo'Bros raised an award-winning sum of money for the 2023 Movember campaign, which included our annual music video.

▶ Scan the QR to view this on the school website.



the beats of one of our resident DJs, Henry McCutcheon, which could be heard across campus. The Entrepreneurship Society sold last minute sugar fixes and ice cream vans offered much needed refreshments. The afternoon was a great success of boys rallying together, supporting Sarcoma UK, Single Homeless Project, Cancer Research UK, British Red Cross and Children with Cancer UK, and raising over £3,600.

Pupils have also run their own initiatives this year; Charlie Faulkner with his Christmas gift appeal supporting Faces in Bedford, Louis Cooke with his campaign supporting Q:Alliance, a local LGBTQ+ charity in Milton Keynes and Ollie Pritchett running the London Marathon in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust.





Mrs Marriott collecting our 'Services to the Mo' award

The Mo Bros of '23 rose to the challenge and ran an incredible campaign, gathering accolades aplenty with a nomination for Team of the Year at the Bedford Everyday Heroes Awards, winning the Movember national schools challenge, and winning the 'Services to the Mo' award at the national awards ceremony in London. This outstanding achievement is testament to all the hard work and dedication the team showed this year. Our aim, besides raising funds for this incredible charity, was to raise awareness amongst our local community about what Movember stands for, and the treatment and support available to men; through social media, citizenship morning, speakers, assemblies at BGS

and the prep school, we hope we achieved that. Cake sales, dodgeball, a golf simulator challenge, tug of war, sports 'warm up' shirts, silent auction, curry night, 'the giant mo', and of course the 'music video' are all highlights of this year's campaign and our plans for 2024 are coming together nicely!

I want to say a huge thank you to all the parents, staff and students who have supported our campaigns and events this year - we couldn't achieve the same level of success without your support. We are hugely privileged to work and learn at such an amazing school, and I truly believe in the power of a team to make a positive difference. ■

VGM



ICKWELL RESERVE CONTINUES TO PROSPER

I am pleased that this year, we have emerged into the daylight with more bookings and activities of a varied nature, including “Red Cuthbert Morris” from Bedford who were replacing their hazel sticks and a prep school science day complete with equipment and nets. With all years of the Prep school visiting the reserve, this increased usage will ensure more boys in the upper school have a working knowledge to make good use of their time with further studies. Pupils in the upper school have also utilised opportunities to visit the site, as part of a study looking at plant ecology.

The highlight of our year was the visit of Jake Fiennes, conservation manager for the Holcomb Estate in Norfolk. I met Jake at a conference; he readily agreed to come over to talk to our 6th form about the work he is doing to put farming and nature conservation in tandem. I hope this will be the first

of an annual 6th form “Ickwell” lecture. His book, along with others on nature conservation, is in our school library.

It’s wonderful when pupils show an interest in conservation management as a possible career. In the future, we will need many degree trained adults to administer complex regulations planned and already in force for farmland and ecology. There are also ramifications in wildlife gain, relating to housing regulations and other projects known as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Thanks to Ivan from the grounds department, we have been clearing some trees and crown lifting others. Over the winter, we reviewed our coppice wood programme and listed all the hazels, so we can see where action is needed. I was assisted in this and other habitat assessment by Olivia Benjamin on her year placement from Lancaster University.

‘Forest Bathing’ is not new to us, but is a popular name for





an age-old concept that we are embracing; we have recently been creating an area of woodland shade next to the camping meadow, where users like our new Forest School can relax under the canopy and not get attacked by nettles! I was pleased when a local yoga group came for a walk, picnic and even some yoga under our lovely oak tree at the back of the conservation meadow - reminiscent of the past when the yoga centre occupied the old manor house.

I have noticed over the past 11 years of managing Ickwell how light levels have lowered with increased tree growth – often evergreens which cast long shadows. A detailed habitat survey completed by the Greensand Trust noted that the balance of shade and open landscape needed some addressing; we hope limited clearance planned will improve the conservation value of parts of the site, with more light let in. A large yew is due to be removed, with other trees crown lifted.

The reserve has some real gems of habitat; our 4ac lake and conservation meadow add to the richness, and to help us with interpretation we are planning an interactive map from the FERA

data on carbon deposition and flux collected a year or so ago.

In August, former BGS pupil Antonia – now employed as an ecologist – joined me and Tommy Woode at the reserve. Tommy, completing his DofE Bronze volunteering, has been using our trail cameras in a number of places, including one of our water courses. Imagine his surprise when viewing the resulting photos to find a family of otters! Their presence had been suspected - officially they became our first known family of parents and two young otters. We don't think there are any fish in the lake, but they might help to reduce our population of invasive American Crayfish. As for seeing a water vole, I am keeping my hopes up... ■

CHJ

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss usage of the Ickwell reserve, or to arrange a tour:





GILBERT LLOYD LECTURES

For a number of years the most popular degree destination for our sixth form boys has been architecture, so it seems like something of an oversight that we have not had a lecture about Sir Christopher Wren, arguably this country's greatest ever architect. The 300th commemoration of his death provided the ideal reason to rectify this omission; we were delighted to welcome Simon Carter, Head of Collections at St Paul's Cathedral for our first lecture of the year. The Collections Department at St Paul's manages the use and care of the library, archives and object collections. Current projects include the refurbishment of the eighteenth-century library and display of its book and manuscript treasures; activities marking the tercentenary of Wren's death, and a new guide to the painters and sculptors commemorated in St Paul's. Simon has previously worked at the Victoria & Albert Museum, The Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford, and York Museum Service.

During Simon's lecture, it became immediately apparent that Wren was something of a polymath, being a revolutionary scientist, mathematician as well as the



▲ Sir Christopher Wren, by Sir Godfrey Kneller

architect responsible for building St Paul's Cathedral in London. Simon explored Wren's life and work - and the crises and opportunities which enabled his genius to flourish - by using images from the cathedral's object and archive collections, covering the less well-known areas of his interests as well as his major architectural achievements. Simon effortlessly interweaved these elements in a compelling and illuminating way that will hopefully provide inspiration to our next generation of architects.

This was followed by Dr James Hamilton's lecture on three of the most significant and iconic painters in the history of British Art: Thomas Gainsborough, William Turner and John Constable. Dr Hamilton is a curator, writer and lecturer with a degree in History of Art from Manchester University. He was University Curator and Honorary Reader at the University of Birmingham from 1992 until retirement in 2013 and is currently a Fellow of the Barber Institute at the University of Birmingham. He was Alistair Horne Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford, 1998/99. He has lectured across the United Kingdom and in Italy, Hungary, Poland and the USA on Gainsborough, Turner, Faraday, and the culture of eighteenth

and nineteenth century Britain, and has contributed to programmes on BBC Radio 3 and 4 and BBC1 television on the art of J M W Turner. His books on Turner, Gainsborough and Constable have received universal acclaim and a number of awards.

In his illustrated lecture titled 'In every hedge and hollow tree': Thomas Gainsborough, rootstock of Turner and Constable' Dr Hamilton explored how Gainsborough's romantic evocations of the Suffolk countryside in the eighteenth century gave inspiration and direction to the questing and interrogative landscape paintings of Turner and Constable in the nineteenth. As such, he reinforced the idea that artists are constantly referring and responding to their predecessors for inspiration and looking to build on their achievements. As an introduction for anyone who was not familiar with their work this talk provided compelling motivation to go and look at the work of all three artists. We were grateful to Dr Hamilton that he agreed to sign copies of his books which were available to buy after his talk which many boys took advantage of. ■

MCC

ARTICULATION

This year saw Barnaby Williams (U6th) reach the Regional Final of the ARTiculation competition; an annual national public speaking competition, which invites sixth form students to give a short presentation on a piece of work, artefact or architecture of their choice.

After a close round of internal heats, Barnaby was selected to represent the school at the Regional Final which took place at Gainsborough's House in Sudbury. Barnaby's thoughtful and eloquent talk on the work 'Night Ice' by Anne Desmet RA was celebrated by the adjudicators, Dr Steven Parissien and Dr Lara Pucci.

Barnaby's authoritative talk began with Desmet's background; her early years in and out of hospital was well tied into the development of her small-scale work, giving



an excellent grounding for his visual analysis. Barnaby's examination and comparison of the 'Night Ice' with other works in the series as well as artists such as Monet, Nevison and M.C Escher effectively weaved the formal qualities of the print to the content, environment and process.

The personal response to the work and confidence demonstrated in articulating such a complex print within 10 minutes was fantastic and Barnaby has much to be proud of.

He represented the school in an exemplary fashion and was unfortunate to miss out on placing amongst some strong competitors. Barnaby has since been inducted into the ARTiculation Alumni Network, through which a plethora of opportunities are made available to finalists. A huge well done to Barnaby for this superb achievement. ■

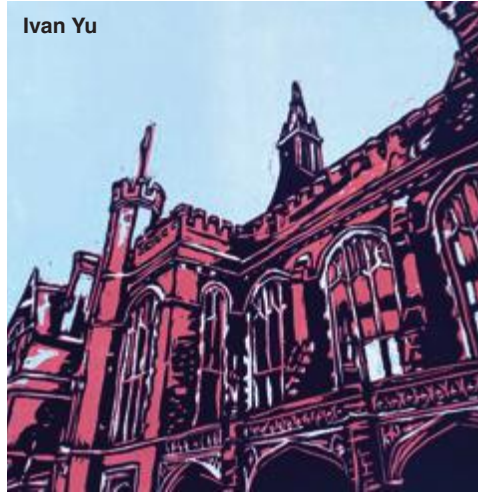
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Photo credit - ARTiculation



Joell Creek



Ivan Yu



William Mowe



Tommy Hughes



George Gutteridge

PRINTMAKING GCSE



Ben Rioch



Daniel Hudson



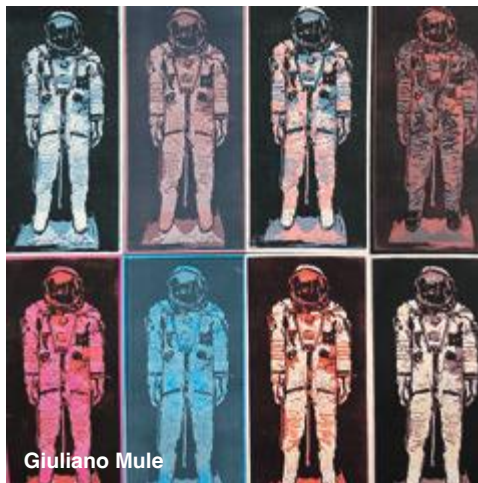
Ben Coomber



Edward Randerson



Oliver Sprange



Giuliano Mule



Archie Robson



Sam Barnes



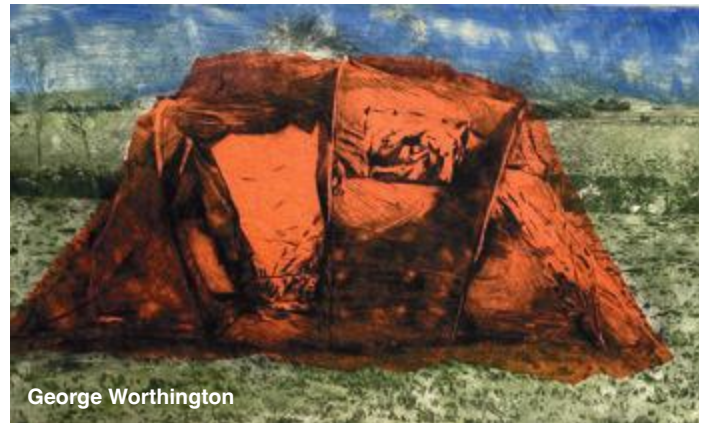
Jibran Baloch



James Wright



Alex Hall



George Worthington



Oliver Yates



Barnaby Williams



Gabe Young



Louis Cooke

SIXTH FORM



Pharell Peters



Luke Pollen Brooks

DETWEILER 2024

The annual Detweiler exhibition is the only time in the year that the Bellroom gallery space is filled with work by the boys for any significant period of time, as it is used primarily for showing work by invited professional artists. It generates plenty of excitement and conversation as the work is seen by all boys, creating a real sense of exposure quite apart from the sense of anticipation as to who might win overall. This year we were delighted to welcome two judges- illustrator Katie Allen is well known at Bedford School as a regular exhibitor at the annual Staff and Friends exhibition, as well as having been the Art department technician for a number of years. Fiona Wilson is a mixed media artist working from her Bedford studio; her approach to her work is expressive and semi-abstract with a foundation in observational drawing. All work is judged in relation to the set theme which this year was 'Life and Death'. The diversity and range of work submitted was reflected in the selection of prize winners.

Alex Ying (U6th) was commended for his ambitious and panoramic scroll painting which, sadly, could only be

temporarily exhibited for the prize giving because of its huge scale. Henry Gillham's (5th) striking and powerful self-portrait sculpture was also commended, as was Gabe Young (U6th) for his inventive and nuanced tree collage. Kish Patel (U6th) was recognised for his haunting and dark screaming portrait while Will Cave's (U6th) animated film of rowers ensured a digital presence in the selection.

The 2D 1st prize was awarded to George Worthington (U6th) for his atmospheric intaglio print of a tent which caught the judges' eye for the beautiful use of light and dark which they felt was reminiscent of Edward Hopper's work.

The 3D 1st prize proved something of a dilemma for the judges as they were taken by both submissions by the winner Rhys Harries (U6th). His climbing figure sculpture had an ambiguous narrative which hinted at both collective and individual endeavour, while the sense of balance and scale of his dog sculpture impressed with its sense of ambition. As such, either work was deemed to be a worthy winner! ■

MCC



ART HISTORY

The after-school Art History class has had another successful year with good attendance from boys of all year groups, primarily from the L6th this year. Writing a 3000 word essay is an essential and unavoidable part of the A-level coursework, so the opportunity to dissect and analyse a work of art each week in real depth is ideal preparation for a task that creates a little apprehension. A critical part of the way teacher Miss Bacon structures these sessions is to encourage pupils to offer their ideas and opinions; on the occasions I have happened to walk in on discussions it is always exciting to hear contributions.

This year the selection of 25 works included paintings

"(Oliver's) enthusiasm and passion for the subject made him the obvious choice."

by Masaccio, El Greco, Poussin and Turner, but also 'The Brown Betty teapot' and 'The New Look' by Christian Dior as a way of reminding the boys that art is much more than paintings and sculpture. For our aspiring architects the Bank of England by John Soane and the Olympic swimming pool by Zaha Hadid were also included.

The Dr Janice Johnson Art History prize this year was awarded to Oliver Quince in Removes. Miss Bacon felt that his enthusiasm and passion for the subject made him the obvious choice - quite something considering the class is predominantly 6th formers. The fact that Oliver is regularly in London looking at exhibitions and galleries in his own time is very revealing of his engagement and enthusiasm. It should also be added that Oliver's analysis for his GCSE coursework sketchbook has been exceptional in no small part, I am sure, due to his attendance of the Art History class.

As a way of rounding off the year a tour of the school art collection was organised. Bedford School is fortunate to have an impressive selection of prints in particular, so Mr Croker was able to lead the group around the school highlighting particular works and their history. It is indicative of the quality of the work that some of the pieces were works by artists discussed as part of this year's course.

We were delighted that Miss Bacon very kindly agreed to do a lecture as the Art department contribution to this year's Creative Arts festival; in front of Removes she discussed the history of Leonardo Da Vinci's painting the 'Salvator Mundi'. She posed the question 'is this painting worth the highest amount ever paid at auction?' particularly in light of its dubious provenance.

In a fascinating lecture the boys were taken through all the ins and outs of the story which has made it such a controversial picture. ■

MCC





Will Cave



Kishan Patel



Zaki Shameem

PAINTING



Alex Ying



Adam McFarland



Harry L'Estrange



Stephen Leng



Louis Montgomery



Lucian Davis



Charlie Diamond

Alex Ying



Ben Rioch



Henry Gillham



Misha Savitski



Lucian Davis



SCULPTURE



Alfie Shooter



Clement Rahwangi Gough



Luke Dover



Luke Dover



Ra'ed Rizwan



Alfie Shooter



Rhys Harries



Rhys Harries



Enrui Zhou



ST CECILIA'S CONCERT

A CRACKER!

Always a musical highlight of the autumn term, this year's St Cecilia's Concert proved no exception. The Great Hall was filled with a wonderfully eclectic mix of music from across the ages, performed by an incredible 100 pupils.

The Brass Ensemble opened proceedings with *Three Brass Cats* by Chris Hazell; their upbeat, crisp performance set the standard for the first half, which contained a fantastically diverse repertoire of funk, big band, modal jazz and more, played by the Festival Band, Funk Band, the New Jazz Collective and the Jazz Orchestra. However, the buzz in the interval (and indeed the talk in school the next morning!) was all about the Consort Choir with their brilliant gospel performance of *Worthy to be Praised!* from Los Angeles composer Byron J Smith. Mr Roberts' energy and enthusiasm was contagious and, mixed with the choir's high-quality singing, not least from soloists Alice Toone (Bedford Girls' School) and Toby L'Estrange (Upper Sixth), made it impossible not to jump up and clap along with them.

More delights followed in the second half, with some fine wind playing from the Concert Band in *Festivo* by late 20th century composer Edward Gregson, who were followed by the



Segovia Guitar Ensemble transporting the audience to sunny Spain with their version of *Canción y Danza*. With a change to the printed programme, Rock Band played a Royal Blood number, and Ben Pickering bravely fronted the band for the very first time – and did so with great success.

To round off the evening, our three orchestras took their turn on the stage. First, the Orchestra of the Ouse, with a super *Flourish for Strings*, by Peter Martin. They were followed by the Chamber Orchestra, who gave a beautiful performance of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*, which perfectly showed



"a triumphant expression of all that one can gain from Bedford School"
Audience Member



off the musicians' skill as well as their emotional intelligence. The evening was brought to a suitably rousing conclusion by the Symphony Orchestra. A special mention must go to the trombone soloist in Grondahl's *Concerto for Trombone*, namely Max Leung (Upper Sixth), whose performance was passionate and expressive, as well as being technically brilliant. This was followed by the *Prelude to Act III* from Wagner's *Lohengrin* bringing a *fortissimo* finale to a fantastic evening of music. ■

MAAn



HOUSE SINGING



It may have been pouring with rain and dark outside, but the brightly coloured lights and the noisy throng of boys wearing House t-shirts, their banners adorning the walls of the Great Hall, could only mean one thing – it was time for House Singing 2023.

A hush settled as last year's Unison Song winners, St Peter's (Talbot's) took to the stage, beginning with a beautifully serene version of Celine Dion's My Heart Will Go On. They set the standard for things to come, with each boarding house treating the audience of day boys, parents and staff to a varied programme. From Michael Jackson to Hozier, Take That to the Village People, no musical stone was left unturned. Last to perform in the Unison Song category were Crescent (Pemberley), and they did not disappoint – choosing I'm Just Ken from the

recent Barbie film, followed by YMCA.

House Singing takes sitting and standing incredibly seriously, and this year was no exception with some slick displays from the boarding houses. From jumping up at a single clap to the three-row rise and fall – even a domino effect, one by one – each interpretation seemed to upstage the previous!

The second round brought the Part Songs, and we were treated to classics such as All My Loving by The Beatles sung by Crescent (Pemberley), as well as Ben E King's Stand By Me from St Peter's (Talbot's), through to the almost present day Somebody that I Used to Know by Gotye, wonderfully sung by Bromham (Burnaby).

This year's guest adjudicator was Quentin Thomas, Director of Music at Oundle, who last judged the competition



12 years ago. While he was deliberating, it was the turn of some staff members to step out of their own comfort zones to entertain the audience with a lively rendition of Dynamite by BTS – receiving huge applause from pupils and guests alike.

Mr Thomas praised the commitment of all of the boys from the boarding houses in the Unison Song round, who had clearly worked so hard on their performances, calling them “a triumph”. He advised them to “remember the journey” and be proud of what they had achieved in only seven weeks since the beginning of term! Ultimately, it was Paulo Pontine and the boys of Redburn’s emotionally charged rendition of Read All About It by Emeli Sandé, as well as a brilliantly executed version of Coldplay’s Viva La Vida, that won them the number one spot for Unison Song.

Mr Thomas then announced the winners of the Part Song – this fell to Ashburnham (Sanderson’s) for their “snazzy” and “rhythmically brilliant” arrangement of Sh-boom by The Chords.

After some frenzied behind-the-scenes counting of total scores, the overall winners were announced – Ashburnham (Sanderson’s) took the top spot for the third year running. ■

MAn



WINNERS

Unison Song – Paulo Pontine (Redburn)

Part Song – Ashburnham (Sanderson’s)

Overall Winners – Ashburnham (Sanderson’s)

SPRING CHAMBER CONCERT



The concert featured a host of our smaller music ensembles, including piano trios, string quartets, the wind quintet, horn ensemble, saxophone ensemble, cello ensemble and guitar ensemble. The wide repertoire of music performed featured works by Baroque favourites Handel and Vivaldi, Romantics Beethoven and Dvořák, as well as more modern composers such as Gershwin, Warren and film composer John Williams.

Particular highlights included the New Jazz Collective's fabulous mash-up of *Sing a Song of Song* (Kenny Garrett) and *Y Todavía La Quiero* (Joe Henderson), and the Chamber Orchestra, who gave a truly stunning, and technically masterful, performance of the first movement of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*. ■

MAn





OPEN MIC NIGHT

The Recital Hall provided a hub for superb musical talent which saw pupils from Bedford School, Bedford Girls' School and Bedford Sixth Form come together to perform a selection of well-known, chart-topping songs.

Always a highlight in the music calendar, the evening is made all the more special as it raises funds for Movember. This year the night raised a massive £648 for the men's health charity.

With an audience turnout higher than ever, the Recital Hall was buzzing with students dancing and singing along to their peers' performances with gusto.

Performances included one from the school's



Funk Band made up of both pupils and teachers. A group called Careless Whispers aptly sang George Michael's *Careless Whisper*, which got everyone singing along to the famous lyrics.

Another different and note-worthy performance came from Thomas Li (stage name Li Qiller) who specialises in electronic live-looping and performed two original songs.

With the DJ set to finish off the night, everyone headed off after what had been yet another brilliant Movember Open Mic Night. ■

MAn

"With over 130 people attending, the atmosphere was high-energy... The performers picked a great range of 'sing-along' songs and people were particularly excited for the DJ set at the end."

Jacob Foster

ROCK NIGHT

Rock Night is an opportunity for all walks of school life to come together and celebrate the musical ability of Bedford School and Bedford Girls' School. Welcoming younger students and Music Department legends, the night is always a joy to watch. After a hard few days of labour preparing for the fun-filled night ahead, rigging and programming lighting, setting up the sound system and trying to remember how to build the staging, we were ready to raise some money for The British Red Cross.

Starting the night, Funk Band impressed with 'Crazy in Love' and 'Beggin'. Shortly after 'Call me Thomas' played MF Doom's 'Rap Snitches' – up and coming rapper Li Qiller's energetic vocal performance captivated the audience, leaving them anticipating his solo performance later in the evening.

Dividing the rockers, Head Girl of Bedford Girls' School, Tash Miller, performed Michael Bublé's 'Feeling Good', adding vibrance to the already bright atmosphere. We then heard Alice Toone take us back to 1976 with 'Sunny' by Boney M showing off her formidable vocals and

dominating stage presence.

Ending the 'rock' part of Rock Night, Li Qiller performed two of his original songs; 'Best Times of Life' and 'This Generation'. His talent and passion for music enthralled the crowd, who sang his songs back word for word. His ability to rap, sing, play the piano all whilst keeping the crowd enthralled, is a talent truly to be remembered.

Headlining the evening we had @that.djcharlie (Charlie Faulkner) and Jacob Foster DJing. Charlie's live remix of 'Murder on The Dancefloor' was a smash hit with all the music lovers, taking us back to the early 2000s. Jacob's Drum and Bass set had the crowd jumping, turning the Quarry into a rave.

Assisting their sets, Zachary Wasterfall hyped up the crowd, keeping the energy going right 'til the end. With flashing lights and plenty of bass, it's fair to say the crowd had a great time.

Raising close to £1000, we would like to pay a special thanks to Mr Rooke for enabling this iconic night in the calendar to happen once again. ■

Jacob Foster





SURVIVORS 2024



Take Two! (L-R): William Baker, William Cave, Blake Swift, Jack Harte, Hugh Williams, Charlie Faulkner, Harry Payne, Shaun Thomas, Sam Maling, Oliver Needham, Ivan Iankov, Will Reddy, Aaron Berman, Miss Oakley, Mr Whitbread, Mrs Carrington



Take One! (L-R): Charlie Faulkner, Aaron Berman, Hugh Williams, Hari Mistry, William Baker, Oliver Needham, Ivan Iankov, Will Reddy, Jack Harte, Luke Pollen-Brooks, George Worthington



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

CAST:

Ebenezer Scrooge – Charlie Eggleton
Young Scrooge – Oscar Jelfs
Young Ebenezer – James Angus
Jacob Marley – Will Hayward
Ghost – Millan Verwoert
Spirit/ Phantom – Zac Wasterfall
Fred – Hamish Timmins
Bob Cratchit – Thomas Taylor
Tiny Tim – Seb Davis
Mrs. Cratchit – Charlie Lawrence/
 Louis Cooke
Fezziwig – Louis Cooke
Belle – Daniel Lushchay
Fan – Matt Hackney
Storytellers – James Angus, Oliver
 Quince, Sammy Hughes,

Zac Wasterfall, Millan Verwoert,
 Will Hayward
Businessmen 1 & 2 – Henry Gillham
 & Daniel Hudson
Bailiff 1 & 2 – Matt Hackney &
 Ben Elliott
Mr Thompkins – Giles Halsey
Mrs Thompkins – Charlie Lawrence?
Mrs Fred – Charlie Gibson
Topper – Ben Elliott
Miss Dora – Nathaniel Fletcher
Man – Lukas Collins
Dick Wilkens – Isaac Johnson
Charwoman – Louis Cooke?
Dibler – Henry Gillham
Old Joe – Anton Gryaznov
Turkey Boy – Agastya Lahkar
Peter Cratchit – Kieran Kelly
Belinda Cratchit – Edward Kegglin

Our drama boys excelled themselves yet again in our latest school production, *A Christmas Carol*. Performed over three nights to a packed Quarry Theatre, this timeless classic, adapted by Karen Louise Hebden, took audiences on a rollercoaster of emotions.

A magnificent performance by Charlie Eggleton added to the authenticity of the scene, with his convincing portrayal of the bitter old man Scrooge – it was really hard to believe that this soulless, mean old man was played by a 16-year-old. Preparing for this famous role, Charlie watched several renditions of the play to take inspiration from the different actors who have also played the part. Charlie explained, “I think I really got into the mind of the character in order to give a good believable performance, and I think I understand Scrooge much better now, and the pain he went through. I decided to portray many classic, Scrooge stereotypes, like a hunchback etc, and I came up with a voice that I thought fitted the character well, that I could sustain for the whole performance.”

The on-stage relationship between Bob Cratchitt (Thomas Taylor) and Tiny Tim (Seb Davis) was no fluke. They spent months honing their father-son bond during rehearsals. Thomas explained, “We worked hard on the little things that would create a realistic father-son relationship, like a hand on a shoulder or a shared smile after something amusing or heartfelt happened on stage. I was very lucky to work with such a talented actor who took on the role of Tiny Tim so brilliantly.”

This particular adaptation allowed for our drama boys to demonstrate a wider range of talents, with some carol singing



“Eggleton did indeed steal the show, his portrayal of a character who is still used to this day to describe someone mean, selfish or unfriendly was on point as he navigated Scrooge’s own emotions through anger, grief, sadness and eventual redemption.

But it’s not a one-man show; Taylor’s Cratchit showed a side of humanity that perhaps many of us can learn from too, that adversity need not affect the way we treat others or diminish our love for one another.

Taylor’s presence was bright, strong and full of the fatherly love you’d hope to see, none more so than for his sick son Tiny Tim (Seb Davis) who made the role his own and had the audience grieving for his supposed loss as much as his own on-stage family.”

(Hutchinson)

(there was not a dry eye in the house when Seb Davis as Tiny Tim sang a sorrowful rendition of *Silent Night*), and chorus dancing, which provided Upper Sixth Former Louis Cooke with the chance to light up the stage and give the audience a good laugh as Fezziwig, a flamboyant jovial man – the very antithesis of Scrooge.

The original score was stunningly composed and conducted by Lower Sixth Former Angus Timmins, who had been working on this composition since June. It was a very special moment for him, and the audience, when he came out at the end to take a bow to rapturous applause.

The whole show was an absolute delight to watch. It is, of course, the message that this well-known story tells that tug on the heartstrings. Kindness really must come above all else. The transformation from Scrooge at the start to the end of the show is clear, as are people's interactions with him – so brilliantly shown by the boys' acting. ■

MAn



"I hold my breath as Scrooge enters, waiting for him to utter his immortal phrase. He has to get it right, he has to make us believe he is the twisted, bitter, angry and cold man Dickens wanted us to hate..."

"Bah humbug!"

The anger, the bitterness, the gravelly scowl devoid of joy rings out across the theatre as Scrooge's workers scurry around making sure they look busy, and giving no reason to dock their pay. I relax. He's nailed it."

(Hutchinson)





“The ghosts too, the messengers of doom and hope, were utterly convincing. Marley (Will Hayward), Past (Millan Verwoert), Present and Future (Zachary Wasterfall), were portrayed perfectly, with the necessary terror, whimsy and authority needed to help Scrooge and the audience see what they needed to be seen.

This was indeed helped along by excellent lighting that gave the ghosts an ethereal and unnatural presence. A feast for the eyes that was expertly aided by a chilling original score, composed by schoolboy Angus Timmins and played live.”

Review extracts used in this article are by Paul Hutchinson, originally published in the Bedford Independent





‘THEATRE IN PRISON’ LECTURE

University of Warwick professor Saul Hewish presented a thought-provoking lecture to Bedford School and Bedford Girl’s School; Saul is a creative artistic director who founded ‘Rideout’, a theatre organisation for rehabilitation which is currently in its 25th year.

A short introduction, given by Charlie Eggleton, preceded the riveting stories and experiences that Saul gained through his theatre company and within prisons across the UK.

Professor Hewish spoke on titles such as ‘Why is Theatre in Prison?’; this was highly insightful in illustrating the many stigmas surrounding prison and the relationships affected due to family members being imprisoned. ‘Rideout’ uses drama to instigate change (behavioural, institutional and societal) to improve quality of life within prisons. Additionally, theatre was used to develop kinship and to increase self-knowledge of both prisoners and audiences. ‘Rideout’ had prisoners performing with a sense of realism and portraying key political events, thus giving insights to real world dilemmas and social problems that impact every prisoner’s life.

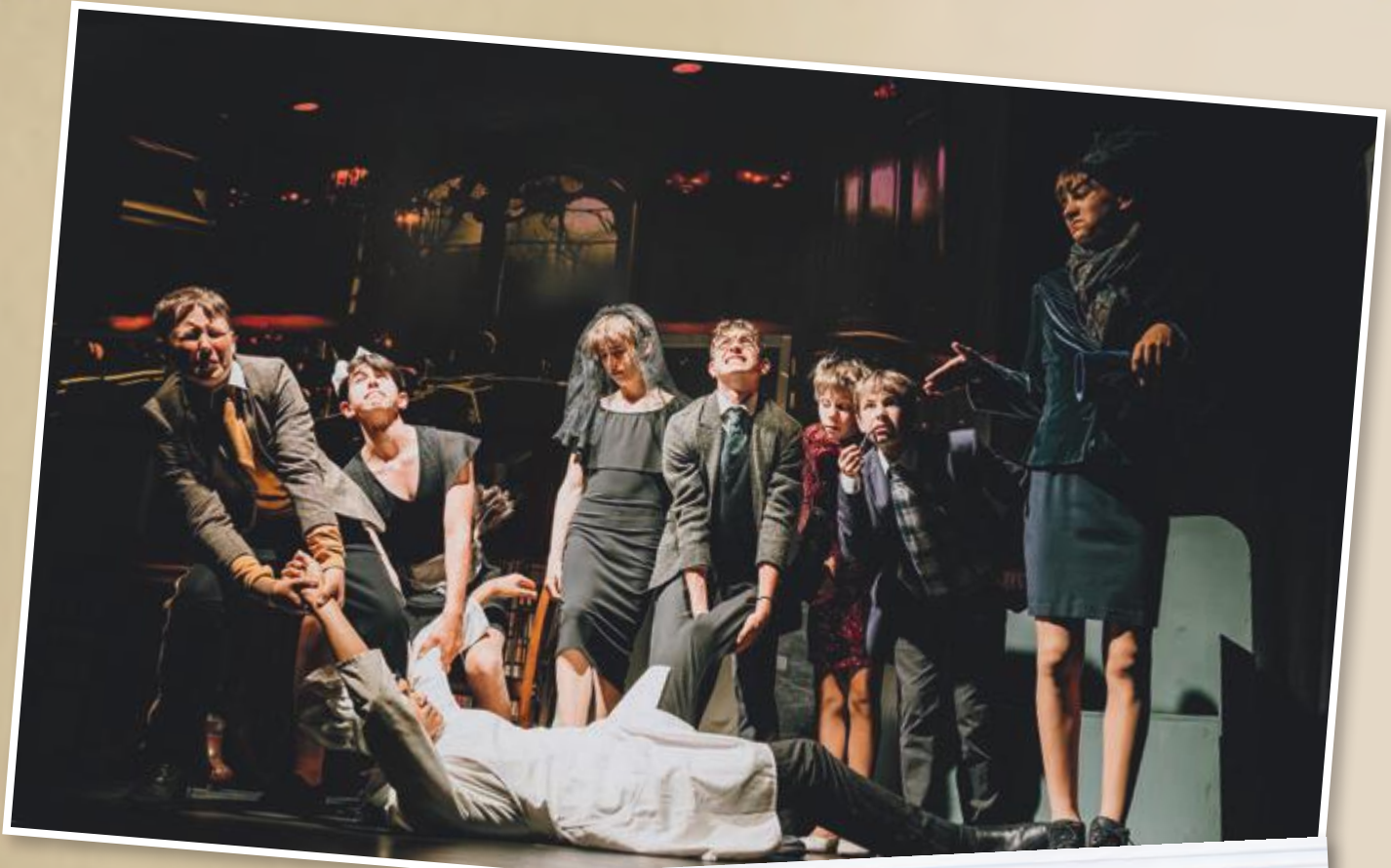
At the core of Hewish’s lecture were theoretical models (e.g. Psychological & Social Learning Theory by Bandura; Simple Desistance Theory by Shadd Maruna, Stephen

Farrall & Fergus McNeil, and Theatre of the Oppressed by Augusto Boal) which were used to adapt to the complex situation of theatre in prisons, in order to prevent irrational and potentially volatile reactions by prisoners in terms of violence or disagreements. These models were used to change the perception of self and to change the perceptions of others through theatre. These teachings altered perspectives on prisoners by both audiences and staff, who began to see them in a different way.

Professor Hewish spoke about how ‘Theatre in Prison’ had a positive impact on the lives of prisoners, such as: reduction in anger, aggression and resilience on substances, as well as improving health and wellbeing. As an audience member in the lecture, this had a positive impact on me as I believe it is highly important to change negative perceptions.

After the lecture, we had an opportunity to ask questions. When asked about his own intrigue, Professor Hewish answered: “There is a lot of storytelling in prison. One of the things about being a performer is about telling stories, and in prison, there are a lot of people who tell stories. This is what makes me intrigued.” ■

Zachary Cumming



From the first read-through to the final dress rehearsal, pupils showed remarkable enthusiasm, commitment and an eagerness to embody the quirky, larger-than-life characters from the classic murder mystery board game. Each pupil approached their role with creativity, exploring different facets of their characters. A highlight was watching pupils develop comedic timing and physicality – ‘Clue’ is a comedy that requires precise delivery and exaggerated movements. The cast’s willingness to experiment and take risks led to some genuinely hilarious moments, both scripted and improvised.

THE SUSPECTS:

- Sammy Hughes’** excellent comedic timing.
- Matt Hackney’s** creativity and larger than life laugh.
- Oliver Quince’s** Southern Belle impression and eye roll.
- Seb Davis’** use of props and sense of humour.
- Matthew Moretto’s** incredibly accurate French accent and ability to walk well in heels.
- James Angus’** pulse checking sequence!
- Daniel Lushchay’s** blank facial expressions during the funniest moments!
- Hamish Timmins’** persistent performance glued the whole performance together.

The collaborative spirit among the cast was outstanding. Special thanks to **Benji Roberts**, for his mentorship role; guiding younger peers through the

nuances of stage performance and offering support and encouragement. This sense of teamwork has not only strengthened the production but also fostered a positive and inclusive environment. I am very grateful for his dedication to the project during his exam period.

The stage management and crew, composed of ensemble [**Kieran Kelly, Agastya Lahkar** and our stage manager **Kevin Chen**] who have been just as passionate about backstage work as they have been dying on stage - for Kevin that was multiple times! They were instrumental in bringing the world of ‘Clue’ to life and immersing the audience. Another special thanks to **Elio Lepore** for returning to school to assist Mr Laidler with lighting and sound cues.

Working with such a talented and enthusiastic group of younger pupils has been a joy, and I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together. ■

DBo



Clue

The school's Creative Arts Festival is always a wonderful celebration, and certainly provides an enthusiastic boost of energy just before the end of the school year.

As part of the Festival programme, Clue was no exception, bringing together oodles of talent from keen 4th form and Remove pupils to recreate the popular 'whodunnit' murder mystery game on stage.

Both individually and as a collective, performers brought their all to the script, taking the audience on a journey of never quite guessing the culprit until the very end. A personal highlight was the sheer deadpan comedy of Kevin Chen, who spent much of his 'airtime' as a murder victim, being dragged around the floor by dinner party guests keen to conceal the crimes from a suspecting police officer (Benji Roberts).

Slapstick comedy was pulled off with impressive gusto, none more so than when murdered Cook (Agastya Lahkar) was carried from the scene of the crime and wedged between guests on a chaise longue, making effective use of blackouts to rapidly change scenes that had audience members in stitches.

Crucial to the success of such a play is inevitably the accuracy of timing; it was clear from the audience reaction and raucous laughter that rehearsal efforts paid off. A truly wonderful evening to help round off the year! ■

LxC



AL MURRAY WORKSHOP

Al Murray OB is a world-renowned comedian and writer, most famously known as ‘The Pub Landlord’ who has performed across the UK and Ireland, as well as Edinburgh Fringe. Six drama scholars were fortunate enough to meet Al for a workshop, on how we as actors can get on stage and get the audience laughing.

Al started by explaining how he got to where he is now, describing how in his school days he used to put on plays in the old theatre with friends, and supporter by the drama teacher. He graduated from Oxford History with a degree in Modern History, and after this went into the world of work, performing in London comedy clubs in the evenings.

Gradually he became a full-time comedian and created the ‘Pub Landlord’.

We looked at the skeleton of comedy: firstly, why do we laugh? Although it may seem simple, there are many reasons why we laugh. We unpicked ‘Connection’ first – where an amusing moment is relatable, and we understand the context, impacts, and facts to trace this back to our daily lives. The second, ‘Outrage’, where the audience is shocked (an example being someone who swears constantly). ‘Escapism’ comes from a place of trying to laugh to cheer ourselves up during times of struggle, therefore escaping from woes. The fourth and



final reason ‘Gallows Humour’ can be summarised by grim or ironic humour used in a desperate or hopeless situation. We later discovered that ‘Trust’ is the most important ingredient, both for the comedian and the audience. Al even said that the secret to comedy is being “surprised by someone you trust. It is important to remember that in comedy the audience will want to laugh and be amused.”

We considered what we should include if performing a comedy sketch, with Al explaining the rule of three (listing three adjectives/ideas), running jokes (that come back repeatedly) and wordplay (using words with multiple meanings). Similar to Al, another tool we could add to our own standup was to create a distinctive character or persona – we produced characters who were loud-mouthed, shy and completely bonkers!

Al also spoke about the danger of standup and making a living, and the risk of not being booked if people do not laugh – and having to hope that the comedian before you does not steal all of the laughs from the room. Al reflected

on evenings where this would be a struggle, even those where he received no laughs at all.

Later that week, after the workshop, several attendees went on to write and perform in drama society, which was a challenge but still a particularly enjoyable experience, with Matt Hackney, Seb Davis, Charlie Eggleton and Will Hayward performing brilliantly. A massive thank you to Al Murray for the wonderful workshop. ■

[Hamish Timmins](#)



JONNY HOSKING WORKSHOP



A highlight of drama society this year was a practical workshop from OB Jonny Hosking; this was an amazing opportunity for boys as not only was Jonny a highly regarded actor during his time at school (playing the lead in *Romeo & Juliet*), but also having recently performed in *Punk Rock* at the Oxford School of Drama.

Focussing on movement and how physicality determines emotion and atmosphere on stage, Jonny explained how pivotal this was to characterisation; beyond vocal performance of lines, he demonstrated the need to delve deeper into fluid and compelling physical theatre. Introduction of themes:

squeeze, cloud, ring and release to portray different moods helped us to associate emotion to movement. Asked to play with each theme freely, we stepped into a space that took us away from the school day, bringing focus to the space. Jonny brought us into a circle, and we spoke about the different characters we had visioned performing and their backstories.

This new style felt daunting at first with one word as a prompt, yet it inspired huge imagination and freedom; by the end of the session we had all built a connection with the themes. We all thoroughly enjoyed the session as it stretched us and gave an insight into drama post-school. Jonny spoke to us on getting into acting and the challenges faced, allowing boys to ask questions to someone who had been in their shoes just a few short years prior.

We are so grateful to Jonny for hosting a session, and for Mrs Keylock and Ms Boughey for making it possible. All the boys learnt so much, which we hope they take into next year's production of *Les Misérables*! ■

[Will Hayward](#)



DRAMA SCHOLAR WORKSHOP

On a cold November evening the Drama Scholars enjoyed an exciting evening looking at 'cinematic theatre' and how we can portray different camera angles whilst on stage, in their first workshop of the year led by OB Sam Rayner. The workshop also looked at how we can portray different objects and transition into different scenes.

The evening began with a fast-paced warm up including high fiving, crawling through legs and balancing each other's bodyweight. In the next activity, the focal of the performance would change, highlighting with people's movement where the focal point of a camera would be in a film.

The first main activity was to look at how we, as actors, can portray different objects. We displayed our hands on a box and then moved these around, trying to keep the hand in the same place in the air. Then we broke into pairs and started pulling rope; altogether we took these actions and transitioned them into a range of scenes such as a tea part, football match, or running away from a dinosaur. After this, we became a pane of glass being smashed by a hammer, reflecting the transparency in our eyes whilst being hit into shards. During this section we looked at a form of split-screening, with actor's responding to one another in a similar way to the act of mirroring.

Working in groups, we constructed several scenes with transitions in between; coming up with these was quite challenging but before long everyone has 3 well executed scenes, including one with actors playing taps, toasters and whistling kettles which transitioned into a cricket match with a slow-motion throw. As the stumps fell, the scene changed again to one of someone driving a racing car, with applause to Will Hayward, Charlie Eggleton, Elio Lepore and Hamish Timmins for constructing these.

The next group performance saw an airplane attendant crashed into by a passenger, which transformed into a launderette and human washing machine buzzing whilst washing clothes, to finally a solemn funeral with a mischievous moving microphone and serious vicar. Well done to Matt Hackney, Henry Gillham, Stanley Breed and Louis Cooke for these amusing scenes.

The evening was rounded off by devising adverts; one for a state of the art lawn mower (with slow-motion, zoomed in cutting of the grass blades) whilst the other group conjure up a Diet Coke advert, with foam represented by the actors erupted out of the bottle and fizzing to the floor.

In summary, all enjoyed the brilliant evening, and many went on to enjoy the performance of 'The Man Who Thought He Knew Everything'. It was a wonderful workshop, and a big thank you to Sam Rayner and his team. ■

Hamish Timmins





BROMHAM HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

This year's strong senior team had ambitions following a disappointing run in the House Cup for the previous few years. With clear intentions set for house competitions, we delivered impressive victories in Junior Cricket, Indoor Rowing, U16 Rugby, Senior Debating and the House Relay, and were close to wins in Sports Day, Senior Cricket, Tug of Way, Pancake Racing and House Music. A respectable 4th place overall shows great progress; until the final competition we had avoided the dreaded 6th place!

Rupert Apps provided a great example as a terrific athlete and modelled outstanding conduct. The senior team worked brilliantly together, supported by two dazzling monitors in Zaki Shameem and Sam Maling, which combined to become the most talented and organised leadership group seen under the Rooke tenure!

Individual successes included Finn Bantock, Kieran Hamel-Henn and Alfie Gandesha in House Music; George Gutteridge and Charlie Diamond (Burnaby) convincingly beat an experience Upper Sixth Paulo in Senior House Debating –



the former becoming the first-ever recipient of House Colours in 5th form after such an impressive and articulate display.

The house raised a huge sum of money for our House Charity in the Fun Run Relays, we also had a wonderful house dinner with guest of honour Mr McCleery and a joint house BBQ finished the year well with prizes, treats and games provided by the generosity of parents, and some senior boys in attendance for the final farewell. The leavers will be dearly missed, but they leave a legacy of great strength and depth in the younger years, and a solid foundation for future success.

TPR

BURNABY HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

Another successful year of demonstrating excellence in both academics and sports – with potential future changes to look forward to, we welcomed new House Master Mr Rees – previous Head of Geography and Humanities – joining with his family; he has been an amazing person to have lead Burnaby.

Music Scholar Aaron Lim (on piano) and Vadym Dmytrenko (conductor) led a spectacular performance at House Singing – despite this, judging felt differently and gave us last place! With many basketball 1st team players in the house, complemented



BROMHAM

**RUPERT APPS**

A Level, head of house, 1st VIII rowing (vice-captain)

**LEEROY BAKASA**
A Level**WILLIAM BAKER**

A Level, 3rd VIII rowing (minor colours)

**TOM CAMERON-FRASER**

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, 3rd XI hockey, head of concert band, music society (officer), symphony orchestra, wind quintet

**ARUN CHOCHAN**

A Level, house colours, 2nd team tennis

**FARZANUL CHOWDHURY**

A Level, academic colours, Ready2Lead

**AYAAN HANIF**
IB**DAVID KNIGHT**

A Level, house colours, 1st V basketball (minor colours)

**SAM MALING**

A Level, monitor, house colours, 1st V basketball (minor colours), 1st & 2nd team tennis, ESU debate team, Model UN, Fowles prize (winner), Sheffield University ethics essay competition (winner), societies: debating (president), english (president), philosophy & theology (co-president), history

**TOBY MITCHELL**

A Level, house colours, 3rd XI hockey (captain & minor colours), tours team

**FINN MONTGOMERY**

IB, house mentor, house colours, philosophy & theology society (co-head)

**LOUIS MONTGOMERY**

A Level, house colours, mitre club, brass band, concert band, Ivy House Award, Bedfordshire Festival of music (consecutive winner, trombone), societies: architecture (secretary), art (secretary), art history

**KESHAV NAVALKISSOOR**

A Level, 4th XI cricket, badminton, gold DofE, Ivy House Award, societies: Pythagorean's, economics

**LUKE POLLEN-BROOKS**

A Level, sports captain (house), 1st VIII rowing (major colours), 2nd XV rugby (minor colours), GB kite foiling

**ZAKI SHAMEEM**

A Level, monitor, academic stripes, house colours, head of house mentoring, deputy head of art, 2nd XI football (vice-captain & minor colours), volleyball, Pythagorean's society, tours team

**FREDERIK SIMMEN**
A Level**WILL TROBE**

IB, deputy head of house, academic colours, 2nd XI cricket (minor colours), 2nd XI hockey, grade 8 speech & drama (distinction), tours team

**WILL WILKINS**

A Level, head of mentoring & leadership team (house), golf team, HMC foursomes (runner-up)

**GABE YOUNG**

A Level, house colours, Ivy House Award, societies: philosophy & theology (head), debating

BURNABY

**VADYM DMYTRENKO**

A Level, head of house, house colours, 1st XI football, 3rd XV rugby (minor colours), Pythagorean's society, maths workshops (assistant), digital leader

**CHUCK HU**

A Level

**STEPHEN LENG**

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, basketball (minor colours)

**VINCENT LIU**

A Level, academic colours

**AARON LIM**

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, music scholar, music colours, chamber orchestra (head), symphony orchestra, U6th string quartet, ABRSM violin (distinction), Tagore piano prize (winner, 2023), Beatrice Langley strings prize (winner, 2023), senior musician of the year 2023, societies: music (vice president), Adrian Boulton (secretary), medicine

**THIMON WINDELEN**

IB, house colours

**JOHANNES YI**

IB, deputy head boy, senior four (head of duties), monitor, academic colours, HM commendation, head of house mentoring (22/23), house colours, house council, 2nd VI badminton (minor colours), badminton club, mitre club, data club, critical thinking society, tours team

**GAVIN ZHANG**

A Level, house colours, basketball (minor colours)

by a couple of other boys to make up the team, we secured 1st place in the House basketball competition – a particular highlight was the support that each member of the house gave the players to encourage such a great performance!

With both boys and housemaster settling in, living each day in Burnaby was full of enjoyment. Another boarding tournament ended in a surprise victory, this time 5-a-side football, in which star player Oliver Bymolen scored 5 to help us completely dominate the opposition.

With exams looming, it was amazing to see how the entire house supported IB boys with studying. Good examples of the importance of studying hard and preparing well were set that motivated the entire house. The exam period was a time of hard work, yet an important experience for all.

Burnaby will be left in good hands with our new senior



team, and of course our amazing Houseparents who give their all to encourage and support all of the boys in the house.

Vadym Dmytrenko

Head of House 2023 - 2024



CRESCENT HOUSE REPORT 2022-23

Energy within the house was electric, driven by incredible talents and personalities. From academic triumphs to co-curricular success, we have created an amazing environment of camaraderie, support and achievement, whether individually or collectively. The unique culture set by Heads of House James Keylock and Ben Plumley ensured that the house thrived in all aspects.

Edgar Maddocks embodied the Crescent spirit and embarked on the ambitious challenge of cycling 600km, raising an impressive £520 for Movember, serving a powerful example to younger pupils, inspiring them to take initiative and make their own difference.

Crescent have consistently earned podium finishes and claimed victory in numerous sporting competitions including Senior Cricket, whilst in Senior Hockey the team's passion and grit was narrowly defeated by a resilient St. Cuthbert's. Fourth Form pulled off a breathtaking victory in the 4x100m relay, fuelled by the support of fellow pupils at the finish line.

Classroom achievements have been equally impressive - earning the highest number of merits testament to the diligence and commitment each pupil brings to their studies; we proudly finished 2nd in the House Cup – something that leaves us hungry for more. Moving into the next academic year, and led by a strong senior leadership team, the future



looks bright, and we are poised to aim even higher.

Sadly, we bid farewell to two tutors; known for his kindness, wisdom and brilliant sense of humour, Mr Braithwaite has been a steady and caring presence, offering guidance in all fields. His influence will be deeply missed but we wish him well. Those lucky enough to be in the 2nds for cricket will hopefully have a "mint" season under his leadership as coach. Secondly, Mr Messling, who many credit as reason for our success in house rowing. Beyond questionable physics jokes, his infectious kindness and warmth will leave a lasting impact – he will be dearly missed by the entire Crescent community.

Oliver Simmonds and Alfie Allen



PEMBERLEY HOUSE REPORT 2022-23

Twelve new boys were quickly thrust into the Pemberley spirit with rehearsals for House Singing. Isaac Dutson did a sterling job leading our unison entries – I'm Just Ken and YMCA went down extremely well with the audience. Despite stunning performances, the trophy evaded us; in true Pemberley spirit, we still enjoyed the best after party!

The famous Friday nights returned - the house hymn, Danny Chapman's excellent sports reports and awards including Man

CRESCENT



JOSHUA ADDO
A Level, 1st XI hockey (major colours & honours cap), 2nd XI cricket, colours



JAMIE DUNK
A Level, sports captain (house), 1st XI cricket (major colours), Scotland 'A' mens team, Leicestershire CCC academy, Scotland U19s, Barbados cricket tour, 2nd XI football, tennis, badminton, EPQ, Pythagoreans society



ALI HASAN
A Level, 4th XI cricket, Ivy House Award, GCSE science club (tutor & co-founder), independent maths problem-solving club (founder), Pythagorean's society



THOMAS HUDSON
A Level, head of charities & inclusion (house), house colours, Caucasian Chalk Circle cast member, school mock election candidate, consort choir, choral society



BARNABY JAMES
A Level, senior four, monitor, 1st team tennis (minor colours), 2nd XI football, Ivy House Award, head of tours team, societies: entrepreneurship, economics



THIVAMSAN KARUNAKARAN
A Level, 2nd XI cricket, 2nd & 3rd XI football, gold DofE, GCSE science clinic teaching, societies: MedSoc, Pythagorean's



JAMES KEYLOCK
A Level, head of house, 3rd XV rugby (minor colours), performed at Esquires in the band 'Saving Li Quiller', psychology society (head)



BEN OTIENDE
A Level, head of charities (house)



BEN PLUMLEY
A Level, head of house, 2nd XI football



SIDDHARTH PRABHU
A Level, computer science ethics club (head)



ALFIE SHOOTER
A Level, art colours



BLAKE SWIFT
IB, house colours, silver DofE, Jo Spir prize, Ivy House Award, Ready2Lead, Massolit video competition (entrant), societies: philosophy & theology, critical thinking



SHAUN THOMAS
A Level, monitor, 1st team golf (minor colours), academic scholar, golf scholar, mitre club, tours team, societies: law (co-head), debating, economics

PEMBERLEY



THOMAS BATES
A Level, house prefect, 1st XI hockey (major colours & honours cap), 2nd XI cricket (colours)



ISAAC DUTSON
A Level, monitor, 2nd XI cricket (captain & minor colours), 2nd XI hockey (captain), yoga (captain), music colours, music captain (house), symphony orchestra (leader), chapel choir, chamber orchestra, Oistrakh quartet, mitre club, tours team, societies: MedSoc, Pythagorean's, law



TOM FERRARI
A Level, rugby (minor colours)



GORDON GUO
A Level, minor colours (aquatics & squash)



MAX HUNT
A Level, 1st XI cricket (major colours), sports captain (house)



JACKY LI
A Level



ZACHARY WASTERFALL
A Level, drama colours, rugby (minor colours), football (minor colours)



KEVIN XU
A Level, house colours, 2nd team tennis (minor colours), digital leader, senior maths challenge gold (top 1% BMO participation), intermediate maths challenge gold, CREST award gold, intermediate physics challenge silver, BPhO experimental project silver, inspiring digital enterprise award bronze, Astro PI space station mission zero, digital journal winner, BSIP runner-up, Chinese newspaper journalist, Astro PI challenge 2023, Ready2Lead, photography competition runner-up, competitive programming club, physics gym, chess club, code quest team, physics project club, societies: Pythagorean's (president), computer science (co-lead), entrepreneurship, debating, film



DAMON YU
A Level, monitor, deputy head of house, chapel choir, UKChO gold, SMC maths challenge gold, shooting club, societies: chemistry, Pythagorean's

of the Week, most merits, and room of the week, as well as a hot supper and film, selected by our unofficial Film Committee of Henry Whitfield, Edward Keggins and Tom Ferrari.

Fourth Form enjoyed a first trip to the Quarry Theatre to watch magician and comedian, Pete Firman. The Mid-Autumn Festival was celebrated with moon cakes and common room decorations. Lucas Law impressively oversaw excellent mentoring sessions, contributing to the great atmosphere in the house. Despite winter drawing close, Danny and Kieran Kelly made a valiant effort of keeping the house running club alive.

Sports Day, 5-a-side competition and Movember initiatives kept us busy throughout the Autumn, finished off with our House Christmas Dinner and some excellent(?) renditions of I'm Just Ken on the karaoke machine.

Ninja Warriors and karting featured in the spring term; Chinese New Year saw Kevin Xu, Jerry Liu and Charlie Chen organising a night of authentic food and celebrations.

A valiant effort came from those competing in the House Relays.

Summertime, and the return of Friday fire pit evenings. Boarder's Games was thoroughly enjoyed, with notable performances from Pop Immaraporn (bucking bronco), Duncan Kung, Ben Elliot and Edward Keggins (egg'n'spoon), Theo Wang (Rubik's cube) and Harry Wood-Rubio winning the cracker eating competition – although not enough to win the event, fun was had by all! Superb organisation of the 'troops' by Mr Watson brought home the win in the annual paintball trip vs. Redburn.

The end of term saw our superb Head of House, Tom Ferrari, handover to Lucas Law, whilst we also enjoyed another successful BBQ to say farewell to our Upper Sixth, all of whom played a significant role in shaping another highly successful year for Pemberley!

HCT



ST. CUTHBERT'S HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

The year really was quite telling on why St. Cuthbert's is 'the best house.' Beginning with a shift in location for the boys, we moved to our new, spacious, welcoming house. From there followed a change in morale and a rise in spirits; the younger pupils enjoying the various rooms equipped with pool tables, table tennis and consoles. For 6th Form, a greater area for conversing as well as a Wii, Xbox and a brand-new kitchen! With this house upgrade, there was a natural uplift in house event success; in House Rugby (led by Tom Jenkins) we were completely dominant, finding that opposition houses were unable to challenge. We were also victorious in shooting, demonstrating the variety of interests among the St. Cuthbert's boys. Furthermore, with our team of academic powerhouses, including Will Reddy and Head of House, Isaac Talbot, it came as no surprise that we finished on top with the most amount of merits, emphasising the minds that persistently seem to spring out of Mr Holt's beloved house.

Though the list of achievements could go on, what truly made St Cuthbert's feel so very great was the continued community spirit; the boys are always welcoming and helpful to others, and every time a boy walks through the front door, they truly feel at home. I look forward to welcoming the new boys in my role as Head of House in 2024 – 25.

Hamish Whiteman



PHILLPOTTS HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

Our journey began with a singular focus: house singing – the grandest boarding event of the year. Led by Scott, our Upper Sixth embarked on meticulous preparation. We took to the stage, fuelled by the belief that victory was within grasp – a feat not achieved in two decades. Despite finishing 5th place overall, the experience was invaluable, uniting us as a community. The term was marked by remarkable sporting achievements; Seb's inclusion in the U14A rugby team exemplified our athletic prowess. In house basketball, Matthew Au's leadership propelled us to a commendable 3rd place. Meanwhile, Shiryu's victory in the 400m led the house on Sports Day.

Further excitement came from the annual go-karting trip, Jack P, Matthew P and Seb highlighted as the speedsters among us. Ben also organised a football tournament involving all houses in aid of Movember. Victory was ours, but beyond the trophy, Ben's proactive initiative contributed £250 to the charity.

The house competition saw domination by Scott in many fields, with wins from Matt A and Nick also showcased. The highly anticipated House Football took centre stage, captivating everyone's attention. A valiant fight secured a spot in the final, however fate echoed last year's outcome as we narrowly missed out, losing in a heart-wrenching penalty shootout. Nevertheless,

ST. CUTHBERT'S

**HUW BURTON-PYE**

A Level, monitor, house senior team, house colours, chapel choir colours, 3rd XI hockey, ESU debate team, MUN UNESCO delegate, mitre club, tours team, societies: choral (president), philosophy & theology (co-president), debating, politics

**BEN COOK**

A Level, academic colours, 3rd XI hockey, Ivy House Award, Ready2Lead, community partnerships, chess club (founder), physics gym, tours team, Pythagorean's society (leader)

**BEN GRAINGER**

A Level, house colours, 1st XV rugby (major colours), Australia tour 2023, recreational golf

**THOMAS JENKINS**

A Level, monitor, house colours, sports captain (house), 1st XV rugby (major colours), rugby 7s

**OLIVER JONES**

A Level, academic colours, 3rd XI football, competitive coding club, code-breaking club, physics project club, chess club (leader), Pythagorean's society (leader)

**OLIVER NEEDHAM**

A Level, hockey (minor colours)

**HARRY PAYNE**

A Level, monitor, house colours, 1st XV rugby (vice-captain & major colours), minor colours (hockey & cricket), tours team

**ARUN PENHALL**

A Level, academic colours, house colours, BSIP winner

**WILL REDDY**

A Level, deputy head of house, academic colours, house colours, 1st team table tennis, 3rd XI football, CCF head of army, Pythagorean's quiz winner 2023

**JAMES SUMNER**

A Level, shooting (minor colours)

**ISAAC TALBOT**

A Level, head of house, 1st XI football (minor colours)

**HUGH WILLIAMS**

A Level, monitor, deputy head of house, 2nd XI football (minor colours), tours team

**GEORGE WORTHINGTON**

A Level, minor colours (rugby & hockey)

PHILLPOTTS

**ANDY CHOI**

A Level, deputy head of house, lead mentor

**SCOTT GILDERSLEVE**

A Level, 1st VIII rowing (major colours), 2nd/3rd XV rugby (minor colours), squash (minor colours), Talalay science prize (3rd place), Mitre club, physics gym, Pythagorean's society

**PRATAP GILL**

A Level, house colours, lead mentor

**MAKSIM KABAROVSKII**

A Level, sports captain (house), 2nd XI football

**SHIRYU OSHIRO**

A Level, head of house, 3rd XI football, volleyball, house committees

**JACK PETERS**

A Level, 1st team golf (minor colours), winner of 1 HMC schools event in Scotland, East Midland regional England squad team golf (captain) 151st Open Championship (final qualifying stage)

**BEN SMITH**

A Level, monitor, house colours, 3rd XI cricket, 3rd XI hockey, BSIP (runner-up), Fowles prize (runner-up), Drama Prize for Services to Stage Crew, Charities Committee, Drama (Little Shop of Horrors, Animal Farm), Ousel reporter, Tours team, Societies: History (chairman), English

2nd place reflected our unwavering determination and teamwork. Some further notable achievements came from: Ariyan with an impressive 1st team football debut, Eric's outstanding senior prize win in the Ellen Parcell Memorial Prize, Matt H, Anton and Ethan N-W's involvement in A Christmas Carol, and Alex winning the senior musician of the year. Their successes underscore the diverse talents within Phillpotts House.

Matthew P and Misha showed exceptional skills in 1st team tennis, Nick was promoted to the U14A cricket team and Scott's impressive rowing abilities contributed to the first boat success. Phillpotts' boys continued to provide numbers for beach volleyball, with Matt A, Shiryu and Adhu participating in the schools national tournament.

Mr Bury's unwavering dedication to the house is truly commendable – under his guidance, everyone feels comfortable and supported within the house we proudly call home. This environment is testament to the combined efforts of Mr Bury and Mr Thomson. I would also like to extend thanks to the matrons and cleaners working tirelessly behind the scenes, and to our tutors for continuously motivating us. To the Upper Sixth boys embarking on new chapters, I wish you the best of luck.

I look forward to the continued success of the greatest boarding house – Phillpotts.

Shiryu Oshiro – Head of House 2023-24





PAULO PONTINE HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

With the goal set by Mrs Whiteman to retain the house title, there was a lot of pressure and expectation to rise to the challenge.

A trip to Box End and Redburn House for pizza welcomed the Fourth Form. Sports Day wasn't the flying start expected, with a 3rd place finish overall, with some more disappointing results following. Momentum shifted with House Tug of War, which propelled us to 1st in Cup standings at the end of term.

The House Christmas Movie and pizza night, and the Day House Carol service were two annual highlights before the break.

Post-Christmas, competitions and victories were plentiful, picking up multiple 1st places. Charity presentations and a subsequent vote determined that we would represent Sarcoma UK in the Charity Run, raising over £1500 for a charity put forward by Thomas Dewe in memory of his uncle,



Chris Synnott OB. A 2nd place in House Relays, and the annual House Dinner (our very own Mrs Mainstone the guest speaker) marked the end of spring term, having extended our lead in the House Cup standings.

A vital – and final for some – term continued with lots of competitions to get involved in. Having narrowly missed out on House Water Polo victory, we picked up 2nd place in Rowing and Junior Tennis, but won Junior Cricket and Junior Fives. The annual house Pub Quiz took place, a highlight which old boys look back on with fond memories. Through the hard work and participation of everyone (including Redburn, of course) along with Mrs Whiteman's enthusiasm, Paulo Pontine retained the title and won the House Cup for the second year running! A huge achievement for the entire house, and a great end to the year.

Theo Murray
Head of House 2024 – 2025

REDBURN HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

2023-24 was another successful year under the leadership team of Vincent Xiang, Mark Neyshtadt and Louis Cooke.



PAULO PONTINE



AARON BERAMAN

A Level, academic colours, house colours, 2nd team tennis, Ready2Lead, Ivy House Award, community partnership programme, societies: politics, international relations, geography



EDWARD BRIERS

A Level, monitor, house colours, 1st XV rugby (major colours & honours cap), 2nd XI hockey (captain & minor colours), tours team



LEO BUTLER

A Level, head of house, house colours, 2nd XV rugby (minor colours), 1st XI football (minor colours), lead mentor



WILLIAM CAVE

IB, house colours, 1st/ 2nd VIII rowing (major colours), CCF head of RAF, CCF CADSAAM & RASST team



WILLIAM EVERITT

IB, 3rd XI hockey (captain & minor colours), tennis, cryptic club (co-founder), grade 8 piano (merit)



JASON FASANYA

A level, sports captain (house), house colours



SAM GRIBBIN

A Level, head of house, house colours



ALEX HALL

IB, art scholar, house colours, 2nd team tennis, 3rd XI football, mitre club, societies: international relations, politics, economics



IVAN IANKOV

A Level, academic colours, house colours, 3rd XI football, tennis (minor colours), Talalay science prize (winner), Pythagorean's society (head)



ROBERT KING

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, 3rd XV rugby (captain & minor colours), 1st team rifle shooting (captain), rugby 7s, CCF Corporal & head of shooting, bronze DofE, gold DofE



PHARRELL PETERS

A level, house colours, 1st XI football (minor colours), arts captain (house)



ABHI TYAGI

A level, house colours

REDBURN



LOUIS COOKE

A Level, deputy head of house, head of charities (house), drama colours, LGBTQ+ role model, drama society (senior member), regular school productions cast member



FREDDIE DRAKE-LEE

A Level, monitor, 1st XV rugby (colours & honours cap), 1st XI hockey (major colours), 1st XI cricket (minor colours), Scotland U18 rugby squad



MAX LEUNG

A level, house colours, music colours, 1st V basketball (minor colours), President of Music



ISAAC MADDISON

A Level, 3rd XV rugby (minor colours), 3rd XI football, chemistry society, grade 5 trombone



BENJAMIN MEALEY

A Level, academic colours, house colours, 4th XV rugby, 3rd XI cricket, politics society



MARK NEYSHTADT

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, societies: international relations, entrepreneurship, politics



OLLY PRITCHETT

A Level, house colours, 2nd VIII rowing, 4th XV rugby (vice-captain), squash, minor colours, Ivy House Award, lead mentor, entrepreneurship society (lead), tours team



BARNABY WILLIAMS

A Level, house colours, art colours, head of art (house), 1st/ 2nd VIII rowing (major colours), lead mentor, Ivy House Award, charities committee, art history, art history prize (highly commended), life drawing, concert band, grade 6 alto saxophone, entrepreneurship society, tours team



VINCENT XIANG

A Level, head of house



ALEX YING

A Level, house colours, 1st V basketball (minor colours), art colours



At full capacity, maintaining a vibrant community was easily completed by the numerous activities on offer, ranging from Box End, bowling and paintball, to long summer nights playing 'headers and volleys' in the garden with copious amounts of pizza and chicken wings. Strong relationships developed between year groups and continued to mean

that the house felt like a home from home.

With house competitions came much success, our greatest achievement the unison win in House Singing,

with renditions of *Read All About It* and *Viva La Vida*; this really felt like our year and special mentions must go to Max Leung (accompanist) and Jamie Hall (conductor) who led us brilliantly in rehearsals and the main event.

We must thank our outgoing tutor team. Mr Vann takes up the role of Head of History and moves to tutoring in the day side. Mr Hopton is promoted to Assistant Head (Teaching) and Mr Nicholl moves on to The Leys, taking up the position of Housemaster. They have all made a considerable contribution to the success of Redburn and we wish them all the best for the future. We are therefore excited to welcome Miss Ventura (Assistant Housemaster), Mr Payne and Mr Sahota as our new tutor team and hope they will enjoy their new roles. Zak DeGale will lead from the front as Head of House, and will be supported by Boqing Kong (Deputy) and Oliver Phillips (Sports Captain).

We look forward to another successful year - #feeltheburn.

Zak DeGale



ST PETER'S HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

Head of House: Jonny Weimann

Assistant Heads of House: Jake Reynolds and Joe Travis

Another outstanding year began with 1st place on Sports Day (testament to our excellent team spirit) and a triumphant win in House Rowing. As always, boys were keen to 'step-up and get involved', a special quality that the House prides itself on. It does not matter if a boy is trying something for the first time – St. Peter's boys are always keen to be involved and this is what counts! Testament to our spirit is that is that even when not always achieving 1st place, we still give our best and it is on this alone that we can be proud.

Although there was inevitably some disappointment with House Singing, achieving 3rd place overall was still very pleasing. I thought both our unison and part song performances were excellent and enjoyed by all. We can take confidence in looking forward to next year's competition! The Upper Sixth who left us were an amazing year group and led St. Peter's with great pride. They will be much missed in 'the shed'! Our aim now is to continue their legacy.

So, what does it mean to be a strong House community? Two things stand out for me. Firstly, it is being there for one another day-in, day-out, through both the good and the bad times. Secondly, what is important is not always being the fastest, or jumping the furthest or even being the cleverest. What matters most above all is how much we care for one another.

M.H. Cassell
Housemaster



TALBOT'S HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

Accompanied by our fantastic team of staff and teachers, everyone quickly settled back and threw themselves into the many opportunities available. Our Upper Sixth set an amazing example to younger boys with Faraz Malik as Head of House, leading Talbot's superbly and once again voted 'Man of the Year' by his fellow peers.

During a boiling hot September House Singing rehearsals began; the highly anticipated event saw us brilliantly conducted by William Tian with Kasper Yu accompanying to Celine Dion's 'My Heart Will Go On' and Michael Jackson's 'Beat It' – 2nd place in the unison category was a great result. Afterwards, we headed back to Talbot's with St. Peter's to celebrate with karaoke and pizza. On reaching November, all were settled into House life and routines with the annual Christmas Dinner and Quiz rounding off the term.

Spring saw many house trips and lots of bonding across the year groups. With the approach of exams, House staff aided us to work and reach our potential, offering 1-2-1 support sessions. The in-house competitions of pool and table tennis produced



ST PETER'S

**TOMMIE BADDELEY**

A Level, sports captain (house), 1st XI cricket (minor colours), 1st XI football (captain & minor colours)

**SAMUEL BAYLEY**

A Level, sports captain (house), 1st XI cricket (captain & major colours), 1st XI hockey (captain, major colours & honours cap), 2nd XV rugby (captain & minor colours)

**CHARLIE FAULKNER**

A Level, monitor, Headmaster's scarf, house colours, drama colours, 3rd XI hockey (minor colours), 3rd XI cricket, Headmaster's prize for entrepreneurship, charities committee, citizenship team, bronze DofE, head of tours, theatre tech society, entrepreneurship society, rock night & open mic night (organiser), lighting: Bugsy Malone, Caucasian Chalk Circle, Animal Farm, Little Shop of Horrors

**EDWARD FISH**

A Level, sports captain (house), 1st/ 2nd XV rugby (minor colours)

**JACOB FOSTER**

A Level, monitor, Headmaster's scarf, house colours, drama colours, St. Peter's leadership team, U18B squash, 1st XI fitness, Headmaster's Arts prize, Services to Stage Crew prize, media productions (head), Ready2Lead (student ambassador), drama (Emil & the Detectives, Little Shop of Horrors, Double or Nothing, Oliver Twist, The Trial, Macbeth, Bugsy Malone, Animal Farm), rock night & open mic night 23/24 (organiser & producer), '23 Mobro Magic' (director & producer), award winning Movember campaign 2023 (organiser), grade 5 speech & drama, tours team, societies: music (officer), entrepreneurship (chairman), media (chairman), theatre teach (co-chair)

**JACK HARTE**

A Level, monitor, academic colours, house colours, head of arts/ music/ charities (house), 3rd XI hockey, 4th XI cricket, head of brass ensemble, symphony orchestra, jazz orchestra, mitre club, international relations society (chairman)

**MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM**

A Level

**SAMARTHAY KASHYAP**

A Level

**LUKE LANGRIDGE**

IB, monitor, academic colours, 1st XI football (minor colours), cricket (minor colours), tours team

**JOSEPH MARAVALA**

A Level, sports captain (house), 1st XI football (minor colours), 2nd XI cricket, law society (chairman)

**HARI MISTRY**

A Level, rowing (minor colours), MedSoc (founder), science clinic (co-founder), chess club (co-founder)

**JAKE REYNOLDS**

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, 3rd XV rugby, 1st team cross country (captain & minor colours), 1st team athletics, cross country winner, grade 8 speech & drama, tours team, media society

**DILAN SHARMA**

A Level

**JOE TRAVIS**

A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, 2nd team squash, digital leader, BSIP runner up, code quest winner 2023, British informatics olympiad, perse coding competition, audio-visual for productions (Animal Farm, Bugsy Malone, Macbeth), tours team, societies: theatre tech, media, competitive programming

**JONNY WEIMANN**

A Level, 1st XV rugby (honours cap)

TALBOT'S

**ARCHIE BLACK**

A Level, house colours, sports captain (house), 1st VIII rowing (major colours), captain of boats

**LUKE DOVER**

A Level, house colours, 4th XV rugby (minor colours), Chinese society (president)

**GILES HALSEY**

A Level, house colours, drama colours, chapel choir (colours), symphony orchestra, chamber orchestra, consort choir, drama (Animal Farm, Bugsy Malone, Caucasian Chalk Circle, A Christmas Carol), LGBTQ+ Allies, charities committee, general knowledge team, Churchill public speaking competition (national final), tours team, societies: debating, general knowledge, choral, drama, international relations, classics, Adrian Boult, astronomy

**THOMAS LI**

A Level, house colours, acceptance to Berklee College of Music (scholarship), electronic music performance (school assembly)

**FARAZ MALIK**

A Level, head of house, house colours, 1st team squash, athletics team

**JUSTIN NG**

A level, academic colours, house colours, table tennis

**ALEKS NIKOLOV**

A Level, house colours, fitness, BSIP runner-up, Ivy House Award, societies: Chinese (president), entrepreneurship

**VOVA SUMBAEV**

A level, deputy head of house, house colours, 1st team squash (minor colours)

**WILLIAM TIAN**

A level, house colours, house singing (conductor)

nail biting matchups, Daniil Savelev and Justin Ng winning the competitions respectively.

Despite the business end of the year, our annual House summer BBQ still made time for everyone to enjoy playing football in the garden, or card games in the library. To finish the year, we celebrated National Boarder's Week. It is fair to say that there is room for improvement next year in the Boarder's Games, although Oscar Qualtrough impressed once again on the rodeo bull, defending his title.

Many thanks must go to our stellar team of cleaners and

matrons who keep the house in order and prevent it from turning into a version of 'Lord of the Flies'. It was fantastic to see Mrs Hakesley drop in for a visit with her very cute Labrador puppy! Mrs Shirley Keable retired after 24 years of service to the House – a tremendous achievement – we wish her well in retirement with her family. Finally, we say goodbye to Mr Peters who leaves for Harrow Bangkok, whilst welcoming Mr Jones as Assistant Housemaster. Overall, another memorable year in Talbot's – we look forward to all that awaits us next year!

Ben Rioch



ASHBURNHAM HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

This has been a year characterised by success, a spirit of collectivism, and excitement. Fourth Form quickly settled in, most notably through the lively annual Box End and pizza night with Upper Sixth. Events came thick and fast, with the long-awaited House Dinner in March where even the most dishevelled boys were dapperly dressed in suits and bowties! A grand time was had enjoying the weather, food and company at the House BBQ.

House singing and we looked to defend our back-to-back victories. An enormous unison effort from Sanderson's and Ashburnham in the part song resulted in the house retaining the title for the third successive year – a feat not accomplished before, as far as memories serve!

Further collective efforts did not go unnoticed; we won Junior Debating, Senior Football (in a real underdog performance), Senior Fives and Water Polo, seeing off Paulo in the final. Strong performances have also come from Junior Fives, U16 and U15 Rugby and House Swimming, where 2nd places were achieved. A real determination has been shown

from all participants, truly representing the mud and blood spirit of our House motto.

A massive thank you to those who keep the house running; tutors have provided excellent support, and the work of our matron, Mrs Hone, cannot be understated either. Mr Everitt and the senior leadership team, led by Dylan Mitchell, have been irreplaceable – best of luck to them and the rest of the Upper Sixth in their future endeavours!

SANDERSON'S HOUSE REPORT 2023-2024

Another successful year for Sanderson's came from the brilliant leadership of Mr Midgley and head of house, Kishan. Miss Spong joining as assistant housemaster and Miss Fleming as tutor injected more liveliness into the house, the former eager to continue our fire pit session following Mr Deplancke's departure.

After quickly bonding together as a house, and despite the immense pressure of being defending champions, we delivered a heartfelt final performance under the superb leadership of Freddie Tucker, came away with the House Singing victory.



ASHBURNHAM



BEN AGBENU
A Level, 1st XV rugby (honours cap)



AIDEN AINSWORTH-CAVE
IB, head of school, academic colours, 1st XV rugby (captain & major colours), England U18 rugby, Northampton Saints player/academy



FILIP ARVINTE
A Level, house colours, 1st team tennis (minor colours), 3rd XI football, debating society (co-president)



ZACHARY CUMMING
A Level, house colours, 1st XI hockey (major colours), 2nd XV rugby (minor colours), 3rd XI cricket, tours team



RHYS HARRIES
A Level, 1st XV rugby (honours cap), Detweiler Competition (winner)



CHARLIE LAWRENCE
A Level, monitor, house colours, drama colours, 1st IV fives (minor colours), CCF (Sgt.), Intelligence Corps competition (winner 2023 & 2024), LGBTQ+ Allies, pupil citizenship group (co-head), general knowledge club, house singing part song, drama (Bugsy Malone, Caucasian Chalk Circle, A Christmas Carol), Animal Farm (deputy stage manager), tours team, societies: drama (president), classics (president)



TOBY L'ESTRANGE
A Level, Headmaster's scarf, house colours, chapel choir (head & colours), music colours, 1st IV fives (senior head & minor colours), chamber & symphony orchestra, new jazz collective, consort choir, funk band (leader), jazz trio, house singing (leader & 2-time winner), double bass (grade 8 & diploma), Archie Wellbelove prize (winner), string prize (2nd place), James Ritchie Memorial prize for performing arts, Bedfordshire Festival of Music (2nd place, 2021), Bugsy Malone (lead role), ESU Churchill public speaking competition (national finalist), mental health ambassador, LGBTQ+ Allies (president), societies: choral, new music (head), Adrian Boulton (speaker)



HENRY MCCUTCHEON
A Level, deputy head of house, 3rd VIII rowing (minor colours), 4th XV rugby (minor colours), Ivy House Award, rock night, open mic night, grade 2 piano, Bedford Esquires performance & sound engineering, music release on Spotify (with school), bronze Duke of York, societies: Adrian Boulton, media, entrepreneurship, music technology



DYLAN MITCHELL
A Level, head of house, 1st VIII rowing (major colours), Ivy House Award, DofE (bronze, silver & gold), lead mentor, tours team, societies: politics (president), international relations



MATTHIAS PASCALL
IB, 3rd VIII rowing (minor colours), 2nd XV rugby (minor colours), CCF



HARRY TORMIE
A Level, house colours, 1st VIII rowing (major colours & vice-captain of boats), sports captain (house), GB trials



JAMIE WELCH
A Level, 1st XI cricket (minor colours), hockey (minor colours)



SHAUN WOOD
IB, house colours



FABIAN WYER-ROBERTS
A Level, 1st/2nd XV rugby (minor colours)



OLIVER YATES
A Level, house colours, chapel choir, guitar ensemble, consort choir, new jazz collective, rock night, open mic night, house singing part song (3 time winner)

SANDERSON'S



JACK LIU
A Level, house colours, academic colours, 1st V basketball (captain & minor colours)



SAMUEL LOCK
A Level, house colours, 2nd VIII rowing (minor colours), oarsman of the year 2023, tours team



KISHAN PATEL
A Level, head of house, house colours, school council, 1st team tennis (minor colours), ISTA tennis team, boarder's council, lead mentor, Detweiler Competition (highly commended, art), Geoff Smithie Memorial Cup for House Achievement



FREDDIE TUCKER
A Level, deputy head of house, house colours, golf team (captain & minor colours)



WILL TWEEDIE
A Level, house colours, 3rd VIII rowing (minor colours)

Trips to go-karting and bowling saw great battles of skill, and towards the end of term our annual Christmas dinner at Santaniello's was complete with Upper Sixth anecdotes.

Spring term, and our annual FIFA competition was strongly contested with a fierce final between Finn and Roven, the latter emerging victorious having beaten the long-standing champion in the first round! A smash burger was thoroughly enjoyed!

In the extended daylight of the summer term, the garden was host to football, with the basketball hoop remaining popular amongst boys. A sunny annual House BBQ marked the end of the year.

Throughout, every boy has shown achievement in all aspects of school life, with all sixth formers receiving house colours and George winning the integrity cup, clearly following the words of Mr Midgley and the house motto! We look forward to welcoming our new cohort in September.

Pui Lam Ng



SIR CLIVE LOADER



If you were given a completely free choice of Chair of Governors to lead your school through an unprecedented pandemic, you would be hard pressed to find anybody better suited than a former Air Chief Marshall, a knight of the realm, whose favourite phrase (at least, one of many!) was “no plan ever survives contact with the enemy”. Well, after 18 years as Governor, the last six as Chair (and, accordingly, Trustee of the Harpur Trust), Sir Clive Loader (to use another phrase) drew stumps finally, and deservedly, last year. He was the most amazing man to have at the helm in a pandemic. As we lurched from one day to the next, Clive would simply draw me aside and say “James, let me tell you about a little crisis I had when I was running the RAF” – making leading a school during the pandemic look like a walk in the park. He was brilliantly decisive. I remember early on a discussion about the cost of a medical device; after a day or two, Clive simply said “just buy it, James” – it allowed us a much deeper sense of security and wellbeing. He had an ingrained sense of duty. He said originally that he would not attend sub-committee meetings: well, when the crunch came, he never missed a single one. He was always fair in his decision making, arguing strongly for compassion and understanding at a time of national need. It is fair to say, therefore, that the pandemic put Clive’s many strengths starkly on show, and that they did indeed shine. Happily for us mere mortals, though, it did also reveal one small weakness – that of technology. Several PAs have said to me that they got to know Clive much better during the pandemic, not because they saw him, but because they spent the whole time fixing his Teams connections!

Beyond the pandemic, he also set the most wonderful example for leaders anywhere. Clive (though rightly proud of his knighthood, insisting on being “Clive”) had this ability to talk to absolutely anyone on a level. He did not like any sort of arrogance or feeling that one person is better than another. He felt strongly that we should be as accessible as possible to as wide a range of families as possible; and that all should be treated with equal respect. He loathed the annual fee letter, because in his ideal world, everybody would have this sort of education.

On a personal basis, Clive understood the loneliness of leadership. As a leader, he never shirked a decision and was tough when he needed to be; he is also deeply compassionate and has integrity to his very core. By way of example, I quote from part of a long email he sent to me when something testing happened at school:

“Inevitably, any leader worth his or her salt will wonder whether more could, or should, have been done. That is the very nature of true leadership, for we all bear the responsibility of looking after those whom we are lucky enough to lead. And, although it is only human to look back and ask the inevitable questions, there is most often no rationale or foresight that could have preempted such sad events; this is just the nature of the human condition.”

Powerful stuff. But what Clive always came back to, ultimately, was what was best for the boys. He was as pupil-centric as any teacher I know, and that is saying something. He believed passionately in the power of a fine education – everything he achieved was allied to that belief.

The role of Chair of Governors is not only critical for the development and wellbeing of a school, but it also involves giving up an enormous amount of time, often at strange times of the day and night, free of charge, without much thanks, and with selfless generosity. Well, on behalf of us all, I pass on our sincerest thanks to Clive for all he has done for the school in the many years he has been involved as parent, as Governor and especially as Chair. I know that he continues to carry Bedford close to his heart; Bedford, in its turn, is indebted to him. ■

JSH



Philip polishing the new observatory dome, Ousel Issue No. 967

CHARLES PIAZZI SMYTH
COMMUNITY OBSERVATORY

OBITUARY

Philip Stone 1957 – 2024

Philip Stone, who designed and built the school Observatory and Planetarium, sadly passed away in January 2024 after a short illness.

Philip developed a passion for astronomy while still at school; he went on to combine this with his talent for all aspects of engineering to produce a superb range of astronomical instruments and observatories. These were supplied not only to amateur astronomers, but also professional institutions such as the British Antarctic Survey, who used one of his instruments in early studies of Earth's Ozone layer.

Philip always enjoyed bringing his love of astronomy to those just getting started. Perhaps his greatest achievement was in the construction of the Community Observatory based at Bedford School. He was involved in planning right from the outset in the late 1990s. His design for the main observatory dome was selected and Philip started producing all the moulds and sections that finally formed the finished observatory. This was a huge undertaking scaling up an existing design, but he worked tirelessly to overcome all of the problems and took great pride when the dome was installed and became operational in 2000.

As soon as this part of the project was complete, Philip was thrown a second challenge. Could he build a Planetarium that would give visitors a realistic view of the

night sky even if they visited on a cloudy night? He went on to not only construct the Planetarium dome, but to design and manufacture a unique projector. Over 50,000 people have now enjoyed a superb view of the night sky from Phil's projector, and it provokes the same admiration from visitors now as it did almost 25 years ago when he first demonstrated it to His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, for the formal opening of the Planetarium.

The Community Observatory and Planetarium has provided Bedford School with a facility unique in this country. For Philip it also provided the chance to grow and develop his abilities as an astronomical educator. This was a role he wholeheartedly embraced. Hundreds of groups of Scouts, Brownies, local schools, and adults along with classes from our Prep. School have benefited from his knowledge and enthusiasm for all aspects of Astronomy.

He served the local Bedford Astronomical Society tirelessly over the last 25 years, helping to run more regular observing sessions than are provided by any other society in the country. Both recent and longstanding members have gained from his company and expertise, always provided in the most kind and friendly manner. Philip was pleased and proud to receive Honorary Life Membership of the Society in recognition of the contribution he has made to Astronomy over so many years.

Family man, astronomer, engineer, educator and friend. These are the words that sum up Phil's life, but there was so much more. Warmth, kindness and compassion underscored his whole nature. His sudden passing has left a huge hole, and he is greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. ■

LJG

FAREWELL TO STAFF



TOMYR WARCABA-WOOD – Organist in residence

Tomyr came to Bedford School for one year to act as Organist in Residence. He immediately settled in and threw himself into all kinds of musical activities at the school – not just playing the organ in the Chapel and Great Hall but also supporting GCSE and A level Music composition and performance

coursework, theory classes, and much more! He was incredibly enthusiastic and the boys loved his diverse musical talents which encompassed trombone, as well as organ and a number of folk instruments too – he has truly eclectic tastes! We wish him all the best in his move to St Alban's High School for Girls.

JMS



ERIK HELLQUIST – Head of Econ. & Business

Erik initially started a career in the Corporate Banking world before finding his true vocation in teaching. Soon after his arrival we quickly learned that he enjoys both running and watching football, being a keen supporter of Liverpool Football Club. He also speaks three languages – the

third being Cantonese!

Erik has Coached U14Bs Rugby - a sport which he freely admits he had “absolutely no clue about”. Erik is a quick learner, however, and his team managed to win over half their matches in his first season. Erik also helped coach the U15C hockey team to many victories.

In St Peter's, I am grateful for all the support and care that Erik has given to the boys in his role as a tutor. Erik has been a very good role model for the boys: always patient, kind and caring in his approach.

As Head of Economics, Erik has successfully led the Department through a period of change and some challenges too. I know that he was especially proud of the Department's excellent Inspection report. I speak for the whole Department, in thanking Erik for his pastoral support, his dedication to the academic success of the boys and for his skill and professionalism in leading us as a team these past two years.

Erik, we wish you and your family every happiness and success in your move to Hertfordshire. Our loss will, I am sure, be Hab's gain!

MHC



DANIEL MAJOR – Maths

As we bid farewell to Dan, we reflect on the significant impact he has had during his five years with us as a maths teacher. Dan's dedication to his students and his subject was evident in his innovative teaching methods and his leadership of the Pythagorean Society. Under his guidance, the

society reached new heights, inspiring students to explore mathematics beyond the classroom. His passion for football also allowed him to connect with the boys on a personal level, making him a beloved figure in the school. Dan's hard work and conscientious nature have been a cornerstone of the department, and his colleagues have always valued his support and advice. While we are sad to see him go, we are grateful for the lasting contributions he has made and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

OOO



NEIL MCCLEERY – Chaplain

It has been a real privilege to work with Neil; his school wide contributions have been impressive.

Within the classroom, Neil has shown an extraordinary passion for Religious Studies and Philosophy. I have learnt a huge amount from not only observing his lessons, but also from sharing his resources.

His knowledge and understanding of all issues theological and philosophical are truly impressive. Tough questioning and rigorous discussion are the bread and butter of what he does best.

As Chaplain, Neil has worked so hard in keeping the Chapel a central part of the life and soul of the school. His talks were always well judged, showing insight and provoking our inner thinking. I will miss his weekly reflections; they have always helped to slow my thinking on the important questions in amongst a busy school life.

We add to this Neil's commitment to CCF, Ivy house, taking Rugby teams, his role on the pastoral committee and the chapel choir. His contributions have been immense.

BJR



JONNY MESSLING – Physics

Jonny joined the Physics department in September 2020 fresh from a PGCE at Cambridge, without having been able to visit the school due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns; he had no idea what to expect!

Despite joining in a time of upheaval and classroom disruption, Jonny took full advantage of all the

many opportunities at the school to develop his teaching through side-by-side mentoring, coaching rowing and getting involved with the music life of the school.

Jonny made many contributions to the Physics department, particularly project club and legendary “safari in sound” outreach sessions. Jonny had a huge impact on the pupils he taught, all whilst completing a Masters in Education.

Jonny did not rest until believing he had done his very best for pupils and his tutees; in the words of Alice Swallow, “he has been the most amazing tutor.”

Jonny was an active rowing coach, putting the hours in and coming on the training camps (even if he did hand in the wrong keys to Radley!)

We wish him well in Cambridge, and hope he finds some time to get back into a boat himself.

EJP



**JAMES NICHOLL –
Art & Assistant Housemaster,
Redburn**

James arrived in 2017 as maternity cover and impressed from the off with his quiet and calm authority, supporting and encouraging pupils to make successful leaps in their academic achievement. He moved on to complete his training, to our

delight coming back when another opportunity arose.

Quiet and unassuming, but with considerable classroom presence, James has made a fantastic contribution to the Art department, inspiring varied, exciting and ambitious sculptures from the boys.

It speaks volumes about James that he was in consistently good cheer, always calm and collected despite a busy art schedule, sport commitments and his role in Redburn House.

Arguably, his major sporting achievement at Bedford was stewardship of the U14D rugby team, coaching the boys to an unbeaten season.

James has fully embraced and relished the challenges of boarding; as an assistant housemaster he had a great sense of fun, still holding the Redburn record for going the longest without being found in our annual game of hide and seek. James' tutor group thrived under his care and guidance, always doing the best for the boys in his charge and showing an interest in the things that pupils were passionate about, attending concerts, performances, societies and fixtures that tutees were involved in.

He leaves big, plaster splattered shoes to fill; we will miss him hugely but wish him every success and happiness for the future as a Housemaster at the Leys.

MCC/ JEM



ERIN NULL – Head of History

Erin's contribution in two years to the History Department and across school life was phenomenal. She will be (and already is) sorely missed.

Her cross-country running with Mr Knight – when one pupil accidentally referred to her as Mrs Knight – and her commitment to encouraging pupils across the wilds of south

Bedford and Priory Country Park and around moving water obstacles was memorable for many boys. Park Run and Strava were firm favourites.

But her commitment to real learning, real reading, and a full-on history curriculum – supporting history society pupils, and continuing in the footsteps of Ellen Parcell – was her real strength. Erin was a worthy successor there and a fantastically supportive Head of Department to staff and Head of History to the boys. From the Arlington Street Compact, Gladstone and Salisbury, to an expertise in American history and caring commitment to the boys learning and going beyond history her contribution was outstanding.

And so was a commitment to punning cajolery of pupils into revision – “Quit Stalin and start Revisin’...” being one such example.

She has travelled back to the US, spending time in Ohio (near a small town called Bedford Heights! And Cleveland)

with her family and renewing her post-graduate study at Columbia State University. I hope she will take delight in reading this copy of the Osel [sic].

I pity her successor, who has a huge amount to live up to.
HPV



**KEELAN PETERS – Chemistry &
Assistant Housemaster, Talbot's**

Keelan joined the Chemistry department in September 2016 full of enthusiasm and energy. He continued in this vein throughout, throwing himself into everything, giving 100%.

He rapidly got himself a reputation for applying for roles offered in school, so keen he was to broaden

his experience. This readily got him the responsibilities of Silver Duke of Edinburgh coordinator, Academic year head and Assistant Housemaster (Talbot's). In all these roles he demonstrated strengths, enthusiasm and a high level of professionalism.

Keelan's House Singing and Rock Night solos were another highlight, and yet another demonstration of him getting fully involved in school life. When Keelan inaugurated the school 'Bake Off' competition it came as little surprise in the Chemistry department when he won!

Keelan recognised his future was in boarding and looked for opportunities to build on his expertise, although at first not wanting to move too far to a potential position in Ipswich.

Whilst the stars didn't line up at first, Keelan worked on the initial family reluctance to not move too far and leaves us for the Far East, taking up a position of Housemaster at Harrow, Bangkok.

We wish him well in this exciting venture, and ask him not to post too many pictures of his excursions round the corner to Bali!

SCK



**MATT GRACIE – Assistant Head
(Pastoral)**

Matt leaves Bedford School after nearly 14 years, with the school forming a huge part of his and his family's life – in response he made a huge impact on the school by fully immersing himself; testament to this is the long list of roles Matt held, including: Talbot's Housemaster,

coaching various sports and running additional clubs, getting involved in the staff contribution to House Singing, moving on to become Assistant Head (Pastoral) - all whilst teaching Geography.

In my opinion, Matt set the Gold Standard for how to run a boarding house during his time in Talbot's, celebrating even the smallest successes and cultivating an obvious sense of community and togetherness, valuing kindness above all else.

Known to the Geography department – endearingly – as “full Gracie mode”, Matt used ingenuity to engage pupils in lessons, on one occasion bringing a tray and several kilos of sand in to demonstrate the formation of desert landforms.

Matt's role as Assistant Head Pastoral has been transformative for the school, embedding systems, routines and practise with pupil wellbeing front and centre. He cared

deeply about the people at Bedford School and valued the contributions that everyone made.

Matt joined Bedford Girls School in January 2024 as Deputy Head, Student Engagement and Welfare. They gained an outstanding and committed leader who champions every pupil, has never-ending positivity and is utterly selfless in leading the way.

It is our great privilege to have worked alongside Matt, and we wish him all the success in the world. If we can learn and remember one thing, it is to “be more Gracie”.

JEM

SUPPORT STAFF – 88 years of service

It is the expertise, dedication and enthusiasm of any school's support staff that, in collaboration with teaching staff, enable pupils to thrive in their environment, explore passions beyond their subjects and ultimately engender opportunities that enable the whole school community to prosper. It is testament to the school, but perhaps more so the commitment and passion of individuals, that we benefit from their contributions. To use a quote from Ben Smith's article in last year's Ousel – “Bedford School is a community completely driven by the hard work put in by our staff.”

This year, the Bedford School community said farewell to four individuals, who collectively racked up over 88 years of service; we thank them unreservedly and wish them all well.

LxC



ROB WOOD, Head Porter (17 ½ yrs):

Always keen to know what was happening in the school so everything could be covered, Rob also had a funny sense of humour; beyond school life he is a keen photographer and moved to Norfolk with his wife, two cats and spaniel.

JOHN MOLD, Security (20 yrs):

John was a great character who, in his final year, made a cameo appearance in the school's Movember music video. A welcome and friendly face that greeted visitors, staff and pupils alike (and a lover of all things Elvis Presley) John retires with a trip to Graceland to look forward to.

SHIRLEY KEABLE, Talbot's Cleaner (24 yrs):

Shirley held one of (arguably) the most important jobs, ensuring that the pupil's home whilst they board was maintained with care and attention – she leaves to enjoy her well-earned retirement.

MIKE HALLSWORTH, Head of Grounds (27 yrs):

The Bedford School grounds, overseen by Mike, have been immaculately kept in all weathers, enabling pupils to challenge many a school in fixtures played at “the fortress”. After an incredible innings, Mike retires with the school's very best wishes.

WELCOME TO STAFF



MAT PAYNE – Head of Geography

Mr Payne joined the school this year and, like most new staff, was impressed with the politeness of the boys and how welcoming staff were; he was also roused by our impressive school site including the rugby pitches and main building. Mr Payne used to work in the state sector in Buckinghamshire where

he was the pastoral lead, giving him plenty of experience. Geography has always been Mr Payne's favourite subject; although initially wanting to become a vet and taking all three sciences for A level, his massive love for Geography as his fourth subject superseded all others, and led to him pursuing further study at university - in Mr Payne's words “the subject is ever evolving and provides context to the world”. From studying geography, he applied for a role as a teacher, accepted the post, and twelve years later has determined that he really likes it. Outside of school he enjoys watching rugby, American football and playing a bit of golf. He used to play rugby a lot and now enjoys exploring Scotland with his family. Mr Payne told me that as a player in his university's team, he played rugby in Rio against the international Brazilian rugby team, and drew against them!

Mr Payne's book recommendations are *Africa is not a Country* by Dipo Faloyin for Geography students, and *It's Not About the Bike* by Lance Armstrong, which he found an inspiring autobiography.

Will Neil



FLORENCE BURBRIDGE – Art

Mrs Burbridge was immediately blown away by the friendliness of the boys and how welcoming everyone was and keeps reminding herself she has been here for just a half term, and not 4-5 years! She believes the ability to sculpt is one of the things that makes us human, dealing with the form through

sculpture. She told me of a 40,000-year-old sculpture called the Lowenmensch lion, which took someone around 3 months to try and recreate; this means that way back in the stone ages someone was able to sculpt all day and be brought food just to make art, such was the importance.

Mrs Burbridge is so fascinated by art that in her free time, she makes even more sculptures, on top of knitting. Her favourite part of teaching is seeing pupils grasp a topic, develop a passion for it, and then fly with their ideas. She feels extremely settled into the school now, and looks forward to continuing through the years with us.

When asked for a favourite book, Mrs Burbridge answered: anything by Thomas Hardy and Laurie Lee, her favourite: *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning* by Lee.

Will Neil



TOM BACKHOUSE – History

Mr Backhouse's enjoyment of History began at school, events of the past proving even more exciting than much of the fiction he read. Being an OB, he is enjoying the nostalgia of returning to teach at Bedford, with the spirit of the school similar to when he was a pupil.

A keen sportsman, Mr Backhouse enjoys golf, a bit of cricket and is currently getting back into running. At his last school, Mr Backhouse helped to establish a house system a bit like our own (though sadly no House Singing), although there was plenty of competition and fundraising events.

Mr Backhouse would always recommend the *Discworld* series by Terry Pratchett, as well as *The Sleepwalkers* by Christopher Clark. The latter is based on the origins of WWI – a fitting choice given that his responses just preceded Armistice Day.

Charlie Finch



AMELIA ABBOTT – Chemistry

Miss Abbott has always loved how Chemistry can explain the world around us, and particularly enjoyed exploring the subject first-hand through practicals at school; her interest further developed at university, especially Medicinal Chemistry and how molecular fragments can be

designed to fix pharmaceutical problems.

What first struck Miss Abbott was how friendly both the pupils and staff were, the school having a lively yet welcoming atmosphere; she also loves how many interesting projects and societies occur at any one time: "there is truly something for everyone!" Miss Abbott is impressed by the numerous stunning buildings, with a particular soft spot for the fully kitted out labs.

Miss Abbott enjoys being active, joining a local running group; as a former keen rower, she looks forward to getting involved in the rowing programme.

As a teacher, Miss Abbott has found it motivating – when delivering the same practicals that inspired her career choice – to see pupils share the same spark for Chemistry.

Black-Box Thinking by Matthew Syed had a profound impact on Miss Abbott, completely changing her perspective on failure, and the power to change your own trajectory whether grades, sports, or "what you are good at".

Charlie Finch



BLESSINGS MAKAMBA – Head of Business & Economics

Mr Makamba, who joins with experience as head of department at his previous school, was deeply impressed with how well-mannered pupils were when he first joined the school, immediately noting how the boys demonstrate and embody our school values. The House Singing

competition became his standout moment of the first half term.

Mr Makamba became a teacher as he finds immense satisfaction in expanding the frontiers of knowledge. Originally an accountant, Mr Makamba pursued his passion and hasn't

looked back since!

Outside of school, Mr Makamba enjoys sports, particularly the variety on offer at the Olympics; as a former striker, he was known as 'twinkle toes'. On the theme of football, Mr Makamba is a diehard Arsenal fan, has met Arsenal legend Thierry Henry twice, and has a nephew who plays for Norwich City!

Growing up on a farm, Mr Makamba fancies himself as a bit of a car mechanic, though has no formal qualifications. On books, besides his own romance story (congratulations on your Silver anniversary!) Mr Makamba recommends *Animal Farm* by George Orwell – a book 4th form study, and one which opened his eyes to the truth of society and the challenges of political dynamics.

Will Neil



HANNAH KEEP – Media Studies

Ms Keep joins the school with plenty of experience in the media industry, ready to share with eager pupils. Prior to teaching, Ms Keep was a documentary producer for 14 years making a whole range of films, and has a hard-hitting documentary coming to Netflix very soon.

On first impressions, Ms Keep felt uplifted by the warm and friendly atmosphere and our school values. Ms Keep's motivation for becoming a teacher was the hope to share her knowledge and expertise of the industry with pupils; having maintained an interest in teaching, it was the perfect fit when Ms Keep was considering a career change.

Outside of school Ms Keep enjoys swimming – in fact a few years ago she swam the length of Lake Windermere – 12 miles! She hopes one day to swim the English Channel which is an inspirational goal. Ms Keep also loves watching documentaries, such was her job, and looking at the news.

Having such solid grounding in the media industry, Ms Keep looks forward to developing this within the lens of education.

Will Neil



REBECCA WILSON – Lead Teacher of Business

Ms Wilson's first impressions when joining the school were how friendly both the pupils and staff were (there is definitely a theme here!) Although teaching since 2006, Ms Wilson took a brief break to run a catering business in 2019, which she continues to run

alongside her teaching.

With plans to pursue a career in teaching or psychology, Ms Wilson completed a Psychology degree; having not enjoyed this as first expected, she then took a master's in business, which she loved. From there, teaching became her passion, particularly in sharing the joy of business with others.

A Bedford Blues season ticket holder, Ms Wilson goes to all of the games wherever possible. Alongside this, she enjoys running and going to the gym. Interestingly, Ms Wilson is an identical twin, which puts her in a category only shared by 0.5% of the world's population.

Having attended plays and adaptations due to her love of the text, Ms Wilson's favourite book, which has stuck with her since GCSEs, is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.

Will Neil

RUGBY

Autumn brought about a term of two seasons - a hot and dry first half followed by a wet second. Although the latter put pay to fixtures, it didn't dampen the spirits!

It was enjoyable to see the 1st XV put together their most complete performance of the season beating Abingdon, scoring six tries. Top try scorer of the season was Ben Agbenu with some scintillating tries; the final game saw the XV's tries spread across five players - clear demonstration of how well the team gelled. We also congratulate three players - Aiden Ainsworth Cave, Ben Agbenu and Jonny Weimann on their England recognition, three real prospects for the future.



The U16 A team were one game away from a perfect winning season. They put in brilliant performances and grew as a team as the year progressed. Their efforts were thwarted in a high-quality match by an impressive Abingdon in the final game of the season.

The U15 C team were the pick of the U15s as they demonstrated the strength of the year group. Mr Ramsden was rightfully awarded 'Coach of the Year' as he was integral in galvanising such a wonderful spirit built on pride and passion. The U15 A team should be congratulated on reaching the cup semi-final of the Langley Festival, losing out to a strong Wellington College.

The U14 As struggled to find opposition to challenge them. They have a great balance of players from 1-15 and threatened their opposition from every angle. Special mention must go to our half backs, Tom Ulvert and George Williams who managed their resources. It is exciting to think how they will progress through the years at Bedford School.

Finally, the U14 3rd game. Expertly managed by staff, the boys made progress. Both the E and F teams regularly played teams one, two or even three levels higher than them and were always competitive. Their achievements are seriously impressive and all should be proud of their achievements.

I would like to thank staff, for the time and effort they put into their teams, often going above and beyond to give the boys the best experience. I would also like to thank the boys as it is them that make the job worthwhile. A final thanks to parents for their unwavering support and the School Rugby Club, especially with last-minute changes and later than expected returns from away fixtures!

JPH





BEDFORD SCHOOL XV'S



1ST XV

OUNDLE HOME (L) 21-24

Knowing this would be challenging, the game was fast-paced in hot conditions; despite three Bedford tries through captain Drake-Lee, Agbenu and Harries, we were marginally beaten, and quickly turned our focus onto Rugby away.

RUGBY AWAY (W) 19-27

Rugby celebrated their 200th year of the sport by live streaming matches. There were Bedford debuts for Gallagher and Smith, following strong performances in the 2nd XV. A close game saw both teams imposing themselves physically, Bedford 20-12 up with tries through Cracknell, DeGale and Agbenu. Rugby applied pressure on us, pulling back to 20-19. A scrum with ten minutes remaining saw Agbenu take off with the ball, brushing off defenders and flying over the line to achieve our first away win over Rugby since 2012.

RADLEY AWAY (L) 35-12

Radley unbeaten presented a challenge on the road; after a slow start, we were firmly on the back foot against a dominant opposition, who took advantage and scored successive tries. In wet conditions, handling errors gifted opportunities to Radley, oozing confidence at 35-0 with fifteen minutes to go. Through perseverance and sheer determination, we kept fighting, managing consolation tries through Harries and Weimann.

HAILEYBURY AWAY – CUP (L) 36-14

With hope a previous Agbenu worldie would provide inspiration, Weimann was shifted into fly-half, with Jenkins at scrum half. We came out firing, with Agbenu intercepting inside two minutes, followed up with a try through Weimann. After an early 0-14 lead, Haileybury's skilful side found a way back in, scoring 36 unanswered points that resulted in an early exit from the cup.

ETON HOME (L) 12-36

Facing another unbeaten side, we were narrowly behind 7-12 after a good first half performance. A well drilled Eton combined with costly errors led to opposition tries. Agbenu managed to grab a second try, but this wasn't enough to avoid defeat.

DULWICH AWAY (L) 31-22

Despite outstanding tries from Payne and Innes late in the game, we were not able to overturn the healthy lead that our historical rivals built up after another frustratingly slow start to a game.

OAKHAM HOME – PLATE (L) 17-19

In front of a good crowd, we were fired up for the plate competition. With both sides fully committed for a physical game, Oakham led for the majority. Harries gave us two tries but with darkness closing in, we were 10-19 down with just moments remaining. Weimann spotted Agbenu on the touchline, launching a pin-point cross field kick for the latter to





dot down. Innes added the extras with a brilliant conversion. With refereeing decisions not going in our favour and despite late momentum, we were edged out.

WARWICK HOME (W) 18-10

Raring to go, we looked to get a first home win of the season. Agbenu received the ball behind his try line, running the length of the pitch in a moment of brilliance to give us a 7-3 lead. Warwick struck back, going into half time 7-10 up. Motivated not to lose again, a hard fought second half with a try from Gallagher and two calmly taken penalties from Innes gave us a victory to end the half term, with Agbenu and Weimann selected for the England U18 camp.

TRIANGULAR AWAY

MILL HILL (L) 14-0

OAKHAM (W) 5-8

In a change to the schedule, we started strongly against Mill Hill. Despite dominating in their half, we struggled to get points on the board. With the shorter game format, two opposition tries were enough to hold us off.

After losing to Oakham in the plate we were itching to rectify mistakes, but somehow found ourselves 5-0 down. A worldie try, followed by Innes' cross field kick to Payne flying through the air, we were level amid claims for try of the season. A Drake-Lee penalty, along with a ruthless and unbreakable defence gave Bedford redemption.

STAMFORD AWAY (L) 60-19

A few injuries and lack of precision made this one to forget – although a worthy mention goes to Wasterfall (brought in from the 2nd XV) for a dashing run.

BERKHAMSTED HOME (D) 17-17

Keen to right some wrongs, Bedford emerged with energy

SQUAD:

F. Drake-Lee (C), J. Weimann (VC), B. Agbenu, R. Harries, E. Briers, H. Payne, B. Grainger, T. Jenkins, M. Innes, A. Proctor, W. Gallagher, O. Barker, S. Cutler, Z. DeGale, R. Cracknell, O. Smith, O. Simmonds, O. Bymolen, F. Wyer-Roberts, Z. Wasterfall, B. Mclurg, M. Verwoert, E. Maddocks, A. Allen, M. Pascall, G. Worthington

and enthusiasm. Lack of ability to capitalise and lapses in defensive focus put us 0-10 down. Undeterred, we pushed harder, demonstrating attacking prowess and delivering some of our most exciting phases of the season. A penalty temporarily put us ahead until Berkhamsted levelled, forcing us to share the spoils.

HAILEYBURY AWAY (L) 32-12

A score that didn't entirely reflect the game; the first half was very even and included a perfect lineout set piece move with Agbenu scoring. Unfortunately, Haileybury came out all guns blazing and beat us in a battle of physicality, all eyes turning to the last game of the season.

ABINGDON HOME/AWAY (W) 34-26

Heavy rainfall and lakes on the pitch meant it wasn't to be the fairytale home game at our fortress. After a switch to Abingdon's ground, a late arrival and five-minute warmup, we were underway.

At almost full strength in Upper Sixth personnel, Payne was forced to stand on the sidelines through illness and cheer the team on – a role he took on almost as well as him playing. With Abingdon deep in our half, we went five down. With immediate response, the nature of Bedford rugby came to fruition, with tries from Harries, Weimann, Wasterfall and Tongue.

Comfortably ahead, the second half provided difficulties with a red card and numerous injuries. Barker headed off with a hole in his lip, taking us down to 13. Wyer-Roberts displayed versatility, moving from the wing to flanker and hooker. Closely contested at 29-26, a magic moment in Innes' pin-point kick to Weimann on the wing then saw Proctor picking up and haring down the blind-side, offloading to Cutler only to receive back and score the team try of the season. With a Drake-Lee conversion, a picturesque finish was the only way to bid farewell to Year 13s in their last game of Bedford School Rugby Union.

It is a bittersweet feeling coming to the end of our Bedford School careers, as it is of great sadness to leave behind a place that has given us so much. We leave with the fondest memories – some of the greatest of our lives, I'm sure.

Freddie Drake-Lee & Jonny Weimann



2ND XV

Won 6, Drew 0, Lost 5

The 2XV is always a tricky team to play for, with constant lineup changes and adopting the official positions of 'bag-holders' for the 1st XV in training. We were delighted with the enthusiasm and desire shown compared to a previously unflattering description by former head of school, Nat Lord.

We began the season with excitement, our leader, Mr Wise, enthusiastic about the squad. Oundle were our first challenge, arriving to play us in what felt like 40-degrees on a pitch made of concrete. We grabbed the first score and gained a 38-29 win. Rugby and Radley gave us valuable standing under the post-practice in games we tried to wipe from our memories. Work needed to be done in training.

We moved on to Eton College, who ventured to the fortress full of confidence. With possibly the most hard-fought 2nd XV fixture of Mr Wise's career, we grabbed a 27-24 victory, leaving the 1st XV boys dreaming of a 2nds appearance.

Dulwich - need we say more? What we thought couldn't be topped had its doors blown well off. The first half, Mr Wise will agree, was abysmal, and we headed into the changing rooms 33-7 down. A transcendent and turbulent second half with tries from Wyer-Roberts, Simmonds, and Butler left it at 33-26 with 1 to go on the clock. After what seemed like hours of work in their 22, Jones stormed through with unparalleled

"Brilliant from start to finish, bring on next year!"

Tommy T

athleticism and secured the victory, leaving it 34-33 Bedford - Mr Wise making comparisons to the birth of his children.

Verwoert was unfortunately 'dropped' to the 1st XV, the 2nd XV losing its leader. Warwick were weak, but we were weaker, apparently deciding that tackling was optional.

We returned excited to get our teeth stuck into a triangular tournament with strong opposition. A performance completed with elegant handling won victory over Mill Hill. Our French maestro Ajaj ended the game ten minutes before the final whistle with pure dominance in the scrum, causing Mill Hill to submit. Oakham was a game determined by tough and questionable decisions against the boys. Nonetheless, we made a good account of ourselves, and Mr Hind, a former 1st XV player (and Fraser Dingwall's best bud), carried us through with a huge passion for the game.

Stamford was very similar to Radley...

Onto Berkhamsted, it was a sunny but crisp day, tensions flaring between opposition supporters and our leader. Good individual tries from our wingers made up for the fact they went missing for the rest of the season. Special mention must go to Briggs, who ventured up from the 3rd XV.

Unbeknownst to us, Haileybury was our final battle. It capped off the greatest 2nd XV season since the Ousel began (a fact check may be required!) Captain Verwoert decided to make it a 14-man Bedford effort, freezing at a new position we will call extra cover. Nonetheless, the dynamic duo of Gildersleve and Pollen-Brooks, dreaming of sunnier days, put in the hard yards. A comeback from Jones led to a second-half hat trick.

All the boys agree it was a season of constant highs. A mention goes to ever-composed Wasterfall, who led the 2nds out until an early retirement to the 1sts. Mentions must go to fringe players like Simmonds, Smith and Mclurg, who gave good accounts in the 2nd XV.

Millan Verwoert and Matthew Jones

SQUAD:

G. Worthington, A. Foddering, M. Jones, S. Ajaj, T. Taylor, A. Gittins, H. Bowerman, W. Gallagher, Z. Wasterfall, A. Allen, M. Verwoert, E. Maddocks, O. Smith, S. Bayley, L. Butler, S. Cutler, T. Ferrari, R. Dennis, M. Pascall, F. Wyer-Roberts, O. Bymolen, E. Fish, L. Pollen-Brooks, T. Jenkins, J. Dagg, O. Simmonds, R. Cracknell, E. Walker, B. Mclurg, G. Stanley

3RD XV

Won 4, Drew 0, Lost 6

In the realm of rugby, triumph transcends mere numerical scores; it embodies the ethos of spirit, camaraderie, and collective growth. The 3rd XV rugby season epitomised this ethos. Despite adversities, our team pressed forward, leaving behind a legacy marked by resilience, determination, and cherished memories.

The integration of 2nd XV players into our ranks infused the team. Their seasoned experience and skill elevated the competitive spirit of matches, urging us to elevate our own standards. Moreover, their presence fostered an atmosphere of camaraderie and friendly competition, underscoring the significance of off-field camaraderie. Thus, we extend our gratitude to our 2nd XV counterparts for enriching our team dynamic with their energy and spirit.

The inclusion of rowers into our team brought forth a unique fusion of strength, endurance, and newfound appreciation. Their seamless transition to the rugged battleground exemplified their adaptability. While they may have initially yearned for the rhythmic cadence of oars, they swiftly found solace in the thunderous collision of tackles. Their addition not only fortified our physical presence on the field but also fortified our game plan.

Throughout the season, our team engaged in ten matches. Though victory did not always come, each encounter served as a crucible for skill refinement and cohesion.

Regrettably, the flux of player transitions presented a challenge to establishing cohesion, the quest for a unified structure proving arduous. Nonetheless, a semblance of order emerged through improvisation and adaptation, reaffirming the pivotal roles of flexibility and adaptability.

An honourable mention to Keylock, our audacious high-tackling maestro. While his penchant for launching opponents skyward incurred raised eyebrows and penalty flags, the spectacle of his aerial feats captivated spectators. We commend James for his gravity-defying exploits, which added an element of excitement to our matches.

Of the ten games contested, victory graced us in four. However, beyond these numerical outcomes lie narratives of passion, perseverance and wit. Some of our proud wins include Eton, just scraping a 1-point victory with the wise decision to kick for posts. Dulwich was another great win as they were a tough side. However, we kept powering through with big hits and ensured our victory.

As the curtain fell on the season, it was not the tally of wins or losses that defined our journey, but rather the collective triumphs, collegiality and laughter shared along the way. Our 3rd XV rugby season epitomized the indomitable spirit and resilience that embody our team. Beyond the purview of the scoreboard, it is the memories forged on the field and the enduring friendships nurtured off it that truly encapsulate our success.

Thus, let us raise a toast to the 3rd XV rugby squad—a cohort of warriors, impassioned players, and everything in between. Through triumph and defeat, our bonds remain unyielding, offering solace and companionship as we regale each other with tales over post-match refreshments (of the non-alcoholic variety, naturally).
Rob King

SQUAD:

R. Groves, A. Foddering, T. Ferrari, J. Keylock, S. Gildersleve, G. Worthington, R. King (C), F. Whittaker, S. French, M. Collins, A. Ananenu, O. Briggs, A. Collins, V. Dmytrenko, E. Dagg, I. Maddison, O. Jooste, N. Swope, S. Gribbin

COACH: *Mr. Mark Huddleston*

4TH XV

Won 2, Drew 0, Lost 7





BEDFORD SCHOOL U16s



COLTS A

Won 10, Drew 0, Lost 1

Bedford U16s previous season was sometimes spent in darkness. Several injuries occurred early on, but our resolute optimism provided motivation with players fighting for their spot. This is what led to our 22-man team, each of them proving outstanding and causing Mr Burgess a dilemma in picking the side.

The boys represented the eagle proudly, Alfie Redfern summing up intentions of going “undefeated the whole season”.

Going into our first match against Oundle, there was an air of confidence as we knew we had the strength, speed and stamina to overcome the opposition; on a humid day the team delivered the result as a unit (42-0), although unfortunately, picking up another injury in Deans.

We set out to beat Rugby and Radley with larger scorelines than the previous year; mission accomplished on that front. Oniuri ran from our half after receiving kick off to finalise the team’s superior show. What was inspirational about this group was our ability to learn the moves together, bringing them into training and demonstrating them on matchdays together.

For the third year in a row, we hosted our oldest schoolboy rivals Dulwich in a sunny afternoon on the 1st XV pitch, laying down a 35-10 victory. Matches 4 and 5 saw us comfortably beat Eton and FINALLY Warwick in a neck-on-neck 29-27 thriller, after a hectic penalty (which was drop goaled) hit the post and bounced back into play. This first half term had given the boys a sense of encouragement to come back better after Halloween.

Our commitment to training never dropped, seeking to become even better and inspiring one another to remain motivated for the last weeks of the season. Evidence of this was our stimulating 39-23 win over Oakham, involving excellent tryline defence and a desire to not concede. Important highlights were Hemings’ try after his inside back had charged down a receiving kick, as well as Collard putting a tackle on their best player, much to the excitement of teammates!

Ahead of our final game against Abingdon we defeated new teams Stamford and Berkhamsted, as well as Yr 9 opposition Haileybury. Through this period, the weather had become a lot colder, and pitches had got a lot muddier, but this could not halt our momentum.

Unfortunately, no season can go all the way without having a hiccup. Ironically, we met Abingdon, who were also unbeaten. We brought it back after half-time with our captain who scored, converted and won a penalty, but that was not enough to guard our tryline and disappointedly lose the game 19-10.

After the boy’s sorrow and guilt, we recovered and reminisced that we had put our all into the season, some of whom played for the last time. We matured as individuals, excelled as players and became more intelligent about the sport that we love.

Let’s hope to play again in sixth form!

Kai Fisher (CC)

SQUAD:

K. Fisher (CC), F. Barnett-Vincent (CC), J. Fasanya (VC), K. Oniuri, A. Reid, M. Halahan, A. Redfern, S. Breed, D. Meier, J. Maling, F. Beckmann, C. Constantine, M. Deans, C. Collard, S. Inman, G. Sivills, H. Whitfield, A. Mohktar-Esteban, G. Hemings, D. French, O. Harries, J. Basquille

U16B

Won 5, Drew 0, Lost 6

U16C

Won 1, Drew 0, Lost 6





BEDFORD SCHOOL U15s



U15A

Won 5, Drew 1, Lost 5

We were keen to take on some challenging opponents this season, but knew we would have to put in the work during training. Our losses, however, came early with a convincing 12-40 to Radley highlighting areas for improvement. The team pulled together and worked hard to turn things around, winning our next two games against Eton and Dulwich.

The Langley Festival provided another opportunity to showcase the team's skills. Over two days and seven games, we reached the semi-finals against Wellington; despite a great performance, we couldn't clinch the win.

Post-festival, impressive performances continued, going undefeated in the next three matches. The initial disappointment from early losses made the wins later in the season all the more satisfying.

Rugby was one of the season's standout moments; from trailing by one try with less than a minute on the clock, Goodwin received the ball, ran the entire length of the pitch and scored in the corner, securing the win with the last play.

We should also mention second row Maddaford's outstanding run against Eton, where he was given the ball on the wing, outpaced both winger and fullback, and scored an impressive try to take an early lead.

Thanks to this season's squad for their hard work and commitment to the team; a special thanks goes to Mr Hone for his supportive coaching, keeping us on track throughout. The early frustrations could have been disheartening, but Mr Hone made sure to focus on the positives. A big thank you also to Mr Larkin for helping us in the right direction, and for his insightful feedback on how to improve in the future.

SQUAD:

G. Knight (C), H. Crowe (VC), O. Surley, G. Simmonds, C. Gallagher, J. Morris, H. Pask, H. Burns, G. Craven, J. Down, W. Tierney, O. Hayward, F. Miller, J. Goodwin, S. Millar, T. Young, O. Sheldon, B. Maddaford, G. Court, D. Morrow, J. Gardner

U15B

Won 7, Drew 0, Lost 3

The U15B had a strong season, despite suffering regular injuries and seeing key players out at various times. The positives to come from this was welcoming new players to the team who brought good energy and commitment. Mr. Jones provided a key part of our success as he coached us through a second year in a row; sadly he will not be coaching us next year.

Strong performances from Cox against Radley, Sule against Oundle and Smirnov against Stamford helped us through some important games. A special shout out to Redburn, as at one point eight members of the house were playing.

Looking forward to next year, we will be aiming to take our good form this year and come back stronger and with more consistency to get the unbeaten season we want.

BTJ

U15C

Won 7, Drew 1, Lost 1

The U15C team 2023 are the finest rugby team I have coached. Each of them brought their own talents to the pool: some size and strength, some speed; others brought a sharp eye and keen technical ability. But all brought heart!

After early victories against Oundle, Rugby and Eton the team tasted defeat for the first time against a well-drilled Radley side. We decided this was a meal we did not enjoy and so spent the remainder of the season feasting on victory at Dulwich, Oakham and Stamford.

There was a notable exception in the form of Warwick, who fielded a big side of tough boys. We went out on our shields, giving everything for the draw in a game that we should have won at the death.

Here's to a team that loved winning. Rarely have I had the pleasure of coaching a side whose intensity on the field was so equally matched by their manners off it.

SQUAD:

C. Miller, A. Lau, O. Harris, R. Uppal, A. Martin, L. Woodhouse, T. Noble, G. Wooding-Jones, I. Ferguson, H. Howlett, T. Mahoney, J. Lally, L. Corrigan, J. Lincoln, Al. Wright, An. Wright, C. Hil

U15D

Won 3, Drew 1, Lost 3

At the start of the season (with only one training session completed) we played against Oundle in a 'war of attrition' that ended 5-5.

Getting some more training sessions under our belt, we travelled to Rugby where it all began 200 years ago. In a milestone anniversary year, we put in a dominant performance in which the game could have been called at half time, ultimately recorded as 45-0.

We didn't know it at the time, but a home win against Eton meant that we had an undefeated home record for the season.

It was not always plain sailing this season as we had very narrow losses away to Radley and Dulwich, where in the latter fixture, our game christened their new 3G pitch. Injuries and promotions of players from the Ds to the Cs were common and left us with an ever-changing lineup of boys, many having to play out of position.

After the half term break numerous players returned from injury and the team stabilised, finding form with a 36-5 victory against Oakham U15C. Sadly, that was to be our last game as the weather put a stop to our final two fixtures.

We ended the season with a point gain; throughout, we improved our skills and will forever remember the training session Broncos.

Ollie Cochrane

SQUAD:

O. Cochrane (C), H. Taylor, C. Whittle-Queral, C. Kopoi, C. Chen, C. Hayes, O. Cadman-Kerr, S. Rawlings, M. Memet, I. Malik, S. White, M. Pateman-Hall, O. Quince, N. Patel, A. Chan, A. Emeana, J. George, F. Leventon Oliver



BEDFORD SCHOOL U14s



U14A

Won 6, Drew 1, Lost 1

Well done boys on a great season! The most important aspect for all boys was the progress made and the willingness to learn. U14As December would be comfortable winners, vs an U14As September! Well led by Captains Barnes and Barnett-Vincent, they threatened from all areas of the pitch, with plenty of pace out wide thanks to Allen and Ajisafe. The forwards were happy to be direct, such as Mullen and Hudson. Half backs Ulvert and Williams marshalled their resources expertly.

U14B

Won 3, Drew 0, Lost 4

It has been a great year for the U14B team. Through the season we've had highs and lows and learnt many valuable lessons.

Our season started with Rugby, playing remarkably well and coming out on top comfortably. Another game to highlight was Dulwich; this one ran close, but Sykes managed to score a try in the last ten minutes to secure a win. We showed determination, not letting our heads go down and in the end, reaped the rewards.

We have had opportunities to play against some A side teams this season – although these were tough games where we struggled to put points on the board, it was a great experience for us to improve our game.

Looking back at the season: although the score boards may suggest otherwise, we have improved massively as a team and as individuals, whether that be our set pieces, defence or communication with one another. It has been a great season, and we thank our coaches: Mr Guest, Mr Gracie and Mr Marriott.

Arthur Fitzpatrick

U14C

Won 6, Drew 0, Lost 2

The U14C team started with a training match against Oundle, but properly kicked off with a massive 54-0 home win against Rugby. We then lost a tough match against Radley 20-0, before travelling away to Eton where despite our best efforts we were beaten.

The hard work continued in training, notably improving our handling and attacking setups and moves. We backed up these efforts with big wins over Dulwich 31-7 and Warwick the following weekend 54-5.

We returned after the half term break superbly, flying straight

back into it and winning 14-10 against Mill Hill & Belmont Schools U14B team. In a close fought match, we stayed strong and pulled through with the result.

We continued learning and progressing our skills in training, with great moves and improved tackling continuing to develop. We then won another hard-fought match, with all the boys involved putting in massive shifts against Stowe's U14B team to win 26-14. The season finished with a gruelling defeat to Abingdon, 33-5.

A huge congratulations to all who played for the U14Cs this season, with a special well done to Zanna for his superb tries throughout the season, and to Bhukhan for outstanding tackling. A massive well done also has to be given to Mr Nicholl and Mr Blythman for their excellent coaching.

Isaac Johnson

SQUAD:

I. Johnson (C), D. Creek, N. Fletcher, D. Fairhead, L. Charles, A. Hollowood, D. Sutton, E. Clifford, S. Davis, W. Chadwick, B. Zanna, G. Borelli, A. Bhukhan, J. McMurrin, N. James, M. Trueman, O. Meier, A. Wright, V. Vetts, T. Coles, H. Timmins, E. Demetrius-Louisy, H. Edward, T. Sykes, F. Okusanya, G. Harrison, T. Gray

U14D

Won 3, Drew 0, Lost 3

The U14Ds started off strong, beating Rugby comfortably, although our following games against Radley and Eton presented difficulties we were unable to overcome.

After some practicing of the hands and coming up with some moves, the team came back strong and after a long match beat Dulwich 15-5 - a shout out to Dagger who scored an excellent try. I would also like to say well done to Demetrius-Louisy who was recognised for his countless great performances and moved up to the U14Cs. From Dulwich we continued to work well as a team, posting consecutive wins.

In the second half of the season the team were thriving, with great moves to help break the lines, our scrums particularly strong. The team won two out of the three matches with ease; we were truly playing as a unit.

For the final game of the season against Abingdon, despite a positive start and two quick tries, the opposition came back with a vengeance in the second half and won overall.

So, to conclude, the U14D team had a bit of a rough start ►





◀ to the season, but with the right mindset to get better and be better, we have persevered. We have not only built as a team, but built as teammates.

Harry Maling

SQUAD:

H. Maling (C), H. Goddard, S. Keating-Anderson, W. Dagger, E. Parrish, M. Goodwin, M. Mitchell, M. Middleton, F. Okusanya, G. Wenn, L. Pettengell, A. Thygesen, E. Stevens, A. Wright, O. Chadwick, L. Thomas, T. Gray, E. Demetrius-Louisy

U14E

Won 3, Drew 1, Lost 5

The U14 Third Game season always starts in the same way. We welcome boys to the rugby club, remind them that we aim to have fun and develop all sorts of skills... and then get down to the business of developing fundamental elements of the game. The large group of boys who represented the E Team made strong progress with these core areas throughout a busy season. The heaviest losses came in a triangular tournament against Perse B and Oundle C; by this stage, the boys had earned their right play such lofty opposition by beating Eton 41-35 and Dulwich 26-12. They ran a determined and athletic Stowe U14C team close, losing 25-29 in agonising circumstances at the end of the match,

but the most exciting game was a full-throttle 24-24 draw away at Harrow, whose swift back line were held at bay on several crucial occasions by last-ditch tackling and purposeful rucking that required great courage and skill. Mr McCleery is still recovering from the drama, we hear! Credit should go to the various boys who captained the side during the season. They helped a reasonably inexperienced squad come together for several memorable victories, a lot of personal development and as much fun as you would hope a Bedford School rugby season could offer.

NLH

SQUAD:

R. Adil, T. Ahmed, J. Angus, S. Apesin, L. Charles, M. Chaudhry, K. Chen, L. Clavier, E. Clifford, L. Collins, E. Demetrius-Louisy, I. Devenish, E. Dixon, O. Gentle, H. Goddard, M. Goodwin, T. Grimshaw, A. Hollowood, J. Hooley, N. James, L. Jessop, T. Kaleem, E. Keggim, L. Liu Zhu, M. Middleton, M. Mitchell, O. Morrell, A. Nair, J. Oakes, E. Parrish, T. Rees, M. Savelyev, S. Searle, G. Taiola-Kouriss, L. Thomas, A. Tierney, T. Whiting, W. Whittaker, A. Yu, L. Zhang, J. Zhou

U14F

Won 2, Drew 0, Lost 4

To misquote Stephen Sondheim in West Side Story, 'When you're an F, you're an F all the way.' The team's opposition





this season, however, came in the form of everything from B to F sides, including players returning from injury who had represented even loftier teams earlier in the term.

The U14F boys did exceptionally well competing against a wide range of different skill levels, showing tenacity against stronger teams, robust rugby fundamentals against more evenly-matched sides and high levels of respect on the field. Wins against Mill Hill (40-20), Stamford (27-7) and Mill Hill again (50-31) were the season's highlights. Moretto, who captained ably, writes: "after starting off the season with a loss against Radley, we lifted our heads going into the next match. Our perseverance paid off as we achieved a great win against Mill Hill. Throughout the season, although we did not always emerge victorious, our spirits remained unaltered. We were optimistic going into every match and I can say the whole team thoroughly enjoyed this season."

All players are to be commended on their development with ball in hand as well as at the breakdown. As always, some were entirely new to rugby in September but they played their part in fluent, attacking and well-disciplined performances just as effectively as those more experienced.

NLH

SQUAD:

M. Moretto (C), P. Bienert, L. Carron, B. Chang, M. Chaudhry, K. Chen, H. Davidson, E. Grady-Smith, P. Immaraporn, E. Keggin, A. Lahkar, Y. Meka, M. Midgley, A. Nair, R. Riaz, A. Saeed, M. Serrano, H. Sharma, B. Scheepers, N. Simplicio, G. Taiola-Kouriss, I. Tang, A. Tyagi, R. To, A. Wasif, I. West, W. Whittaker, E. Wrightson, L. Zhang

U14G

There are few schools which can support an U14G team, or regard rugby as highly as Bedford. Our team varied throughout the season depending on availability, and so results were mixed. A three-way match against Mill Hill in which Bedford were stunning really set us up well for the term, filling the boys with confidence and recognition of the skills learnt in training. Kelly was man of the match, repeatedly intercepting balls through the gaps in the lines,

before winding his legs up to 11 and making short work of the rest of the pitch. Chang played for Mill Hill to make up their numbers and was quickly barking orders which they dutifully followed.

This was opposed by a loss at Harrow. Best described as "polite offerings for scoring a try" we pushed Harrow back before putting the ball over their try line. On restarting, Harrow did the same to us - "would you like to score a try next?" style turn taking. An even and fair match, Harrow commented on how they "couldn't get through us" which was lovely to hear. Sadly, the second half didn't repeat this with fatigue setting in, along with playing on a larger pitch uphill. Overall, a varied and entertaining season.

PSc

SQUAD:

K. Kelly, J. Riley, R. To, F. Jenkins, D. Patel, M. Serrano, B. Scheepers, G. Garosi, I. Tang, B. Chang, R. Riaz, T. Davidson, A. Rai, K. Krishnaruban, M. Midgley, H. Sharma, H. Grattan, H. Davidson, J. Kingsbury, O. Barbour, T. Kaleem, E. Daubney, S. Phillips, A.J. Morrissey, T. Ahmed

U14H

Only Radley have the capacity to put up a H team to face Bedford; it turned out to be a very even match. Radley arrived with a curious attitude - despite their claimed Six Nations level of rugby knowledge, they sadly didn't reckon on a Chaudhry or an Immaraporn who, simply put, are mini fourth form man mountains. Radley may have its fancy nimble toe'd faking offloads, but when attempting to run through some of our boys, physicality took over and halted their efforts. Bedford demonstrated some excellent passing and pushing through the lines, particularly by Immaraporn and Ahmed. We took advantage of Radley's inability to lie flat when presenting, resulting in an offside line very close to the ball giving an advantage. When combined with how many times Radley ran backwards or sideways rather than forward, it gave Bedford lots of lovely opportunities.

PSc



U16s Rugby 7s Squad

◀ RUGBY SEVENS

The penultimate week of term saw the Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens tournament – now the world's largest rugby tournament with over 14,000 pupils taking part. Following a superb showing at QE Barnet tournament the previous week, the U14 team won all of their matches on day one to reach the last 32. Unfortunately, they lost out to a strong outfit from Wales and Harrow. However, they can reflect on promising first season on the circuit, having beaten Wellington College and Tonbridge on their way to the National Sevens. There was a very strong turnout to sessions and, as a result, they were able to field two teams.

The U15 team unfortunately had their biggest tournament cancelled, the Wimbledon College John Pieroni Sevens, and were unable to defend the cup the previous year's group had won. They were unbeaten in the Stowe Sevens and performed well in the Perse Floodlit Sevens.

The U16 boys started the National Sevens with confidence,

having won the Perse School tournament the previous Friday and finished runner up at Oakham Sevens. They won all four games in some style on day one to reach the last 32. On day two, they qualified for the last eight in the cup, beating Clifton College 19-17 to secure progression to the semi-final. While they narrowly lost to Trinity, to finish in the top four teams out of 200 was a superb achievement.

The U18s made slow progress in their season and the run up to the National competition was certainly not plain sailing. They could take heart from performances against Eton College, Hurstpierpoint and Bloxham. At the National Sevens, they impressed with their first three games, which was enough for them to finish 2nd in the group and progress to the plate competition. They gallantly fought in the plate on day two, although a couple of agonising losses meant that they would progress no further. To finish in the top 24 schools in the country is a testament to the quality of the rugby sevens programme and the boys' hard work and determination.



U18s Rugby 7s Squad



U15s Rugby 7s Squad



U14s Rugby 7s Squad



HOCKEY

1ST XI

The hockey programme was in September, with three training sessions helping the 1st XI prepare for the indoor regional competition. The boys played great hockey, but were outclassed by Ipswich who topped the group and qualified for national finals. There were positives from the tournament and plenty of learning opportunities for the squad.

In the last days of the Christmas break, the 1st XI travelled to Rugby for preseason. The tournament saw them put strong performances together which showed great promise for the season. The team finished the day unbeaten, winning against Bloxham, Uppingham and Princethorpe, before drawing to Rugby. Overall, the tournament was a success and would prepare the side for the season.

Uppingham away: The team's first block fixture of the season. We found ourselves 4-2 down with ten minutes to play. But an inspired Tom Bates performance in the second half, saw the full-time score level at 4-4. Hayward's wonder ball into Simmo was mouth-watering. A tough start with a point on the board.

Stamford: The first cup game of the season. After strong runs in previous years, the team were up for what would be a tough game. It was almost the complete performance, winning 3-0.

Oundle: The lad's confidence was high, heading into what would be an attritional game against a strong side. The game finished 1-1. Our finishing and discipline cost us.

Uppingham: After the frustration in the first block fixture, we drew Uppingham in the cup at home. The conditions were perfect for a fast, free-flowing game of hockey for two strong sides. We took the lead early on before Uppingham scored either side of halftime. We deservedly scored late on taking the game into extra time. With no goals scored in extra time, the game finished 2-2. Dreaded shuffles would follow. Goalkeeper Josh Addo stood up when needed the most, along with the outfield players; Bayley(C), Hampel, J Dagg and E Dagg all getting us over the line in a cup classic.

Felsted: Confidence was high following the success in the cup. Felsted had some extremely talented players who outran our midfield. They scored a late equaliser and thanks to superb short corner defending from Mullaney, the spoils were shared finishing 2-2.

The Leys: Following a strong start, the team wanted to build momentum. The Leys proved to be a strong opponent and despite a strong Bedford performance, they won the game 2-0. ►



◀ **Magdalen College:** The boys set off in high spirits for the next round of the cup with positive news of creative wizard Tom Bates returning to the side. Magdalen proved tough, with some very talented players. The 4-1 defeat dropped us out of the cup, in frustrating style, with discipline and finishing being our weakness.

Harrow: A day after exiting the cup, the lads faced Harrow. The team had new faces coming into the side, which saw a fantastic performance result in a 3-0 victory.

The Perse: After bouncing back from the cup defeat, the squad wanted to continue the form. However, a strong outfit would prove too much for us, following a tough 3 matches in a week. Perse came out as deserved winners, 4-1.

Oakham: After a tough previous week, we bounced back positively. We won the game 3-1, despite wasting numerous chances to turn it into a cricket score. At full-time, despite the win, there was some disappointment with the numerous chances wasted.

Hitchin: The penultimate fixture of the season. The lads showed progress we had made throughout the season. We emphatically won the game 9-1 and finally managed to combine all parts of our game.

OB's: The annual OB's fixture is always a highlight. The OBs had some talented players and it proved to be a great learning opportunity. Despite the vast talent they had, the team were keen to show what we were capable of. We played some good hockey which once again showed how far we had come as a team.

Overall, the season was greatly successful, with lots of highs and plenty of learning opportunities for the core of next year's squad. Everyone who represented the 1st XI can look back on the season with a great deal of pride both individually and collectively. Many thanks must of course go to Mr Hoggett as the first team coach and the director of hockey, but also to all the coaches, members of staff, parents

and players who all contributed to a vastly successful hockey season at Bedford across all age groups.

SQUAD: W. Hayward, Z. Hone, A. Allen, T. Bates, J. Addo, S. Cutler, F. Hampel, O. Simmonds, F. Drake-Lee, O. Smith, F. Dickson, S. Mullaney, S. Bayley, J. Dagg, E. Dagg, O. Jewers

2ND XI

Won 6, Drew 1, Lost 2

The season started off with a clinical 4-0 win over Uppingham, this feat made even more impressive considering that many of the squad hadn't trained together. Team chemistry, however, was there for all to see, setting us up for a successful forthcoming season.

We met a formidable Stamford side, drawing 1-1 after leaving everything on the field. In the games that followed, the team returned to previous form with a solid 4-0 win over Oundle and successive wins against Felsted (2-0) and The Leys (1-0). Going into half term, the boys were unbeaten – but our toughest challenges were yet to come.

After the break, and with Upper Sixth still feeling the sting of a last-minute defeat in the previous year, we faced The Perse in a tight end-to-end battle. Tied at 1-1 with two minutes to go, a brief lapse in concentration gifted Perse the win, ending our unbeaten streak in spite of displaying a very high standard of hockey.

This loss would consequently motivate the team for the remainder of the season, with home wins against Oakham (3-1) and Stowe (2-1) who were both consistent sides.

An away fixture to Merchant-Taylors was our last of the season; having played their hearts out in all games up to this



point, they finally ran out of steam and succumbed to a heart-crushing 6-0 defeat. For the Upper Sixth this was a sour note to end on and didn't reflect the fantastic season that preceded this particular game.

18 goals scored and only 5 conceded (not including the last game) spoke volumes about the team's tenacious defence and strong attacking presence. Crucially, the season was enjoyed by the whole team; the improvement of players could not have happened without the tactical input of Mr Burgess, whose dedication cannot be understated.

SQUAD: E. Briers (C), S. Cutler, O. Briggs, O. Bymolen, S. Elder, T. Barnes, I. Dutson, O. Needham, W. Trobe, J. Welch, T. Taylor, J. Guest, T. Rai, O. Phillips, C. Faulkner, F. Drake-Lee

3RD XI

Won 4, Drew 2, Lost 4

The 3rd XI season was full of all the elements you would expect from a Bedford 3rd XI side; fun, laughs, camaraderie and winning a couple of games on the way. With a mix of Lower and Upper Sixth, the team connected within the first training session, becoming apparent that chemistry was certainly not lacking.

Taylor led us through the first two fixtures. It became clear that he was too good, so he signed a season-long contract with the 2nds, and we lost our talisman.

Nevertheless, Upper Sixth and Bedford School Hockey veterans Everitt and Mitchell took the reins. After two losses on the road, there was little hope when travelling to Oundle. However, Frederik Simmen chose not to feel the cold and went on to score two goals inside the first 10 minutes. Two

more scores at the start of the second half put Bedford in a strong position leading by 4 with 20 minutes to go. Unfortunately, Rai decided to play a needless one-two with Everitt, which saw us concede a soft goal. 5 minutes later we found the back of the net again. Luckily, the referee blew the whistle and Bedford took the win.

After our first win of the season, we doubled our tally against Felsted with a 1-0 victory. Wallis found the back of the net with a rocket from a penalty corner that left the rest of the team concerned that he too would sign a contract with the 2nd XI.

We welcomed The Leys School on a rainy afternoon, going down 2-0 in the early stages. Basra pulled one back and we went into half time one goal down. Mr Wise briefed us on the importance of being clinical in the D. What followed in the second half was anything but. The game ended 2-1; training that week was spent shooting.

The next game prompted confusion when we saw we were playing the Eton College U16C. Mr Wise quickly reminded us how embarrassing it would be if we lost on home turf, which motivated us to win 6-1 with a brace from Wallis, Mitchell dominating the midfield and bagging three assists.

A very weak team due to illness came up against Oakham, although somehow we managed to escape with a 0-0. Our next game was a 4-0 win against Stowe, with Cameron-Fraser, Cook and Cracknell performing very well - though this game was not without controversy as there were reports Burton-Bye played less than 3 minutes. It was later found he had played 7 minutes, so no harm done.

Our final game was a trip to Merchant Taylors' where we played on the 1st XI pitch. We found out that they only had 10 players, so we loaned them a player. Phillips was quick to put his hand up, and decided to play the best hockey he played all season - for another team. With a plethora of shots from

◀ both sides a high-scoring thriller was expected, but the game ended 0-0.

Another successful season for the mighty 3rd XI - we look forward to next season, praying one of the Y12s will be a prolific striker. A special thanks go to Beckmann, our goalkeeper even though he was in Fifth form. Without him, results would have been dire. Additionally, thank you to Mr Wise who put up with our inability to hit the target throughout the season!

Tanay Rai

SQUAD: T. Mitchell (Captain), W. Everitt (Vice-Captain), H. Burton-Pye, F. Simmen, G. Worthington, T. Cameron-Fraser, C. Faulkner, B. Cook, J. Harte, R. Cracknell, C. Wallis, O. Phillips, H. Basra, T. Rai, F. Beckmann, J. Guest, T. Taylor, I. Dutson, J. Welch, O. Needham, T. Barnes, W. Trobe.

U16A

Played 12 Won 8 Lost 4

The season began disjointed, with examinations getting in the way of training. We took on Stowe in the first round of the cup. We were deserving of our 3-goal lead, and with 12 minutes to go we were looking to the next round. However, we should probably have been looking at the opposition who scored three quick goals. The game was decided by penalty flicks and we

were dumped into the Plate competition. A trip to Uppingham two days later saw a resilient performance and we registered our first win. The following games against Stamford and Oundle were frustrating. We played well but couldn't convert our efforts into goals, losing both 2-1. We had a chance to make amends against Stamford again, in the next round of the Plate. This was the turning point of our season, and fully deserved a 6-1 victory. The home fixture against The Leys saw us dominate but woes in front of goal returned. We lost 0-1. The tough fixtures kept coming, facing The Perse at home. The Perse's U16s are one of the top teams in the country at this age and previously comprehensively beat us. However, this was to be our day. Our passing was crisp, our movement slick and our finishing clinical – the giant killing. We then travelled to Eton for another Plate game – we won comfortably, progressing to the East Final. This saw a repeat of our first game of the season, against Stowe. Confidence was high and the incentive of righting the wrong was all the motivation we needed. A 4-0 victory left us thinking what might have been. There was little time to dwell on this as we faced Altrincham Grammar in the National Semi Final. With no fixtures we didn't know what to expect from the Manchester side, but we identified their main players and adapted our plan accordingly. It was a nervy game, but we came away with a deserved victory and progressed to the final at Lea Valley. Before then we had one more block fixture, facing Merchant Taylor's at home. Several boys had been part of the U16 squad, who performed brilliantly at Roslyn Park. We went into the game with fatigue and injuries. The team needed a spark, provided by Harry



Townsend, who scored on debut resulting in a 1-0 victory. We arrived at The Olympic Park in confident mood. After a rustic warm-up, we were ready for our moment on the pitch that is home to GB men and women. Both teams started nervously, and we conceded first. It was the firing up needed and we never looked back. Jack Down's finish drew us level at half time. We were dominant in the second half and a determined, selfless run by George Sivills set up Sammy Inman, to score. Will Jackson had little to do in the second half, but like all good goal keepers, was there when it mattered most, pulling off a superb save. We ended the season as Tier 2 National Plate Champions. Thanks to the parents who supported us and to all who helped coach.

JEM

SQUAD: S. Inman (C), H. Whitfield (VC), I. Bakasa, S. Barnes, F. Barnett-Vincent, C. Collard, B. Coomber, L. Davis, J. Down, K. Fisher, D. French, W. Jackson, G. Knight, J. Lee, A. Mokhtar-Esteban, N. Silk, G. Sivills, H. Townsend

U16B

Won 3, Lost 4

Ably led by Ilic, the U16Bs made a strong start with away wins against Uppingham (2-0), Stamford (6-0) and Oundle (5-2). Fairhead was pivotal as goalkeeper, marshalling his defence to draw fear via their aggressive press and presence to repel many an opposition attack.

The midfield group provided distribution and an attacking threat which fed a dangerous top three, including top goal scorer Townsend.

The toughest fixtures of the calendar against powerhouses Perse and Merchant Taylor led to narrow and hard-fought defeats, but the squad maintained exceptional morale and worked tirelessly in all games – well done to all for their efforts.

SQUAD: N. Bantock, D. Biggs, B. Bruce-White, A. Chan, C. Diamond, S. Fairhead, D. Hudson, L. Ilic, A. James, H. L'Estrange, J. Lee, K. Okusaga, A. Reid, A. Roces Peñacoba, M. Shepley, H. Townsend, E. Wootton, K. Yu

U14B

For the U14B team, the 2024 season was an exciting one. We started strongly, with a 4-0 win against Uppingham, but tough opposition made many of our games particularly exciting, none more so than the closely fought match against Oundle, which unfortunately went against us in the end. However, the improvement throughout the season was evident to all – we began to work better as a team and consequently, by the end of the season, we were creating plenty of chances to make goals for the team. The addition of Theo Rees and Will Moore to our team partway through the season, and the energy they brought with them, not to mention Theo's shooting skills, helped us gain some more convincing victories!

Another mention should go to Oliver Whittam who, when our goalkeeper became injured early in the season, stepped up to take on the role. With no previous experience as a

hockey goalkeeper, his footballing skills came in handy as he made some incredible saves (and less and less went through his legs as the season went on)!

Although improving our shooting skills might help us score even more goals than we already have, there is clearly plenty of skill in our players. I hope that over the next couple of years, if we all continue to improve, we might enjoy some strong games, and perhaps even an unbeaten season.

U14D

The boys played well and with heart but in some games we were beaten due to facing a better opposition or in a very close game. Despite this, I could not be prouder with how the season went as a whole. In our first game of the season it was potentially our tightest game ever against Uppingham. However, we started off with the opening blow and then hit the post before half time. The second half we all switched off and Uppingham stuck the ball between the posts twice for us - a 1-2 loss. Against Kimbolton we drew with them 1-1 (a repeat later in the season) in a very similar fashion. In these games it was Kimbolton scoring first, before we fought back twice. The next game was our toughest loss against Oakham. In this game they took a goal very early on, completely catching us off guard to score a second before the start of the second half. This 2-0 deficit we faced and some good words by Mr Nicholls at half time meant we went back out looking like a different team, with nothing to lose. We played some of our best hockey of the season and we kept them down to only scoring one goal. We struck the posts 3 times, with the game finishing 3-0 to Oakham. Furthermore, throughout the whole season the lads played some brilliant hockey with flair and skills from Milo Goodwin and Max Middleton, and no nonsense tackles from Isaac Tang and Vyom Vetts. Put with incredible keeping by George Harrison and Harry Maling. Overall, we have learnt from this experience. I believe that we have all bonded and worked as a team.





ROWING

1ST VIII

2023-2024 saw considerable progress, resulting in the most successful season in recent years.

Early on seven members of the crew started the GB trials process, setting up the season well and showing the potential of this year's crew. Despite the frequent poor weather and flooding, significant progress was made for the transition from sweeping to sculling.

In the second term, we struggled yet again with poor weather, having to utilise rowing machine and cross fit sessions. Whilst the crew only very briefly managed to train on the water and with only one race in mixed eights at Peterborough Head, the crew raced well in the Championship Vllls division in the School's Head of the River Race. We placed eighth overall, matching the school's previous best placing, however we were over a minute quicker and much closer to the top three crews than previously.

We spent five days in Sarnen, Switzerland, using the Swiss National team's facilities and training on Lake Sarnen. During the camp, we made large technical gains and put down serious mileage to maintain fitness levels going into the regatta season, which considering the progress from eleventh the prior year to ninth this year, paid off. At the main event, the Henley Royal Regatta, we drew Eton College in the first round. Despite a rough start to the race and a tough opponent, we finished a 1/3 of a length down on a crew who had finished in the top five at National School's Regatta.

Overall, the crew were happy with the season but undoubtedly felt as if there was more to gain for the coming season.

James Sprange

1ST VIII CREW:

S. Gildersleve, A. Black (Capt. of Boats), H. Tolmie, D. Mitchell, R. Apps, F. Tongue, J. Sprange, L. Pollen-Brooks, D. McGregor, T. Reader



2ND VIII

The school had its most committed squad to date. Up to this point we have been able to produce three eights and a coxless quad, with each eight setting new school records – most notably the 2nd VIII at the School’s Head of the River coming 5th (18th overall) and beating the school record, set by the 1st VIII in 2018. With the 1st VIII coming 8th (8th overall) the achievement of having two boats in the top 20 has only been completed by a few other schools.

In regatta season the crew continued their streak of winning all events entered at the 158th Bedford International & Amateur. The Junior 18 Coxed Four won each heat, semi-final and final. In the R.H.H. Symonds Memorial Goblet (2nd VIII) we pushed away from Latymer Upper to 1 length and finished 3 feet ahead of Radley in the final.

Then the National School’s Regatta. The cross headwind at Dorney – the most difficult to race in – meant we had to row the race of our lives to stand a chance of medalling. After the 1900-metre time-trial we managed 5th, beating Eton by 0.2 seconds and only 2 seconds behind Shiplake in first. We snuck into the ‘A’ final, knocking St. Edwards, Hampton and

Latymer into the ‘B’ final.

Our competitors had excellent starts, meaning we had to fight our way through the field. At halfway, we pushed back onto Radley; a call from our cox in the last quarter “I don’t want to come last!” – we held 5th place.

Henley trials is an opportunity for younger years, which brings joy to some but equally disappointment to others. We effectively gained a new crew as the order changed. At Marlow International Regatta we discovered that Hampton and Eton had also improved. A good start in the final put us straight into the lead, which we held against Norwich’s 1st VIII to halfway, before losing our lead over 3rd – 7th in the last 250m of the race; as frustrating as this was, it proved we had what it took to qualify for the Temple Challenge Cup at Henley, with unmatched time trial capabilities.

Come Henley Royal Qualifiers, we practiced our start against Star Club – managing to secure a 1 length lead at the ¼ mile. Cometh the final hour we charged down the famous course, with the boat being on a knife edge of speed and efficiency. Later, it was announced over the tannoy that Bedford had qualified for the Temple Challenge Cup. At this

◀ moment a section in the boating area erupted into a roar. We had qualified for the most prestigious regatta in the world, a feat which Bedford School had never done. The following day Sir Steve Redgrave C.B.E. read out the draw and announced we would race Oxford Brookes Univ. 'A' – we then realised we would race on national television against the favourites and holders. On a Sunday training session at Henley, we learned that we managed to qualify in the position of 9th and as the fastest school crew.

Acknowledgements for Dr W. Suthers, Mr S. Colliver and Mr J. Foster who coached us to this incredible achievement. Also to our competitors, Eton College, who cheered us out of the tent to race Oxford Brookes. As commented by Matthew Brittin “Qualifying was this 2nd VIII’s real race, so they will just be enjoying this moment here”.

William Cave

TEMPLE VIII S.H.O.R.R. CREW:

E. Newton-Walters (Bow), C. Rahwangi Gough, W. Cave, B. Williams, A. Harrison, L. Pollen-Brooks, A. Deane, S. Lock (Stroke), C. Bonnington (Cox)

TEMPLE VIII BEDFORD REGATTA CREW:

W. Baker (Bow), E. Newton-Walters, A. Harrison, M. Moretto, D. McGregor, B. Williams, W. Cave, S. Lock (Stroke), C. Bonnington (Cox)

TEMPLE VIII N.S.R. CREW:

E. Newton-Walters (Bow), C. Rahwangi Gough, A. Deane, M. Moretto, A. Harrison, B. Williams, W. Cave, S. Lock (Stroke), C. Bonnington (Cox)

TEMPLE 1ST VIII H.R.R. CREW:

E. Newton-Walters (Bow), M. Moretto, A. Deane, S. Breed, A. Harrison, C. Rahwangi Gough, W. Cave, B. Williams (Stroke), D. Shirley (Cox)

3RD VIII

The majority of the eight spent the autumn term refining their skills in small boats. We came together in the big fast eights in the new year. We already had some experience of the eight during the Pangbourne training camp in October, which was cut short due to poor weather and high streams.

Just as the crew started to settle, the first and second eights became plagued by illness leading to the loss of some of our rowers. The almighty presence of Matthias Pascall and Henry McCutcheon effortlessly filled this void. We took to Peterborough ready for our first race. With the special appearance of Charlie Eggleton as cox of the crew (something he became surprisingly good at over the year) we never lacked motivation and produced a fine result. Luckily, we found Charlie’s replacement in Angus Timmins who quickly adapted to cox, something he had never done before. With a cox embedded into the lineup of the eight we set our sights on school’s head of the river.

After hours of training resulting in blood, sweat and tears for some of the crew, we took to the Thames, with excitement to showcase our talents. An outstanding recent 6:40 2k from Michael Moretto and a strategic switch for Will Baker away from seven-seat to five due to his “immense power” did wonders in helping the rhythm as Charlie gracefully took his seat. A late change in cox meant David Shirley came into the crew, his calls guiding us past the opposition to a 3rd place finish.

We set our sights on catching 2nd place Eton. The crew had real connection and drive to succeed. With Mike’s ascendancy to the 2nd VIII we lacked power. The addition of a strong Oscar Jooste and Nate Sharpe quickly resolved this, and as Bedford Regatta approached the excitement grew. We learned we would gain 2nd VIII, star rower Clement with a chance to go far. We entered open eights and took a commanding victory over Pembroke, although falling short to Emmanuel College in the semis. The main event was the J18 3rd VIII category. First up was Radley, with a clear size advantage. Our grit and determination drove us to a remarkable win which gave us immense hope for our



upcoming final against Eton. The crew had clear focus, storming the course with the best row we had produced and defeating Eton. This was the highlight of the season for the 3rd VIII.

Sadly, a culmination of factors led to a disappointing performance missing out on a medal and coming 4th in the A-final at National School's Regatta. This was despite Finley's grit, a symbol of how the crew faced difficulties but never let their heads drop. It was an amazing season; one cemented in the history books.

I would like to offer our thanks to our coaches during the season, Miss Bowis and Miss Owens.

Hugo Wilson

3RD VIII CREW:

H. McCutcheon, O. Jooste, M. Pascall, C. Eggleton, S. Jutla, W. Tweedie, H. Pascall, T. Wright, W. Baker, F. Mitchell, N. Sharpe, H. Wilson, A. Timmins, D. Shirley

COLTS A

Starting the year, the team rowed countless strokes on the ergo and practiced their sculling; my highlights of winter are the early morning sessions pushing off in negative degrees, and returning with icy riggers. Most of the crew came out of the term with wins from the autumn head races.

During half term the squad went to the Pangbourne camp for a proper introduction. The coaches gathered information off the telemetry on all rowers. For some it was their first time on the computer, which is always interesting. We set our goal for the year; To reach the

'A' final at National Schools' Regatta (NSR).

Spring resulted in limited training due to wet weather, a frustration with our burning desire to get some water time. This showed with a defeat in our first event – Peterborough Head, where St. Paul's beat us by a whole minute. The aim – close the gap. We put in the hours and went to the Schools' Head of the River (SHORR). Our first test was the champion eights, rather than first eights. With some suffering illness and injury, we came 15th – not a highlight, but the only way was up.

Sarnen delivered an upward trajectory; with a new boat and telemetry, the crew were able to progress (my favourite part when we managed to hold the 2nd VIII). With a structured GCSE revision programme, we learnt to balance academic work with sport.

Miss Owens set us targets in the summer term, motivational quotes and all. We introduced the bucket rig, meaning the stroke and 7 seat swapped sides. Deardon moved to stroke (on bowside) and Payne at 7 (on stroke-side), delivering more speed. Leading up to NSR, we beat Abingdon at Wallingford regatta. An 'A' final was possible. We will never forget rowing through an eight after being a length down for the first kilometre. In the week leading up to National Schools', the crew was feeling unmotivated and tired.

The final crew headed to Eton Dorney; with our hearts on our sleeves, we put everything into the time trial. Miss Owens called us round to address the situation – we had made the A final! Coming from not even being in the pack at the SHORR, to 5th going into the A final at National Schools' Regatta and beating Westminster and Latymer, who we had been behind all year. We rested for hours, trying to drain the lactic acid.

When it was finally time to race, we were ready. Once in a final anything can happen, we hoped for a medal. In the end, we held our position and finished 5th. The 5th ►





◀ best J16 crew in the country. To back up the performance at NSR, we had Star Club Regatta. There, we had to compete with Eton College, managing to beat them by half a length, even with a different rig. With over half the crew training in temple eights, we didn't meet until Thames Valley Park Regatta. We finished the season with a comfortable victory.

Finally, a special thank you to the coaches that have helped us. These include Miss Owens, Dr Suthers, Mr Hone, Mr Foster, and Miss Andrews.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS REGATTA CREW:

J. Pinkney (Bow), O. Payne, S. Breed, D. Meier, B. Rioch, T. Northey, C. Spencer, S. Deardon (Stroke), J. Logan (Cox)

J15A

It was a frustrating start for the J15s, with poor weather leading to cancelled training and races. The crew adapted well to land training and after a slow start, finished on a high with dominant performances in our last three regattas.

The first race of the season was BASHER Invitational. Since we spent little time on the water, the crew felt a little inexperienced, albeit in the same boat as all other crews. We had a promising performance, finishing behind St Paul's, but ahead of Westminster, Shiplake, Eton, and Abingdon to come third. It was good to finally race, but we had a long way to go and could perform better.

Peterborough Head of the Nene was our first long-distance race. The prospect of racing over 5km was daunting, not least because we were racing the J16s! We finished in just under 20 minutes, coming 7th. There was room for improvement, but the crew felt good, getting experience of long-distance racing. Alas, the Schools' Head was the next victim of bad weather, ultimately cancelled for the J15s. We raced instead at Dorney, but missing out was a blow.

This was the story of the Spring term; plagued by bad weather and lack of water training. We missed out on a lot of races, which became a source of much frustration.

The theme continued at our Easter camp at Radley. Unable to row on the Thames, we had to drive to Dorney every day. Despite this, the Radley camp was a highlight of the season, allowing us to bond, have time together as a crew and offering a welcome break from revision for end-of-term assessments. The camp allowed us to gain experience using Radley's excellent facilities, such as the indoor rowing tank to improve technique. We also had a lot of time on the water which was a relief after earlier disruptions.

The water time turned out to be very valuable, and in the first session back in the summer term it felt as if something clicked. We were suddenly rowing much better and in time. Of course, we felt elated, and I believe that this change shifted our outlook. It was the key to our focus and diligence in training both on and off the water, which set us up for success later in the term.

Despite not getting the result that we wanted at National Schools regatta due to multiple injuries and replacements in the crew, we persevered, and the second half term was characterised by multiple successes. Our last three regattas of the season were Star Regatta, Thames Valley Park and Peterborough Junior Sculling Head, putting in dominant performances and coming home with medals. The final race at Peterborough was a definite high of the season, since after only a week of sculling training back in the octo we won by a large margin. The trip to Henley was an opportunity to relax and cheer on our senior boats in the last race of the season. Although the seniors didn't have the performance they wanted, it was a fun day out and a great bonding opportunity for the crew.

After such a frustrating start to the season, we were pleased to leave things on a high, and as a crew we are already looking towards the J16 season as an opportunity to try and mirror the successes that we finished this season with.

Oscar Qualtrough

J15A CREW:

*L. Barrett, O. Surley, O. Qualtrough, S. Yeomans,
G. Wooding-Jones, F. Miller, H. Pask, S. Else, A. Sohanpal (Cox)*

J15B

This year has been an amazing experience. Training began in Autumn Term with ergs and circuits on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and whilst going on the water wasn't available, it was great to see loads of us at training.

Spring Term, while it did let us go on the water, unfortunately faced unusually wet weather. Key races like Star Head, Bedford Head, Reading Head and others were sadly cancelled due to flooding. But the weather did allow us to go to a select few, including BASHER 1 and Peterborough Head of the Nene.

Radley annual camp ran in the Easter Holidays; boys commented on the great experience, despite bad weather. Summer term was a lot better for weather, being able to go on the water nearly uninterrupted. Racing was a mixture of smashing results with a couple of mishaps. Bedford Regatta saw misfortune for the B and C crews; with C losing brutally to St. Pauls but overshadowed by B Crew crashing into star island during their race.

Star Regatta luckily went without accidents for us. In B crew, we were beaten by a joint A/B crew from Shiplake, but we tired them enough for an amazing win by our A's. The B crew won the C category of the B Final at National School's, and at BASHER 2, we came in 4th out of 32 crews from a variety of schools.

Peterborough Regatta finished the season with the B's landing 5th against a competition of 5 A crews, including our own, who won the championship. It's been a fabulous year for the B crew and I'm very excited for what's coming in Year 11.

Ralph Franklin

J15B CREW:

*C. Kopoi, A. Cao, O. Hayward, J. Lincoln, G. Craven,
R. Franklin, F. Leventon-Oliver, L. Woodhouse, I. Raddan (Cox)*

J15C

The season for the J15 C crew has been full of ups and downs, with the hardest part being able to create a full crew for our races. The season was sadly disrupted by lots of difficult weather, however, we made up for it by trying our hardest at the races we did complete.

One of the first races was the Peterborough Head in which we did not disappoint. Some of the crew then headed off to Radley training camp which was once again disrupted by the wonderful English weather, so they headed to Dorney lake instead.

Moving into the summer term, our first race was Bedford Regatta where we faced off against St.Pauls. We unfortunately ended up losing but worked hard for our final race, Star regatta. The first race was the semifinals against Shiplake, knowing that if we won, we would be racing our A boat. It's safe to say we didn't want to win this race! Despite trying our best, we lost, however

we definitely tired Shiplake out, giving the A boat an easier win!

It has been an honour for all the boys to be a part of this crew and to also be the final crew that Mr Messling will coach at Bedford School. Thank you, Sir. We've all learnt a lot and now look forward to next year.

Olly Biffa

J15C CREW:

*C. Kopoi (Bow), A. Cao, C. Gandesha, A. Martin, R. Franklin,
O. Cochrane, W. Feltham, O. Biffa (Stroke), E. Kenrick (Cox)*

J14A

The J14As met on a cold December day in the lower gym. It was clear that we had all had different rowing experiences in the past, or none at all. In the first term we made a lot of progress on and off the water.

Over the Easter Holidays we endured a tough Radley camp, making progress. Our first regatta was BASHER. We had a solid time trial although we caught a couple of crabs and finished 2nd place in both finals. We trained hard in order to prepare for our home regatta. On a hot May day, our first race was in the evening against Radley. We had a solid start and luckily for us Radley crashed into the bank within five strokes. We were clear before they began rowing again – a comfortable win. In the next round we raced Hampton (the eventual winners) who beat us comfortably. We headed back to Dorney for National Schools. An adequate time trial put us into the B final. In the race we had a poor start and finished 4th, resulting in 10th overall.

Following National Schools, we realised how successful we could be. At Star Regatta we cruised into the final in the Octo despite beating the B crew by only one length. We faced Kings Ely – who won the B final at National Schools – with a solid start we burst under town bridge in the lead, holding on to win our first regatta. At Star Regatta the quad was knocked out in the first as well as a double of Jacob O'Neill and Olly Meier. Pascal Bienert crashed in the first race of the day resulting in him being knocked out. Dylan Uppal raced in a single and lost in the final.

Following Star Regatta we headed to Thames Valley Park. One of the mixed quads finished an impressive 2nd and the Octo also finished 2nd. Next, we raced at the Peterborough Junior championships. We started in the Octo where we had a good time trial placing us 2nd. In the final we had a strong race finishing 2nd to Windsor Boys. In the afternoon, the quad of Hamish Timmins, Seb Warner, Ben Zanna, Arthur Fitzpatrick, and Dhruv Patel had a good time trial qualifying second. In the final they finished 2nd, beating Windsor Boys and qualifying in 1st place in the quad. There were also two doubles at Peterborough, one was made up of Pascal Bienert and Rory Grant, the other made up of Jacob O'Neill and Olly Meier. Both rowed well to qualify for the A final. The double of O'Neill and Meier finished 4th, whilst the double of Bienert and Grant won a brilliant gold.

The J14As season was one of significant improvement and development. Thank you to Mrs Maltby for coaching and helping us. Special mention to Pascal Bienert who leaves us this year to return to Germany after 1 year. He will be missed in the boathouse for his attitude and ability. We look forward to the future of our crew.

Hamish Timmins & Arthur Fitzpatrick

CRICKET

1ST XI

The team started pre-season with matches against Clifton College and RGS Worcester. Although we lost both games, our aim was to get players together, for batters to spend some time at the crease, for bowlers to get used to bowling on grass again and for Mr Thurston (returning from playing in Australia) to start his role as 1st XI coach.

The season proved tough, managing just the three wins and two very credible draws. Wins came against Stephen Perse – in the National T20, Felsted – in the T10 Competition and Haberdashers in the 50 over block fixture. Draws came from 2-day matches against Tonbridge and the Old Bedfordians.

Tonbridge was arguably one of the best comebacks of all time and possibly the season's best performance due to the innings his school career from Captain, Bayley. Bedford batted first, disappointingly bowled out for just 87 in 37 overs. Tonbridge scored a quickfire 257 in 41 overs, subsequently declaring. Despite losing a quick wicket, Haroon (43) and Poothi (73) batted well to give us a fighting chance of a draw. 4 quick wickets brought Bayley to the crease; batting positively from ball one and scoring freely all around the ground, he amassed an incredible 136.

This set up a scintillating last session, Tonbridge requiring 160 runs to win in just 23 overs – whilst it was a tough target to reach, it was possible. Hunt led from the front taking 4, however Tonbridge were resolute. It all came down to the last over – to win, we needed 2

wickets; Tonbridge required 10 runs. Determination could have got them the win, but they lost their 9th wicket with two balls remaining. We were perhaps favourites with 1 wicket needed, however Tonbridge decided to play out the last two balls, resulting in the draw. It was a fantastic game – all credit to Tonbridge who played very well throughout, and to Bayley for his outstanding century.

As mentioned – and despite excellent captaincy from Bayley – it was a disappointing season overall. There were, however, several excellent individual performances:

D. Chapman, 5 for 44 v MCC | J. Dunk, 70 v Stephen Perse School | D. Chapman, 4 for 14 v Oundle School | A. Poothi, 73 v Tonbridge | S. Bayley, 136 v Tonbridge | M. Hunt, 4 for 77 v Tonbridge | A. Poothi, 62 not out v Haberdashers | M. Haroon, 55 and 100 not out v OBs | J. Basquille, 75 v OBs | T. Baddeley, 62 not out v OBs | L. Mathew, 5 for 48 v Old Bedfordians

GSS

TEAM: S. Bayley (C), M. Hunt (VC), J. Dunk (VC), D. Chapman, M. Haroon, T. Baddeley, F. Drake-Lee, J. Welch, S. Mullaney, C. Brett, B. Bruce-White, Z. Jepp, B. Maddaford, L. Mathew, A. Poothi, J. Basquille, H. L'Estrange, O. Briggs, J. Dagg, A. Iarala, O. Jewers, O. Simmonds



MAJOR COLOURS:

T. Baddeley, J. Welch, F. Drake-Lee



MINOR COLOURS:

M. Haroon, O. Jewers, S. Mullaney, O. Simmonds, A. Iarala





2ND XI

The 2nd XI began the summer on home turf against Rugby. Underwhelming to say the least as we were skittled for 105 on a sticky wicket, Dutson top scoring with 40. With tea fuelling the boys up, Trobe bowled a spell described as one of the best the school has seen (6 overs 3-4). Phillips bowled some looseners and erratic bowling from Bates and Tanay meant we struggled to keep them down. Rugby chased our 30-short total in 24 overs.

A T20 away at Oakham had the boys licking their lips. Anshul picked up 2 wickets and Trobe took a couple more meaning we had 127 to chase. However, our batting let us down and we fell short.

Against Uppingham, we learnt from our mistakes, won the toss and bowled first on a gem of a strip. Phillips and Briggs despite bowling tight weren't rewarded, AJ and Jepp helped to break the 100 partnership at drinks which gave the boys some confidence. We had a challenging task,

chasing 209 down in 30 overs. Yet, the strong pitch rewarded Poothi and Dicko with some great individual performances. Anshul scored an outstanding 95, Dicko fell in the 40s and Tom Wright came in with a nice 30, forming, as put by Mr Braithwaite - "the most gutsy chase I've seen and best win in 15 years of my time in the 2s"!

Oundle saw the boys beaming and back-to-back wins. Briggs and Phillips, the experienced bowlers, led the attack with Allen taking 2 on debut and Trobe picking a 3-for on what would be his last game of the season. Harry L'Estrange batted well, racking up 41 and the boys broke the unbeaten Oundle opposition going into Half-term winning 2/4 matches.

A bit of rain and some exams meant the boys struggled to get going at Abingdon, with some senior players away on Uni visits. Following this, Berkhamsted was rained off, meaning our next game was Stamford away.

A glorious day at Stamford saw us batting first. Unfortunately, we lacked discipline with wickets being thrown away. Neville picked a quick 20 and Hayward batted deep topping the score with 30 runs. After some tasty match tea, we were out again, and Jepp bowled tight with Jamie Hall and Phillips picking up 3 each. This wasn't quite enough as TFCs from Allen and AJ meant we were 20 short and suffered a loss.

Haberdashers at home and it was the last time out for the boys. Ben Bruce-White on his last game for the school picked up 2 and scored an exceptional 55. But the standout for the day was Bates who hit a 59 off about 30 - unreal scenes, with many convinced they had seen Lara incarnate after one beautiful cover drive for four.

3 wins and a few more losses, but a quality season and the lads move their separate ways with a promising season

Will Hayward



Mustafa Haroon
scoring 100 against OBS

TEAM:

L. Langridge, F. Dickson, A. Poothi, I. Dutson, J. Dagg,
B. Bruce-White, Z. Hone, G. Nevill, W. Hayward, J. Addo,
A. Buddineni, O. Phillips, T. Wright (c), A. James, L. Corrigan,
Z. Jepp, T. Bates, W. Trobe, T. Rai, M. Junaid, H. L'Estrange,
S. Cutler, A. Mishra, J. Hall, A. Proctor

◀ 4TH XI

The 4th XI produced some pleasing results against determined opposition, starting the season with a strong win by 45 runs against Oundle. Excellent bowling from Wallis and Smith helped take quick and crucial wickets. Barker was steadfast in his keeping; his reliability meant that Bedford could limit and control their opposition's run rate. A rainy day saw the first loss of the season at Rugby – their strong bowling attack early on made recovery difficult. Batting performances from Maddison and Basra helped to steady the middle order, but Rugby's team proved too strong.

The commitment to fixtures from the squad was admirable, with all showing excellent character and desire to improve throughout the season. By the end, we witnessed precision in fielding and steady batting performances. We look forward to seeing many of the boys next year with the same enthusiasm and determination.

TEAM:

B. Smith (C), O. Barker, K. Dlomu, A. Foddering, A. Khalid, T. Taylor, M. Verwoert, C. Wallis, A. Hasan, I. Maddison, P. Peters

U15A

We got off to a solid start in pre-season with a dominating win against RGS Worcester's 2nd team, including an impressive 100* from Curtis.

Our first game was against a very strong Rugby side who set 135 in 20 overs including 24-3 for Jepp. We were unable to chase the score, losing by 7 runs despite good six hitting at the end from Brett (34) and Nevill (19). We did, however, show promising signs with bat and ball.

The quarter final of the 30 over cup against Oundle saw an opening partnership of 63 from Corrigan and Patel – a good

foundation was lost, meaning the lower order had to get stuck in. Although a tight finish at the end, we lost by 1 wicket after dropping a catch, resulting in an early cup exit.

BMS demonstrated a very professional performance in the field when we met in the T20 county cup final – Bedford's chase, including a quick 41 from Curtis, sent us through to the T20 cup.

A 2nd meet with Oundle, and this time we came out on top with a convincing win with many notable performances. In contrast, Tonbridge in the annual 50 over game was less cause for celebration, being bowled out for 109; a disappointing result on the road. We picked up for Abingdon and Eton, delivering wins in both games, with the latter a result of a very strong bowling performance.

We faced NSB in the round of 16 in the T20 cup; after winning the toss and demonstrating some very good death bowling from Nevill, along with a solid contribution of 33 runs from Corrigan, we reached the quarter final. Stamford were our next opposition, and we chased the score in a comfortable 13 overs. Shrewsbury were our drawn opponents for the semi-final; a fantastic fielding display was not enough, with us coming up just 4 runs short.

Our final game resulted in victory against Haberdashers', chasing their score of 100 in 22 overs. Overall, we have had a good season, with some stand out performances.

U15C

Unbeaten last year, players were brimming with optimism and confidence for the season ahead. A drenched Rugby school saw a flying start, with skipper Morrow's high energy and spirit leading the way.

Good form continued against Oakham and Oundle, the former featuring a fabulous hatrick from new addition Mahony and clinical batting from Phillips (50*) at Oundle. The next three games, we took loses against good cricketing schools in Wellingborough U15As, Abingdon and Eton.



Our quality and unrivalled team spirit prevailed against Stamford thanks to accurate seam bowling from Taylor, a magical team hat-trick and an inspiring partnership from Phillips and Malik to seal the deal.

Other mentions must go to:

- Umar who dispatched many a bowler over the boundary for six
- Gutteridge's admirable performance as first-time wicketkeeper
- Dewe and Mahony who threatened the openers early with skilled swing bowling
- Uppal whose all-round cricketing skills kept opposition guessing
- Malik, ever reliable in the middle order Iacofano who was sublime in the field

It has been a thoroughly enjoyable season and a privilege to be in a team with so many great players!

Thomas Dewe

U14A

An eventful season started with a not-so-warm welcome from Rugby, with them tonking us for 195. Despite this, the boys came together nicely for our second home match, dismantling Oakham with special mention to Sharma for 50* retired.

A trip to Uppingham showcased clever spin from Wilson and deadly cutter from Barnes, restricting the rivals to 145 all out. Jackson and Moore put on a good batting display, but it wasn't enough to take the win. With Stowe cancelled due to weather, Oundle were next up at home. Mid-season injuries took out two of our best seam bowlers, giving an opportunity to call up James from the strong B team. After a delicious match tea, our chase saw the top order falling quickly; Bodfield stepped up, contributing 42, and a fairy tale start to his A team career for James (50*) brought home the win.

Derbyshire, and bowling from Wilson and Sharma limited the opposition to 134 for 9. Batting wasn't good enough on the day, almost getting over the line if not for the cruelty of a pea roller. On the road against Eton, Jackson and Barnes were attempting to save a collapse when the British weather washed us out.

The later stages of the season saw a win against Stamford coming from a quick chase, bowing out to BMS in the county cup final, and a very exciting run chase away at Haberdashers'. This was a great season for the boys, and we look forward to the next!

Tom Ulvert

U14B

Played 8 Won 7 Lost 1

Our challenge to the boys at the start of the season was to try as hard as they could to affect each moment of each game positively, whether batting, bowling, fielding or supporting. They all proved highly successful at doing so over the course of the eight games, earning plaudits from coaches and oppositions for showing an outstanding attitude.

Bowling Rugby out for a round century, with the wickets

being shared between the bowlers, and then heading to victory for the loss of just three wickets meant the season got off to a good start. After the next two weekends saw convincing wins against Oakham and Uppingham, George Wenn scored an excellent 70 from 73 balls versus Oundle. In this fixture, as for most of the season, the team's only shortcoming was giving away far too many extras and this is something they will need to address in future years.

Abingdon provided the closest game of the season. After a miserly bowling performance that saw Aled Wright and Taish Kaleem take three wickets apiece, George Millar set about the chase of 108 in grand style. When he departed for 45, however, nerves set in and it took a courageous last wicket stand by Kaleem and conscientious captain Tom Gray – plus the support of the A and C teams on the boundary – to help Bedford over the line. An erratic and under-par performance away at Eton saw the end of the winning streak but spirited innings by Harry Edward and Aaryan Bhukan proved bright spots on a day that included defeat, late tea and torrential rain!

The boys' response? To head to Stamford and come away with a win by 139 runs. Edwards offered a cavalier 86 but even this first-class effort was eclipsed by Elliot Allen's superb 100* from just 56 balls. Everyone had a bowl as Bedford defended 251/3 with ease. The final match, against The Haberdashers' Boys School Elstree saw Allen continue his commanding form; a fine half century and four wickets the result. Ultimately, though, cricket is a team game and it was the fact that each boy worked hard to eke out runs, accurate throws, dot balls and encouraging words that meant the season was so successful and fun.

NLH/ASx

TEAM:

E. Allen, F. Bantock, H. Barnett-Vincent, A. Bhukan, M. Budge, E. Demetrius-Louisy, H. Edward, T. Gray, N. James, T. Kaleem, K. Krishnaruban, M. Midgley, G. Millar, E. Stevenson, R. Stewart-Jones+, T. Sykes, M. Trueman, G. Wenn, A. Wright*

U14D & E:

The start of the season initially looked to be a repeat of previous years with rain stopping play on multiple occasions due to water-logged pitches at opponent schools. Fortunately, the summer gods were not to be kept indoors for the whole season allowing the D and E teams (both in combined form and separately) to get out onto the fields.

Few schools can match Bedford for the number of cricket teams we can put out, therefore team matches are not always level. The 2024 season saw solid performances from both the D and E teams, with wins against Oundle at home, Haileybury and Habs away. Sadly both teams were beaten at Eton; with rain pouring and teams completely soaked, it perhaps wasn't the best day out.

Some star performances across the games were shown by super-fast and accurate bowling by Vetts and excellent batting by Pettengell, Rai, Whittam and Fletcher – the former two hitting their retirement limits in our away game at Habs and being clapped off by both teams.

PSc



FOOTBALL

What began as a season of transition quickly evolved into one of (almost!) spectacular success for the 1st XI. A strong U16 looked to fill spaces vacated by last year's leavers. Pre-season is a term used loosely, as the last 64 of the cup, preliminary round 1, was scheduled for late September. A 3-2 win against Felsted saw strong performances from captain Tommie Baddeley and 5 debuts for U16 players, including a debut goal for George Gutteridge. Other goal scorers were Bakasa and Baddeley.

Our route to the quarter-finals included visits to Kings Ely, a relatively straightforward 3-1 victory (Peters, Talbot x2), and to South London to take on St Dunstan's. This and the subsequent quarter-final were highlights of the 1st XI season. A challenging match, with questionable refereeing and a depleted side, demanded that the boys show character to see the game through. This was epitomised by Ariyan Flora and Joe Maravala, with Bedford winning 3-2 (Maravala x2, Peters).

Spring brought the Mercian League. A sub-par performance saw us gift two goals to LGS, eventually losing 2-1 (Basquille). The boys rallied, trained harder than ever, and were rewarded with a win at title challengers Stamford, 5-1 (Talbot x3, Gutteridge, Bakasa). A frustrating fixture against Rugby followed, ending 1-1 (Dmytrenko), with buses being the centre of attention—the figurative bus parked by the opposition and the literal bus beached in mud. A tractor, coach Jason Wood armed with a shovel, and large sheets of carpet proved unsuccessful in securing our transport home!

Reigate, quarter-final, home turf... cometh the hour, cometh the man. A cup fixture against strong opposition again demonstrated talent and mental fortitude. Cheered through the final minutes of normal and extra time by the biggest crowd at a school match in recent years, the boys showed up when needed, hitting equalising goals, making last-ditch tackles, and maintaining a foothold. Then... Luke Langridge. Every penalty shootout requires a hero, and Luke duly obliged, making athletic save after save, including sparing blushes of Gutteridge and Baddeley. Bedford won 6-5 on penalties.

Victory against Oundle, 2-1 (Randerson, Baddeley), followed to maintain momentum as we headed towards our home semi-final vs Bancroft's. If the game were covered by vidiprinter, it would read: once-in-a-lifetime strike to take the lead for Bancroft's, goal-line clearance by a Bancroft defender,

penalty scored by Bancroft's, another goal-line clearance, an incredible save by the Bancroft goalkeeper, Bedford hit the post, Bedford hit the bar... 3-1 Bancroft's, and an exit at the most frustrating round of the competition.

There was a first Mercian League title to secure. Wellingborough, Uppingham, and Oakham were dispatched 5-0 (Peters, Talbot, Bakasa, Baddeley, Ananenu), 3-0 (Butler, Randerson x2), and 2-0 (Randerson, Bakasa), respectively, setting up a season finale against Kings Ely to secure the title. Ten minutes in, Bedford 2-0 Kings Ely, "It's Coming Home" was being queued up on the playlist. Concentration was lost, and a poor 20-minute spell saw the scores level at 2-2. A late rally from the boys saw the crossbar and the post struck, a Gascoigne-esque lunge at the far post, and with minutes remaining, a penalty. Isaac "Iceman" Talbot, the standout goal scorer in the league, stepped up. This was it: a deserved title for a deserving team, scored by the most deserving of players... surely. Chris Waddle, Stuart Pearce, Roberto Baggio, Isaac Talbot.

The season didn't bring the silverware the boys' efforts deserved. It did bring a bond with each other, amazing experiences and winning together, supporting friends, and lasting memories. We came so close to silverware and will be hungrier than ever to make amends next season.

We wish all of our leavers the best and thank them for leaving school football in a stronger place, in particular the leadership group of Tommie Baddeley (captain), Pharell Peters, Luke Langridge, and our captain Isaac Talbot. We hope to see you back, either supporting the current boys or challenging them in the OB fixture!

Players' Player of the Season: Tommie Baddeley
Coaches' Player of the Season: Tommie Baddeley
Top Goalscorer: Isaac Talbot

SQUAD:

L. Langridge (GK), A. Ananenu, T. Murray, T. Baddeley (C), J. Maravala, A. Flora, J. Basquille, T. Dennis, G. Gutteridge, L. Butler, P. Peters, I. Talbot, L. Bakasa, E. Randerson, A. Mahesh, J. Henry, V. Dmytrenko

SHOOTING

Last year saw the departure of a very experienced cohort of shooters in our U6th, so the year started with a focus on gaining experience and honing skills to rebuild our Shooting VIII. To this end the boys enjoyed a coaching session from Nick Hudleston (OB), one of the School's many successful OB shooters. With no league competitions for the boys in the autumn, we had time to do some more full-bore shooting and seven boys visited Bisley in November to shoot at 300 yards. Despite bitterly cold conditions they shot well, expertly coached once again by Nick Hudleston and Robin Hatcher (OB). Mr Lumley-Wood finished off the term by winning both BSSRA staff competitions.

The spring term was busy and marked by a number of firsts. February saw the inaugural match against Uppingham, our first inter-school shoulder-to-shoulder match for more than 2 decades. Unfortunately, our lack of competition experience resulted in a loss, 536 to 555 (ex 600). The same problem faced us in the match against a highly experienced Cambridge University team, however, despite losing, the team did very well to hold Cambridge to just an 18-point lead (725 to 743 ex 600). The away leg against Uppingham took place immediately after



half-term, the first away match for more than 30 years. Sadly, we once again lost to a more experienced team.

By way of contrast, March saw the OB match, the oldest and longest-running of the shoulder-to-shoulder matches. The School has enjoyed a long run of success in this match but this year we became a victim of our own success, with last year's highly successful U6th returning as the opposition. The School lost against this very strong team of recent OBs 1124 vs 1175 (ex 1200). The best School shot was Matthew Pitt with 144 ex 150 and the best OB, James Lumley-Wood with the highest possible score of 150 ex 150.

As usual, the pressure of exams in the summer term inevitably resulted in a drop in competition tempo, giving us the opportunity to improve the training program with a refocus on the basics. The ►





◀ team spent a large part of their time refining position, shooting drills and shot release, resulting in significant improvements in scores.

The most noticeable effect of this effort was in the House Shooting competition, where group sizes were considerably smaller than in previous years. The course of fire for this was once again two 5-round groups, with the smallest aggregate size taking the win.

Ashburnham/Sandersons took third place with Finlay Mitchell's aggregate of 29.48mm. Finlay also shot the smallest single group of the competition at just 8.98mm across. Crescent

/ Pemberley took second with Adrian Chan's 28.86 mm and St Cuthbert's / Philpotts achieved first place with Matthew Pitt's 19.72mm aggregate, for which they receive the Doig Cup. To put this in context, groups of this size mean the boys are consistently putting 5 rounds into a circle smaller than the width of a pencil, on a target 25 yards away.

On the full-bore side, five boys visited Bisley over the Easter break to shoot with the Bedfordians Rifle Club. The day involved a coaching session in the morning at 300 yards, where pupils could take advantage of the OBs considerable experience shooting for England and GB. The afternoon session provided an opportunity to put those new skills to use in a team competition of mixed boys and OBs, shot at 300 and 600 yards. The day concluded with a formal dinner in the North London Rifle Club.

PLW

CUPS & COLOURS:

*Cup for Best Shot in the Shooting XIII –
Matthew Pitt*

*The Abrahams Cup for Best Junior Marksman –
Oliver Harris*

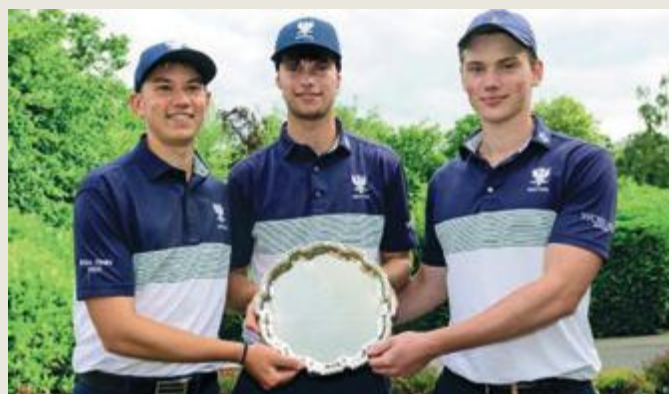
(Pitt & Harris recorded 10 bull averages of over 94)

Shooting Colours – James Summer

GOLF

It has been another incredibly busy season for the golfers with many successes, both individually and as a team. The last weekend of the Easter holiday saw the whole squad travel to the JCB Club for the Swifts Strokeplay Tour Championship, finishing in 2nd place. Ultimately, this meant that we finished second for the season as a whole, narrowly missing out on defending our title, having been the inaugural champions last season.

The team reached the Swifts Foursomes (formerly HMC) national finals by seeing off Brentwood in the regional final. It was here that the team achieved a milestone for school golf. In beating Reed's and Winchester in the group stage, the team secured a place in the final to play Loretto. A 3-0 victory in the final doesn't tell the full story of the drama that unfolded. The team immortalised themselves in school folklore, becoming the



first pupils from our school to lift this coveted trophy.

Further success followed at the beginning of the summer holidays at the National Schools Scratch Championship, held at the home of England Golf, Woodhall Spa. Freddie, Jack & Finlay were our representatives at this event, and in victory secured the proverbial cherry on top of cake for our finest season to date.

The golf club thanks Freddie Tucker for his distinguished tenure as captain this season.

PLW

SWIFTS FOURSOMES:

F. Tucker, J. Peters, D. Wiltshire, F. Rennie, E. Wade, W. Mowe

NATIONAL SCHOOLS SCRATCH CHAMPIONSHIP:

F. Tucker, J. Peters, F. Rennie

INTERNAL CHAMPIONS:

Club Champion: Jack Peters (36 holes strokeplay at Woburn)

Winter League Champion: Finlay Rennie

Minor Sports Colours: Ed Wade & David Wiltshire

SPORTS ROUNDUP



FIVES

Fives continued to thrive as a full games option; regular fixtures against Oundle, Bedford Modern (our own Derby), Rugby, OBs, Regionals, Nationals and the University of Cambridge all featured in the calendar, with various wins and losses(!); we hope to grow the fixture list for next year.

This season's highlight came against Cambridge and their purpose-built indoor courts – OB Rob Menhart, who left the school just two years earlier, welcomed our First IV.

Highlights also included Sam McMurrin and Fraser Morgan reaching the semi-finals of the Regionals, with Sam winning the U16 Tournament and making it to the Round of 16 in the National Schools Championship, one of the strongest performances for Bedford School in recent years.

CUPS AND COMPETITIONS:

Junior House Fives – Paulo Pontine

Senior House Fives – Ashburnham

Dawes Cup for Junior Fives – Will Spice

Mellor Cup for Senior Fives – Sam McMurrin



TABLE TENNIS

This year we again saw the U16 squad of Jerry Liu, Ryan Cheung, Duncan Kung, Alonzo Lau and Harry Hodgson become County Champions, representing both the school and Bedfordshire in the first round of the national competition at the Nottingham table Tennis Centre. Unfortunately, we met the eventual 3rd place finalists, coming a respectable 2nd overall. For three of the boys, table tennis is their second option and so the achievement is ever the more impressive. Generally, participation levels throughout the school are sky high, so there can only be better things to come in the future!

Simon Collier



TENNIS

With over 200 players, tennis has continued to develop at a rapid pace. Pupils have continued to benefit from regular high-quality coaching and the opportunity to play regular fixtures, meaning significant progress was made. The senior A team have been outstanding and won a number of first rate matches. The junior A team won 6 out of 11 fixtures and the Regional Division LTA Championships, as well as the Bedford Area tournament. The B and C teams at all levels have also been highly competitive.

Our Remove form pairs and senior team also had the opportunity to play at the prestigious ISTA National Championships at Eton College, subsequently representing the school with distinction.

Minor Sports Colours were awarded to:

Kevin Xu and Ivan Iankov



BADMINTON

The Badminton team have had yet another excellent year. The U16 team comprised of Jacob Yau, Marcus Wai, Yash Stachowiak, Wallace Kwong and Leo Mathew made it to the semi-finals of the National Schools cup, suffering the narrowest of defeats (on total points scored across all sets played) after drawing the match with who would turn out to be the eventual champions. They also went all the way to the England Badminton National Finals, finishing in 3rd position overall.

The first team senior pairings, led by Alex Lamb and Timothy Wai, have again been undefeated in their regular fixtures, and we have seen big improvements in several of the second team pairings – becoming far more competitive against some strong opposition.



THE DNA SNOWDROP PROJECT

The human genome was first sequenced in 2003, having taken 13 years to complete. Since then, technology has advanced so rapidly that the same volume of data can be taken in under an hour, with equipment a fraction of the size. Our project aimed to utilise new technology to investigate DNA within the chloroplasts of snowdrops. We were lucky enough to visit the Wellcome Genome campus and see the pieces of equipment which allow us to sequence genomes faster than ever before. Our project was inspired by the work of other schools looking into daffodil DNA, and aimed to compare the chloroplast of 12 species of snowdrop to the one species which has already been sequenced, and create a phylogenetic tree; telling us how closely related each species is.

24 pupils between Years 10 – 13 were involved in the project which took place over the Autumn and Spring Terms. In the Autumn Term the skills involved were practiced and refined ready for the Spring Term.

The first step of the project was to extract DNA from our species; in order to do this, we went over to Anglesey Abbey, where they have a huge collection of snowdrops. Thanks to them we were able to collect enough of our samples to gain a good amount of DNA for our project.

Next, in order to extract the DNA from our leaves, we had to crush them in a pestle and mortar, before adding a series of different buffer solutions and then centrifuged in order to isolate the chloroplasts and eventually the DNA - testing that we had succeeded using a technique called gel electrophoresis, where a sample of DNA is mixed with a loading dye and placed on a gel base. Then, electricity is applied, causing the DNA to move up the gel, separating the pieces of DNA by size.

After extracting the DNA, we went to Rothamsted Research centre to barcode and read our sequences. With barcoding, a small amount of DNA is added onto our strands to differentiate the different species' DNA, this was important as all the DNA was mixed together to be sequenced, as some of the equipment used to read the sequences was one-time use. This process involved going into actual labs used by scientists at Rothamsted, and being able to see just how research really happens in industry. The next step was reading our DNA sequences, which involved a new technology called an Oxford MinION, which was able to take out DNA strands and read the individual bases on them - identifying each one to a group using the barcode.

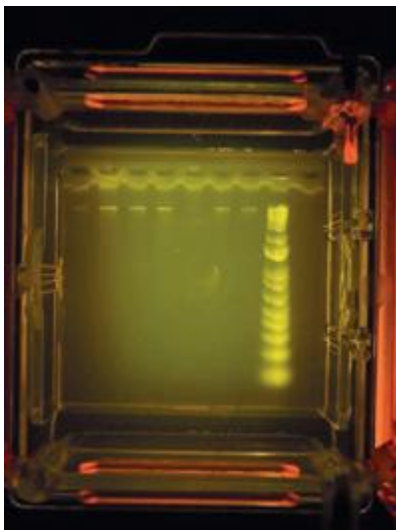




After achieving our raw data, we used EMBL-EBI's Linux software, with assistance, to trim the smallest reads (<100 gigabases) from the data, as they would give unreliable results. Then we assembled our reads against a pre-prepared template read, which showed where we expected certain bases to be found, based on the one snowdrop species that had been sequenced. The results were finally compared against each other to produce the final phylogenetic tree, showing how closely each species is related to each other. Unfortunately, the trimming down of our data made some of our results too small to assemble properly, so our

final results only contained 6 of our initial species.

In the Summer Term several pupils were lucky enough to present the project at The Royal Society Conference in London. This involved talking to members of the public in the daytime and in the evening talking about the project to Fellows and Invited Guests of the Royal Society.



The funding for the project had come from a Royal Society Grant, which is why we had this opportunity. This gave us an opportunity to improve our presentation skills and also to speak to other scientists and pupils about the research they have been doing.

We would like to thank Dr Stephen Pearce (Rothamsted Research), Dr Sarah Dyer (EMBL-EBI), David Jordan and Amy McCormack (National Trust) and Mrs Mainstone, who without their expertise and time we would never have been able to do this project. ■

Henry Pascall and Boqing Kong

CULTURAL DAY OF DIVERSITY

This year marked the first-ever Culture Day at Bedford School, and it was a glorious celebration filled with a variety of activities. The boys had an amazing time, engaging in events that highlighted the diverse cultures represented within our school community.

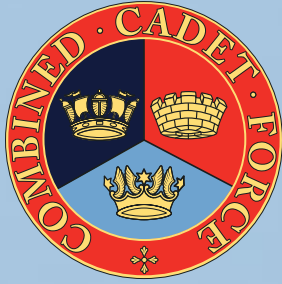
The day featured snack tasting and a variety of foods in the dining hall from different cultures, music and dance performances on the Inky pitch, a “pin your heritage on the map” activity, and an exciting treasure hunt. The assembly was a highlight, showcasing these cultures as boys shared stories and traditions from their backgrounds, helping

others to gain a deeper appreciation and an opportunity for everyone to learn something new.

In addition to these activities, lessons throughout the day incorporated cultural elements, providing an educational experience that celebrated our global heritage.

Boys and staff dressed up in colourful cultural attires, adding to the festive atmosphere. This event was important for fostering a sense of togetherness and support among us all. Our community is rich in diversity, and we will continue to celebrate and highlight what binds us together. Look out for Culture Day 2025! ■





Combined Cadet Force

The CCF started the year with both a physical and metaphorical bang, with the Corps competing in the annual CADSAAM small arms shooting competition, which took place at Beckingham Ranges in Lincolnshire. The proximity to the start of term makes the timing of this competition difficult yet, despite the lack of opportunity to practise, the team achieved 1st place of all the CCF contingents competing, and 3rd place overall. Against a field of much more experienced and established teams, this achievement was even more impressive.

Once the autumn term began, the routine of normal training was quickly established. The Army Section worked to advance their weapon handling and fieldcraft skills, the RAF continued with ground training and the Navy sailed on Priory Lake whilst the weather and light allowed.

All 3 Sections trained with the Corp's new Field Gun, culminating in the

inaugural Field Gun Competition just before the half term break, won by the Royal Navy.

The NCO training Cadre took place in the first week of the half term break, returning to Jersey Camp on the Isle of Wight. This intensive training programme involved preparing 14 junior NCOs from all three Services to lead the 4th Form Recruits that joined us in January.

The RAF Royal Air Squadron Trophy Ground Skills Competition took place in November; the team performed well, beating Bedford Modern and achieving podium places in two stands: 3rd in Airfield Defence and 2nd in the Command Task.

This term also saw the appointment of the contingent's latest Lord Lieutenant's Cadet, Sgt Licia Cacioppo. Acting as an aide to the King's representative in Bedfordshire, this





◀ appointment carries considerable responsibility and is one of the highest achievements a cadet can make.

The training tempo accelerated significantly in the spring term with the recruitment of over seventy 4th Form cadets in January, giving the junior NCO's ample opportunity to exercise their newly honed leadership skills.

Over a weekend in March, a team of eight cadets

INTELLIGENCE CORPS CADET COMPETITION TEAM:

E. Bowis, P. Clarke, O. Jooste, D. Karavaggelis, H. Kaur, C. Lawrence, J. Murray, K. Woollard

competed in the annual Intelligence Corps Cadet competition. Pitted against teams from CCF and ACF contingents across the country, the team undertook tasks based on open-source intelligence, human intelligence, map interpretation, command tasks and shooting. They performed exceptionally well, winning the competition for the second year in a row and attracting many compliments on their performance from the directing staff.

Sadly, we were unable to extend this success to the Combat Cadet competition. In spite of efforts to build a competitive team, staffing and cadet availability problems meant we unable to do so - the first time we have had to do this since the inception of the competition more than 2 decades ago.



March also saw the Corps compete in the CCRS Team shoot, up against a field of thirty-seven CCF and ACF contingents from across the country. Our relatively inexperienced team performed well in the Grouping and Landscape stages, but time pressure in the Rapid and Snap dropped us down to 11th.

The Annual General Inspection took place on 27th March, comprising of the Inspection Parade, followed by demonstrations of training activities and culminating in an inter-services Gun Run competition, won, once again, by the Navy. The Inspecting Officer, Col James Shaw OB was very complimentary, despite being used to much larger events in his role as Brigade Major of the Household Division, having

CCRS TEAM SHOOT:

W. Reddy, R. King, M. Pitt, A. Chan, O. Jooste



◀ organised and led the parades for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Her Majesty's Funeral and the King's Coronation.

Normal Wednesday afternoon training for all three Sections progressed through the summer term, with the Navy returning to sailing on Priory Lake, making the best of the improving weather.

The Army Recruits Field weekend took place in June, when thirty of our most recent recruits moved out to the Chicksands Training Area to learn how to live in the field. As well as learning to build shelters and cook rations, the cadets trained in patrolling, ambushes and section attacks. The weather was kind; warm, with enough rain to sharpen the cadets' drills, but not enough to cause too many problems.

Fifteen cadets returned to Chicksands on Sunday 30th June, this time for a day on the range, shooting the Cadet

GP rifle. The demands on these facilities are great so opportunities for cadets to fire this weapon system do not arise very often. The day went very well; the weather was perfect and the standard of marksmanship excellent, with the cadets firing 900 rounds between them.

At the end of the year, we bade farewell to the Head of the RAF Section, Flt Lt McCleery, as he moves to Fettes College to become their Chaplin and Contingent Commander. ■

PLW



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The 2023-2024 Duke of Edinburgh had its share of challenges; the biggest and first being the weather! After initially leaving school on the Friday evening, pictures from staff already in Derbyshire highlighted the torrents of water flowing down roads and fields flooded, and so the decision was taken to abandon the October Silver and Gold expeditions. This meant changing dates and times for the expeditions, which in a very busy year was tricky. Upon making the trip, the boys rose to the challenge and there were some excellent examples of great navigation.

Although the expeditions are the part that pupils seem to remember the most, the other 3 sections (4 for Gold) have

shown the diverse nature of pupils' interests. I really enjoy reading all the assessors reports and seeing how the boys have progressed in whatever volunteering, skill or physical activity they have chosen.

The Award would not be possible without staff giving out their time expertise to pupils. In particular, I would like to thank Miss Swallow, Mr Tonge, Mr Watson and Mr Knight for their continued support of the Award Scheme. I hope that this year there is a little less rain during the expedition season (but when typing this it is not looking likely!)

Jean Mainstone (Award Leader)

**D OF E
BRONZE
AWARD**

ASSESSED EXPEDITION:

Our Bronze DofE was great. Arriving at 7:30, we aimed to leave at 9:00 after gathering supplies which included the maps, compass and stove to carry to the campsite, around 12km away in Ickwell.

After everything was set the groups started to move off, leaving my group and one other left to start. After a wait, we finally left and were on our journey. We firstly started walking out of central Bedford and within about an hour were in the middle of the countryside, where the smell from nearby farms was extremely pungent! We walked the whole morning, other than to stop for a quick break of sweets and cereal bars. When we got to lunchtime (about 12:00) we were all extremely hungry and decided to rest slightly longer; we were more than halfway to the campsite which allowed us to relax a little. With temperatures that day soaring to 30/32 degrees, carrying heavy bags of supplies was quite difficult. But the Bedfordshire countryside was calming, and the setting for lunch was stunning. The long green fields and shallow rolling hills were the perfect spot for lunch as we found ourselves on the top of a hill, looking down on Bedford town centre. Continuing on, the afternoon consisted of walking through

trails and fields of sheep not keen on our presence. After a long day with lots of water bottle refills at the road crossing points, and lumbering with my mates up the hills we finally reached our camp at Ickwell. Launching our shoes off, we laid down for a bit in the shade as it was still boiling in the afternoon sun, and we still had time to set up our tents before dinner. After our practice with setting them up the week before we knew what we were doing and were much more efficient. Dinner for nearly everyone was a pasta dish of sorts, and then it was time to get some sleep ahead of the next day.

Day two started early with some groups all packed and ready before my group even woke up! We set off after everything was ready and started making our way home. This day was even hotter; after losing some group members there were three of us left. We moved quickly in the heat, taking more breaks as the second leg was a shorter distance. Not far from the end we found ourselves in familiar parts of Bedford, where the map was not needed anymore and we finally stopped for a long lunch under a big oak tree. We trudged back as we finally saw the end in sight - even though we were all knackered we sprinted across the finish line into Burnaby Road to complete our mission, having had laughs along the way.

Alex Turner

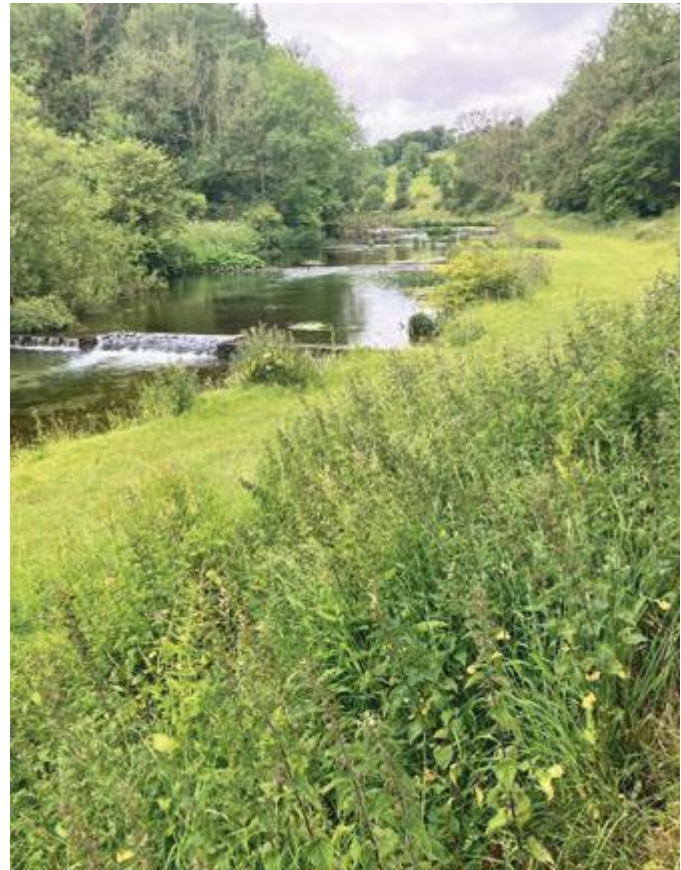


D OF E SILVER AWARD

ASSESSED EXPEDITION:

Eleven of us took part in the Silver expedition over the summer holidays. With extreme weather affecting our planned October attempt, we combined the practice and real expedition in the same week. Departing on June 25th at 8:30 with massive bags of equipment, we headed to the Peak District National Park. After a long drive, we arrived at Pindale Farm Outdoor Centre where we swiftly set up our tents ready for the evening. Once camp was made, we were advised to go through our bags and determine what we needed, utilising our handy tricks for efficiently packing. We spent the evening playing some football and also enjoying some fajitas made by Mr Tonge. The following morning, we had no clue what we were in store for later in the day! The practice expedition started out great; we walked through amazing valleys, saw astonishing views and ended with climbing the side of a mountain, called Mam Tor. On reaching the top, we all collapsed with exhaustion! We were set a mission by staff to make our way back to the campsite, using our own navigation skills. After learning how to use Trangia stoves, a pasta meal was enjoyed. That night I am sure we all slept well, knowing that we had the real expedition the next day.

In the morning, the minibus took us on a 20-minute drive to the town where we were to start the expedition. Our aim was to reach Mandale campsite – the walk was long and tiring but with conversation flowing between us, it flew by. Navigation was hard at first, but we persevered and managed to reach the site having only spent 20 minutes walking in the wrong direction at first. After setting up tents and preparing food, it was fun to speak to other groups we hadn't seen for the majority of the trail. Our boil-in-the-bag meals received an overall rating of "weren't the best but did the job"! Despite an extremely windy evening, we managed to get some rest before heading out with



the aim of reaching Eric Byne memorial campsite.

Excited with the knowledge that we had completed our first day and full of belief that we could complete the expedition, we set off on some amazing paths leading through interesting towns – my favourite view being Chatsworth House or the old railway tunnels we passed through. Reaching our

campsite, we found ourselves surrounded by animals, which was strange to be right beside them. A pasta meal with tomato sauce tasted great and was followed by conversation amongst the groups about their expeditions. We woke to the lovely noise of sheep whilst readying for the last stretch. Walking back along a familiar path, we finally reached Bakewell; the trip was long but fun, working as a team and learning new skills. We finished the day with a Bakewell tart before getting on the bus to return to school. Completing our expedition wouldn't have been possible without the teachers so a huge thank you goes to them! We all loved it and can't wait for Gold – until then that's enough exploring for us!

Daniel Hudson

**D OF E
GOLD
AWARD**

ASSESSED EXPEDITION:

We arrived in the Lake District and after a long bus journey spirits were running high into the first day. Firstly, we were split into two groups of five which contained; Nic Swope, Alexei Wright, James Dagg,

Ed Dagg and Akshat Buddineni in one and in the other; Dylan Mitchell, Chris Bonnington, Alex Lamb, Angus Timmins and Will Turner. After a thorough kit inspection, we were ready to go. The good morale continued for a time until we reached a long steep hill that received more than a few grumbles! We did however see some stunning views and after further hills, we arrived at camp for the first night. As the groups got ready for the second day the rain started to come down and it decided to stay with us for the rest of the journey. Emotions became strained and after a couple of outbursts (and a questionable route down the hill) we arrived at camp after a long day walking and many tired feet.

The next day we had to climb "Helvellyn" which sits at a staggering 950 metres. With the weather even worse, we prepared ourselves for what we thought would be a long day. After a tough uphill, we arrived at the summit to find ourselves in clouds and our visibility limited to 50 metres. Although there



was no view to see, morale improved dramatically and after a rapid walk down the mountain, we arrived at camp for the last time with a sense of excitement. With drenched clothes and dwindling food, we settled into our tents and saw England beat the Netherlands with a last-minute winner. On the final day, morale rose considerably after a damp night and the weather followed suit as we pushed through the last hike of the trip to pass our Gold Expedition.

James Dagg



BEDFORD SCHOOL INDEPENDENT PROJECT (BSIP)

PROJECT RESULTS 2024

RUNNERS-UP

- **Tahir Alom** *AI and Medicine: What does the future of the Medical Industry look like?* (essay)
- **Eric Breslin** *The Golden Ratio, Fibonacci Sequence, and applying these concepts to art* (artefact)

SPECIAL MENTION

- **Saif Ajaj** *Should the ban on commercial supersonic travel be re-evaluated and removed?*
- **Harry Clifton** *Quantum Computing - the 21st Century arms race and the beginning of a new technological era.*
- **Edward Dagg** *How useful is the minimum wage?*
- **Kona Dlomu** *An analysis of the long-term blackouts occurring in South Africa.*
- **Charlie Eggleton** *What skills does a trauma surgeon need in order to save lives in austere environments?*
- **Eric He** *From Forum to Cathedral: Transformation of Rome in the Late Antiquity.*
- **Ruben Jacob** *The Development of 'Mini Brains': Can Consciousness Arise?*
- **Adrian Lok** *A study investigating the factors that promoted the Mao cult from 1949 to 1966.*
- **Michael Moretto** *How can physical geographical factors affect urban planning?*
- **Pui Lam Ng** *How will Japan's release of radioactive wastewater affect its economy in the long term?*
- **Alexander Olleson** *Was the operation to reintroduce beavers worth it?*
- **Arthur Polhill** *To what extent has the misogynistic history of chess had long lasting impacts on the game?*
- **Ra'ed Rizwan** *In what ways does digital media contribute to the advancement of a thriving sociopolitical landscape?*
- **Angus Timmins** *The music for A Christmas Carol.*
- **Oscar White** *Knot Theory*
- **Olly Wright** *The Colour of Music (A Eulogy)*

During their Lower Sixth year, A-Level students undertake a BSIP. This can take various forms, including an artefact, a detailed essay, or a response to a practical real-world challenge. Beyond the research and creation process, students are also tasked with presenting their findings.

Shortlisted presentations were delivered to an audience of parents, peers, and a panel of judges. The range and quality of both projects and presentations was outstanding, reflecting the boys' academic curiosity and aptitude for independent study.

OVERALL WINNER

EDGAR MADDOCKS

How can stock returns be predicted using Machine Learning?
(essay)

Charlie Eggleton (joint winner) was awarded the presentation prize for his talk 'What skills does a trauma surgeon need to save lives in austere environments?'. The judges commended his background reading, his passionate delivery, and his honest reflection on the BSIP journey.

Charlie told us,

"I chose the topic because I am very interested in medicine and was reading books on the topic. My Mum gave me a book called War Doctor by David Nott, who is one of the world's best trauma surgeons, and I was hugely inspired by all the volunteer work he has done for the Red Cross and UNICEF. Since reading this book, I have done lots of medical-related work experience and I would like to study medicine after Sixth Form. I really enjoyed the evening and seeing everyone else's presentations – they were all so good."

PRESENTATION RESULTS 2024

On Wednesday 31st January, six shortlisted Lower Sixth boys delivered their BSIP presentations in the Memorial Hall on their chosen areas of personal and academic interest. The adjudicators were impressed by their extensive knowledge and the confidence with which they delivered their talks; indeed, the presentations were of such a high standard that they awarded a joint first prize.

Kona Dlomu (runner up) was highly commended for his articulate reflections and responses to questioning in his 'Analysis of the long-term blackouts occurring in South Africa'.

Saif Ajaj impressed with the way he engaged the audience and his enthusiasm for the topic 'Should the ban on commercial supersonic travel be re-evaluated and removed?'

Eric He spoke on 'The Transformation of Rome in the Late Antiquity', astounding all with the breadth of his reading and knowledge.

Adrian Lok was congratulated for the organisation and selection of material from both primary and secondary sources when he explored 'What contributed to the emergence and escalation of Mao's cult of personality prior to the Cultural Revolution?'

Congratulations to Edgar, Charlie and all boys mentioned on their academically rigorous BSIP work.

RAQ

Edgar Maddocks (joint winner) was also a winner for making a highly complex topic accessible and the confident, easy delivery of his presentation 'How can we predict stock returns using machine learning - with Python examples?'

On his chosen topic, Edgar explained,

"When I was 13 years old, I took a Computer Science course at UCL, which I really enjoyed. I decided not to take it at GCSE, which I quite regretted. So, during the summer after GCSEs, I learned the whole of the GCSE Python course and started to take on small AI projects. I turned to the Stock Market as a big source of centralised data and thus I came up with this topic to study. I am very pleased to have come joint first. I didn't think I was going to, but I put a lot of time and research into it and so I am very pleased."

ART AND ARCHITECTURE SOCIETIES

The Art Society got underway in September with a talk and discussion about the work of David Hockney. Consecutive sessions in the lead up to October half term were taken up by the U6th boys doing their presentations for the school internal heat of ARTiculation. A shortlist of four was selected from the 16 entries, with the final taking place after half term. Barnaby Williams, Kish Patel, Alex Hall and Zaki Shameem talked about Anne Desmet, Van Gogh, Shepherd Fairey and Vermeer respectively. Our adjudicator Mr Finch singled out Barnaby Williams for his passion and in-depth analysis of Desmet's print 'Night Ice' so he went on to represent the school at the regional heat at Gainsborough's House in Sudbury. A review of Barney's ARTiculation experience can be read elsewhere in this magazine. Later meetings were taken up looking at the work of Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud, always popular reference points for the 6th form artists.

Stephen Leng – Kengo Kuma

Architecture Society got underway with an informative talk from Stephen about the architect Kuma.

James Robinson OB – Career in Architecture

Robinson, who is currently working for Piercy & Company architects, talked about his career trajectory to date and explained how he has gone from studying architecture at the Bartlett at UCL to now designing architecture for space. In a whistle stop and exciting talk James' passion was evident for all the boys to see - I am sure he will have persuaded some of those attending to seriously consider architecture as a possible future career.

Dale Devereux Barker RI, Printmaker – U6th Artist Masterclass

Working for the whole day on a Sunday with Dale ensured that the boys really got into the whole process and momentum of silk-screen printing. It was great to see them end up with some quality work to include in their A-level coursework.





Alison Head & Andrew Tutton Exhibition & Talk

The joint exhibition from painters Head & Tutton, showcasing their powerful and colorful work certainly made an impression with memorable and haunting imagery; their talk for the Art Society was very well attended by

6th form pupils keen to find out more. Andrew brought in his props, including puppets he uses for his compositions which provided a fascinating insight into his picture making process.

'David Hockney Secret Knowledge' Video & Debate

This video explored Hockney's research and ideas into how artists have used lenses in their work throughout history. The whole debate about using devices to work with and 'trace' from generated some interesting discussions about the legitimacy of this way of working, and whether or not it is 'cheating'??

Dr Albin Wallace – 'The Garden of Earthly Delights – A Load of Old Bosch'

Dr Wallace retired two years ago and is a much-missed teacher and colleague so we were delighted to see him again and, as on a number of previous occasions, he gave an excellent and informative talk about this extraordinary painting.

Dom Blore OB – Career in Graphic Design

Dom gave an excellent and insightful talk explaining exactly what being a designer entails, conveying just how exciting and important graphic design is in everyday life. This talk could not have come at a better time with so many of the L6th artists considering Graphics as a possible future career choice.



Graham Jones Exhibition & Talk

This exhibition opening provided a welcome chance to relax amongst exams. Graham is a local artist who is best known for his exciting and vibrant abstract paintings but for this show

he included figurative work as well, illustrating his full range and versatility. We were extremely grateful that Graham was able to come and talk to the Art Society about his work, reminding the boys about the importance of process and preparation and

how, even for an experienced artist, working through mistakes is all part of and essential to the creative process.

Frankie Marlor – 'Falling Water' by Frank Lloyd Wright

Frankie Marlor, an aspiring architect, had clearly done his research and his understanding of form and space in this extraordinary building was clearly articulated.



Enrui Zhou – 'Shape, Form and Texture in the Work of Henry Moore, Umberto Boccioni & Alberto Giacometti'

As one of our sculptors, not only did Enrui clearly explain the distinctive qualities of these artists, but he also showed his own studies and how they have influenced his work.

The Art department contribution to the Enrichment Day for local schools coincided with an Art society meeting so a painting and sculpture class was made available. Working with 15 pupils in each class, this would not have been possible without the assistance of both 5th and L6th artists who provided fantastic support and encouragement over the course of the sessions, for which Mr Croker and Mr Nicholl were very appreciative.

The Student End of Year exhibition is one of the highlights of the Art calendar. As the department's contribution to the Creative Arts Festival, it is a celebration of all the hard work of the 5th form and U6th. One highlight for many visitors is the opportunity to vote for their favourite work in the exhibition. This year the winner was Henry Gillham (5th) for his striking portrait of his grandmother produced in his final GCSE exam. The Head Master also comes to choose his favourite work in the exhibition for the Head Master's Art prize. A number of works caught his attention. Alex Ying's (U6th) fantastically ambitious and huge scroll painting was one highlight. Luke Pollen Brook's (U6th) striking lino cuts of the school also caught the eye with the unusual perspective achieved by taking photos using a drone; the standout for him this year was the collection of huge prints of the dramatic Sydney skyline brilliantly incorporating the different printing techniques used over the course of his A-level project. The prize was awarded to Barnaby Williams (U6th). ■

MCC



DEBATING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

The opportunities for boys to acquire and demonstrate the skills of debating and public speaking during their time at Bedford School are many and varied. As an educational community, we live out the maxim that oracy should be developed for and through learning because it matters throughout life. This ethos is undoubtedly why so many of our pupils achieve success in competitions and this year saw some particularly impressive performances.

A new event - the Quarry Public Speaking Workshop and Competition - saw Fourth Form and Remove pupils from several local schools come along to learn the skills of chairing, questioning and debating from expert coaches, some of whom were more senior Bedford School boys. Representatives from The Rotary Club and English Speaking Union then judged a

friendly competition, where the emphasis was on pupils building their confidence and experience of speaking to a larger audience. Organised by Head of Speech and Drama Fi Fowler, it proved a fantastic evening.

This year's ESU Schools' Mace debaters were Society President Sam Maling and Lower Sixth Millan Verwoert. They qualified from two highly competitive rounds, exploring motions associated with the school curriculum and British justice system. Narrowly pipped by Radley College in the Regional Final, they can take great pride from performing so well in the UK's largest and most prestigious debating competition.

As has become usual, two teams of Fourth and Remove Formers entered the ESU Churchill Public Speaking Competition. Last year's regional finalists, Henry Gillham (Chair), George Gutteridge (Questioner) and Fraser Morgan (Speaker) went one better this year, reaching the national finals day held on a sunny May morning at Churchill College, Cambridge.

A senior public speaking team consisting of Charlie Diamond, Ralph Franklin and Vir Walia finished runners-up in the District Final of the Rotary Youth Speaks competition, where Vir was named best speaker of the evening. The vast majority of competitors were sixth form students, so it was pretty impressive that such a comparatively young team achieved such success.



The following evening, a team of Fourth Formers (Oliver Barbour, Nathaniel Fletcher and Aaryan Nair) went one better than their senior counterparts, winning the Intermediate Rotary Youth Speaks District Final with a brilliant debate about the impact of violent video games. They qualified for the cluster final and presented highly effectively, even though Edward Keggin had to step into the breach as a late substitute for Nathaniel.

An extremely high standard was set in the Junior and Senior House Debating Competitions, won by Ashburnham and Bromham respectively. The National Science Week

Debate proved a terrific event, won by the chemists who convinced judges that their science had contributed the most to technological development over the centuries.

These are all excellent achievements but it is the fact they sit alongside so many wonderful boy-led assemblies, classroom debates, common room conversations, public presentations, school tours and a myriad of other moments when pupils used their voices to grow, share, include and celebrate that gives me most pleasure. ■

N. Hopton

ROTARY YOUTH SPEAKS

Public speaking and debating empowers boys to express their ideas, engage with diverse perspectives and defend their viewpoint. Practising these skills, boys equip themselves for future courses and careers that require incisive thinking, crisp communication, engagement with big ideas and the ability to disagree well.

This year boys have performed exceptionally well and achieved some great successes along the way. Organised by Rotary International, the public speaking and debating competition is an opportunity for pupils to develop the ability to speak on a public platform, carry out research and formulate ideas, improve self-confidence and presentation skills.

The Bedford School senior team was made up of Remove Formers Vir Walia and Ralph Franklin along with Fifth Former Charlie Diamond, coming runners up in the Herts and Beds area group held at Bishops Hatfield School. They were up against very strong sixth formers

from all over the district such as St. Albans Girls who won by a few points. These boys debated for and against the use of AI in schools. The proposition was represented by Charlie with Ralph as opposition; put together the team was by far the youngest there. Nevertheless, they came a narrow and very respectable 2nd place and missed out on 1st by a matter of 3 points. We were led very well by Miss Fowler who orchestrated a very mature debate.

Vir Walia





