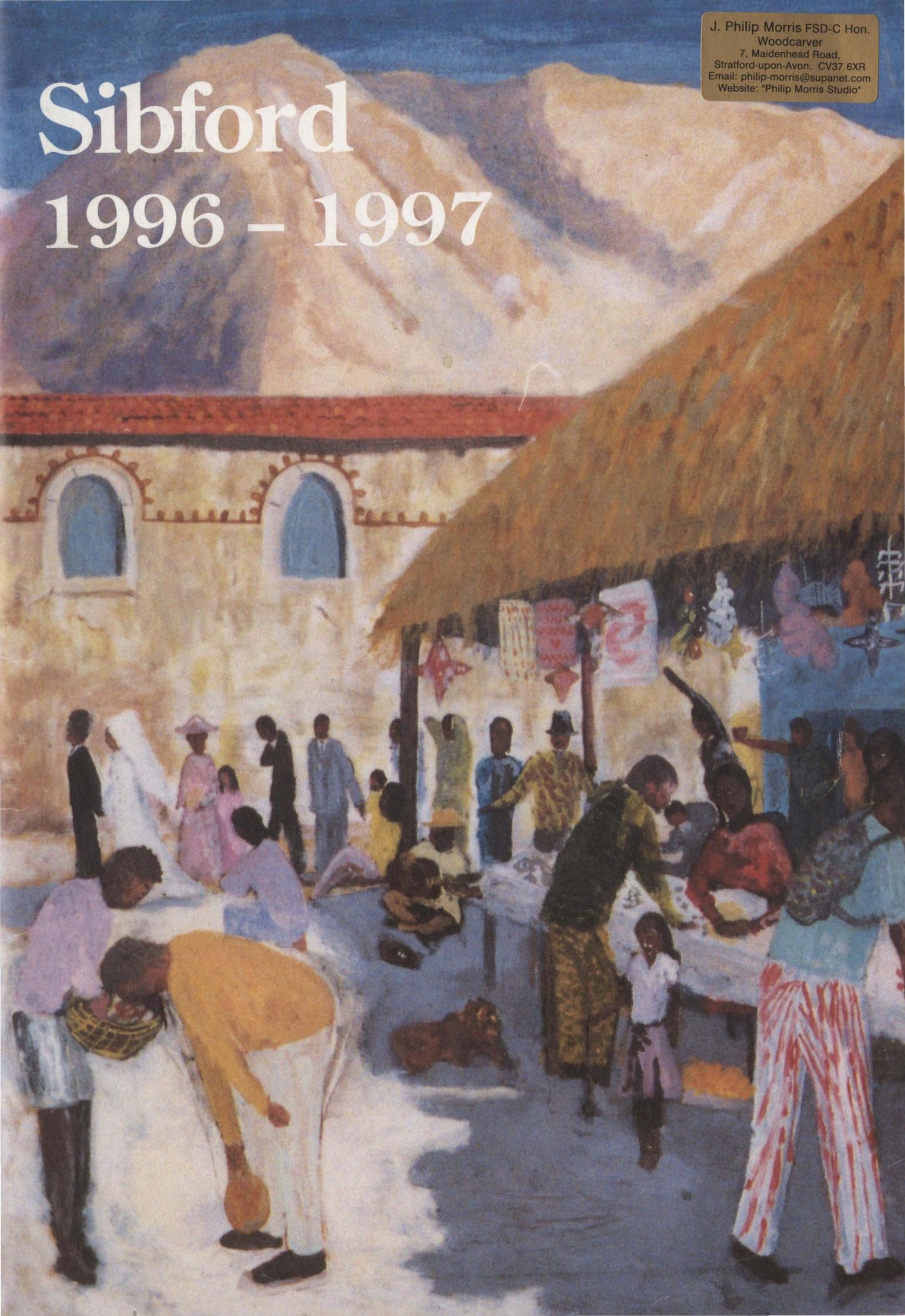


# Sibford

## 1996 - 1997

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# EDITORIAL

Earl Spencer spoke directly to the hearts of the whole nation when he proclaimed his late sister, Diana, Princess of Wales, to be unique, special and irreplaceable. The emotion of the day only heightened the truth contained within the words: it did not "create" that truth. Sentiment passes, but verity remains forever, and his words are true for all of us, not Diana alone.

In his inaugural address to the people of South Africa in 1994, Nelson

Mandela proclaimed the truth, "Your playing small does not serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that others around you won't feel insecure."

These two proclamations reveal something of the attitude we bring to education at Sibford, where we value that of God in each one of the community and where we educate for the future service of humankind. Big ideals, but why not? God knows the world needs big hearts and big ideas as the millennium approaches.

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## MAGAZINE PRODUCTION

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CO-ORDINATOR: Michael R Finch  
PRINTERS: H E Boddy & Co. Ltd., Banbury.

Front cover artwork: Mexican Market Scene. Hazel Bell, A level Grade A.  
Inside front cover: Year 9 Gargoyle Carving Project.

## SUE FREESTONE WRITES:-

I am a country girl. I grew up on a farm and until my most recent post had always worked in country boarding schools. So arriving at Sibford after seven years plus in a day school in the centre of Bristol was in many ways a homecoming. I have relished the return to the countryside and more than that, the return to boarding school life.

It is now more than a year since my appointment to the Headship of Sibford and there can be few members of the extended school community whom I have not met. I have delighted in the variety of constituent groups that make up the Sibford community and the breadth of perspectives that add colour and interest to the life of the school.

In twenty years of teaching and experience of many schools, I have never encountered an Old Scholars' Association that takes such an active interest in the functioning of the school today, or goes to such lengths to keep in touch with each other and with the school itself. I have been pleased to be involved in the last two SOSA Reunions and my first encounter with 'Rockets' was an experience in itself!

Equally pleasurable has been my experience of the staff at Sibford, and by that I mean all those whose job it is to contribute to the well-being of the student population, either as teachers or those who support the school's main function in so many ways. Every new Head expects to encounter a few problems, and there have been some certainly, but none of them have given me any cause to doubt the dedication, enthusiasm and interest of those who work here in all capacities. I feel very fortunate to have become a member of the Sibford team, and I have enjoyed the co-operation and support of my colleagues. The feeling of common purpose at Sibford is tangible, and the result is that the school is a place charged with positive energy and a sense of direction.

The pupils are our *raison d'être* in a very real sense. They form the focus of our activity, and their successes are our greatest professional pleasure. I do not limit these to their academic successes; more I count all the moments when an individual realises that he or she has achieved something previously thought impossible, be it an artistic creation; a new sporting record; finding the courage to minister in Meeting; or a set of examination results that surpassed expectations. Our pupils are very rewarding to teach because so many of them are determined to do their best and find their own path through life. It is our privilege to help them find that path.

I have never been one to indulge in expectations. I tend to take each situation as it comes and deal with life as I find it. I came to Sibford with a very open mind determined to observe and absorb before making any changes, aware of the very real risk of throwing out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. What I have observed has been good practice and a genuine interest in every individual - none of the lip-service so often encountered in schools today where educational jargonese is common currency but respect and care for each other is frequently lacking. What I have absorbed is a real sense of community and a feeling of belonging. This is perhaps the most precious gift we can hand on to some of our charges.



Sue Freestone  
Head

## WELCOME ABOARD

### PETER LINDSELL

I was born in Stanmore, North London, but my strongest memories are of Wells in Somerset where I spent six years as a boarder at the Cathedral School. After a gap year working for an electronics firm, the next four years of my life were spent at Keele University. Five years ago I returned to Keele on a distance learning M.A. programme studying Education Management and graduated three years ago.



My teaching career started in Cannock, in the West Midlands, and after two years I moved on to Stanbridge Earls School, Romsey, where I was in charge of a boarding house, the I.T. and Music departments as well as teaching Physics and Electronics. It was during this time that I met my wife, Daphne, whilst we were both involved in a production of "Dido and Aeneas". During my time at Stanbridge I became interested in how I could best help the pupils with learning difficulties, in particular Dyslexia, that I encountered in the classroom. I subsequently moved on to Wykeham House School in Fareham as Head of Science and I.T. Although this was a school where there were very few pupils with learning difficulties, these concerns have never left me.

I have a wide range of interests, but perhaps my greatest pleasure has been from gaining a Private Pilot's Licence. I hope very much that when I have more time I will be able to take to the air once again and I trust that my activities will not annoy everyone as much as those of the R.A.F!

I enjoy travelling and, following a holiday that Daphne and I spent in The Gambia, the pupils of our previous schools have been helping St. Martin's Primary School in Kartong.

I am delighted to be at Sibford as your Deputy Head and I am grateful for the warm and helpful welcome that I have received here. It is a privilege to be working in a Quaker School where everyone is valued and where "all members" of the school, whether it be as a member of staff or as a pupil, support each other and work together as a caring community.

### DORA COLLYER

I would describe myself, I guess, as an arty, crafty person, with a love of classical music and a growing interest in alternative medicine. It is two years since I moved back to my roots in the Midlands and much of my time and thoughts since then have been devoted to interior decoration and garden design.



I was born in Stoke-on-Trent during a time when smoke still poured from the old fashioned pottery kilns and I thought that all house bricks were black. As the daughter of a Methodist Minister I spent my childhood on the move living for short spells in various places including, immediately after the war, the idyllic island of Jersey, where I started my education. I have lost count of the number of schools I attended after that.

One of my father's appointments was to Birmingham and that was where I completed my nursing training, following on with a midwifery course in Rochford in Essex and Fulford in York.

In the mid 1960s I decided to travel, and spent the next three and a half years pursuing my nursing career in Boston U.S.A. and Canberra and Melbourne in Australia, completing my circumnavigation of the globe with an overland trip by bus from India, an exhilarating if somewhat uncomfortable experience.

Marriage and the arrival of two daughters inevitably brought a more settled life, this time in West Sussex, when, after twenty-seven years my husband's job in horticulture research brought us to this beautiful part of the country, and me, happily to the San at Sibford.

## DAPHNE LINDSELL

I was born in Surrey and from the time I was a small child my greatest pleasures were reading, music and horses. These are probably the things which I still enjoy most. I trained at The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow and then went on to Bretton Hall College of Education in Yorkshire.

I began my teaching career in Basingstoke in a comprehensive school. After three years I moved further South, although still in Hampshire, and worked at Stanbridge Earls School. I was Director of Music for several years and also taught English and helped in the Dyslexia department. As my interest in working with dyslexics grew, I gave up the music teaching and devoted my time to the Dyslexics and class English teaching. I worked at Stanbridge Earls for twenty-one years and it was here that I met and married Peter.

I enjoy travelling and, with Peter, have visited some really interesting places: Australia, Hongkong, Kenya, Tanzania and The Gambia.

I am at present working on a distance learning M.A. in Specific Learning Difficulties, so the move to Sibford, a school with such an excellent reputation for helping Dyslexics, could not have come at a better time. Sibford is a very special school and I am already beginning to feel part of it. I look forward to the new experiences and challenges it will bring, not only in my support of Peter as Deputy Head, but in what I will be able to offer personally to the life of the school.

## KATE MCKEAN

I am from Cheshire, but have been moving around for the last six years. All of my previous jobs have been mostly as a nanny to different families. After moving to a couple of places in England, I wanted to work abroad. I spent a summer season in Greece as a "Kiddie Rep" for a holiday company.

I then moved to Zurich, Switzerland, and stayed for 18 months. I got to travel around Switzerland lots and saw lots of places in Europe. I had to leave last summer due to my work permit expiring. I then went and travelled in Australia for six months and for one month in Indonesia.

I now look forward to new and different experiences at Sibford School.



## ANNA JO RIGHTON

Coming to work at Sibford feels very much like coming home. I was born and brought up in the area and went to school in Oxford before spending my student days at Exeter University. My particular interest was Nazism and the Third Reich so I spent the third year of my degree course teaching in Germany.

I married Michael in 1995, who rather inconveniently was living in Dusseldorf at the time! However I welcomed the chance to return to Germany and enjoyed the experience of living at the heart of Europe particularly as I have family in Denmark. I used the chance to brush up my German and Danish and catch up with friends and relatives. We travelled a lot while working abroad, our most exciting trip being to Australia and New Zealand. Closer to home we like to escape to our small cottage in the West of Ireland to relax.

Michael is now working in Oxford and I am very happy to be part of the staff at Sibford. Being married to a fanatical fly fisherman leaves me lots of time to devote to my ever increasing menagerie, keep fit and of course to devise exciting ways to fill Sibford students with enthusiasm for Humanities! I look forward to meeting you all. You can find me in room 22 or somewhere in the grounds walking Carra!



## CLARE STEWART

I was born in West Yorkshire where I lived for the first 21 years of my life. I moved to Northampton in 1994, where I studied for a BSc (Hons) degree in Environmental Biology with Law. After graduating in July 1997 I decided to spend a year or two away from studying in order to earn some money.

I enjoy playing and watching rugby, and I am also an enthusiastic skier. Although my last ski holiday, in January 1997, turned into a bit of a disaster. I went ski-ing to Bulgaria with a group of friends and after an enjoyable week's holiday I had my passport stolen 20 minutes before we were due to depart the hotel. This resulted in me having to stay in Bulgaria for an extra eight days before I could leave with an emergency passport.

However, this has not deterred me from travelling and I hope to go to New Zealand in March 1999, to study for a masters degree.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first months at Sibford and I look forward to the months ahead.

## ANGELA TALBOT

A new member of staff!!!!? Most people will recognise my face from last year when I was the resident supply teacher. Thankfully, the situation has improved enormously as I am now teaching on the Intensive English Course, which I am enjoying thoroughly.

As most people have gathered, I am now Mrs. Talbot and not Miss Shingler. It was a painful process but I am getting used to it now.



Simon and I enjoyed a fabulous year travelling the world, exploring many far-flung places, before settling in another far-flung place, Hook Norton, a lovely village and a great place to sample the local Hooky ale !

My spare time is divided between writing, painting, gardening and supporting Shrewsbury Town - well, somebody has to! My main ambition in life is to have my book published, thus finally seeing my name in print.... In the meantime I am happy teaching the many complexities of the English language at Sibford.

## LUCY TAYLOR

I joined Sibford School in 1997 as Sanatorium Sister. My background is nursing and midwifery, and more recently health promotion. For twelve years I lived in Bolton and worked within hospital and community settings, caring for many different kinds of people. My keen interest in preventive medicine prompted me back to study and I completed a BA(Hons) in Health Promotion in 1995 and moved to Folkestone, as a Health Promotion Specialist. I trained numerous health care professionals, teachers and youth workers on health related issues and helped raise general awareness about health in schools, hospitals, clinics and the local prison.



I was attracted to Sibford as it allowed me to regain a nursing role and combine my health promotion skills for the benefit of young people. I am pleased to be able to help equip our young people with the knowledge so important for their future health and wellbeing, as well as look after their immediate health needs.

In my spare time I enjoy walking, camping, canoeing and most of all surfing in the Atlantic Ocean. Although I have lived south of Birmingham for a number of years, I believe I will always remain a Lancashire lass at heart.

## ANGELA WAY

I was born in Devon and, being part of a service family, I lived most of my early years in various parts of the United Kingdom. I thoroughly enjoyed my studies at the public girls' school Wykeham House, followed by Gosport County Grammar then onto Bath College of Education (Home Economics).

My enthusiasm for my subject brought me from a school and community college in Devon to a large comprehensive school in Oxfordshire.



I have continued to enjoy my work in Home Economics in its broadest sense, culminating in running a busy department and co-ordinating KS4 Design and Technology examination courses. I am a moderator and examiner in both subject areas. Both as a tutor and also as Head of Year it gave me great pleasure to contribute to the personal growth of the students in my care.

Having had a two year break from teaching and undertaking voluntary work in America, I look forward to working in Sibford School.

# FAREWELL

## JANET GREGORY

Janet Gregory left Sibford during the year after joining the staff in September 1989. During her seven years here, Janet taught English and History and worked in the girls' boarding houses, undertaking various roles.

She brought with her years of experience in education and her unique, very Welsh, sense of humour. She had many friendships in the staffroom, where she is missed, and good working relationships with the pupils, who knew her as a demanding but supportive teacher.

We wish her a happy and an active retirement in the Welsh heartland of Anglesey, where she can perfect the Welsh language, which she enjoyed learning late in life.

## CAROLINE HOMAN

Caroline arrived in Sibford in September 1994 as Deputy Head with special responsibility for the pastoral life of the school, especially girls' boarding.

She brought energy, enthusiasm, compassion and dedication to her work. Her calm manner was appreciated by staff and pupils alike.

She was closely involved in the move of the girls from The Manor to the newly-refurbished Nansen, which was renamed Margaret Fell House, and in the provision of the annex, to cope with extra numbers.

Many of Caroline's ministries to meeting were memorable, as her celebration of light at Christmas with her collection of candles. She brought her own light to the school.

She was appointed to the Headship of Stonar School in September 1997 and she takes with her all our best wishes for success in her work there.

## SIMON HORSLEY

Simon arrived in Sibford at Easter in 1989, when Jim Graham was Head, taking over the English Department after Anne Chalmers departure. He immediately impressed all with his determination to do not just a good job but the best job possible.

His early days were not made any easier by the fact that his family, wife Isobel and daughters Rhiannon and Bethan, were living in Reading and Simon had to commute to see them at weekends. Eventually they bought a house in Shutford and settled into domestic bliss there for several years, after a short spell in Shrubby Cottage.

When Sibford lost the remarkable personality of Stephen Bunney in 1992, Simon became Deputy Head alongside Caroline Homan. Previously he had served the school as Director of Curriculum, a responsibility he took with him into his new role, working in close harmony with John Dunston, who became Head in January 1990.

It was a great joy to local Friends when Simon and Isobel were accepted into membership of the Society after several years as Attenders. It is typical of them both that they only applied for Membership after they had carefully tested their own motivation and were satisfied that they were acting in integrity. Eventually Simon served as Clerk to the Sibford Gower Meeting.

Simon always had high ideals and did his best to implement them. He always strove to meet the needs of the pupils first and did a lot to raise expectations both amongst the staff and the pupils themselves about their abilities. His is the credit for introducing the "lap top initiative" into Sibford, the first wave of the Information and Communication Technology revolution which is in permanent frenzy around us, even as I write these words on a lap top! The new I.C.T.

provision is a direct legacy from his grasp that Sibford had to use the new technology to help pupils achieve their best. Where he led, others have followed.

Sometimes circumstances and the hard decisions forced on him by the job he did caused Simon some heartache. I was privileged to share some of the discussions he needed to go through then with his circle of friends and he emerged the stronger and the less naive. He will be a better Head for the learning process he underwent here in the S.M.T. for five years.

We wish him all success and happiness in his new post as Head at Frewen College and have no doubt that his two daughters, of whom he is rightly very proud, will give him great delight as they grow into young womanhood, together with Isobel, his loving and supportive wife, when the demands of the job get too much for him, as they periodically will !

*Seán Kenny.*

## **BERNADETTE SABIN**

Bernadette joined the team of Compass, the then school caterers, in 1989 and worked in that section of the school for eight years, before she left us in the summer of 1997 to take up a new post in Sainsbury's in Banbury.

Bernie was always a happy and cheerful face in the dining room and she will be missed by staff and pupils alike, with whom she had an ease of communication. We send her all our best for the future.

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# **ORCHARD CLOSE**

## **GENERAL REPORT Y3/4**

So much has taken place during the past twelve months that recalling it all seems almost impossible and as for getting it in the right order well... I am also certain that no matter what we write we will forget something !

The year began with a 3 day residential visit to York. We travelled by train to York and stayed at the Youth Hostel. Our trip included visits to York Minster, Jorvik Viking Exhibition, the Archaeological Resource Centre and also the Railway Museum. As our trip coincided with Bonfire Night, we were treated to a superb firework display over the City skyline, viewed clearly from the warmth of the Youth Hostel.

Later in November I married Keith Wilson at Westwell church, near Burford. It was lovely to have so many of my class around, who all took great delight in showering me with bird seed and rice. It is really thanks to my class that I have become used to being Mrs Wilson, as they reminded everyone for weeks, including me, that I was not Miss Mills – she's extinct!

Our Christmas production of the Stage Coach was very popular and all the pupils enthusiastically prepared their roles and costumes. Each one of them gave their all on the actual performance. The Spring Term literally flew by with Book Week organised by Rachel McCulloch, and a visit to the Chipping Norton Theatre to see 'Five Children and It'. Suddenly it was Summer, or so the calendar said! Why didn't they tell the weather? So, there followed a wet sports day, camp and several playtimes; however this did not seem to mar the children's enthusiasm at all.

We were lucky to get a good, although slightly dull, day for a trip out to Farmoor Reservoir to see what does happen to Thames' water!

## **SARAH SPITTLE**

Sarah arrived at Sibford in September 1993 and during her time here she taught Child Development and Food Technology and was assistant member of house staff in The Manor and in Fielding.

Sarah was a great sportswoman, playing hockey for Banbury Ladies 1st XI and coaching at the school, where she also took Step Aerobics as a popular activity with the girls.

"She was fun in class and always wore nice clothes", is how she is remembered. Not a bad memorial!

She always demonstrated a great interest in things Australian and is now job hunting in Melbourne, with plans to stay a year or maybe longer in Australia. She takes the best wishes of all the school community with her.

## **ROBIN WARNER**

Local Brailles man, Robin, worked in the Maintenance Dept. since 1974 and was very much part of the school scene for all those years. He was invaluable in knowing where all the waterways in the school campus were located and now he's gone Kevin Wyles, the head of the department, will have to locate them by dowsing.

Sue Freestone presented Robin with a leaving gift on January 22nd and he takes all our best wishes with him into his retirement.



*Cast of Stage Coach.*

and also an opportunity to go sailing in Optimist dinghies.

The year has been another eventful one. The new extension was ready for the start of the Autumn Term. As one returning student announced with glee "At last we have a real school". The new entrance and extra classroom have truly given us "Space to Grow".

*Gail Wilson*

## **OPEN DAY - AUTUMN TERM**

The official opening of the new extension was an important milestone in the life of the school. Wendy Williams, Francis Surry and David McMahon, three of the first students in Orchard Close were invited to cut the red ribbon at the opening ceremony. Kieran Ford, the youngest member of Orchard Close and the first child to register for the New Key Stage One Class, led the present pupils into the new building to commence Open Day activities.

The younger children participated in a 'hands on' Art Workshop. Many visitors tried their hand at various printing techniques. The Year Five children re-enacted a Victorian classroom. Barbara Walters was an extremely strict teacher and the children were excellent pupils!

A selection of photographs and books from the school archives was on display. The use of original source materials for History Investigations is an important element in Key Stage Two History.

Year Six children participated in Craft, Design and Technology and Science lessons, Music making, Outdoor Life activities and Chess challenges, all making for an exciting start to the new school year.

## TRANSITION PROGRAMME

Children in Year Six participate in lessons in Senior School. This is an invaluable preparation for Year Seven and has proved to be highly successful.

During the Autumn Term parents are invited in one evening to see the children participating in the programme. This also has been greatly appreciated and supported by them.

The end of Year 6 sees the transition from Junior School to Senior School, hence the Year 6 year is called 'Transition Year'.

Year 6 have an increased number of lessons in Senior School using Senior school facilities and some of the staff. Year 6 also begin to experience more unsupervised moving around the campus with the responsibility of getting to a lesson on time and with the right equipment.

Information and Communication technology has become a major part of Key Stage 3 and 4 work in the Senior School, whether through discreet use of computers to aid projects learning, research etc. or through direct teaching of relevant skills. This is equally so at Key Stages 1 and 2. It has been of primary importance (excuse the pun) that children progressing from Key Stage 2 to 3 should receive the specialist teaching and enhanced resources that the Senior School can provide. The chance to thrive and meet new challenges is of importance to us all, and by integration into the main school for some lessons, we remove some of the fear, anxiety and worry associated with the transition. I have been involved with the programme since its conception several years ago, and I have been impressed with the students' attitude and aptitude to learn. There is no doubt that the programme benefits the progression of the child into the Senior School, resulting in a more confident, happy and knowledgeable demeanour.



The main advantages of pupils working the specialist laboratory earlier, is that they can be trained in safety procedures so that they become an integral part of science work. They are given 'hands on' experiences with what the pupils perceive to be real science apparatus in a real science environment. It engenders greater self confidence and awareness of the subject and links to everyday life.

Science teachers are able to cover substantial amounts of Year 7 introductory work which puts the students at an advantage for Key Stage 2 tests and the start of Key Stage 3.

It gives them a good start to Year 7 Science, they are able to tackle more advanced topics and procedures earlier and this extends their enthusiasm.

The biggest plus is the link between Senior and Junior Staff and the pupils.

## WEDDING BELLS

The marriage of Gail Mills (Year 3/4 class teacher) to Keith Wilson in the Autumn Term was a source of great excitement. The tiny church in Westwell, near Witney was full of friends and family. Patricia Howes (class six teacher) sang. Graham Thomas (Head of Sixth Form) was best man and the boarders in Orchard Close were honorary guests. Gail was surprised by the number of pupils and parents who wished her well at the church. An environmentalist touch, which reflects Gail's own interest, was the throwing of bird seed instead of confetti.

## TREE PLANTING

Until the day we decided to plant the trees the weather had been relatively mild and dry. Bob White, father of present pupils Beatrix and Ruth, donated a native British tree to each child in Orchard Close. Bob also organised the planting. The day dawned, the temperature had dropped and it started to snow. However, the children valiantly planted throughout the light snowfall. Scott Ralston, attached Australian Student (1995/96) planted a Scot(t)'s pine and hopes to return one day to see it fully grown!

## CHRISTMAS EVENT

All too soon the Christmas event was being held. The programme consisted of two lighthearted fairy tales and concluded with a traditional musical "Babushka".

The event was followed by tea and the Orchard Close Christmas Cake, traditionally made by the pupils. Christmas Dinner and the Carol Service brought the term to an end.

## SPRING TERM 1997

The most important event was the completion of the Orchard Close prospectus. Everyone was pleased with the final product. Thankfully, the children recognised it as their school and really felt it was a true reflection of our community.

## SUMMER TERM 1997

The Summer Term is always a busy term and so much has to be incorporated.

## SPORTS DAY

A truly memorable day - because of the weather. The decision to hold Sports Day was made in the anticipation of the weather improving. In fact, it deteriorated and conditions were awful. The children were stars and so were the parents, reflecting our country school environment with their wet weather outfits!!

The Annual Camp was blessed with the same weather, but was met with the same enthusiasm and fortitude by the children and the parents.

SATS came and went and a variety of visits were made.

## INDUCTION DAY

This special day for new children culminated in a visit from "The Golden Key Theatre Group". All too soon the term had ended. The farewells were said, tears shed by many and the holidays started.

Another year in the life of Orchard Close had flown by.

## AUSTRALIAN GAP STUDENTS

How does Australia produce so many cheerful, self confident, good looking young men? Each year our school benefits tremendously from the input of Australian Gap Students. We said farewell to Scott



*Thank you for all those Sainsbury vouchers, exchanged for sports equipment.*

Ralston in December and welcomed Tony Howells in January. He, like all his predecessors is a wonderful asset to life here.

*Elizabeth Young*

## APPLE WEEK

Orchard Close usually holds a Strawberry and Cream week to raise money for Charity. However, the wet summer made this impossible - no source of local strawberries for the pupils to pick and prepare. Instead we decided to hold an Autumn Apple Week.

The children designed a fascinating variety of stalls, all connected with apples. Each lunch hour, groups of children were busy having "apple fun". £50 was raised for charity during the course of the week.

## ELIZABETH YOUNG – by herself

I wanted to teach from an early age. I was born in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and lived for the majority of my school years in Bourton-on-the-Water, a Cotswold village.

Before the age of six I had lived in four different places, the most exotic being Singapore. Ever since, I've loved travel and hot climates.

After college in Hertford I took my first teaching post in Harlow New Town where I met and married Peter, my husband. Moves to Buckinghamshire and Essex followed. Then a working holiday in New Zealand which lasted five years!

A return to Oxfordshire for a few years was followed by ten years in Nigeria and the birth of two daughters. On my return from Africa I was fortunate to come to Sibford.

My long teaching career has always been interesting. I left college when education was about children being given freedom to express themselves. I have taught in an open plan school with team teaching. I have used the initial teaching alphabet for the teaching of reading.

Amongst my pupils I have taught children aged from three to thirteen. I have taught children who attended school when their working barge was being loaded or unloaded. I have taught Maori and Samoan children in a large city school; children from remote sheep farms in the far south of New Zealand; children from many nationalities in the middle of Africa; Lebanese children who returned from holidays in Lebanon with awful stories of a war-torn country, an African princess whose birthday party consisted of silver cutlery and servants galore!!

I have taught in three countries and five counties. I have seen ideas and methods change. However, wherever I have been "children are children" and the joys of teaching remain the same.

*Head of Orchard Close  
September 1997*

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Outdoor activities continue to be popular in Orchard Close. Each year every pupil Y3 and above is able to take part in a local camp. This year was no exception, and in mid June we found ourselves at Horley Camp site, near Banbury for 3 days' activities following 2 days of preparatory activities at School including first aid, cooking on a small stove and navigation.

The weather was unkind at best and from the moment the tents were up to the time we took them down (if they had survived that long) it rained. However, undaunted the children managed a smile and were almost oblivious of the rain when completing many different tasks.

There were flag poles and flags to construct, tents to erect, meals to cook, stories to tell and be told, magic eggs to be found, trails to be run and of course casualties to be treated.

On the second evening, somewhat damp but drier than the first, we had a barbecue dinner attended by over 60 parents and siblings. The phrase "rather them than me" was overheard in several conversations and I rather agreed with them. This, followed by storytelling from Nick Tomlinson, fairly finished off most children who were volunteering themselves for bed.

This was not the response from Y6 pupils in the early September camp when on an activity camp - held at School. They were wide awake and full of enthusiasm and that was past midnight! However, this did not prevent them grabbing a few hours' peaceful sleep before starting again at 5am! This group cooked their own suppers and complete with costumes, participated in a variety of 'pirate activities' constructing lantern and boots.

As a group we walked via foot paths to Blenheim Farm, Shutford, to visit the lake there and investigate Fossil Island. Armed with samples, we returned to school to enjoy some group games and a barbecue with parents.

As with any activity, the success lies in the organisation and frequently the assistance given by older students and parents. There can never be too many volunteers where an O.C. camp is concerned and if you ever feel inclined to find out what goes on your efforts will always be gratefully received.

## JUNIOR SKI TRIP

Our second ski trip for Juniors departed from Sibford at the start of the February half term, 29 pupils, staff and parents all off to try their skills on the Italian slopes.

We flew to Milan and transferred to Passo Tonale, a very small but pleasant resort. Our hotel, only 5 minutes from the main ski tows, provided a good base for all of our activities. This timing did alter however, depending on your size and ability to juggle skis, poles, goggles, cameras and hats!

The ski instructors spoke far better English than any one of our group could speak Italian, although there were occasions when it was possible to hear the children trying to communicate with the hotel staff. (Usually when they wanted drinks or more frequently change for the pool table)

For one of the busiest times of the ski season, the snow was not always at its best. It was incredibly hot for February and often saw many of us skiing in T-shirts. One night of snowfall during our stay topped up the snow cover enough to provide reasonable skiing for the remaining days on the slopes.

The lessons proved very successful, and all the children and adults received their hard earned awards at the end of a very long week. A few bumps and bruises were gained along the way, mostly by adults tripping over other adults, but I am glad to report that Lindy has fully recovered from her topple and is even thinking of joining our jaunt to the snow in 1998!

## SAILING

Every year I seem to report that sailing has grown within School and once again this has been no exception. Since the start of this year several awards have been gained by pupils throughout the school.

Sailing is now part of Wednesday activities for Y10 to Y13. They are able to sail throughout the year, with the added protection of wet suits and full waterproofs. With O.C. and Y7 - 9 sailing on Mondays during the early Autumn Term and Summer Term, this brings the total number of pupils regularly participating in sailing, on a weekly basis, to a healthy figure.

We sail at Farmoor Reservoir, as members of the Oxford and District School Sailing Association and have access to various boats, plus additional instruction from the Sailing Warden, Nigel Vick, someone whom many children have met, usually as he arrives next to their capsized boat on top of which they are trying to climb!

The weather this summer did not really lend itself to sailing with young people, as it was either far too powerful a wind or completely calm. Many pupils were frustrated that they were unable to get out in a boat or even out of the School grounds, as we frequently cancelled sailing due to the bad weather. So, as the present sailing season comes gradually to an end as the evenings close in, we shall have to hope that the enthusiasm for getting wet and the thrills of hanging over the edge of a sailing boat as it moves across the water remains intact.

## SAFE CITIZENS

Year 6 learnt how to become safer citizens by visiting Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes, accompanied by Year 7, and, on Polling Day, by participating in Junior Citizen at Upper Heyford, this time accompanied by Year 5. Both events consisted of mock up accidents and the children were invited to summon help by dialling 999. The building site was shown not to be a safe place to play and their powers of observation were tested when they became witnesses to a burglary, not a robbery, as no-one was attacked.

Throughout the year WPC Dilsaver has visited Orchard Close as part of the Community Policing Programme. One aspect of these visits has been to reinforce the STRANGER DANGER message. Whether the message had been 'taken on board' was tested at Junior Citizen. Interestingly it was mainly the girls who remembered not to go off with someone whom they did not know.

## GIRLS' GAMES

The 1996-97 season saw more in the way of success on the netball court. Thirteen matches were played of which eight were won, one was drawn and the rest were lost. Success was due to the hard work put in by the girls, particularly with shooting, and special mention must be made of Miriam Rabb and Jennifer Preston. Experience gained in the previous year was also an added bonus.



Police visit, PC Rosemary Dilsaver.

Besides netball the girls and the boys of Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 learnt the rudiments of hockey. One mixed match and one girls' match were played; both were lost but still enjoyed.

In the summer term, rounders replaced netball as the major sport. Four matches and one mini tournament were played. The mixed tournament resulted in a win for Orchard Close, whilst we won one of our matches and lost three.

At all fixtures the girls have been a credit to themselves and the school and they have always given of their best.



Orchard Close netball team.

## S.A.T.s

The end of May saw Year 6 concentrating hard on maths, English and science. It was time for the S.A.T.s or Standard Assessment Tests. All the children gave of their best and approached the tests in a calm and mature manner. Their hard work was rewarded with some pleasing results to end the school year. As in previous years, science produced good results including a number of Level 5s. Maths showed a big improvement, with over half the children obtaining Level 4 or higher.

*P.A. Howes*

## BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!

In March, Orchard Close held its first Scholastic Book Fair. There was much excitement as the four large book cases were opened and the fair got under way. The children's enthusiasm was such that, although there were specific opening times, there was constant desire to be involved in the fair. Constant tugging of the sleeves and exuberant smiling faces meant that parents were also keen to view the books.

During the week of the fair, many book related activities took place: special thanks must go to our visiting storytellers (staff from senior school) who entertained us with their exciting and dramatic tales.

One day Orchard Close looked rather like a picture from a fairy tale, with the staff and pupils dressed to resemble characters from their favourite books, so many white rabbits not too late for a very important date!

The week raised £360-67 in books for the school, and the next Book Fair will be in the spring, when we look forward to seeing you there!

*Rachel McCulloch*

## MUSIC IN ORCHARD CLOSE

A recurring problem with music teachers in secondary schools is that of new pupils entering Year 7 with widely differing musical backgrounds. Some primary schools manage to provide a wide ranging musical experience, while others can offer children hardly any.

Sibford Music Department benefits enormously because Orchard Close pupils are taught by specialist staff within the Dept. When O.C. pupils move up into senior school their abilities, strengths and weaknesses are already known and there is a seamless transition to the Year 7 music curriculum.

Orchard Close pupils benefit from tuition in the main school in the following ways:

1. instrumental teachers are specialists in their own field and they offer uninterrupted tuition throughout the school;
2. they gain access to Sibford's very well resourced Music Dept. from an early age - CD and tape recordings, library, pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments, orchestral instruments and the electronic studio;
3. they have the opportunity to sing in a choral society with pupils, staff and others adults; to play in the school orchestra and to take part in small ensemble groups;
4. to grow up into main school, where music is important and valued.

*Mark Paine*

## BOARDING LIFE

What a busy year we have had in Orchard Close — the time has just flown by!

We kicked-off the year with a visit to a Viking camp at Sulgrave Manor and many more interesting visits followed. One of our favourite places is Wigginton animal farm, which must be the coldest place in Oxfordshire! We were very involved here in animal "conversation" and still have the scars to prove it.

During our twice termly visits to the Meeting in the Gower we took responsibility for hospitality, which involved dusting, preparing flowers and serving biscuits and drinks after the meeting (the best bit, according to the boarders.)

One weekend we painted an underwater scene in a rather dull corridor in Orchard Close and on another we planted flowers in a waste patch, and like Topsy they grew and grew. So thanks to everyone who donated plants, because it's been a super display and we are especially proud of our vegetable plot.

By the summer term, O.C. seemed full to the rafters with many of the day children flexi-boarding. In the second half of the term we had additional visitors — for the first time ever we had four Russian children from St. Petersburg staying with us for six weeks.

What an experience that was! Lots of laughter and finding out about each other. How good their English was and how terrible our Russian was! When they left, tears all around and lots of happy memories.

Lots of thanks to all our 1996/97 boarders for helping so much, working so hard and making life such fun.

*Beth Banning  
Matron*

# HOUSE REPORTS

## FIELDING HOUSE

To say the year started with a bang would be wrong. It started with a break! Unfortunately it was my arm, and a nasty break it was too! The Upper VIth and I were just acclimatising ourselves to the arrival of a positive, vibrant and large Lower VIth when the accident happened. At the very beginning of a year it could have caused problems but happily Sarah, Cathy and the whole House responded wonderfully. It turned out to be the catalyst in forming a good house spirit that progressively became stronger. I hope I don't have to repeat the exercise annually! Pam will also remember the year with mixed feelings due to her traumatic operation!

With 39 in the House now, we quickly put into action our activity programme - Pizzas & Videos on Friday night, visits at weekends and occasionally during the week. Our first memorable evening was a visit to the Oxford v Sheffield Wednesday football match. Surprisingly more girls went than boys - something, I believe, to do with big chaps in short shorts! Cathy and Tracey took the group and I blame them for Wednesday's poor defeat. Late in the year Simon Talbot and I took a similar trip to Wednesday v Aston Villa and on that occasion Wednesday were successful. Perhaps our singing with the Wednesday band scared those Villa players!

Next was the trip to the Snow Dome in preparation for the VIth form skiing trip to France at Easter. Cath, Sarah and Kate Deacon showed how it was done - Fabian sadly didn't!! Christmas brought the Clothes Show and the VIth form song at the Carol Service. One was very good and the other wasn't! Suffice to say we will try harder next time.



Over the year we had some 'interesting' House meetings. Perhaps the most noteworthy was the talk by Graham Thomas on his mountaineering exploits and the emotional moment when we realised that Geoff Slade had been his loyal sherpa who had saved his life! We also used these meetings for informative talks and Lucy the new San nurse spoke on drug issues, epilepsy, breast cancer and testicular cancer. The latter was too much for some of the more squeamish amongst us - James!! These talks and some very sad personal losses inspired us to actively support two House charities — The Epilepsy Association and Break Through Breast Cancer — with Stephen O' Malley and Hannah Leavett at the helm. At present the total is approximately £50.

We were soon off on our travels again and a visit to 'Grease' in Birmingham proved to be a real success - although Tanawat and Joseph kept asking if they needed their passports. The year rolled on with dances at Kingham Hill, visits to 'Guys and Dolls' in London and the white knuckle rides at Drayton Manor Theme Park.

The House performed well on Sports Day and in the rugby and football. The latter saw us field a mixed team in which Cathy Gornall

and Kate Deacon terrorised the opposition! The girls won the hockey and Helen, Kate, Cathy with Sarah attended Tuesday night training at Banbury Ladies Hockey Club. At weekends, Fabian, Francis, James B and James E played for Stow Rugby Football Club.

Comic Relief saw Jimmy Wringe raise over £60 for dressing up as a woman and publicly shaving his legs. It is strange what people will pay to see!

The year came to a close with 'The Mikado' turning out to be a whole House effort. Those not in the production willingly helped cover the duties of those engaged in rehearsals, and served again to underline the tremendous House spirit apparent throughout the year. Last of all came the Leavers' Dinner, an event held at The George, Lower Brailes and attended by all the House and many teachers. It was a very emotional evening as we said goodbye to Rosie, Fabian, Hazel, Anthony, Jamie, Becky, Clara, Laura, Jenny, Rebecca and Andrew, the stalwarts who had embarked upon their V Ith form career as I was starting mine at Sibford. I was most pleased to note success for all in their GNVQs and A levels. Lastly we said goodbye to 'Spit' who was off to seek pastures new in Australia and who will be sorely missed by all those she saw through their time at Sibford. We leave the last words to her: "What a great year! With many happy memories!"

*John Howard*

## GILLETT HOUSE

Sitting down to write this report gets me thinking about how much some of the pupils have changed since the House re-opened in 1993. Little shy year 7s back then have changed into confident young men in their last year of Gillett. Like proud parents, Alison and I can sit back and smile about past times and look forward to our present year 7 growing up.

Looking back over a year in the life of Gillett and trying to put that into words is no easy task. So many happy times and so much fun takes place during the course of a day that isn't recorded in any way it becomes very easy to forget these things. It's the small things, like the way the boarders infect you with their happiness whenever you go on duty, that makes this House so special.

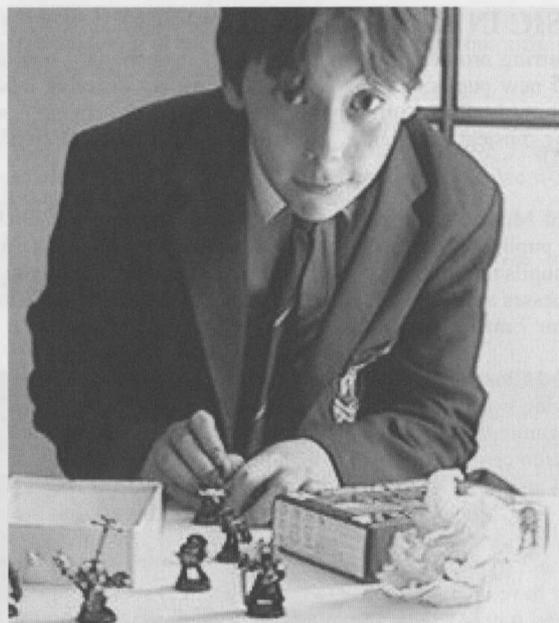
Relaxed, fun, mad, home are just four words that come to mind when I think about Gillett, and I hope that all present and old scholars of the House are able to think of Gillett as a home from home.

Like any department in School the secret of our success is mainly down to a good team. The Gillett team is made up of Alison Pearce who, like me, started with the House when we opened. She continues to be a major influence on the day-to-day lives of us all, not only taking responsibility for the domestic management of the house but also acting as friend and supporter of us all. Our cleaner, known only as 'Heather', has worked tirelessly to keep the House in good order and has put up with me walking over her wet floors time and time again. Our third-person, Andy Glover, takes charge of the House on Monday evenings whilst I take a couple of hours off, and is a welcome change-of-face for the boarders, even though he does keep putting his feet on my coffee table in the common room! The attached staff, Lyn Usher and Andy Newbold, have entertained us on many occasions with fun and informative House Meetings.

Also important to the team are the House Captain, Deputies and Sports Captain. This year our House Captain is Patrick Jessel. Pat has also been a member of Gillett since 1993 and will be an asset to our team. Our Deputy House Captains this year are Matthew Armstead, Franki Shum and James Chen. The Sports Captain is Adam Bell.

The rest of the team are of course the boarders and day pupils who all have a major part in the smooth running of the House.

It wasn't only staff taking House Meetings this year; pupils also



*Chris House painting some models.*

take their turn in leading the House in a meeting for worship or perhaps telling us about a hobby. We also had a guest speaker in the summer term, Mike Finch, who has spent a life-time associated with Sibford. He told us all about 'the good old days' and the Old Scholars' Association.

On the playing field we have had some success again this year. The football results were: Gillett 6 Lister 0, Gillett 1 Penn 1.

Athletics: Gillett intermediates won and the juniors did very well but didn't make a good show on the score board because of their small number.

Well, that's it for another year, Well done Joshua Viney and Chris Freeman on your exam results and thank you Gillett for yet another happy year.

*Paul Ludlow  
Housemaster*

## LISTER HOUSE

We all enjoyed a calm and happy year thanks in particular to a really splendid Year 11 group led by Andrew Gunnett, Jason Chadwick, David O'Donohoe and Billy Yiu. All of them have stayed into the 6th form. This year has begun with a shared captaincy for the first time between Philip Tew and Ben Gibson, who have been firm friends throughout their stay in Lister. They are already doing a good job.

We bid farewell to our Care Assistant of three years, Paul Rae, who has gone on to be a Care Assistant with responsibility for activities at St. George's School, Hertfordshire and the House presented him with a gift in appreciation of his kindness and commitment, at our BBQ in June.

A new and exciting departure has been the appointment of Claire Stewart as our new Care Assistant — the first female assistant in an all boys' house. Claire arrives having completed her degree in Northampton and she has settled very quickly. Already the boys are responding to her enthusiastic, friendly and competent approach and we are all benefiting from this new initiative. We hope that Claire has a happy and fruitful stay in Lister.

We have continued to support Kpassa School, Ghana and we have sent out our annual £200 donation this term, but our continuing to do so is becoming harder and depends upon the support of our parents and friends. Without having gifts to sell in order to raise money we will fail to reach our target sooner rather than later this year. Susan Frampton brought slides of life in and around Kpassa to evening meeting in June and we were all moved to hear about the lives and



*Lister Boys setting off for the Christmas Ball.*

aspirations of the pupils there and the work that she and David have done as missionaries over the years, culminating in constructing new school buildings before retiring back to England.

We are at last looking forward to our Lister refurbishment. The installation of a new fire alarm system and new walls in place of partitions in the dormitories is a real necessity but this alone will not improve the facilities for our pupils. We hope also to gain a remodelled kitchen and eating area which hopefully will be closed off, and to have more comfortable sitting and working areas in the dormitories by having only four beds in each area. A real boon will be fully refurbished showers.

*Stuart Hedley*

## MARGARET FELL HOUSE

Margaret Fell House has gained a lot of new faces since last term and we now start the September term with a full house and ten girls down in the Annex, so look out boys, we're taking over!

I think that the majority of the house is happy to be back and we are raring to begin a new term, with a fresh start, honest.

As I think of what I can tell you about Margaret Fell, pancake day sticks out in my mind. It was the most original one I have ever experienced as over a hundred of the things were made - in our tiny kitchen - and eaten with fillings ranging from sugar and lemon to chocolate, maple syrup, banana and ice cream all in one mix — as I remember Mrs Freestone had at least 3! Well, as the nights draw in and the world outside becomes bleak and bare, we all reminisce of the much missed summer when we said goodbye to our 'blue jumpers' the Year 11, but I am glad to say a lot have stayed on into the sixth form, so we still get to see them for a chat.

As I referred above to new faces, Miss Marklew is another recent addition to our house, and I think she has found her place in life washing our underwear and sorting laundry - thanks Miss.



*Evening life in Margaret Fell House.*

Many people come and go at Sibford and we have had the opportunity to spend time with Julia (pronounced 'Ulia') Moebus, a German girl, who I hope is enjoying her one term stay. We also have girls from all corners of the world which is good for me as I've only had experience of living in the North of England. Some of my friends include Katy from Scotland, who's currently living in Australia; Sylvie from Spain and Kukiko, my artistic friend from Japan.



We are looking forward to the Christmas Ball - a big date in the girls' calendar where hours are spent running about, making sure we all look gorgeous .. or at least trying to.

*Adele Molson - Year 10  
(hoping to become a  
journalist)*

*Christmas Ball. Don't we look lovely  
and it only took us 4 hours! Laura  
Bridgeman, Georgie Hill, Alizarin  
Kimball and Gemma Raby.*

## ANNEX

As we review another year passing it is time to give thanks to Sarah Bain for the excellent way in which she took on the role of Head of House. Her efficiency, depth of character and organisational skills were of tremendous help to Catherine and myself. We were pleased to see a number of the Year 11 girls staying on into Years 12 and 13. Already they have been down to visit us and their old rooms.

For those who left us for pastures new, we wish them luck for the future. After only 3 weeks I have received 2 letters from Sarah Sealey giving details of her new life — these letters are always very welcome as we do worry about how our old scholars fare elsewhere.

Our charity work this year, 1996/97, has extended to helping the homeless and supporting a 'shanty' school out in South Africa. For the year 97/98 we have yet to decide.

In July we said goodbye to Dominic Soriano who had efficiently run the Annex for the Summer term. She is now beginning her training to teach in England.

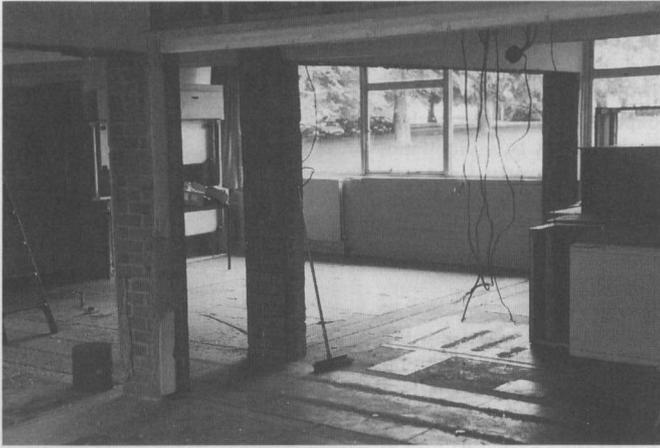
My last thank you goes to Catherine Marklew who has been Assistant Housemistress in Margaret Fell House for 12 months — in that time Catherine has proved to be a very positive asset to the girls in her care, and the never failing cheerfulness with which she performs all her duties makes life so much better for us all — long may it last.

*Lesley Norton*

## PENN HOUSE

As I write, the sounds of whirring drills can be heard from the other ends of the House. It is late September, and for the last twelve or more weeks the House has been pulled to pieces and reassembled to provide more luxurious accommodation for the boys. For the senior boys a series of twin study bedrooms have been created whilst the younger years share four bed rooms with study areas and newly designed storage facilities. Each boy has a large area of pinboard for posters, a bedside table and a reading lamp. A new colour scheme, new carpets and curtains have given the dormitories a fresher, more welcoming feel.

Downstairs, work is progressing, but has still some way to go. The newly fitted kitchen with stainless steel hob, new sink and drainer and breakfast bar is complete. A new laundry has been created, and a w.c. with wash basin is now available exclusively for visiting parents. The removal of an interior wall has opened up the hallway area for the installation of tuck lockers; so that food and drink need not be brought into the newly carpeted common room. Comfortable lounge furniture, new pictures and a collection of jungly house plants will soon transform the raw plaster and sawdust of the common room



*Penn – gutted and fitted July '97.*

into a space for relaxation and television viewing.

The House has been plumbed into the new school phone and computer system and a new vocabulary of techno-speak is appearing in our conversations. It will soon be possible to leave voice mail for us, not to mention a host of other technical wizardry.

Penn's traditional sporting prowess continues with the Rugby Inter-house trophy remaining in our custody. This was due in no small

part to the skill and sportsmanship of Nick Adamson (now promoted to House Rugby Captain), Martin Peers and Daniel Anderson. On Sports Day we were delighted to see the Athletics Trophy remaining in Penn hands. We must particularly thank Adam Palladino and Rasmus Nielsen (this year's Captain of Athletics) for their valiant achievements. To everyone who took part in the sporting life of the House we owe a real debt of gratitude.

We have, after much deliberation, decided to adopt the Nchima Trust as our house charity. This body works for the poor, the orphaned, the handicapped and the elderly in Malawi, central southern Africa. Plans are afoot for fundraising schemes as well as practical ways to provide things which are scarce in the country with the lowest economy in the world.

At the end of the summer we said goodbye to David McMahon, who had taken on the role of House Captain with great confidence, effectiveness and popularity. We are sure that such qualities are abundant in his successor, Freddie Huntington, and we wish him and his team good luck for the coming terms.

The House is very grateful for the continuing care and support given by Tony Skeath and Mark Connor. We look forward to another successful year.

*Michael Spring  
House Master - Penn*

## AROUND THE CAMPUS

### ART AND DESIGN

This year has seen some remarkably competent and original work coming from our students at all levels. In the junior years there has been much activity on the carving front with a veritable ark of animals carved from stone in bas-relief by Year 7 pupils. Medieval gargoyles provided the inspiration for some hideous grotesques carved by Year 9, while studies of the textile designs of the Cuna Indians gave Year 8 the opportunity to exercise their imaginations.

The GCSE course revealed some really outstanding draughtsmanship. In particular the large format charcoal sketches by Yuka Suzuki and the bright pastel drawings of natural objects by Olivia Baring drew admiration from the visitors to our exhibitions during the year. We were delighted that they were awarded A\* and A grades respectively.

At Advanced level some exciting and varied work was emerging, often on a grand scale and culminating in a wonderful show in the newly refurbished Painting Studio in June. Following a generous award from the Martin Luther King Fund, we have purchased resource materials and wooden panels in order to begin a programme of mural painting to celebrate the cultural richness and diversity of Sibford's pupils, and to foster a deeper understanding of the ways of other peoples.

Visitors to the School will have noticed the appearance, at Easter, of a number of brick plinths around the campus. These were built following a donation from the family of the late Kate Long. Kate was a great supporter of the arts and these plinths for the display of the children's sculpture are a fitting memorial to someone who served the school for so many years.

To celebrate its 125th anniversary, the Horton General Hospital in Banbury invited a group of local secondary school art departments to contribute a large panel, each depicting a period in the hospital's history. Using the theme of the 1960's Pop Art movement, sixth former Felicity Day painted a scene featuring the Maternity Building which was opened in 1968. All six participating schools' panels were assembled during the summer holidays and officially unveiled.

During the week prior to summer half-term, the department opened its doors to the public as part of Oxfordshire Artweek '97. We had visitors from far and wide including a number of overseas tourists. A varied display was mounted, including two and three dimensional work from students of all ages, including Orchard Close, as well as work by staff and friends of the school. On the closing day we extended the opening hours so that members of the Old Scholars' gathering could view the work - it was most heartening to hear their appreciative remarks and to listen to their reminiscences of days gone by, when the whole school would gather in the present Painting Studio for meetings.

Early in the summer we visited London to see the remarkable exhibition of paintings by the co-founder of the Cubist Movement, Georges Braque. This visit provided much inspiration for further study and Hazel Bell's well-deserved A grade at A Level owed much to the influence of Braque's new way of seeing.



*Felicity Day working on the Horton Hospital mural.*

Our annual visit to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition once again gave students the opportunity to come face to face with what is happening in the world of contemporary art. Reactions to the exhibition ran the full range from 'absolutely brilliant' to 'what total rubbish'! ... 'twas ever thus...

The Autumn Term has seen our return, after a year's absence to the re-vamped painting studio, its light and uncluttered space a welcome change from the dusty atmosphere of the sculpture studio.



*Ben Clayson and Craig Joynson at Art Club.*

A busy and successful year ends with a laudable array of high grade examination passes, and a new one begins with the hopes and aspirations of the next vintage. As usual a number of students have left us to pursue further and higher art studies, but all who have passed through the department, from the casual doodler to the monumental carver, have left us with memories of an enjoyable and creative year.

*Michael Spring*

## **BUSINESS STUDIES DEPARTMENT 1996-97**

Nothing like starting on a positive note – so here goes... Congratulations to Rosie Hilferty, who gained a D at A level and is now at Sheffield Hallam University studying for an HND in Business Studies.

Year 11 GCSE students experienced two-tier examinations for the first time within the Business Studies area. Charles Good and David O'Donohoe were successful at the higher level, and others in the group achieved well at foundation level too. Indeed, this year sees David, mentioned above, progressing naturally from GCSE to A level (a first again within the Business Department at Sibford). We look forward with interest to see how he develops over the next couple of years.

Four GNVQ students in the Department left in July 97, having been very successful with their Intermediate programmes - Fabian Collis, Rebecca England, Jamie Grant and Andrew Waite. All received a merit award, which allowed them to progress further with their careers. I feel the need to express my personal satisfaction with Andrew Waite's achievement, as he battled with learning needs throughout his course. He was determined to succeed and, with co-operation from Warwickshire Education Authority, received computer hardware and software on loan to aid his development. Thanks must also go to Lindy Harris and Tony Skeath for their efforts relating to his needs. Our best wishes to him as he now begins Advanced GNVQ at Leamington. I must not forget to mention too Heleah Al Anazi, Jenny Solis, Rebecca Garside, Stephen O'Malley and Annette Perry, who achieved a Unit of Credit on their Foundation Course. They passed the unit called Contributing to A Team Activity, where they promoted the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of Top 86, which delighted their teacher Jenny Wollerton.

At present we have 19 students working on GCSE Business (year 10/11) and 24 Sixth form students involved with either A level or GNVQ programmes within the department.

This year the department experienced a few hiccups, - not least of which was as a result of my 16 weeks absence from school, from the Middle of February to early June 1997. I had an operation to remove 2 discs from my neck and a graft from the hip bone, to fuse the gap. (not to be recommended unless absolutely necessary!) As a result,



*Geoff Cox and his wife Charlotte, celebrating Top 86's tenth anniversary, Dec.'96*

students were supported admirably by Geoff Slade, my "right-hand man", who stepped in to assist Year 11 GCSE students, helping them as they neared their final exam, and prompting them to get their coursework to me on time for assessment, as well as working with Year 12 A level students. He also kept an eye on the day-to-day running of the department and maintained contact with me throughout. Many thanks Geoff.

For 2 months, the services of Di Warren were acquired. Indeed, Di came out of retirement, to assist GNVQ Year 13 students, in particular, to complete evidence requirements and undertake assessments. Again many thanks Di, for the commitment you gave, which was much appreciated by all concerned.

Consequently, my return to School after GCSEs was not particularly easy, coping with the backlog of work, dealing with the new, finding out about the staff changes, and generally catching up on all the "gossip" from students. However, as usual, Sibford in its entirety showed me great support and helped me cope with a few painful and difficult months. Fingers crossed, this year will be better and hopefully healthier!



*Mobile cream eggs!!*

Students recently have embarked on their courses within the Business Studies department with enthusiasm, and a number of 'visits out' have taken place already. Twenty-five students went to Cadbury World and were given an insight into the Marketing Mix of Cadbury's products as well as taking part in the new Cadabra promotional experience.

*Extracts from students' accounts relating to their visit to Cadbury World. The visit was concerned with the marketing strategies used by Cadbury.*

"The A level and GNVQ Business Studies students have undertaken a School outing to Cadbury's World. The reason for this outing, was to study the making and marketing, in particular, of Cadbury's chocolate and its other numerous products".

*David O'Donohoe Year 12 A level.*

"We started with the main tour which consisted of various stages in the development of chocolate from the earliest user of cocoa beans

as a form of currency used by the Mayans, to the chocolate we eat today. As we went around this self-guided tour, we had a question pack to fill in, and this made us pay attention to the information given, because if we didn't, then we wouldn't get the answers we needed.

I found out that there was a lot more to Cadbury's than just making chocolate. For instance the advertising involved was amazing. One advert for Cadburys Milk Tray took six months to make and involved 'the man in black' performing various stunts. Helicopters, both real and models, were needed; a sound stage was used and the advert was even filmed on location in Jamaica.

Cadbury World has also recently made a ride called 'Cadabra', which involved you taking a ride on a little car through a fantasy land involving chocolate beans where other Cadbury characters exist, such as the caramel bunny and mini egg parrot too. This ride cost Cadbury £1.2 million to make and is aimed mainly at young children and families.

After the tours end, you are straight into the Cadbury shop, the biggest chocolate shop in the world! The shop concentrated mainly on chocolate, of course, but there was other merchandise available e.g. mugs, hats and cuddly toys etc. I also went to the restaurant and found that most of the food there was a little over-priced, which was understandable however since you are a captured audience".

*Chris Freeman Year 12, A level*

"The most helpful part of the day was the talk at the end of the afternoon given by Colin Samways, the Marketing and Sales Manager. Below are the main points of marketing.

Market research is essential to marketing and there are two types:  
Qualitative  
Quantitative

Qualitative is the understanding of people's feelings, e.g. I like the flakiness of Flake. This can be achieved through focus groups, normally about 8 people per group, and interviews. In these, people discuss what they like and don't like about a product. This will give you opinions and this is the point of qualitative research."

*Francis Surry Year 13, A level*

"When Cadbury's have this information they go on to do Quantitative Research. This is where they see how many people agree with these answers through questionnaire, surveys etc. They then analyse and use the data accordingly."

*Elliott Jennings Year 13, A Level Business*

"The four Ps are very important for marketing- they are price, promotion, place and people. Producing chocolates, for example, will need to consider variable costs, such as raw material, packaging and so on. Fixed costs, such as plant and labour are needed as well".

*Claire Chou Year 13, A level*

"**Product** - The products at Cadbury's are normally designed by the T D D (Technological Development Department.) This is often responsible for reviving interests, in products whose life cycle needs regenerating for instance. They did this by launching Wispa Gold as sales of original Wispa bars were in decline.

New Technology will also dictate a new product - for example the Spira was almost only brought out because it was a new way to 'spin' chocolate and they could do this, so emerged the Spira product.

Products are also produced to compete with other products e.g. Timeout was primarily brought out to compete with Kit Kat, as it had such a large share of the market.

**Price** - There are many things to be taken into account when pricing a product. The first initial cost is the plant and this has to be paid for no matter if the product succeeds, or fails.

Other factors are as follows:

- 1 Raw materials, such as the chocolate or biscuit, counts as a variable cost.
- 2 Packaging is also a variable cost and this has to be done now by law relating to the ingredients used etc.
- 3 Labour is needed in the plant - the making of the product, but due to new technology less labour is now needed. This has led to a decrease in labour cost, but an increase in the cost of setting up the plant.
- 4 The market place is now only really willing to pay around 27/28 pence for a chocolate bar, - if that means that a particular chocolate bar would not make a profit, it is not normally produced.

### **Packaging**

The job of packaging is now more than just making it protect the product. It has to catch the eye and stand out, as there is so much more competition in the market. It has to state its weight, ingredients and sell by date. These are legal requirements, but Cadbury's also include a bar code, as most major retailers don't sell products without one. They also include a description of the product itself and its ingredients.

### **Promotion**

This is now done entirely through advertising. There are many media and each is good in its own way. TV (national scale), Press (regional or national), Posters (areas of a region), Radio (regional), Coupons (whatever the company chooses), Sponsorship (aimed at socio-economic groups) - note Coronation Street and its huge viewing audience.

### **Place**

There are many places from where the products are sold. The majority however, are sold from grocers, corner shops, distribution chains and petrol stations. Petrol stations get more profit from their sales of chocolate bars than from fuel".

*Francis Surry Year 13 A level*

"All in all, this trip was not only a good day out, but a lot was learnt, and the group went away from it full of information about advertising, sponsorship, customer service, looking out for supply and demand, legal constraints and all sorts of other things which will help all of us for future projects in one way or another".

*James Wringe Year 13 GNVQ*

### **Did you know? .....**

The amount of chocolate confectionery produced each year is 100,000 tonnes, or that 300 million Creme Eggs are produced each year, and if they were stood on top of each other they would be 10 times higher than Mount Everest!

We were given the pleasure of being addressed by Colin Samways, Cadbury World Sales and Marketing Manager, who guided us through the past, present and future marketing strategies connected with products and services. A very informative and enjoyable day for all!

**Another first for the department**, saw a Training Day organised for Sixth Form GNVQ and A level students. They were given a comprehensive look into being self-employed and setting up a business, by Ted Tolputt, a consultant and local businessman. This was as a result of furthering our links with Norbis/Business Link in Banbury.

Students who may have thought that setting up your own business venture was easy, soon realised there was a tremendous amount of work involved from the idea, encouraging PMA (Positive Mental Attitude) through to Ownership, Marketing, Raising finance, Tax implications, Legal obligations, and Cash Flow and Financial Forecasting.

Ted Tolputt enjoyed his day with us — experiencing Sibford for the first time. Indeed he commented that it must have been about forty years since he last had a 'school dinner' and complimented the



*Debbie chats to Ted, just before the afternoon session begins – she was sounding out her own business venture “idea”, to see what he thought!*

catering staff on their skills. The students enjoyed his company for the day, his experiences, stories and obvious enthusiasm for his work. No doubt we’ll see him again.....

“A good insight of what is to come in our coursework, and we will find all the information useful”.

*Elliot Jennings, Year 13, A level Business*

“Nice chap that Ted, useful for the ‘real world’ experience. Lots to absorb, (too much maybe!)”

*James Edwards, Year 13, A level Business*

“I found it rather interesting, because Ted explained every single detail on how to set up your own business properly”.

*Tanawat Charoenbhol, Year 13  
GNVQ Intermediate Level Business*



*“Had a good day – it taught me about the practical details, rather than the theoretical. It will help a lot with my course work project. Thanks!”*

*Francis Surry, Year 13, A level Business student*

Our link with Lloyds Bank has seen the return of Simon Woodruff who has acted as a consultant, assisting individual students with their Business Plans for Small Business set-ups.

Marks and Spencer in Oxford allowed us to visit again, view their customer services operations and work on the department floors. Thanks for an excellent morning go to Oliver Monahan, Commercial Management Trainee as well as Rachel Oliver from Lesme Callebaut returning to us. She specialises in Human Resource Management and guided us through the world of CVS, Job Applications, Job Roles, and employer and employee co-operation/ conflict experiences, using appropriate legislation.

Since the start of this academic school year, we have proved that business activity is alive and well at Sibford School.

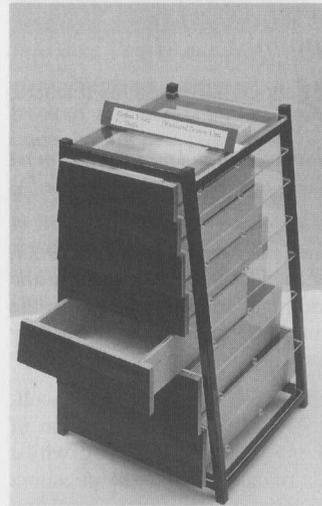
I will end, as always, by requesting that if any parents, guardians, relatives or friends of the School have some useful world-of-work experiences they would like to share with us, then please “drop in” and let us know. Students always value these opportunities to complement their studies with real personal experiences, and get a chance to put some theory to the test. Plus, it makes a nice change from seeing the ‘old faces’ of the Staff. Do please get in touch and you’ll be made very welcome!

*Pam Conroy  
(Head of Business Studies/GNVQ Co-ordinator) 1997*

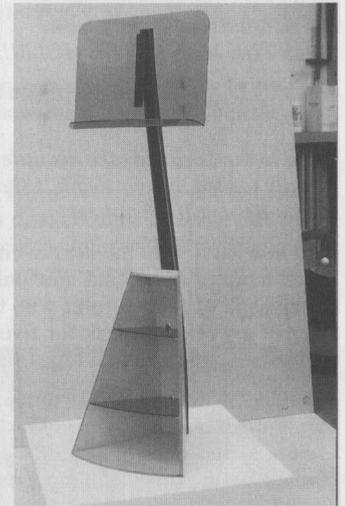
## C.D.T. DEPT.

We enjoyed teaching a particularly positive and well motivated Year 11 group this year, culminating in their achieving 9 grade A’s from an entry of 13 candidates. 60% of the exam is determined by coursework, but the candidates had to sit two written papers. Five of our candidates were dyslexic and their success, aided as they were by the SpLD Dept. shows just what can be achieved with hard work and good motivation.

Alex Ritchie, Andrew Gunnett, Andrew Walker and Amy Duckett have started an A level design course in the VIth form.



*Display Drawers, Grade A.  
Bethan Young*



*Music Stand, Grade A.  
David McMahon*

Year 10 pupils enjoyed a visit to the Dept. from maestro Alex Gregory, an eminent musician, designer and inventor of innovative stringed instruments. He brought along from Gibson and Fender several hand-made prototype instruments he had developed, explaining the technicalities and materials to us, concluding with some stunning virtuoso playing. He was subsequently invited to a Morning Meeting where the whole school were able to hear and appreciate his playing.



*Alex Gregory with year 10 C.D.T. pupils*

At the end of the summer term, Year 10 also visited Rycotewood Summer Exhibition to see examples of the craft and design work in furniture and modelling, intended to inspire their own coursework.

*Stuart Hedley*

## DRAMA DEPARTMENT

### Years 6-8 Drama Weekend or Bedlam By Any Other Name

The first to arrive was Tom. Finding the Oliver Studio peopled only by a plastic dummy dressed in feather boas and a green beret, he disappeared down a hole in the stage and stayed there for most of the rest of the weekend. This was Tom, of course, the man who put the Wacky into Wackford Squeers, so nobody was too concerned. Occasionally, he would come out to give the porcelain pig a walk, or flounce the boa, at which point all the children would shout,

*"IT'S THE MAN IN THE HOLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"*

whereby he would lick the pig on the snout, gaily toss his feathers, and say,

*"And lo the Lord did take his little lambs, and did mince them most merrily for tea, as, my dears, I shall do to thee, laughing wickedly, Ha-de-ha-dee Tee-hee-hee!"*

Fred and Ruth were the next to come, and Stacey soon after. 9.23, seven minutes to go, and now only Sian was left to complete the merry band of foolish folks who had inadvertently said yes to the offer of a weekend break for five in the Oliver Studio, with only thirty screaming children for company.

Outside, in the foyer, the thirty aforesaid children were, well, screaming. Caroline Homan was doing a passable impression of Canute as the tides of youthful energy lapped at her feet, whilst parents stood with gleaming eyes, dreaming of all the excellent adventures they were about to have during the child-free weekend to come.

9.29, and Sian arrived, saying simply,

*"I hate kids."*

at which point, the doors opened, and thirty of them surrounded her, pulling at her sleeve and saying,

*"There's a man in the hole!!!!"*

*"I think the Oliver Studio should be declared a child-free zone"*, said Stacey flatly, prompting all five of the helpers to leave the room and go upstairs to cry.

Down in the Studio, meanwhile, the tears were also flowing freely, as the thirty young thespians acted out a romantic scene between two trees in the style of Teletubbies. Tom was back in the hole, exploring the dramatic possibilities of disappearing from sight for the whole weekend, and Freddie was working on how to vanish at the top of a ladder. Ruth was doing a rather hopeful impression of a paintpot, and Stacey and Sian had burrowed to the bottom of the fabrics box in the costume cupboard. All was to no avail, however, as their cover was blown by Tom, who simply could not resist one further flourish of the boa, leading immediately to a cry of,

*"There's a man in the hole!!!!!!!!!!"*

Five minutes later, thirty young thespians had joined the man in his hole, and a play had been born.

What the play was about, nobody seemed to know; not even God, who was making an appearance sounding suspiciously like Ben Robbins. Good and Evil were reputed to be engaged in some cosmic struggle for the control of Joe Public, but, since most of the cast spoke their lines as they were accidentally falling into the hole, it was rare for more than the first two words of any sentence to be heard. Nevertheless, the parents all dutifully attended the performance with the same gleaming eyes as before, though this time the gleam was more of a sheen of mutual incomprehension, as scene followed scene, occasionally in the right order. Backstage, the simple narrative had turned into a veritable Pulp Fiction, as child after child made the wrong entrance in the wrong place at the wrong time. Up in the box, Tom gaily declaimed to the audience about the Bible and Rugby, something which might have surprised his erstwhile PE teacher, Graham Thomas, who might well have been under the misapprehension that Tom was to Rugby as Arsenal is to Spurs.

And then, as suddenly as it had begun, it was over. Silence reigned, and the studio was stripped bare as if a swarm of locusts had been and gone. Freddie looked at Sian, and Sian looked at Tom. Ruth just tidied the paintpots, and Stacey said flatly,

*"Never again."*

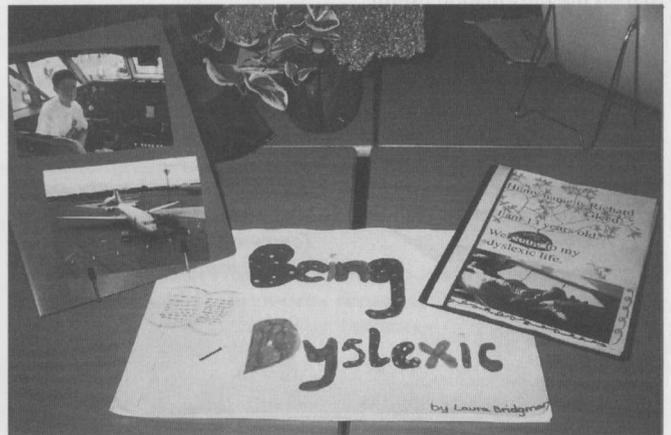
Which is why, come January next, we'll all be there once more, to act out **Drama Weekend II, the Sequel**: as they say in the Biz,

*"THE SHOW MUST GO ON!!!!!!!!!!"*

Anon

## DYSLEXIA DEPARTMENT

What a year! As I write, every surface in the department is covered with superb holiday projects. We asked our students, Orchard Close and Seniors alike, to portray themselves. And they did. In words, photos, books, posters, simply handwritten or using high-tech machines, they opened their hearts. Notably too, Year 11, despite their total immersion in coursework, produced the largest number of entries.



*Holiday projects.*

The previous Year 11 also have just cause for pride in their excellent GCSE results. Over 50 per cent of the dyslexic students achieved five or more A-C grades, including A\* in Science, CDT, Textiles and PE.

Our students have made their mark in the wider world too, taking leading parts in *The Mikado*, getting into print in *Dyslexia Contact*, being interviewed on Radio Thames Valley, gracefully entertaining visitors and finally moving on to pursue their chosen careers.

In response to many requests to visit the department, we hosted two special days, for Educational Psychologists in January, and for Specialist Teachers in May, both of which were very successful. In June, there was standing room only for the talk on Dyspraxia organised by Lindy Harris and Simon Talbot.

Last year's new faces are now familiar friends. Hilary Soden, Speech and Language Therapist, has become a regular visitor, while Angela Shingler (now Talbot) stood in magnificently after Elisabeth Escher's operation. Fiona Tier, our Australian student, has made a great contribution in helping individuals with their reading and presentation, and reorganising our resource files. Another welcome visitor has been Zara Huntington, our link with School Committee.

It is, of course, the people who make the department, but material provision helps too. We have been very grateful this year for several gifts: money, an SRA kit and two very good PCs from parents, and a legacy from Dan, Ben and Georgina Leshner's grandmother.

The bad news is that, by the time you read this, we shall be saying goodbye to Lindy Harris who has been a deeply appreciated teacher in the department, always sensitive to her pupils' needs, and a



*Jo Russell's holiday project 1997.*

wonderful colleague. She has been a tireless Head of Enhanced Learning, whose gentle manner hides a steely determination to secure only the best for those in her care. We shall miss her greatly, but wish her and her family much happiness in their new home at Oundle.

*Jenny Austing*

## ENGLISH AND MEDIA STUDIES DEPT.

The Dept. enjoyed a good academic year with a 63% pass rate between grades A and C in English GCSE and with nine pupils electing to study English Literature at A level, our largest number ever. 75% of our Media Studies GCSE pupils passed between the same grades, also.

Exam results, however, are not everything, and education is a bigger kettle of fish by far. This can be well illustrated by our experience of the marking which our pupils' Key Stage 3 papers received this year. It was questionable, to say the least, and we were successful in our appeals to have the marks and in some cases the grades of several of our students raised.

What is most important is that we enjoyed teaching the subjects our Dept. delivers (three in number: English, English Literature and Media Studies) and for the most part our pupils enjoyed their learning with us.

We went out to the theatre and the actors came into school to see us, as has become our tradition now. We also held another successful Book Fair with the help of the Chipping Norton book shop, who always plough back a percentage of the profits into the activities of the Dept. Our thanks to them once again.

*Seán Kenny*

## E.S.O.L.

The academic year of 97-98 promises to be a watershed for our work with overseas students and so, appropriately enough, we have a new name 'English to Speakers of Other Languages', replacing 'English as a Foreign Language'.

After six years of Intensive English courses held in our summer term we have now introduced a continuously running intensive programme, operating in tandem with our normal mainstream work. There are currently four pupils on the course who will be able to integrate fully into the curriculum when sufficient language progress has been made. After Christmas we expect a new influx including, hopefully, the first overseas musicians to study English at Sibford before going on to join the renowned Purcell School.

This is an appropriate time to thank Julia Hammett for her hard work in teaching the Intensive Course between 1995 and 1997. I wish her luck in her new post at an Oxford Tutorial College. Our new course is being taught by Angie Talbot.

As part of Sibford's computerisation programme, we now have two



*Intensive Course pupils.*

state-of-the-art computers to help in our work. Time is being spent by staff and pupils getting to know these machines, but they will undoubtedly be a huge asset.

The self-access listening area that I mentioned in last year's magazine is running and being added to as time permits. I hope to set up the reading area in the near future. These facilities will allow older pupils, in particular, the opportunity to practise exam techniques in their free time.



*Year 11 in the E.S.O.L. room.*

Finally, this year we have had three overseas students entering Year 12 having passed their E.F.L. exam and a wide variety of GCSEs in Year 11. They will now commence their International GCSE in English as a Second Language along with their GNVQ and A level courses. It is a pleasure to welcome them back and see them continue their education with us.

*Andy Glover*

## FOOD TECHNOLOGY.

The students in Years 6-9 will be following the National Curriculum. This entails safe and hygienic working practice and the acquisition of good manual dexterity skills linked to the underpinning scientific principles related to working with food. They will evaluate their own and others' work, using tests ranging from verbal or pictorial scales to difference and attitudinal sensory tests such as ranking and triangle tests. Pupils will recognise that different population groups have differing nutritional needs, taking account of these in producing their design briefs. The dietary needs and influences of other cultures will naturally be included.

Those selecting to study GCSE Food and Nutrition will build on this, expanding and developing their skills and knowledge in social and economic factors, nutrition and health, food services together with food preparation and processing.

*Angela Way*

## GEOGRAPHY DEPT.

Last year's Year 11 were a very rewarding class to teach and it showed in their results. Once they realised that they could achieve at a creditable level, they went from strength to strength. Of the 23 students, 21 achieved grades A, B, or C - with 4 As and 5 Bs.

The present Year 11 started the new syllabus a year ago and we spent a half-day collecting fieldwork data in Broadway, looking at the impact of tourism on a Cotswold village. In two weeks time we will be in Wales, Borth, to be precise, studying coastal erosion and deposition as well as sand dune management!

Year 12, in their first year of A level, spent a most enjoyable and profitable week in south Devon, learning all about A level projects, which will have enabled them to collect data for their own fieldwork studies. Geoff and Gill Slade went along with them to enjoy the sea, sun and long hours of study and investigation.

*Brian Holliday*

## HORTICULTURE/LAND AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

The Horticulture Department has had another productive year with excellent yields in fruit, flowers and vegetables, these being carefully tended by the Year 10 and 11 Horticulturists, studying for their City and Guilds Practical Tests. The students in Years 12 and 13 have been faced with a new challenge; piloting the new GNVQ in Land and Environment.

Andy Newbold joined the department and has successfully reintroduced animals into the curriculum. Eggs were hatched, young poultry grown on, to lay or for the table. Lighting units were set up in the greenhouse for GNVQ plant propagation experiments, and a new weather station was erected on the upper lawn of the Walled Gardens. Thanks again to the PSFA for their support in funding this project. It has produced invaluable weather readings of a somewhat unusual year. No rain in February, hot summery days in April, and cold frosty nights in June.

The GNVQ students started their course with an induction programme which took us to Horley Nature Reserve to study soil profiles and the local flora and fauna. Conservation studies were carried out by these students on the now 12 year old conservation area behind the Walled Garden. This now supports a woodland, badgers, foxes, muntjack deer and a wide variety of plant species and invertebrates.



*Year 10 Horticulture students set to work on preparing their vegetable plots for double digging.*



*Sculpture has been added to the Walled Garden and has attracted much interest on open days.*

The Walled Gardens were opened again to the public on 8th June for the third year, as part of the National Garden Schemes Open Gardens. All of the students worked extremely hard to ensure that it looked its best for the several hundred visitors who passed through our gates. Thanks also to Penny Spring and Fiona Pidgeon for their extra curricular weeding.

Congratulations go to Stacey Walsham, Freddie Huntington and Matthew Stafford for winning the Gold Award for the Best Kept Vegetable Gardens, also to David Anker who was awarded the Alan Jarvis Horticulture Cup for the most promising student.

*Angy Bovill*

## HUMANITIES

I am very pleased to be able to use this opportunity to let you know some of the plans for the History and RE departments for the coming year.

Years 7 to 9 are following National Curriculum Programmes of Study, which will give pupils a good sense of chronology and an understanding of developments in Europe and the world between 1600 and the present day. In RE the pupils will gain an appreciation of the diverse nature of faith by studying a variety of world religions.

Year 10 are following the GCSE course, the Modern World, and are currently studying The First World War. In addition they will study Germany 1919-1945 and the USA 1919-41. Mrs. Lindsell's GCSE Integrated Humanities students are working on the core topic 'The Family and Society' before beginning work on three further topics: Beliefs and Values, Conflict and Co-operation and The Environment. I am in the process of organising a four day trip to the battlefields of the Somme and Ypres for Year 10 and any other pupils who would like to join us.

Year 11 will carry out two pieces of coursework this year before taking their examination. The first piece is on Northern Ireland and the second on an aspect of local history. Lord and Lady Saye and Sele have agreed to show the pupils around Broughton Castle as an introduction to their studies for the second coursework assignment.

Year 12 have started their A Level Classical Civilisation course which includes the study of women in Greece and Rome, art, architecture and literature. We are planning to visit Greece early in 1998 which will enable the students to base their coursework on the sights they see there.

I hope to supplement the History and RE curricula with further trips and outside speakers - so watch this space!!

*Anna Jo Righton*

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Sibford has prided itself in being at the forefront of educational initiatives, with I.T. being no exception. In the early 90s the school embarked on a very successful 'laptop' initiative with access to low-cost computers for many of our students. As technology develops, we have to adjust to the new working methods both in education and in the wider world, so that we can equip our students with the transferable skills required for the future aspirations of our young people.

1997 will, I hope, be seen as a landmark in Sibford's educational development, with the introduction of a campus-wide computer network infrastructure, linking all areas of the school, including the Boarding Houses, the Manor, Sports Hall, Library and main teaching areas. It has been a mammoth and unique project, which has seen the school transformed over the summer vacation. With phase 1 nearly complete, the students can now benefit from a purpose built I.C.T. centre, housing new P.C. computers, scanner, digital camera and laser printing facilities. Other areas of the School, the Library, Science, L.S., SPLD, EFL and the staff room also have new



*I.C.T. room in action with Orchard Close pupils.*

computers linked to the network, with more coming on-line in the near future.

I am delighted to be joined by Debbie Evans, who will be acting as a Network Manager and who is helping co-ordinate pupil ICT support, staff training, and running a new keyboard training course for the whole school, operated on an early bird system.

We are also initiating a course of modular ICT units, which concentrates on providing students with skills and knowledge, and which leads to a certificate of competence, backed by the London Examinations Board. It will be aimed at Key Stage 3 & 4, (years 9,10,11) and above. I hope it will allow students of all abilities to work through units at a pace which suits them, whilst providing a real challenge combined with a sense of achievement.

The Acorn network machines, that were previously used, have now been used to boost Orchard Close's I.T. provision, thus giving a very creditable 4:1 pupil to computer ratio. As ICT continues to develop this year, we are working at providing full Internet access, infra-red note book printing, E-mail clubs, an updatable interactive web site and links with like minded schools, colleges and businesses.

All in all, it looks like being an exciting and busy year for staff and students alike.

*James Bond*

## **FORWARD FOR TECHNOLOGY**

The last twelve months have seen another year 11 come and go, a sad farewell, a welcome, and an excellent start to the new academic year. The Technology departments have all seen a truly outstanding series of practical work produced for the G.C.S.E.'s this summer, and the hard work has produced some of the finest exam results in recent times. I would like, on behalf of the teaching and support staff, to wish all our students, present and past, our best wishes for the future.

Having said a sad farewell to Sarah Spittle last term, after teaching Home Economics and Child Development for the past four years. We warmly welcome Angela Way, who takes responsibility of the Food Technology and who is teaching some junior textiles. I am sure she will add her own style to this dynamic and unique subject.

It remains for me to thank John Viggers, on behalf of the staff and pupils, for all his hard work over the year. We all admire the display cabinet in the main entrance, and the meeting table, which he and Stuart Hedley built during the summer. He has also constructed the new ICT tables and bases currently being used in the ICT centre. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated and skilled technician in the Technology Department.

*James Bond  
Head of Technology and I.C.T.*

## **LEARNING SUPPORT**

This has been a very productive year for the Learning Support department. Last autumn, we produced our own magazine composed largely of work that was displayed for Open Day. This was so successful that we plan to make it an annual event. Also our successes at G.C.S.E. were an improvement on last year and all the Year 11 students are now pursuing their chosen courses. Most pupils have improved in their reading and spelling ages by at least a year, some by as much three years, and this has been a tremendous boost to their self-esteem.

As a reward for all this hard work, we had a day out at Alton Towers in June which was a great success. Not only did everyone thoroughly enjoy themselves, but they conducted themselves in a very sensible and grown-up way, which was a tremendous credit to the school. Predictably, the only ones who did not brave the scary rides were Mrs. and Miss Evans, but since they are rather old, we forgave them. The weather was dry and cool and miraculously the rain held off until we were ready to return!

This year, we have a new room, room 27. Since 27 is Miss Evans' lucky number, we take this as being a good sign and so far things have been going very well. The display boards are now all full of interesting things and we have a new computer which is in great demand. We also have a new Learning Support Assistant. Mrs. Evans, who is our new network manager at the school, is still doing some Learning Support work but Miss Marklew, our Matron at Margaret Fell, is our new Learning Support Assistant. We are looking forward to working with her and enjoying another year of good results in all areas.

*Helen Evans*

## **MATHS DEPARTMENT**

In a year when teaching standards and levels of achievement in Mathematics have been criticised nationally, I am pleased to be able to report once again a marked increase in the percentage of A-C grades attained at GCSE. The success, in part, is due to careful setting, teachers teaching to their strengths and the use of the excellent Heinemann text books. The real merit, however, must go to a dedicated large nucleus of Year 11 pupils who on a weekly basis attended the voluntary Maths Workshops, designed specifically to improve examination technique and give a greater insight into examination questions. I am certain that the pupils' extra efforts during these sessions swung the pendulum in their favour.

Other weekly workshops are run for the lower years and happily there appears to be an ever increasing number of pupils attending these sessions. From September 1997 we intend to run a workshop for Maths games, in which computers and software designed to develop Maths skills will be to the fore.

1997 saw the retirement of Dave Goodwin from the Department and I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all the pupils he helped in his long and successful career, to thank him and wish him a happy retirement. Thankfully we have not lost his expertise completely since he has agreed to help out on a part time basis in the SpLD Dept.

*John Howard.*

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

### **Friday 22nd November**

Penelope Martin Smith and Ashley Stafford gave a recital under the umbrella of the Chipping Norton Music Festival. Proceeds from ticket sales for the concert, which was given in the Methodist Church at Chipping Norton, were generously donated to the Music Department.

## MUSIC FOR A WHILE

Penelope Martin Smith – Soprano  
Ashley Stafford – Alto  
Adrian Inscocoe – Organ  
Shauni McGregor – Piano

<b>Soprano, alto and organ</b>	
Italian Duet No. X <i>Tanti strali</i>	G F Handel (1685-1759)
<b>Soprano, alto and organ</b>	
My dearest, my fairest	H Purcell (1659-1695)
<b>Alto and piano</b>	
Music for a while	H Purcell
<b>Soprano and organ</b>	
<i>Dido's Lament</i> from Dido and Aeneas	H Purcell
<b>Organ</b>	
Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ	J S Bach (1685-1750)
<b>Soprano and piano</b>	
V'adoro from Giulio Cesare	G F Handel
<b>Alto and organ</b>	
<i>Eternal Source of Light Divine</i> from Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne	G F Handel
<b>Soprano and piano</b>	
<i>Piangerò</i> from Giulio Cesare	G F Handel
<b>Soprano, alto and piano</b>	
<i>Caro bella</i> from Giulio Cesare	G F Handel
<b>Alto and piano</b>	
Ganymede	F Schubert (1797-1828)
<b>Soprano and piano</b>	
Gretchen am Spinnrade	F Schubert
<b>Organ</b>	
Alla marcia	J Ireland (1879-1962)
<b>Alto and organ</b>	
The Lost Chord	A Sullivan (1842-1900)
<b>Soprano and piano</b>	
<i>The Dream</i> from The Bohemian Girl	M W Balfe (1800-1870)
<b>Alto and piano</b>	
Kashmiri Love Song	A Woodforde-Finden (1860-1919)
<b>Soprano, alto and piano</b>	
Good night, dear heart	E Newton

And finally, for something completely different, all that jazz...!

Both singers seemed at ease and their enjoyment of the music was infectious. They were accompanied by Adrian Inscocoe at the organ and Shauni McGregor on the piano, accompanists who did justice to the very high quality of the singing. It was a memorable evening of beauty in the human voice and artistry in the compositions performed with touches of humour to balance the serious songs — not to mention the juggling act performed by Adrian Inscocoe as he changed shoes between piano and organ.

We are most grateful to Ashley Stafford and Shauni McGregor for promoting this event and for the money raised towards the purchase of new musical instruments for Sibford.

### Saturday 30th November

The combined choirs of Bloxham, Sibford and Tudor Hall Schools performed the Messiah in St. Mary's Parish Church, Bloxham. Two

combined rehearsals had taken place at Sibford and Bloxham before the full group met under the direction of Peter Hunt on the day of the performance. It was a happy experience, a 'first Messiah' for most Sibford pupils with a warmly appreciative audience.

### Friday 13th December

The Carol Service, well patronised as ever, used traditional readings from the nine lessons and carols read by representatives of all parts of the school community. The Choral Society, having spent most of the term learning 'Messiah', performed a number of the well known choruses. Donning Santa's red hats for what has become a tradition, Fielding House rounded off the evening with their own, very special, rendering of the Band Aid hit 'Do They Know it's Christmas'.

### Friday 7th March

The opening night of Chipping Norton Music Festival saw Sibford's Barbershop Group and the Choral Society in action. Taking part provides a focus for performance and it is good to hear other groups sing. The North Cotswold Chamber Choir give a very professional performance each year so we are rather glad that our choir cannot take part in their class. The Choral Society won the Open Choirs class again this year - but we do have to say we were the only entry!

Our Barbershop Group had to give pole position to 'Pole Position Barbershop Quartet' for the second year running. But the rivalry is very friendly and Pole Position will be giving Sibford a push in the right direction with a workshop or two at the end of the year - they dress better, that's what it is but you wait. The new Sibford barbershop waistcoats will soon knock any group out of pole position.

Sibford entered a few individual instrumentalists in the Chipping Norton Music Festival. Julian Li played 'Apres un Reve' by Faure in the Advanced String Class. Simon Robinson played 'Square Dance' by Sanders in the Advanced Woodwind and Brass Class. Kukiko Koibuchi played 'Solfeggietto' by Bach in the Intermediate Piano Class. Claire Chou and James Chen performed in the Advanced Piano Class, 'Toccatà' by Khatchaturian and 'Prelude in G minor' by Rachmaninov.

## SIBFORD SCHOOL PRESENTS

### CONCERT OF VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Church of St. Etheldreda  
Friday March 14th. 7.30pm

#### Programme

Trio for Violin, 'Cello and Piano op.35 No.2	Julius Klengel
James Brash - violin, Julian Li - 'cello, Mark Paine - piano	
Toccatà	Khatchaturian
Claire Chou - piano	
Chanson from Suite Antique	Rutter
Naomi Chant - flute	
'Pie Jesu'	Lloyd Webber
Elizabeth and Eleanor Paine	
Sonatina	Beethoven
Adrian Kennedy - double bass	
Prelude op.23 No.5	Rachmaninov
Rock from 'Mister D' Music	David Hellewell
James Chen - piano	
My Grandfather's Clock	Henry Work
Autumn Leaves	Joseph Kosma
Tea for Two	Vincent Youmans
Sibford School Choral Society	

## Interval

Two Minuets from Quartets op.76 and op.20 Haydn  
James Brash and Naomi Chant - violins  
James Chen - viola, Julian Li - 'cello

Castle on a Cloud Schonberg  
Close Every Door Lloyd Webber  
Georgie Hill

A Couple of Swells Irving Berlin  
Freddie Huntington and Elliott Jennings

Square Dance Robert Sanders  
Simon Robinson - trumpet

Prayer from "Jewish Life" Ernest Bloch  
Apres un reve Gabriel Faure  
Julian Li -violoncello

Laughing Franz Abt  
George Jones Bartholomew  
Humble Bartholomew  
Dogwood Dell Pennypacker  
De Animals A Comin' Bartholomew  
Sibford School Barbershop Group

Bob and Tomfoolery T G Bunce  
Simon Robinson and Bob Pritchard - trumpets

**Piano Accompaniment:** David Ball, Tony Swift and Mark Paine  
**Conducted by** Mark Paine

Our concert at the church of St. Etheldreda in Horley gave individuals and some of the ensembles that rehearse at School the chance to perform in a lovely setting. This old church has a flattering acoustic.

It gave us much pleasure to perform to an appreciative audience and to be able to raise funds through ticket sales towards the upkeep of the church.

### Saturday 1st February

14 Sibford pupils participated in the Young Musician Competition this year. Over 100 musicians played in the heats, each trying to gain a place in their class for the final. The following Sibford pupils did: Claire Chou in Senior Woodwind and Senior Piano, Julian Li and James Brash in Senior Strings, Simon Robinson in Senior Brass, Naomi Chant in Intermediate Strings and Woodwind, and Kukiko Koibuchi in Intermediate Piano.

At the Final on March 1st, Kukiko Koibuchi won the Intermediate Piano class, Claire Chou won the Senior Piano class and James Brash and Julian Li were joint winners of their class. It was another good day for Sibford.

Whilst the adjudicators deliberated over the evening's performances, James Chen, who was the previous 'Young Musician' returned as guest artist to perform.

With so much music-making taking place during the second half of the term, auditions for leading roles in *The Mikado* had to be fitted into the final week. We had time for a couple of chorus rehearsals before sending off the soloists for a vacation armed with libretti, score and cassette tape and the message 'learn all your words before the start of next term!'

### JULY 1st, 2nd and 3rd — *The Mikado*

This was undoubtedly the high point of the year; indeed it dominated music for the whole summer term. The effort was colossal but the reward was great.

The following pupils passed instrumental music exams this year:

Christopher House	Grade 4 trumpet
Simon Raby	Grade 3 saxophone
Harriet Cooper	Grade 2 clarinet



Simon Raby



Amelia Salter

Jonathan Titcombe	Grade 2 clarinet
Naomi Chant	Grade 5 flute
Claire Chou	Grade 5 flute
Lucy Duckett	Grade 2 flute
Victoria Taylor	Grade 2 flute
Matthew Stafford	French Horn Merit
Georgie Hill	Saxophone Merit
Jenny Preston	Grade 3 violin Merit
Claire Prizeman	Grade 1 viola
Miriam Rabb	Initial Grade Piano Merit

## THE MIKADO

Undertaking a school musical is a mammoth task at the best of times. Gilbert and Sullivan operettas presents particular problems of their own in that although they traditionally have fewer scene changes, they are predominately music with accompanying dialogue, and music written with professional singers in mind at that. Because of this, any school considering such a theatrical performance would of course normally have a large student base from which to choose, leave a long period of time in which to rehearse and produce the play, and would require a large expenditure allowance before proceeding.

Understandably then, some members of the School community were somewhat surprised when it was announced that the school was to produce, within a period of ten weeks, Gilbert and Sullivan's "*The Mikado*" and with the understanding that we were to try and break even.

Although auditions were held before the holidays, with many worthy contenders vying for the main roles, the ten weeks of summer term that followed may well have been one of the most hectic working periods in the history of the school, with GCSE's and A levels to be completed within the same time frame. Trevor Walters, director, threw himself headlong into rehearsals, dedicating every spare moment of his day, be it before breakfast or late into the night, into the process of production and the lion's share of the



*Pish-Tush and the Boys' chorus.*



choreography. Meanwhile, the Music Department was alive to the sound of singing with many solo, group and chorus rehearsals taking place, while Mark Paine, music director, constantly battled to stay afloat of the mountains of paperwork that came with the responsibility of organising the logistics of the production. In addition Mr. Walters

supervised set construction and lighting production at weekends, while the orchestra was rehearsed by Mr. Paine.

On 1st July what a show there was in store! A feast of colour and excitement awaited the large audiences who sat in a Japanese garden, decorated with beautiful kites hanging from the trees above, to enjoy Mr. Walters' energetic direction, carefully devised so as not to override the subtleties which make Gilbert and Sullivan still so relevant to today's world.



But out of all the glowing reports that came after the production, the comment that remains with me most was made by a staff member who noted "I assumed that I was going to have to make allowances and excuses for the show, but I left having thoroughly enjoyed myself." A testament indeed to the commitment of many students who worked so hard to produce something that would have been envied by many other schools. Students with major roles included: Freddie Huntington, who portrayed Ko-Ko with charm and wit; an utterly delightful Yum-Yum played by Cathy Gornall; a gallant Nanki-Poo (Simon Raby) whose golden singing did great justice to his signature tune "A wandering Minstrel I";



*The Girls' Chorus*

Yum-Yum's catty sisters, played demurely yet with vitality by Caroline Cleland, Zoe Prior (understudy) and Rachel Dales; Matthew Stafford who gave the required aloofness to Pish-Tush, while the antics of John MacDonald's Pooh-Bah kept the audience laughing as he continually tried to "mortify his family pride"; the subtle rendering of the very difficult role of Katisha by Amelia Salter and Katy Harper (understudy) added dramatic credibility to the plot and of course the psychotic Mikado



*James Brash*

was fearfully portrayed by James Brash. Also worthy of mention were the entertaining cameos of Jimmy Wringe and Elliot Jennings, some fine four-part choral singing on behalf of the chorus, a sizeable contribution by the backstage crew, particularly Andrew Walker, and a charming and ever helpful front of house led by Di Howes.



*Freddie Huntington and John McDonald*

Perhaps I better than anyone know how deeply the students are indebted to Mr. Walters and Mr. Paine, not only for the opportunity to perform, but also for the immense amount of work that went in behind the scenes to ensure the success that it was.

And though Mr. Walters may well have promised himself never again to work with large numbers of people, restructured school halls or anything musical, I would like to take this opportunity to suggest that a logical sequel for next year would be "HMS Pinafore".

What was that?

Come, come, Mr. Walters. You know they could never print a phrase like that!

*Adrian Kennedy*



*The Producers!*

## PE. DEPARTMENT

Once again a very full and successful year within the P.E. department. We have achieved some notable victories both in girls and boys fixtures in the past year and have also undertaken more fixtures than in recent years.

### Rugby

In the autumn term 54 rugby matches were played including Orchard Close, of which 20 were won and 5 drawn, a success rate of 43% which is testimony to the hard work of the boys and the members of staff who devote their valuable time to coaching.

### Hockey and Netball

Once again many more fixtures were played, over 40 in total of which 17 were won and 8 drawn. In the spring term in particular Sibford proved very hard to beat, especially the first XI who lost only 2 matches between September and March.

### Soccer

Another full fixture calendar for the boys, who played a total of 39 matches, won 15 drew 5. It was noticeable that individual skill was much higher than in recent years and this was demonstrated as the session progressed with most victories falling in the latter half of the season.

### House Matches

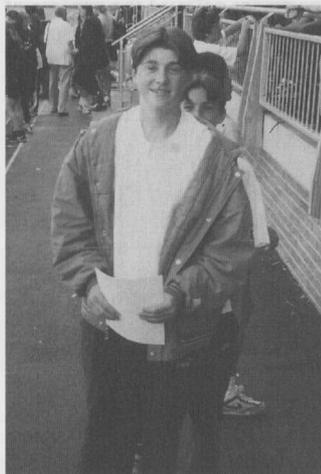
Once again there was stiff competition in the House cross-country championship, the eventual winners being Lister boys and Fell girls. Individual year group winners were Christopher Toplisek, James Sale, Ben Carty, Jordan McGurk, Sarah Philby, Gracie Gaunt and Hannah Gregson for Orchard Close; Harriett Cooper and Ross McNamara for Year 7; Georgie Hill and Miles Colegrave for Year 8; Anya Innes and Duncan Forrester for Year 9; Alicia Hamel and Simon Raby for Year 10; Caroline Cleland and Paul Colegrave for Year 11 and Kate Deacon and Francis Surry for 6th form.

### Athletics

Our success at athletics continues. The fixtures against Kingham Hill, Beechborough and BGN proved to be very worthwhile, the school winning 2 of the 3 matches. 27 athletes went to the Area Trials at the end of May, all putting in creditable performances, with 14 selected to represent the Area Team at the County Championships. The highlight at the County Championships, held at Tilsey Park, Oxford was David Whetstone's 38.78 throw which made him the



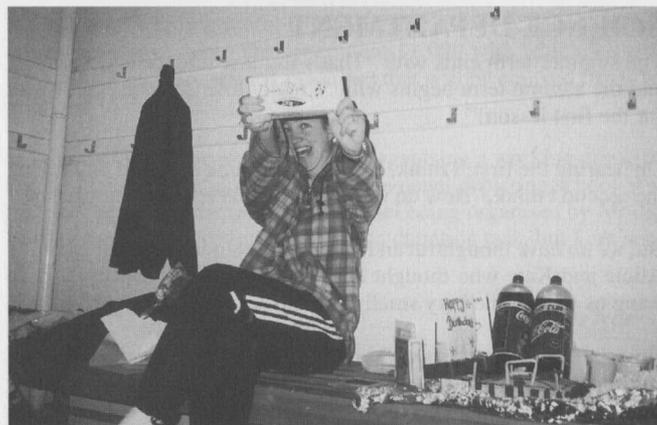
*Alice Gummer and Hayley Joynson, both year 10, prepare to join a practice game.*



*Tilsley Park, David Whetstone, Junior Boys Javelin Champion.*



*Tilsley Park, Kate Deacon, First Senior Girls 1500m. Area Finals.*



*Miss Knowles celebrates her birthday – 21 again!!*

County Champion at javelin and broke the school record by 48 cms. Other athletes who competed at the Championships were:

Alistair Prestidge	Junior Triple Jump
Daniel Anderson	Junior 800m
Caroline Cleland	Inter Girls 300m and shot
Duncan Forrester	Inter Boys 400m
Johnny Harwood	Inter 400m
Kate Deacon	Senior County Champion 1500m
Helen Shephard	Senior Shot
Rasmus Neilsen	Senior 1500m

### School Records Broken in 1997

As she moved up another year Caroline Cleland once again broke the 300m record for girls in a time of 48.1 seconds, beating the previous record of 50 seconds set by Georgie Harmer in 1993.

### Cricket

Due to the weather little cricket was played this term. However we still managed to play 10 matches with the statistics showing: won 2, drawn 1, lost 7.

### Staff v Pupils

The annual 'practice what you preach' events took place on surprisingly warm days unlike previous years. All 3 occasions were treated with spirit and considerable gusto by staff (many with hidden talents) and pupils alike!

### Staff Soccer v Boys 1st XI - Boys Won!

The staff try to keep quiet about this one unless to claim 'the boys only won because of their excellent tuition!' Nevertheless there were excellent performances all round.

### Female Staff v 1st XI Hockey

The female staff (we were particularly pleased at the special guest appearance by Sue Freestone) maintained their unbeaten run in this annual event despite a close shave when the pupils forced the game 1-1 to an Amelia Salter goal only to come out on top in the second half through a goal scored by the ladies' captain (no names mentioned).

### Mixed Staff v Pupils Hockey

A new event for the calendar this year and enjoyed by all. A very tight match with the pupils representing the School admirably, putting on a stirring performance which had the staff temporarily shaken.

We would personally like to thank all staff, pupils and parents involved in Physical Education throughout the year. It does take a tremendous effort on the part of many people to host events, organise fixtures, coach teams and give the support needed for Sibford to continue the success of previous years.

*Graham Thomas  
Tracy Knowles*

## SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The summer term ends with "That's my last science lesson ever!" and the autumn term begins with "I really love science.. can't wait for the first lesson!"

On hearing the first, I think, "Er.. I don't think so!" and on hearing the second I think, "How do we cope with that level of enthusiasm?"

But *we do have* thoughtful and enthusiastic students, as for example Alicia and Kate who thought during their summer trip to India to bring us back some very smelly sulphurous rock!

However, for most of us, 5 years of study at secondary school, culminating in the GCSE examination, is enough at least for a while, until the need to obtain higher qualifications draws us on, as the most likely route into a career.

Our summer examination results this year were the usual mix, representing very good results for some, so-so results for others, and quite a let-down for a few individuals who have to face the fact that they simply did not work hard enough! Of the 58 candidates entered for the sciences, 46.6% gained grades A-C (51.6% for those doing Double Science and 37% for Single Science) and of the 27 candidates entered for Horticulture 85.2% gained high level awards, which says a lot for the effort so many put into their work.

But this is not the whole story, of course. There are those individuals who stand out in one's memory, who, despite not getting a high award in the eyes of the DFEE and the general public, nevertheless deserve fulsome praise for their efforts and the major part they played in maintaining the school's widespread reputation for drawing out the best in nearly everyone.

Along with the rest of the School, we have gained a share in the new ICT equipment, and will be able to use the network as well. All this should enhance our students' abilities to learn about matters scientific and to broaden their skills base.

*Chris Cox*

## SIBFORD SCHOOL MEETINGS

The School community now gathers for meeting for worship around a beautiful new table made by Stuart Hedley and John Viggers of the CDT Dept. The table provides a focus for the school which now sits in a circle of chairs.

The table and the chair arrangement are but two signs of the deliberations of the Spirituality Group, which met to consider ways in which the School can promote and better celebrate its spiritual life and its Quaker ethos.

Visiting speakers now come to School on a Friday afternoon when the whole School can gather at the end of the working week. Parents and friends are most welcome to join us on these occasions.



On Tuesdays, Music Meetings alternate with smaller gatherings of the Lower, Middle and Upper School, respectively. These meetings, together with Thursday morning House Meeting provide a range of opportunities to listen together, in silence or with music and words.

Our boarding community gathers together on a Sunday evening now to share a meal after the weekend away with family, and the weekly cycle of school life begins again.

## TEXTILES DEPARTMENT

Work in the Textiles Department has continued to thrive and extend the barriers of convention.



*Hazel Bell, Silk Painting. A level Grade B.*

At A level, Hazel Bell (B) and Laura Brown (D) produced a wide variety of pieces and techniques.

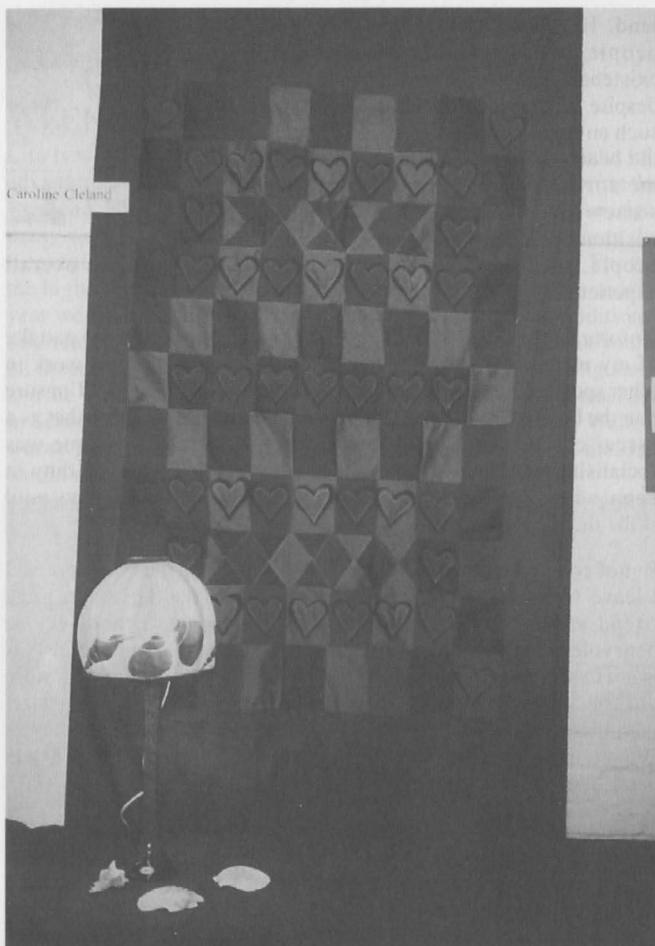
Hazel specialised in hand painted/stencilled fabrics, having developed some exquisite pastel peach designs for which she produced a length of fabric made up into an evening dress. Her personal study based on the work of the artist/embroideress, Ann Macbeth, was highly commended for its depth, content and presentation.

Laura's work was heavily influenced by William Morris. Her embroideries, carried out in cross stitch and tent stitch, were delightful and of an exceptionally high skill level.

Both girls have now moved on from Sibford to further their studies in Art and Design.

At GCSE level, once again, the department enjoyed the success of all candidates, 50% of whom were awarded A grades, with special mention to Christa Yates who gained the coveted A\* for her outstanding work which included a hand applied bedspread, a table lamp with beautifully painted shells and a stunning exam piece of 3 dimensional work based on flowers.

Other examination submissions included Caroline Cleland's (A) effective wall hanging using silk and felt. Sarah Bain (B) experimented with the new technique of image making and produced an excellent range of printed textiles. Bethan Young (A) drew on her past history to produce an in depth study of the textile crafts of Africa developing many of her own ideas. Amy Duckett (A) has a passion for cross stitch so it was no surprise that she submitted 2 excellent pieces. Kerry Smith (A) surprised even herself with the quality of her silk painting. Jason Chadwick (B) developed an excellent project on the history of Tartan and linked it to historical costume. Yuka Suzuki (B) amazed us all with the unique style she displayed in her fashion drawing. Mark Grimshaw (A) was one of five boys entered this year and has my congratulations for attaining the first A grade any boy has attained in Textiles at Sibford - his



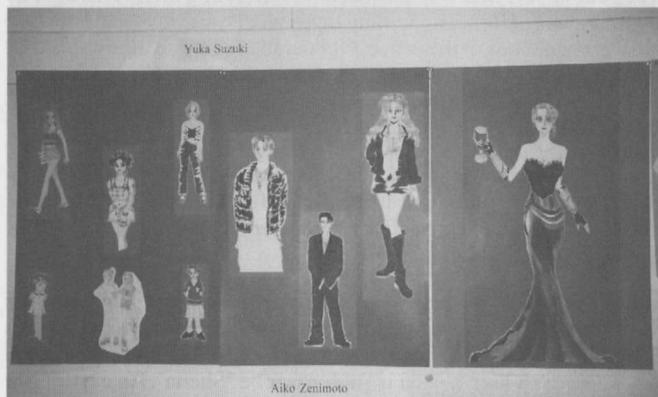
Caroline Cleland

Wall hanging by Caroline Cleland, G.C.S.E. Grade A.  
Table lamp with hand painted shade, Christa Yates, G.C.S.E. Grade A.

units of work were as diverse as his talent, delicate hand painted fuchsias made up into a dressing gown, very dramatic black and white tumbling patchwork, a tent! and an intricate silk painting based on tropical life.

Year 10 have much work to do but are already showing signs of the ability they have to produce excellent work and hence attain good grades.

In Junior years work has continued to reflect the wide range of techniques used to focus a child's creativity through a programme of design problems. The work achieved this year included silk painting, fabric painting, tapestry and embroidery and, of course, Teddy Bears.



Yuka Suzuki – Fashion Sketches GCSE Grade B.

We are enormously grateful to Dan Lesher (an ex-scholar) and his family who have given the department £1,000 with which we will be buying new basic sewing machines that will be enjoyed from the youngest to the oldest student.

In the months that lie ahead I will be organising a working group of textile students. The aim is to produce a panel depicting school life, that will be part of the millennium panel being organised by Mollie Mulley for the two Sibfords. It seems a daunting task, but I am sure once we make a start ideas will flow.

Lesley Norton

## VISIT FROM THE LABENWOLF GYMNASIUM, NÜRNBERG, GERMANY

In the week before half-term we again enjoyed a visit from our partner school in Germany and again it was a huge success, further cementing the links between our two communities. We were pleased to welcome again Gerd Witzke (English teacher) and Martina Friedrich (music), who brought with them a pleasant group of twelve students, including two boys this time, both of whom were named Christian, which made it easy to remember them!

They seemed to appreciate their programme of historical and cultural visits to places like Chedworth Roman villa, Oxford, Stratford and several National Trust properties and many expressed their enjoyment of our beautiful environment, both urban and rural. They were also most appreciative of the friendly welcome offered by their host families and of the 'niceness' of English boys! Most of them enjoyed the experience of being in an English school and thought our buildings much better than school buildings in Germany. However, they found school rather too strict (!) and were not so favourably impressed by some aspects of boarding school cuisine - notably the frequency of baked beans on the menu! On the other hand, it seems we have many more varieties of crisp here in England and I am pleased to report that at least one student was converted to Bubble and Squeak and Yorkshire Pudding (I wonder if she had Roast Beef to go with it...an unusually large proportion of students were vegetarian this year!). The weather was a pleasant surprise - one student mentioned missing the typical blanket of fog - but driving on the left caused some confusion. They were also surprised that our refuse is not sorted - it appears that Germany is far in advance of us in environmental matters.

It seems that a good time was had by all, including ourselves, as we were again treated to a wonderful performance in our Tuesday music meeting, this time with flute and piano as well as the magical choral contribution.

Thank you, Labenwolf, for coming to see us - we hope to return your visit next June.

Jean Rudge



# GAP STUDENTS

## SARAH DIXON

My year at Sibford started early in January, whilst Britain was experiencing the coldest winter in 60 years. From early January up to the present day Sibford has most definitely provided me with more than just the cold weather. However, I will never be able to come to terms with the cold or the evening beginning at 4.00pm. Coming from one of the largest cities in Australia, and never living in the country, arriving in Sibford was, shall we say, an eye opener! However, I have loved living in Sibford and seeing a different side of life.



I have worked all year in the EFL department and have found it to be most rewarding, although after just completing my final year at school I did find that the student to teacher scenario took some time to adjust to. It has been fun to FINALLY know exactly what does go on in the staffroom! I have enjoyed working as a teacher, although I can now understand why my mother prefers primary teaching!

I must thank Andy Glover for all his help and support during this year, it has been invaluable. Thank-you!

I have had some incredible experiences this year, from skiing in the French Alps to sunbaking in the Greek Islands, it has been an adventurous year that I shall be sad to leave.

Finally I'd like to thank everyone at Sibford for making this a great year, Lesley Norton for being not only a good friend but also my substitute mum, and a big thanks to Catherine Marklew for being a GREAT mate, and Tony, Adrian and Fiona for being there.

Thanks Sibford for a great year, I will be sad to leave the U.K!

## TONY HOWELL

I came to Sibford in early January with some snow still lingering - what a change from 35 degrees Celsius in Canberra to minus two in London! After the shock wore off, I settled down to learning about life in Orchard Close, some of which included sailing, trampolining and swimming. Great!



I also enjoy joining in the sport at Sibford, taking basketball and indoor soccer on Saturday mornings as activities. I also played rugby with the 1st XV and soccer for the school. Sadly there is not much school basketball, which is my forté, although I did play a game with the VIth form against Bloxham, which we won convincingly.

After school I was sometimes on duty in Penn, where my chief activity seemed to be discussing whether or not Aussie soaps are true to life and joining in the games of pool.

I also went to France with the VIth form ski trip, an experience I will be able to take home and brag to my friends about.

On a concluding note, I would like to thank all the people who have made me feel at home in Sibford and would encourage them to do the same with future Aussie students.

## ADRIAN KENNEDY

G'day.

Walk to the end of the corridor and have a look at the world map outside Mr Holliday's room. Find Australia (we're the big pink one in the bottom right hand corner) then locate Ballarat, a city just Northwest of Melbourne in the lower Southeast corner of this mighty

land. Here I lived with 85,000 other people completely oblivious to the existence of Sibford Ferris; a place that, despite its size, would ultimately have such an impact on my life. And although the beauty of the area will remain with me for quite some time despite its somewhat isolated geographical positioning, it is the association with the people of Sibford School and Ferris that defined my overall experience.



Unfortunately, the old Sib did not offer much opportunity to partake of my main sport, rowing, and so while I was willing to work in other sporting fields (with the possible exception of rugby), I'm sure that the boys of my Under 13B soccer team would all agree that as a soccer coach, I'm a good rower! Another eventful pastime was socialising with many of the same 'lads' later on while on duty in Penn, where many an interesting conversation was had and my pool skills increased dramatically (!!!).

But of course, the majority of my work fell in the music school and I leave with many happy memories of music making and a great friend and mentor in the form of Mark Paine, without whose benevolence my year would not have been nearly as enjoyable. This is not to say however that contributing factors of my happiness were not found elsewhere — I remain eternally grateful to many staff members who continually went out of their way to make our stay as smooth and hassle free as possible; one of Sibford's greatest assets is the supportive nature of its staff.

Having been to the most northern and western points of Europe and as far east as Moscow, I now plan to travel in France and Spain in January before returning home in search of a Barbershop group, and to start a combined degree (two degrees taken simultaneously) in Law and Commerce in Melbourne. And as I go, I can only hope that just occasionally some of you may look at that pink land mass swimming in the Pacific Ocean and wonder what we might be up to, for it is certain that for many years to come, we will think back to a small dot on the other side of the world's surface, and smile.

## FIONA TIER

A Year in Sibford — What an experience! This has certainly been a year of adaptation. Coming from a CE Grammar school surrounded by sun, sea, and surf in Newcastle (NSW) to isolated little Sibford surrounded by trees, fields and Europe. I have been confronted with many challenges e.g. getting out of bed while a blanket of snow stretches over the countryside, trying to induct year 7 on Rounders which I'd never played before, even the change from student to staff.



The role of "PE Student" has been an interesting one, consisting of pumping up rugby balls, helping out in the Dyslexic Department, to answering phones in the office. Not to mention those afternoons and lunches spent in the Margaret Fell Annex watching Neighbours and Home & Away or the mind numbing amounts of time chasing students who have items in lost property.

The year has allowed me to travel the small distance to the Bishop Blaize and all the way to Europe, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The holidays and travel certainly make the hectic and consistent life at Sibford not entirely gruelling.

It has been a most wonderful year for experiencing new things. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a member of a small village such as Sibford; I've found the community so welcoming and prepared to make us feel at home, even if I'll forever be 'Sheila'. An experience such as this is one I'd recommend to any enthusiastic young person.

Thank you so much everyone for everything.

# OUT AND ABOUT

## WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

Life is what you make it, and most of the pupils at Sibford take full advantage of the many trips and activities offered to them during the weekend. It's not only the full boarders who take part in these trips, many weekly and day pupils join us or even stay in school over the weekend to take full advantage of the many trips on offer. For me the highlight of each year is the Christmas Ball, and for the second year we have had a live group to entertain us before the traditional disco in the Oliver Studio. I would like to say a special thank you to all those who helped, the many pupil volunteers, the catering staff, and the waiters and waitresses who spend the rest of the year teaching in School. I would like to say a special thank you to Trevor Walters whose many talents are put to good use and without whom the Ball would not be the same.



*Daniel MacLagan, Robert Molson, Andrew Gunnett and David O'Donohoe at Drayton Manor Park.*

Trips out this year have included all the normal locations and some new ones such as, the Cinema, Oxford and Stratford shopping, Bowling in Leamington, Canoeing on the River Severn, Ice skating in Oxford and Birmingham, a day trip to France using the Channel Tunnel, Drayton Manor Park in Staffordshire, Quad biking in Warwickshire, Kite flying at Avon Dassett and a trip to Cadbury World.

In-school activities have ranged from, Donut making, model making with the construction kit, fruit picking, juggling to face painting and lantern making.

I don't think we could pack any more into the weekends, could we.....

*Paul Ludlow.*



*A group enjoying a packed lunch at Drayton Manor Park.*

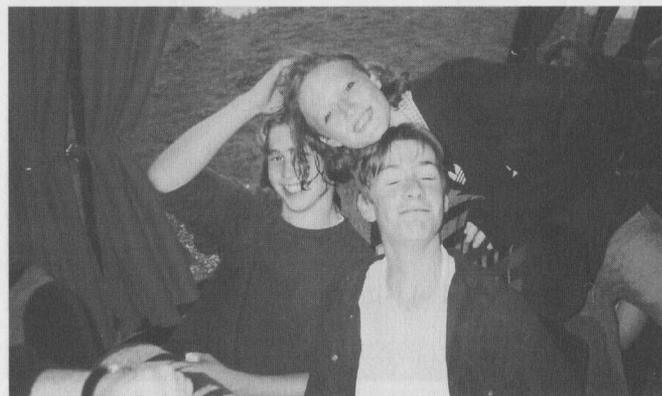
## YEAR 9 TRIP

The year selected Thorpe Park for their day out and we spent a term looking forward to it. Everything was arranged except the weather; if you remember, most of June was very wet and cold. Fingers were crossed. Much to everyone's surprise, we were promised and had, a warm sunny day. Spirits were high. The journey was pleasant; year 9 seemed to be saving their energy for Thorpe Park. Once we arrived everyone, including the staff, was keen to explore. There was plenty to do and eat. Students were more than eager to recommend "tame" rides which they went on time and time again. They seemed to have no fear at all and even thought many of the rides "too tame". I can assure you they were not. The atmosphere was extremely pleasant and everyone was keen to share their experiences when they met. All too soon it was time to go and the trip home was very quiet, as a number of students and staff slept, having worn themselves out.

*Lyn Usher*

*Nicola Sale, Year 9 writes . . .*

An early start didn't stop the noise on the bus and the constant chattering of enthusiastic people.



*Posing on the coach!*

When we arrived at Thorpe Park, we were greeted by the sun, which decided to visit us for a short while. Once into the park, we split into different groups and went our separate ways.

First up for us was the log flume, apparently the longest in Europe and luckily for us there weren't any queues, so we went round three times, after which we were completely soaked! To dry off we decided to go on a ride which involved going round and round a lot of times and at an extremely fast pace!

We met up with some other people from our year and had some lunch, after which we went to the Spinning Teacups where we found Mrs. Usher and Mr. Kenny in a cup!



*Spinning in a tea-cup!*

It was our aim to go on every ride in the park and I can safely say that we managed it.

The journey home was slightly quieter since a few people had somehow managed to lose their voices. For those who hadn't, there was still plenty to talk about. Everyone enjoyed themselves a lot and it was a brilliant way to end Year 9. Thanks a lot!

## CHILDREN'S CAMP 1997

Children's Camp or 'Kid's Camp' as it is usually known, has been run by Sibford School since 1974. The 1997 event was certainly one of the best that I have been involved with, thanks to the tremendous efforts of everyone who helped in any way.

The key to its success was the work put in by the twenty Sibford pupils from years 10 - 13 who volunteered to give up the first week of their summer break to provide a holiday for twenty children from two special schools in London who might not otherwise have got out of the city.



Each year, before they come to us, we visit them in their own school. This is a pleasant enough place in itself but cramped between busy roads, tall buildings and high fences it is easy to see why the children who come appreciate the open spaces and freedom of the countryside around Sibford.

The five days spent here in early July are packed with activities including a visit to a local farm, the Cotswold Wildlife Park, the Sibford Circular Walk (with a welcome break for squash and biscuits kindly provided by the Wykham Arms), pony riding and kite flying, a boat trip in Stratford-on-Avon and a visit to Hatton Country World. The children are also able to go swimming, trampolining, orienteering and generally to make the most of the facilities and grounds at the School.

The helpers have the hardest job looking after the children on a one-to-one basis but thanks must also go to all the staff at Sibford who help to keep things running smoothly - we really appreciate the work put in by the laundry, catering and cleaning departments.

I am very pleased this year that several of the pupils from Sibford who have been involved in helping over the last two years are now offering to look at ways of raising money for next year's camp alongside raising money for their year's charity - UNICEF. I am sure that they would welcome any ideas or support that anyone can offer.

Because it takes place during the early part of the summer holiday, Children's Camp can tend to get rather overlooked in School but please - if you get the chance - have a look at the marvellous display of photos put up by Di Howes in the Hall Foyer. These, to me, show what the camp is really all about and how worthwhile an event it is.

Andy Newbold

## JYM '97

Junior Yearly Meeting 1997 was an inspiring experience, a chance to take a break from the world and the election, make great friends and reflect on thoughts and issues usually not expressed. Packed into the four days were workshops, sessions taken by outside speakers, reflection times in small 'family size' base groups on the day's events and plenty of time to sit back, relax and socialise. The break summed up and reinforced for us all we thought and hoped Quakerism is about. Altogether a fulfilling Yearly Meeting, whether a Quaker or not.

In peace,

Felicity Day & Hannah Leavett

## Vith FORM SKIING TRIP TO PRA LOUP 1997.

On Friday 21st March, three adventurous Australian students, ten Sixth Formers and the ever willing Sarah Spittle and John Howard headed to the French Alps for a week of the best skiing, accompanied by several bonding experiences, which began with 22 hours sitting on a crowded coach.

After winding our way through the mountains, by mid-afternoon of the next day we arrived at a beautiful snow covered mountain, Pra Loup. Standing at 2500 metres, this mountain appeared very different to the "mountains" we have back home in Australia! We spent the day admiring the view, getting our ski equipment sorted and unwinding from the long journey.

Day 1 had the Sibfordians split into three assorted groups: the *very good*, the *good* and the "*I think I've got the hang of this snow plough thing, now!*" Tony and Sarah were in this latter group, with Fiona outranking us completely!!

Whilst the beginners were managing to find their feet and avoid an out-of-control Francis Surry, the good and the very good ploughed their way down the slopes, still very much in control. The beginners had their own styles, with Tony demonstrating an ill fated somersault, half-twist, half-pike, bettered only by Sarah Caines' nose dive, as caught on video!

John, deciding the "very goods" were just too slow, moved to the ranks of the intermediates to aid the likes of Rachel, Hazel, Fabian, Helen and Anita. As a result this group became known as the "always lost" party.

Day 4 proved to be the most action packed with two birthdays, a kareoki evening and a night on the town, French style. Some dreadful singing, particularly from Francis and Elliott, it must be said, did nothing to enhance our image with the other schools!

Day 6 was a highlight with people managing runs with professional skill, which on the first day seemed impossible. Fabian's "arm chair" and Helen's "bombing it man" together with Stephen's ever patent smile, and the individual styles of all the party will long be remembered at Pra Loup.

All in all it was a brilliant trip and everyone who went had a ball, especially we Aussies who, although others will tell you different, did stay on the piste. Thanks, John.

Tony Howell and Sarah Dixon  
Gap Students

## HOCKEY TRIP

On the 10th September the Sibford School girls' hockey teams of all ages and abilities, ventured to Milton Keynes for a day's coaching and to watch the England men's U21s team play Japan.

We studied skills which the English players later demonstrated in their successful match, defeating Japan 3-1.

The coaching took place in the form of circuit training, performed in a clockwise direction and the instructors were very impressed with Sibford's young players of the future - well, who wouldn't be!

We were then able to chat to one of the members of the England ladies U21s team who played in the Atlanta Olympics in 1996. She gave us great encouragement to be as successful as we possibly can be.

The journey back to school was silent and seemed long, such was the tiredness of the day.

On behalf of the squads involved, we would like to thank Miss Knowles for giving us the opportunity to see how hockey is played at this international level.

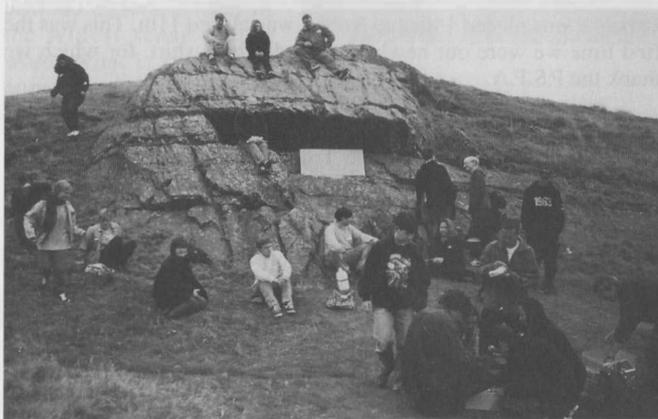
*Cathy Gornall, Year 13  
Senior Team Captain*

## **SOUTHERN SCHOOLS QUAKER PILGRIMAGE 1997.**

The pilgrimage began when we offered hospitality to the Sidcot and Newtown party, who spent Thursday night in Fielding.

We had a pretty hectic Friday (with the school photograph in the morning) but we were on the bus at 10.15 a.m. for a four hour drive up to the Lake District and '1652 country', where we met the other pilgrims, from Saffron Waldon and Leighton Park.

Our journey began with a climb up Pendle Hill, where George Fox received a vision from God in 1652. We were all looking forward to a stroll up the hill, but it was more than that, and getting there proved just how super fit we were!



*Firbank Fell – "Fox's Pulpit".*

We boarded the bus - later to be re-named The Pixie - and headed for Yealand where we would be staying for the next three nights.

Day 2 - we visited Brigflatts Meeting, where Fox himself preached, and learned just what sticky ends some of the great preachers of the period came to have. From here we went to Firbank Fell where Fox preached to some 3,000 people for three hours. It was here some of our pilgrims ate their peanut butter sandwiches, while others ran around the rocks as fast as they could, but it made them happy!

The Pixie now brought us to Kendal where we were shown the Quaker Tapestry, 77 panels of textiled history. The tapestry shows different stories of Quakers and what the Society went through because of its beliefs. It was very interesting, indeed "very triumphant" - that's what we wrote in the visitors' book, anyway!

On the Sunday our beliefs that the original Quakers had always been pacifist were shattered. Our entire understanding of Quaker history

was un-romanticised that day, and we learned that George Fox himself had been as blood-thirsty as the next seventeenth century man. The Society evolved towards pacifism later. We learned all this in Swathmoor Hall, the home of Margaret Fell and her first husband, and where Fox stayed and held many meetings in the great hall itself. What is now called the Hall was not the original hall (rooms having been moved around) and we also saw the balcony from which Fox preached.

The weekend was not all work and no play. In the evenings we would all gather around a very out-of-tune piano and sing along with our very out-of-tune voices. At mealtimes we would all say how remarkable our School was and how their's was rubbish, and at night we would play cards until an ungodly hour and regret it in the mornings.

I certainly enjoyed the pilgrimage and was with a very good crowd of people. I learned more about Quakers than I ever did in a lesson. More importantly, we all had fun learning, so if you are in the least bit interested, go for it next year!

*Jimmy Wringe, Year 13 and Siân Mather, Year 12*

## **OLD SCHOLAR SPORT**

As tradition demands, it seems, the O. S. cricket match was once again rained off, but there was a break in tradition in the O. S. football match, unfortunately not welcomed in all quarters.

In the interest of a good sporting match, the school, which had a rather weak 1st XI, bolstered its midfield with two members of staff, just as Old Scholars used to ship in "guest players" in the past and comfortably beat the school!

The result was, I think, one of the best contests for many a year with the school winning by 3 goals to 2. Congratulations to all the players!

*Brian Holliday.*

## **GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK, SLAPTON LEY FIELD CENTRE.**

Ten lower sixth geography students participated in a field trip in May to Devon, accompanied by Mr. Slade and his wife.

The week commenced in pouring rain as we travelled down the M5, but we arrived in the late afternoon to beautiful surroundings and a friendly welcome. After settling in, we explored the campus and Slapton.

That evening we were introduced to the week's programme and the centre's co-ordinator. After the evening lesson and the journey, bed seemed very appealing!



*The 'gang' returning home, tired and crabby.*

The morning bell, which propelled us from our beds in the direction of the showers, sounded very like a fire alarm! We were met by a massive cooked breakfast and Hannah, who is a veggie, even had bacon thrust at her. She managed to nibble a corner of her meal.

The day was spent in Exeter, mapping the central business district and avoiding the rain. We returned to supper and the evening lesson. The following day we were joined by a school from Bristol who joined the daily routine.

On the second day we studied coastal management and somehow Rachel came to be in the sea - however, much to Francis and James later detriment!

The third day saw us study rivers and revealed Sarah and Rachel's hidden ability to send smoke signals across Dartmoor, Red Indian style.

Another day we were all crabby since we got soaking wet and the following day was spent studying urban growth patterns and arguing continually. Stress had set in.

Tired, we returned home to the joys of Sports Day. The week was eventful and an education into the nature of our true selves while also being very helpful to our A level course. We would like to thank Mr. Slade and his very tolerant wife, Gill.

*Sarah, Hannah and Rachel*



*Francis sits 'lotus style' while the measurements are taken.*

## MY EXPERIENCE OF YOGA

Yoga is now offered as an activity on Saturday mornings. The class is taken by Helen Evans. I understand yoga to be an art of relaxation, which refreshes one's mind, body and soul.

While attending the sessions, I feel as though everything in my soul is drained away from inside me. It relaxes and soothes my stresses and strains.

Different people will react in different ways: some may find it relaxing, while others may find that their emotions are different when they leave from the way they were when they entered the session, and others may feel quite tired but at ease.

I fall into that last category. But all in all I enjoy the silence and the feeling of finding my own inner self. It is a great and enjoyable challenge to learn more.

*Debbie Leslie, Year 13*

## EQUESTRIAN EVENTS

Our first event was the National Schools Equestrian Cross Country, held on March 31st at the Gawcott course, which provided a successful day from start to finish with its banks, drop and its unique horse shoe water jump. The Sibford Team finished with two strong times and with Robert Garne gaining the first place and the fastest time in the flyers competition.

Our Junior was Claire Gregson while the Senior "Sibford Friends" Team consisted of Robert Garne, Ann Grice, Alicia Hamell and Victoria Taylor. The other senior team, named the "Sibford Flyers", were Caroline Cleland, Rachel Dales, Robert Garne and Simon Raby, and this team were placed 4th. overall.



*Ann Grice, Rachel Dales, Simon Raby, Robert Garne, Alicia Hamell & Caroline Cleland.*

On September 7th Caroline and Robert ventured into Wiltshire to the British Inter-schools One Day Event at Stonar School, where Caroline Homan is now Head, to compete in the tenth Stonar O.D.E. The course is renowned for its technical difficulties and stiff competition, which proved quite a test for both Sibford competitors. Caroline was placed 14th and Robert was placed 11th. This was the first time we wore our newly designed school shirt, for which we thank the P.S.F.A.

Again it was Robert and Caroline who travelled down to St. Leonard's for the National Schools Horse Trials, September 27th and 28th. The weather showed a marked improvement and the course provided a steep learning curve for both riders and horses.

As I write, our next competition will be on October 11th at Princethorpe College, the Inter Schools Dressage event.

The whole year has been possible only because of the support and financial backing of our Chef D'Equipe, Di Howes, and from Sue Freestone. Many thanks to both.

*Caroline Cleland*



*Robert Garne jumping*

# SPECIAL FEATURE

*In each edition of the Sibford magazine I have tried to focus on a particular aspect of the life of the school. In the past I have looked at overseas students, at local families and at the role of our girls. This year I have chosen to put the spotlight on two members of staff; Maggie Guy and Brian Holliday, the Heads of Middle and Upper School respectively. I asked them to share something of their tasks with our readers and they have responded in two quite different styles, but each reveals something of the work that these two colleagues do for all our pupils and the vision which informs this effort.*

Editor

One of the established “buzz words” in education at the moment is differentiation. It is usually used to refer to differentiation of the curriculum to suit the needs pupils. At Sibford, I believe we offer a unique type of differentiation and the best way to understand this is to “feel” the difference.

Being a Quaker school, we are profoundly influenced by the inner depth that silence can offer us in our Meetings for Worship. At best, we are able to extract from this silence a renewed faith in and regard for the God/Good that is in every human being. This is not, I hope, an overly sentimental or even patronisingly simple view of the children and young adults in our care.

Sibford’s pupils are held within a system of quality education and pastoral care and our expectations are high for each child. Throughout the School there pervades the sense that we are all striving together towards common goals. The recognition that there are many roads down which one can travel to get there is implicit in the way we provide differentiation in the widest sense of the word. What is sometimes considered “special” becomes the norm when summer exam papers are read aloud for all pupils, not merely those struggling to make sense of the printed word. No one is penalized. It is a simple way of reversing an educational process which can exclude rather than include.

One of the reasons many of the staff, in all areas of the School, choose to work at Sibford is the “atmosphere of the school.” It is the intangible X factor and almost everyone who visits the School or who has been a pupil will tell you it does, indeed, exist. Undoubtedly, it is helped by the very pleasant rural setting, but there is much more than the open spaces and the idyllic gardens that contribute to the sense of freedom. For some it is the freedom to live in a safe and secure environment whilst for others it is the freedom to show what they can really achieve despite a learning difficulty. We cherish and value the A\* pupil as well as the one who struggles academically. One cannot say enough about how a happy, confident student can achieve and find qualities in themselves which have lain dormant.

Part of the reason why our pupils are able to gain such confidence and a positive sense of themselves is the time the staff make for them. It comes (as in all success) at a huge cost - a huge commitment of time and energy from the staff. This is the “value added” that is almost impossible to measure. In these days of enormous pressures on teachers, it is this gift of time that I see colleagues give over and over again to pupils and parents alike.

In Meeting for Worship anyone may speak, if they feel moved by the Spirit to do so, it makes no difference who you are. And what the ministry can give may make all the difference to a person’s life. We hope that pupils at Sibford will become “centred” individuals partly as a result of learning to centre at Meeting and partly because as a

school we are centred on individuals, providing an education which celebrates a difference.

Maggie Guy

How does the Head of Upper School see his role? Usually from behind a stack of books, waiting to be marked unfortunately, but always, I hope, from the standpoint of seeing what is fair and best for the individual and the two year groups concerned, Years 10 and 11.



Rather than talk about the paper description of the job, I will outline something of what typically happens.

A few weeks before term started, along with Peter Lindsell, I interviewed two children for entry to the School in September. Sue was having a few days off. Offering the places was an easy decision in this instance because they were two lovely children, who will fit very well here.

Then I arranged the Induction Day for the new members of staff. This

would not normally be part of my role, but since Peter was himself new and Sue has only been here two terms, and I have been here 69, it was thought I might do it!

Once term starts, the pace for everyone is hectic, there’s always so much to do. We began with Tutor Meetings, mainly used to iron out details of the new Merit Mark system. Then in the first week Sue and I addressed the new Year 11 - again a really nice group of youngsters, who I think will work and play hard and do themselves credit.

Along the way, no doubt, I will see a few with their Tutors in my office about missed coursework deadlines or inappropriate behaviour. I also administer the detention system, which I do not get any joy from unless I can work with relatively small numbers of miscreants, doing something useful, which they can see as positive. It is important they do not end up feeling bitter.

Then there are definitely nice aspects to the job. I administer the grades which happens every three weeks, and it is good to see confirmation of so many working hard, and to let them know through a quiet word or the issue of certificates of merit. The other rewarding task is to arrange mock career interviews for Year 11. I invite people with interviewing expertise to come into school and each Year 11 student has a half-hour interview, having prepared a letter of application and a C.V.

And that, from behind a pile, no, two piles now, of unmarked books is what I try to do !

Brian Holliday

# WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

## Youngsters tackle fire training

SIBFORD School pupils could be firefighters in the making if their enthusiasm for their visits to Banbury Fire Station is anything to go by.

Twelve students, aged between 14 and 15, have been going to the station on a weekly basis over the last four weeks as part of their bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award training.

The two-hour sessions have been led by firefighter Alan Hutter who has been teaching them about the structure of the fire service and fire safety in the home.

But what really lit the teenagers fire was the practical part when they got to handle the hoses and enter the smoke room.



**FIRE TRAINING:** Sibford School's Edward Lindsay, left, Freddie Huntingdon, centre, and Alex Ritchie.

Teacher Andy Newbold said: "We're very grateful to Mr Hutter who does this on a voluntary basis."

"It's a very useful service and gives the children the opportunity to ask lots of questions."

## Archers creator was former Sibford pupil

FORMER Sibford School pupil Godfrey Baseley, the originator of the Archers, has died aged 92.

Mr Baseley, who left the school in 1919, edited the world's longest-running drama series for 22 years.

The Archers was first broadcast on January 1, 1951. Mr Baseley, who was born in Worcestershire, came up with the idea for a 'farming Dick Barton' when he was working on a programme in 1948.

After leaving Sibford School, his first job was as a butcher's delivery boy for his father and he later went into broadcasting.

(See page 47 for a full tribute)

## Music title hopes

THE Banbury area's most talented young musicians will compete against each other this weekend for the title of Banbury Young Musician of the Year.

The finals take place on Saturday (March 1) at Sibford School and more than 40 youngsters will be taking part.

The competition starts at 6.30pm and tickets costing £4 and £3 are available on the door or from the One Man Band music shop in Church Walk, Banbury.

### YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR Sibford School.

**Saturday (March 1) at 6.30pm. Tickets £4 and £3 on the door.**

The finals of the Banbury Rotary Club competition is finally upon us with 44 finalists out of 110 entrants battling it out in junior, intermediate and senior classes.

## Singing with the stars



**IN FINE VOICE:** Young singer Ottilie Kark

A SIBFORD School pupil has added her voice to a tribute album to Princess Diana along with stars such as Elton John.

Ottilie Kark, aged 11, was one of 200 members of a London-based children's theatre group selected to sing on the album.

Stars including Elton John and Paul and Linda McCartney have also contributed their own songs.

The Chicken Shed Theatre Group, of which Ottilie is a member, performed a song called I'm in Love with the World.

"It's going to be released as a single and some say it could be a Christmas hit. It would be exciting if we appeared on Top of the Pops," said Ottilie.

"The Princess was the patron of our group and first heard our song several years ago. She did a lot for us and helped us raise money."

The song was recorded on Saturday at a studio in Wembley and stars Gina G, girl band All Saints and boy band 911 joined in.

"We were told we shouldn't be too excited to meet them because they're people just like us but we were anyway," said Ottilie.

● A new information and communications centre was opened at Sibford School on Saturday.

It will form the hub of a computer network to be set up throughout the school over the next three years.

## Brilliant Initiative by a Sibford School Pupil

Christa Yates of Sibford School entered a recipe competition sponsored by Newman's Own in conjunction with Good Housekeeping. The idea of the competition was that the winner and runner-up would donate their prize-money to their favourite charity.

Christa designed a pasta sauce named the "Dyslexic Special" and won £5,000 which she donated to the British Dyslexia Association.

Christa, together with the new head at Sibford Ms Sue Freestone, presented the cheque to Alan Howarth MP, Vice President of the BDA, at the Palace of Westminster.

Christa sets a brilliant example to us all and we are extremely grateful to her for her support.



# LITERATURE SECTION

## THE OLD HOUSE

I was walking up the street when the gate swung open in front of me and crashed into my chest. I held the gate and I turned around and looked towards the house and I saw that the doors were swinging to and fro. It was silent in the street and I could not hear a sound coming from the house. I walked up the path as the sprinklers splashed me.

I reached the steps of the house and I was beginning to feel odd. The hairs on the back of my neck were prickly. What was wrong? I crept up the steps and pushed the creaking door open. Inside the house was dusty and old. Cobwebs hung down in drapes around me and I was beginning to feel trapped.

The stairs to the first floor had rotted away, but I found an old ladder to help me reach the top. I made my way up, but I could feel the ladder splitting beneath my feet as I reached the top. I hauled myself off the ladder and crawled under the cobwebs to the next set of stairs. These were not so old, so I found my way to the top more easily. I was now in the attic.

In the far corner of the attic there was a trunk with a rusty old lock on it. I kicked the lock and it slipped off. I opened the trunk and I was struck with horror. There, in front of me, lay my key word book with odd English spellings such as neighbour and foreign. I needed to escape from this spelling nightmare.

I stumbled down the first set of stairs and found my way to the edge of the ladder, but it had disappeared. Panic set in. I pushed my way through more dust-balls, through layer upon layer of threads. They were beginning to suffocate me and I knew I had to find my way down.

Through the haze of cobwebs I saw a sofa. I got to the edge and held my breath and threw myself off the edge onto the sofa. I was now off the first floor. I knew I had to run for it now or I would be here forever. I brushed past the creaking doors, leaped down the steps and ran down the path. I jumped the gate in one clear leap and ran straight onto the road. Luckily no cars were about. I picked myself up off the asphalt and ran down the street. I didn't stop running until I was home.

Once I was at home I headed for the bathroom to shower away the dirt and the cobwebs. I ran to my room and sat on my bed. The key word book was there. It had beaten me.

*Henry Taylor, Year 8*

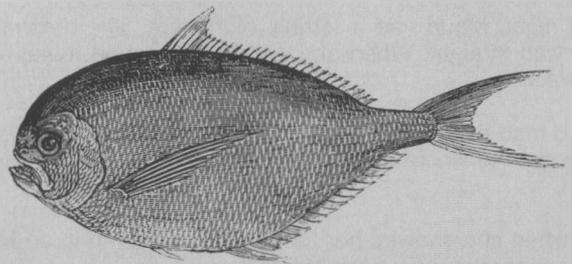
## LIGHT

For most people the dark will give them a fright,  
but me, I am afraid of the light.  
I watch the dawn break to start a new day.  
I am in fear of what others might say.

I hear the darkness in my ear,  
I want it to save me from the fear.  
I must be brave! I must go on!  
I am as fragile as a new born fawn.

The darkness has come like a blanket of wool.  
With the darkness my contentment is full.

*Samantha Danton, Year 8*



## SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS YOUNG.

I remember the old days when I was young! Those TV programmes like Biker Grove and Grange Hill. These days we have Cyber Bunker – they don't make programmes like they used to!!

Those new-fangled flying machines are just rubbish, I say. In the old days we used to have cars like the old Ferrari – an amazing vehicle.

The only good thing is that they still sell fish and chips like they used to!

There were pubs in the good old days. Now there are these silly, fancy bars and the robot waitresses are just rust buckets!

All in all, it's all right, really.

*Simon Holloway, Year 9*

## HAIKU POEMS FROM STUDENTS IN LEARNING SUPPORT.

### Party

Laughing, giggling in the dark.  
Music blaring loud.  
People dancing fast.

### Mind

He lifted his head.  
His shiny eyes burrowed  
Through my empty mind.

### Being hue man

Feeling sad, happy,  
Or depressed is to be "hue"  
Man, like all the rest.

### Excited

Leaving soon for home.  
Can't sleep I'm so excited,  
Jumping up and down.

### Birth

Birth is joyful,  
A new life has just begun.  
Mixed feelings all in one.

### Sadness

Losing Biffie  
I cried myself to sleep,  
Dreaming of him, lovely cat.

## BAD HAIR DAY!

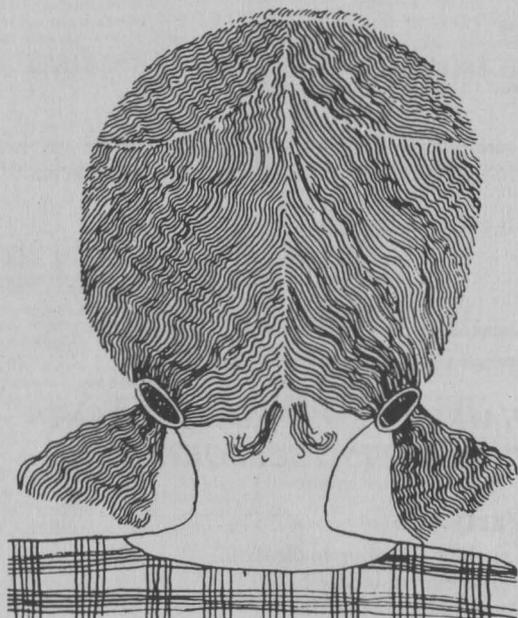
Maud Smith lived in Belltown. The town was well known for its hair styles, and Maud always had the latest style.

One night, Maud had a terrible nightmare. She dreamt her hair was straight! When she awoke, she found it was true. Disaster!

Maud tried everything: she ironed it, she steam rolled it, she even got the whole football team to lie on it.... but it was no good.

But when she showed her friends they all loved it, so Maud had set another new trend for Belltown!

*Alice Day, Maia Keeling and Katya Blumberg, Year 8*



## THIS IS THE REAL WAR.

The sound of the guns rattling in your head,  
The sight of the men that you left for dead,  
The tears of the children whose homes have been lost,  
The grief of the widows whose lives are the cost,  
The tortured landscape, the shattered dreams,  
This is the real war, not the heroic deed it seems.

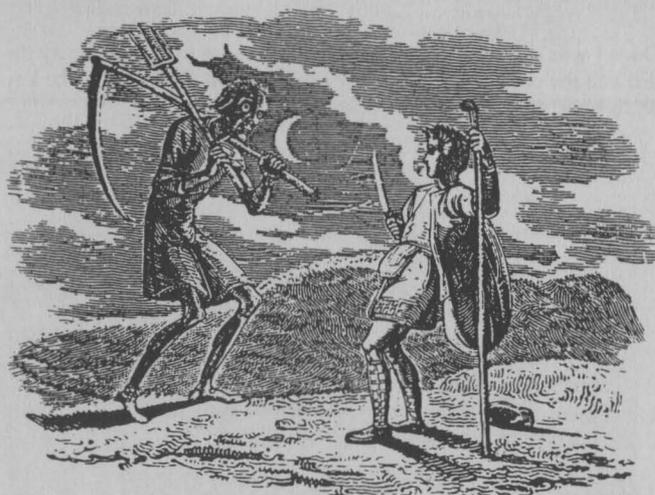
War's not the wonderful adventure we are told,  
Full of power, fights and medallions of gold.  
These, the rewards for your destruction and murder,  
Your thoughts of war need go no further.  
What about the innocent people you left behind?  
What about the children, do they not mind?

After all you have done is destroy their futures,  
You will not see their putrid wounds and bloody sutures,  
Their health and life gone in one final blast,  
For you they are just a memory from the distant past.  
That is not the real war, you will have said,  
But then the ones at home have not seen the dead.

The death and destruction, the true face of war,  
And did you ever see what you were fighting for?  
And now you are safe at home, a hero true,  
Don't you think those children are thinking of you?  
The ruthless soldiers who destroyed their lands,  
The men who came with death in their hands.

This is the real war.  
This is the real war.

*Laura Williams, Year 11*



## SURVIVAL AT SIBFORD SCHOOL

I started the year 1997 with wonderful ideas, but I soon noticed that my beautiful body lacked something. It needed a perfecting touch, but it was a mystery what, exactly. My personal trainer and dietitian were deceiving me in front of my eyes. The mirror tells no lies. My body was crying out for SOMETHING!

The answer to my problem was staring me straight in the eye that day I had to go and personally fetch my order of imported low fat cheeses. There in front of me was a counter, full of chocolate in various shapes and sizes. My body drew me nearer to the evil product. I could not resist. My hand slipped into my pocket and my fingers felt a 20p coin.

Before I could stop my actions the money was exchanged for a bar of chocolate and in a spilt second I was out of the shop and sprinting down the road to the duck pond. Here I could be alone and safe from the mad doctors. My fingers tore off the paper and before you could count to ten, the chocolate was gone. Gosh, it did taste good!

Composing myself, I returned to school, going straight to the race track, prepared to win in all events. What could be easier for such a perfect body? I felt different, not odd but supercharged. This was going to be a new experience for all to see.

I lined up with my fellow competitors. A quick glance told all: this was my race. The sound of the gun sent me into overdrive. I thundered down the track at the speed of a hundred paces a minute. Yes, Malcolm, you ARE perfect! I reached the ribbon, which tore in half and carried on along the track to take my lap of honour.

This body of mine performed to perfection and the answer lay in SUGAR!

But how was I going to get this food into Sibford? I will find a way. Malcolm will not be beaten by a simple problem like that! We perfect specimens will not be held back by inferior beings.

With money concealed in my pencil case, I calmly walked into Greens, the village store, and bought £50 worth of Mars bars, Lucozade, liquorice and marshmallows, not forgetting my favourite mints. I could hardly carry it all, but with my supersonic muscles I soon had the load back at Sibford. Now the deception was to begin. The sweets had to be hidden from my teachers and trainers. The shampoo was replaced in the bottles by Lucozade, while the liquorice was sharpened to look like pencils and went into my pencil case. The marshmallows were hidden in my duvet for a midnight feast. But where were the Mars to go? My locker was the obvious place and soon they were stacked in there, behind my kit and books.

That move was made just in time as Mr. Spring appeared from nowhere, leaving the mints as my amazing and final disappearing trick. With the aid of a hockey stick I broke the mints into tiny pieces and flushed the toothpaste down the toilet replacing the tube's contents with the mints. Brushing my teeth would never be the same again, nor would my teeth. I was a very happy chap, content in all ways, with an appetite for sugar that would at last be SATISFIED.

*Malcolm Smith, Year 7*

## THE LIFE OF A SWING

I could hear on the summer's breeze the pounding of the children's footsteps running towards me. Their laughter and joy floated through the air. They would throw themselves upon me, swinging high in the sky, their feet touching the clouds.

But soon enough the air was silent, the leaves had fallen and the ground turned brown..

In the end I was alone, swinging in the wind.

*Gemma Raby, Lizzie and Lucy Duckett, Year 8*



## SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS YOUNG.

Wrinkles, crinkles, false-teeth and hair  
Make life at times hard to bear.  
Visits from grandchildren bringing their toys  
Make people of our age young on our feet.  
We play cricket, football and games galore,  
But at the end of the day we fall on the floor!

High jump and long jump, we do our best,  
Then hot chocolate and bedtime for a long earned rest.

*Robert Garne, Year 9*





## **SUPERMAN**

Superman,  
Dooperman,  
Flying in the air,  
All day long.  
Listening to the church bells,  
Ding, dang, dong !

Superman,  
Dooperman,  
Sitting on a mast,  
Watching the clouds floating past.

Superman,  
Dooperman,  
I wish I was him every day.

*Kieran Ford, Year 3*

## **PERFECT**

If I was perfect, cats would be cash,  
Dogs would be dosh.  
If I was perfect,  
Perfect I'll be.

*Jordan McGurk, Year 4*

## **ONE DAY**

One day my teacher said to me,  
"Are you doing some work for me?"  
"Yes," I said "Can I go to bed?"  
"No," she said.  
"Why?" I said.  
"There is no bed."  
"There IS in my head!"

*Matthew Weston, Year 3*

## **Wishes**

I wish my mummy was full of money.  
I wish my cat was full of delight.  
I wish the dog would stop barking.  
I wish the schools would never open.  
I wish I could always spell words right!  
I wish I could fly like a kite.

*Benjamin Carty, Year 4*

# THE FOURTH YEAR

## PARENTS STAFF AND FRIENDS OF SIBFORD SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

This year has been a much more positive and fulfilling year for the PSFA, with our diary of activities being much more numerous and more activities being arranged and well attended. We welcomed Sue Freestone as our new Head and she has attended all Committee Meetings.

With the appointment of the new Committee, following the AGM last October, 1996, we have continued to meet twice a term to plan and discuss the activities of the Association.

The object of the Association is to advance the education of the pupils in the school. In furtherance of this objective, the Association may:-

- a. Develop more extended relationships between staff, parents and others associated with the school.
- b. Engage in activities which support the school and advance the education of the pupils attending it.
- c. Provide and assist in the provision of facilities or items for education at the school (not provided from statutory funds), as the Committee in consultation with the governing bodies shall, from time to time, determine. The Committee consists of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, 2 staff representatives chosen by the School, two school representatives (Head, Deputy Head) and 5 parents.

Grants have been made for a number of items which have been requested by staff, pupils, and different departments within the school. Most of these are listed in the annual accounts, with the amounts awarded shown. There were two additional funding requests made towards the end of the year, which included a request for a Heritage Early Learning Centre Game, for the Maths Department, which was awarded £82.34 to set the system up.

The largest project that the PSFA have been involved with is the reclamation of the old tennis courts into a paddock play area. This request was a vision from Graham Thomas, Head of the Sports Department, who have been very involved in the project.

The area has certainly been greatly improved and the pupils now have the benefit of a play area, which is multi-purpose and available to all age groups.

A Barn Dance took place in the Spring Term, which not only broke even but made a profit, and was greatly enjoyed by all those who attended. The enthusiasm of all ages to fully participate in this event was heartening to see, and much appreciation for putting on such an event was expressed to members of the Committee. It is hoped that a similar event can be arranged during the coming school year. Refreshments, which are a regular "income earner" have continued to be provided by the members of the PSFA at various school events (the various drama productions, School Sports Day, Orchard Close Sports Day, The Banbury Symphony Concert). Grateful thanks to all those parents and staff who have helped on these occasions, and I would stress that these occasions are a good way of getting to know each other and breaking the ice!

The Choral Society, which has amongst its number, parents, staff and friends of Sibford School, supplied the chorus to the Mikado Production, and was closely involved in several aspects of the production, including make-up, costumes and wigs. Special gratitude for their involvement go to Marie Carty, Gwen Mather and Penny Spring.

A group of pupils have again competed in the Equestrian National One Day Events Programme. The year opened with the team taking



part at Gawcott, Buckinghamshire, Stonar in Wiltshire, and Boardehill in Sussex, to complete the programme. Rosettes were gained at the beginning of the year, which are displayed in the front hall of the school. The event at Stonar was overshadowed by the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, the day before, and the cancellation of the dressage part of the competition. However, Caroline and Robert acquitted themselves well on the Cross Country and Show Jumping, narrowly missing the Rosettes. The least said about the outcome of Boardehill the better!!! Suffice it to say that some extremely wet riders and horses came home somewhat disappointed but safe and uninjured.

This particular activity is an extremely good example of the co-operation and hard work put in by pupils, parents and staff (Di Howes) and is an excellent example of the objectives of our Association. It is a combined effort on everybody's part, which has been greatly enjoyed and has been good fun!!

The PSFA Committee provided Tea and Sympathy for new parents at the beginning of the new school year in September 1997. This venture was started in 1996 and proved a great success. Again, this year, we were overwhelmed by the turn out of new parents wanting information, friendship, and in some cases, a packet of tissues. We do hope that this will become a regular feature of the school calendar, as it has been demonstrated that this is an occasion that is appreciated by new parents.

We have been closely involved in discussions about the proposed change of school uniform, which has been greatly appreciated by the parents on the Committee.

Zara Huntington has served as the Parent Representative on School Committee, and is owed a debt of gratitude for the time that she has volunteered to this task. She will be continuing in this role for another year, but we are anxious that anyone interested in being nominated to take her place, puts their name forward to the PSFA Committee as soon as possible.

At the end of the school year the PSFA provided the liquid refreshment at the Barbecue that was held to say goodbye to Caroline Homan and Simon Horsley. This was another greatly enjoyable social event, if sad, to say goodbye but good luck in respective headships in their new schools.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to all members of the Committee for their service in the past year and their loyal attendance at meetings and events.

I will be handing over to a new Chairman of the Association on Open Day, the 5th of October, 1997. The School has experienced a lot of changes in recent years and is now going forward with a new Head and Deputy. I wish the new Committee well in their deliberations.

*Jane Cleland  
Chairman*

## PSFA ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1 August 1996 to 31 July 1997

### Opening balances

Community A/c	£56.31
Bus. Prem. A/c	£7,502.02
Nat. Savings A/c	<u>£315.27</u>

Total £7,873.60

### Income

Subscriptions from 45 Friends	£301.50
Subscriptions from parents	£2,185.60
Interest on closing	
Nat Savings A/c 138027120	£44.58
Proceeds on closing	
NS A/c 138027121 (FOSS)	£77.25
Proceeds on closing	
NS A/c 138053366 (Sports)	£368.48
Interest	£193.60
Barn Dance ( note below )	<u>£344.21</u>
Total Income	£3,515.22

### Grants and expenses

Grants as noted below	£7,364.12
Barn Dance expenses	<u>£212.73</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>£7,576.85</u>

Total £3,811.97

### Closing balances

Community A/c	£467.96
Bus. Prem. A/c	£3,515.76
Less unrepresented cheques	<u>(171.75)</u>

Total £3,811.97

### Further Barn Dance

proceeds held by School	£324.06
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### Grants promised:

Silk frames and books	£40.00
Radio and aerial	£97.99
Equestrian Team Kit	£340.00
Paddock Play Area	£3,465.30
OC Football Team Kit	<u>£90.00</u>
Total	<u>£4,033.29</u>

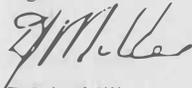
### Grants paid this year

Computer design system	£1,000.00
Toaster/ kettle M Fell	£183.99
Weather station	£253.27
Multigym cycle	£466.48
Construction kit	£79.90
Video and trolley	£302.45
Playground bark	£475.00
School Magazine	£460.15
Textiles	£127.07
Atlases	£320.60
Radio Mike	£490.21
Book Tokens	£205.00
Paddock Play area	<u>£3,000.00</u>
Total	<u>£7,364.12</u>

### Auditor's report:

The above accounts give a true and fair view of the activities and financial position of the Parents, Staff and Friends of Sibford School Association.

Signed



D John Miller

12/9/97

## PSFA BOOK AWARDS FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

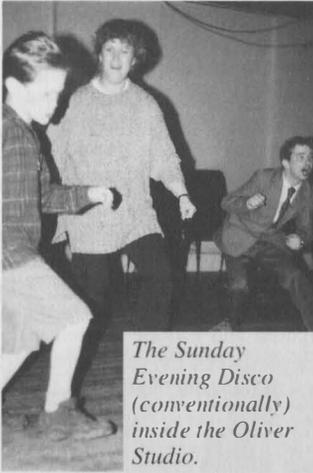
Presented at final assembly July 1997

by Jane Cleland, chair/PSFA

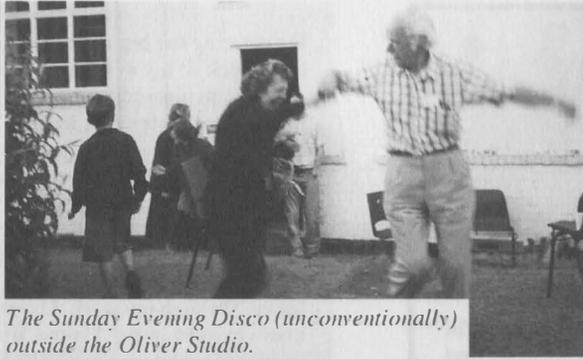
Year 3	Katy Pannell
Year 4	Andrew Gaunt
Year 5	James Sale
Year 6	Ruth White
Year 7	Maia Keeling
Year 8	Justin Juan
Year 9	Deborah Stripe
Year 10	Laura Williams
Year 11	Sarah Anderson
Year 12	Francis Surry
Year 13	Hazel Bell



Sue Freestone watches as James Bond officially opens the new I.C.T. Room on Open Day.



*The Sunday Evening Disco (conventionally) inside the Oliver Studio.*



*The Sunday Evening Disco (unconventionally) outside the Oliver Studio.*



*Ian Weatherhead, Mike Finch and Ashley Shirlin.*



*Guy Kingham serves Barbara Pensom at the Barbecue.*



# OLD SCHOLARS' NEWS



*Don Ryan and Nicola Grimes displaying the therapeutic benefits of a SOSA Reunion.*

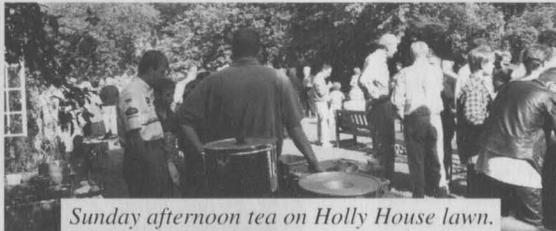


*Ben Hedges, Ellen Salway and Julie Greenhill.*

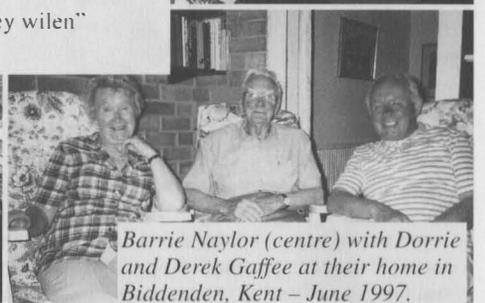
*"Ye Menne of Sheep-ford wendath withersoever they wilen"*



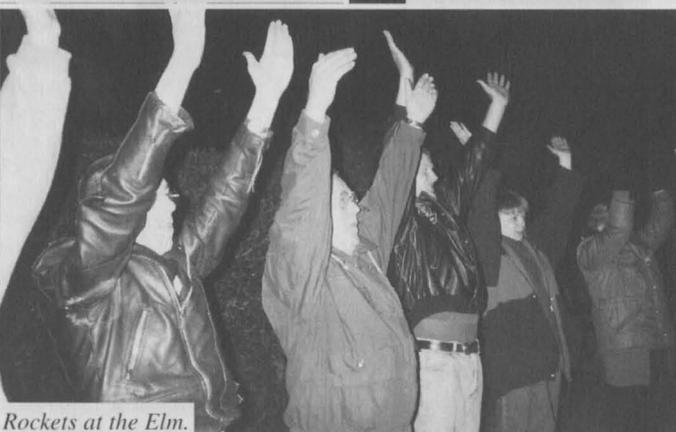
*Luke Waterfield and Rachael Davis.*



*Sunday afternoon tea on Holly House lawn.*



*Barrie Naylor (centre) with Dorrie and Derek Gaffee at their home in Biddenden, Kent - June 1997.*



*Rockets at the Elm.*



*David Haines, Martin Dodson, Christine Wincott (née Bishop), Freddy Seefeld, Joachim Litteck.*

## SOSA EDITORIAL

Well, I really am amazed!

In 1996 I was happy to acknowledge a deluge of articles and photographs, which had enabled us to produce an exceptionally colourful and memorable magazine, but this year we have received an even greater volume of like material, from all quarters of the globe, which we are confident will attract widespread interest.

As you will see at the front we have produced a meaningful 'Contents' table. It is hoped this will help readers to find their way around a quite varied publication.

I am especially pleased to acknowledge the help given by my Assistant Editor, Michael Grimes, whose talents by the way are well displayed on page 53 in the article co-written with Isabel Evens. Michael's quiet counsel and his assiduous proof-reading have been of immense value to your harassed Editor.

Mike Finch of course has (as always) been the omnipresent adviser and behind-the-scenes help. I know it's a hackneyed phrase but I can think of no better way to describe him than as 'A Tower of Strength'.

Members will recall from my September Newsletter that I've been planning to introduce a 'Time Slot' series in the Magazine and that I intended starting it off with something of my own. Well, by happy chance we have received two more items which fall into this category. The Time Slot series is contained between pages 49 and 55.

Remember there will only be blank pages without readers' contributions! The Editorial Team bids you 'happy reading'.

*Mike Farr*

## PRESIDENTIAL PROFILE

Hello, my name is Julie and I am President of Sibford Old Scholars' Association for 1997-98, some twenty years after my very first day at Sibford School; something of a milestone and I am therefore privileged to be the youngest President so far!!!! (I am sure that some present scholars will duly beat this record).

I was born in 1965 (to some of you that will seem extremely OLD and to some extremely YOUNG) in Highgate, North London, of working class parents. My father worked for the Post Office and my mother was a housewife. I was their only child. I had an interesting and somewhat rebellious childhood, some would say a very hard and deprived upbringing. It was in these circumstances that I discovered at a very early age that I did not like school or authority in any way, which eventually led me to a small sleepy village called Sibford in 1978.

Being only 12 years old and what I thought of as a very streetwise city child, I did not know about the country and more importantly about Quakers or boarding school life. I therefore came to Sibford with some trepidation, but with a vision that it was going to be like St Trinians; how wrong I was. After experiencing the normal period of homesickness, and learning how to look after myself with the guidance of friends and house staff, I eventually spent six very happy years at school and made close friends, many of who I am still in contact with today, and of course dare I forget my partner Mike Herm, who I started going out with in 1981 whilst we were both in the 5th year. I even managed to lose my London accent and my London friends accused me of being "posh".

On entering the big wide world in 1983, which certainly came as a shock to my system, I found work in the travel industry, which I am pleased to say I still work in today, although I have had the misfortune of having been made redundant and of leaving various companies for different reasons, but as I am sure you will appreciate, now or in later life, this happens, and you have to brush yourself down and start again. I am now lucky to be in the position where I know most aspects about my chosen profession, including all the mundane jobs as well as the advertising, database, and marketing. I have been very lucky. Through my work, I have also travelled to places I never knew existed in the United Kingdom and Europe as well as escorting travel agents on trips. I now work for an American company, and am looking forward to travelling to the USA, a country I have never visited.

Mike and I live in South Norwood, South London, where we seem to live a somewhat domesticated life. We are attempting to get our house and garden into some sort of order, however only knowing a little about either DIY or gardening this is becoming very arduous, especially when I have to ask other people for advice, including the next door neighbour about the garden (or jungle)!!!!!!

In what little spare time that I have I like mainly to socialise with friends, attempt to exercise by doing aerobics (very difficult when you are un-coordinated) and swimming (or drowning), listening to music (the louder the better) and more seriously to read.

Since leaving school I have always had close ties with Sibford Old Scholars' Association. I was Reunion Secretary until last year and through this involvement now know many of our younger and older members and actively encourage our younger contingent. I am proud to be your President for 1997-98 and I hope to see many of you at the Annual Reunion in May 1998. I would certainly like to welcome recent leavers or anybody who has not been to a reunion before. I am sure you will enjoy it, as well as catching up with old friends and making new friends. After all, this is what 'SOSA' is all about, where everybody is welcome.



Julie Greenhill  
President 1997-98

## REUNION ROUND-UP

*A contribution from Desmond Rose*

Any misgivings that the organisers might have had in switching the Annual Reunion from the August to the Spring Bank Holiday were forgotten when a long spell of glorious weather smiled on those who made the pilgrimage from all parts of Britain - and beyond. Numbers were less than they customarily are in August but it had been realised at the outset that the change of date and clash with GCSE examinations would have an effect. Some 65 or so were in attendance plus some more fleeting appearances by members who were unable to attend for the full weekend.



*Left to right (Back) Julie Greenhill, Mike Herm, Guy Kingham, Jane Ashdown, Cindy Poulton, Adrian Douglas. (Front) Hugo Finley, James Thompson and Jonathan Tutte.*

Old friendships and reminiscences were revived at the opening lunch and the President, Philip Morris, using the official gavel with a devastating effect on our eardrums, welcomed all those attending and announced the start of the customary full programme. The first main event was the AGM which passed off in a very amicable and peaceful manner. Main attention focused on the possible purchase by the Association of The Ark (better known to more mature O.S. as the former San) but as members had had little time to think about this the Committee were asked to consider it in depth and report back.

The Treasurer (Mike Finch) proposed some significant alterations to SOSA subscription rates. There had been no change since 1990 and the increases were approved with little discussion. We agreed some administrative changes to the Association's rules, and reports were also received from Branch Secretaries. Amongst several new appointments were Pat Grimes (School Committee Representative), Hugo Finley and Paul Levy (Reunion Secretary and Assistant), Michael Grimes (Assistant Magazine Editor) and Cindy Poulton (Vice-President). There was a stimulating and welcoming report from the recently appointed School Head, Susan Freestone, which was greeted with warm and prolonged applause.

Philip Morris (our President who had invited Anne Wood to deliver the 1997 Leslie Baily Address) must have been blessed with second sight. Anne is the talented head of Ragdoll Productions and deviser of the new BBC 'Teletubbies' children's programmes. She showed us and discussed in some detail four five-minute films selected from work she had produced for an 'Open Air' series, which had enjoyed worldwide showing and acclaim. The ones shown, which contained no spoken dialogue, were for the Philippines, Sweden, Brazil and China.

Naturally enough, the audience's interest and questions soon focused around the Teletubbies, which had hit the headlines during the previous week. Anne Wood gave a very



*Mario Ricci – Preparing to join the formidable Italian World Cup side.*



*Hockey Match – The players assemble (in various shapes, sizes and genders.)*

effective response to many of the more hostile criticisms. She reminded us that the programme was designed for the very young - from a few months old to around 3 or 4 years old - during the earlier part of which children could not assimilate listening skills and viewing at the same time. Any educational and social values had to come through entertainment.

The audience appreciated Anne's reasoning and we echoed our President's words of warm thanks with enthusiastic applause. [Interestingly, an hour-long radio programme on the Monday of the weekend was devoted almost entirely to a discussion on Teletubbies; it's a subject which seems to have polarised opinions quite dramatically!]

The Rockets ceremony at the Elm followed this stimulating session. The strange ritual, the details of which your reporter is forbidden to divulge, was held at about 9.40pm, with fewer participants than usual (about 40) and, because of the time of year, this was in twilight rather than darkness. A new version of Rockets had been devised by Chris and Pat Grimes: a 'Rocket Cannon' - or more likely Canon, as it had a musical undertone. There were apparently several initiates present, but in retrospect the mystic element is perhaps best conveyed at midnight!



*Relaxing in the Peace Garden – Janet Steed and Margaret Shelley.*

Sunday dawned even brighter and warmer than the previous day. A break with tradition occurred in the Choral Singing after breakfast when we had a President's Selection of hymns and, at times, a President's Solo. Those proceeding on foot to Meeting at the Gower had an exciting walk, as our footpath passed through a field occupied by a bull (and herd of cows), but we all emerged unscathed. Meeting was followed by the usual refreshments - and further drinks for some of us at the Bishop Blaize, where we enjoyed beautiful views across some English countryside at its loveliest.

The afternoon saw two different walking routes: one party touring Sibford and environs; the other, led by Michael van B I ankenstein, doing a 3 1/2-mile



*Sibford's new Head at her first SOSA Reunion, Sue Freestone with daughter Tara.*

pleasant and easy round of Swalcliffe Common, with its adjoining ridge along good footpaths, all in ideal conditions. The usual enjoyable tea and photograph session followed at Holly House, still in perfect conditions. This informal occasion also provided us with an opportunity to become better acquainted with Sue Freestone.

The 'President's Choice' entertainment consisted of music from five very talented flautists from Birmingham Conservatoire with Zoë Smith as their pianist and compere. The programme included two chamber music items by Boismortier and Doppler, interspersed with special arrangements made from more popular items by Mozart, Tchaikowski, Schubert, Scott Joplin and others. The Concert concluded with a rousing performance of 'Willow the King', during which the instrumentalists were supported by some lusty singing from a "Choir" comprised of our President and a half-dozen members of the audience.



*Le Tout Ensemble. The instrumentalists are joined by a choir, led by President Philip Morris, in a rendering of 'Willow the King'.*

The last item on Sunday was a 1950's-60's-70's evening with an excellent Barbecue and Disco, in which young and old alike participated. However, things seemed to be getting rather nasty when a dodgy character - introduced to us as "the Oldest Swinger in Sibford" put in an appearance. He was startlingly clad as a Fifties 'Teddy-Boy' and sported an extremely macho hair-do. He appeared ready to cause a "bit of boover" and he gave at least one lady a considerable fright. (Our intruder incidentally bore a slight resemblance to Mike Finch, dare we say.)



*Mike Finch brings an old suit out of mothballs!*

Happily he did not stay long, departing harmlessly to the relief of the more sensitive among us, and shortly afterwards Mike Finch himself appeared, apologising for the uncouth behaviour of the black sheep of his family.

The Motor Treasure Hunt on Monday was at least as successful as in previous years, having as twin bonuses the continuing fine weather and a route which covered some of the best scenery in the area. The afternoon attractions also benefited from the conditions, and members were in a very happy mood when they assembled for the Presidential Reception and Dinner. The President delivered a brief and entertaining after-dinner speech on "Aspects of Infinity" which covered such matters as the Hale Bopp Comet, a new form of mousetrap (!) and his reasoning that "continuous creation" is more likely than the "Big Bang" theory.

He thanked the catering staff for the excellent food provided over the weekend, the School Head for her presence and enthusiastic support of the various events, and the Secretary Ashley Shirlin for all his work during the year. The President awarded the elegantly-mounted 'hub-cap' trophy to the winners of the Motor Treasure Hunt,

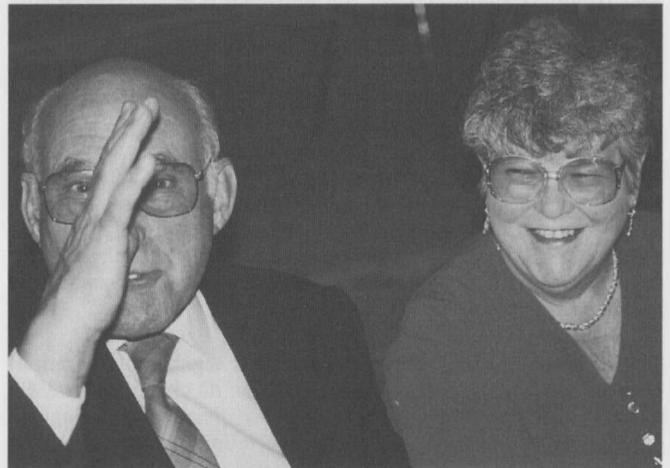


*Ann and Ray Bond supervising the start of Monday's treasure hunt.*



*Chris Grimés proudly displays his winning car's trophy.*

Chris and Pat Grimes. (Chris had obviously been studying how winning team-captains at Wembley display the trophy!) Finally the President welcomed Julie Greenhill, who has done such stalwart work in her role as Reunion Secretary, as the new President, to general acclaim.



*The 1972 President demonstrates why it has proved necessary for SOSA to be more careful over selection of candidates for this high office! (John and Doreen Taylor).*

The proceedings ended with the customary indoor Rockets ceremony with all its variations, old and new, and the traditional Auld Lang Syne. There were one or two unofficial gatherings in the late evening and by Tuesday morning we were all either home, or on our way home, after a thoroughly enjoyable long weekend.



*The brothers Farr (left and right) try to ignore a bunch of unruly youngsters in 'The Blaize'.*

*It was feared at first that Desmond Rose might have to be absent during Sunday. Therefore, as a precaution, we asked Janet Steed if she would kindly cover that day's events. Consequently it now turns out we have two separate impressions of Sunday; my thanks to both diarists - Ed.*

## IMPRESSIONS OF SUNDAY

by Janet Steed

Using the President's words at breakfast, "Welcome to a sunny day". Immediately after our meal some of us attended choral at which an overhead projector proved to be most useful as some of the hymns were new to many.

For Old Scholars on shanks' pony, the bull in the field on the way to Meeting added extra interest to the walk, but he was more interested in his harem than mere human beings. Ministry at Meeting was lively and thought provoking. We learnt that Quakers in Wales will be highlighted on TV later this year with an Old Scholar being interviewed. Unfortunately the programme will not be seen on English television.

After a good lunch Mike van Blankenstein took the stalwarts on what they were promised would be a short walk. Later in the afternoon we all gathered for a shared tea on Holly House lawn. Old Scholars had been asked to contribute to the catering with suitable cakes. They excelled themselves with quantity as well as choice. The weather stayed fine for the usual group photograph taken by our regular photographers.

Early evening and the weather turned much cooler but this didn't stop us joining in the barbecue which was actually completed outside. Neither did it stop Mike and Wendy Finch attending, dressed as a very fashionable Teddy Boy with his girl friend. The lime green suit with leopard skin lapels did not match his complexion, but the purple lace fronted shirt and fluorescent pink shoes and socks proved to be more complementary, probably because his suit was at least two sizes too small! The Brylcreem hair style held up well, literally. Wendy looked extremely fetching in a tight black top and green satin bouffant skirt with net underskirt. There was much hilarity at the ensemble, particularly as no-one else had thought to dress up.

It can't be easy to find an evening entertainment to span the different age groups. The flashing lights and volume of the disco in the Oliver Studio were best enjoyed by most Old Scholars staying outside in the garden area. Eventually they drifted away to their favourite corners to end the day with cups of tea and never-ending tales of times at school.

## A YOUNG OLD SCHOLAR'S VIEW OF THE REUNION

Contributed by Paul Jon Levy (1988-93)

I left Sibford in 1993, after spending five very enjoyable years there. For me, and for many others leaving a place where we had spent such a long time, it was a very sad experience. What was hardest was leaving the many friends that I had made. We knew that we would probably see each other again, but we would never live together at Sibford again.

Mike Finch gave a talk to the leavers about the Old Scholars' Association, and he told us about the yearly Reunion, which was then held in August. A group of us decided that we would go back and help at the Reunion, not knowing exactly what to expect.

When we arrived we were made welcome by Julie Greenhill, the then



Paul Levy

Reunion Secretary, who is the current President of the Association. She explained to us the format of the weekend; each day there are a number of events organised, such as a Motor Treasure Hunt, in which my team's annual low score may have something to do with us combining the course with visiting some of the many old Public Houses Oxfordshire has to offer.

On the Saturday evening this year a 50's, 60's and 70's disco was organised, which was enjoyed by all. Other events that have been organised in recent years have included a fancy dress barbecue and a visit by a miniature steam engine.

Each year we have a visiting speaker to give the Leslie Baily Address. The topics are always varied and have included Children's Television, from the creator of the cult television programme Teletubbies, and the construction of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

We have a fun happy hour with party games, a table tennis tournament, the 'Golden Doll' Hockey contest, organised walks, and 'Rockets' at the Elm, which is indescribable! The Old Scholars' Reunion is an event much more than just a gathering of old school friends. It's a long weekend in the gorgeous Oxfordshire countryside, a chance to visit the country pubs, walk in the fields and attend the Gower Meeting House.

The proof of what an enjoyable weekend it is for everyone can be seen by looking at the varied people who return year after year. I could say that the Reunion is enjoyed by everyone from eight to eighty, but that would leave out all those who are not in this age range!

After my first few Reunions I felt that I would like to get more involved in the Association so I became a Committee member and, from this year, Assistant Reunion Secretary working with Hugo Finley the Reunion Secretary to help organise the event.

The Association is an institution in which anyone of any age can be involved. Just by looking at the Committee you can see the varied attraction; it has members who left in the 40's and the 90's.

The Reunion is enjoyed not only by Old Sibfordians but by the families, partners and even friends of leavers. I am now at university, but I still enjoy the few peaceful days I spend each year among friends at Sibford, and I urge anyone of any age to come, to visit Sibford again, to meet old friends and make new ones.

*Russell Steed Says*

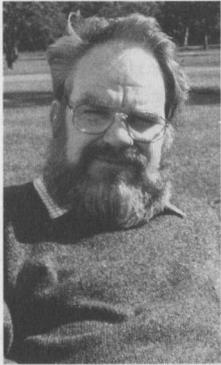
## THANKS TO A PRESENT SCHOLAR

The holding of the Old Scholars' Reunion during term time caused some disruption to school life and accommodation. Emptying rooms of one's personal possessions for just a week, so that someone else can use it for a weekend, cannot be welcome.

As visitors we were interested in whose room we were occupying. We were early enough to look around Fielding to decide which was the most conveniently located room. The wall decorations had been left in place and we naturally had a good read and think.

We came to the conclusion that our hosts were both Friends, concerned with the environment and other cultures. One at least was involved with the forthcoming production of the Mikado. Their wall coverings may have shown their characters but they also made us think.

Here is part of what we observed. A rehearsal schedule for the Mikado. Bright posters of geese, frogs and pigs. Was the pig poster intended to show the effects of inheritance of striped and spotted pigs? There was comment about the relevance of condoms in countries where families of 10 are status symbols. 1660 and 1987 editions of the Peace Testimony and a Quaker Tapestry calendar. A cartoon showed the negative and positive effects of adults versus a VDU or television. A child in front of adults is told 'don't be greedy', 'don't be selfish' and 'you must share'. Whilst in front of a VDU/



*Russell takes his ease in the Bank Holiday sunshine.*

TV he is told that he is exclusive, 'entitled to luxury' and 'to demand more'. Which will shape the future attitudes of society? Marmaduke the cat was popular. He appeared three times.

The increased security of the campus brings to mind that uninvited and unwelcome visitors leave a feeling that they know something about you, but you know nothing of them. In case our absent hosts have this feeling, I am an Old Scholar who left in 1961, some years before Fielding was built. I work as an engineer and am interested in photography. You will see some of my images on these pages. I have attended Old Scholars' gatherings regularly and am now a member of School Committee. My wife,

Janet whom I recently married, managed local authority Home Care services.

School Committee should know and experience the accommodation. We wonder what our impressions would have been if we had chosen another room. We look forward to our absent hosts joining Old Scholars in due course. However, we thank them for their hospitality.

We noted some of the sayings displayed on the wall, which included "Always look ahead, there are no regrets in that direction."

## THE 1997 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

*Given by Philip Morris on the 26th May 1997*

### ASPECTS OF INFINITY

I was surprised when photographing the Hale Bopp comet the other night, from the Welcome hills at Stratford, that I didn't have to set the focus of the camera at infinity. This suggested to me that there were other objects further away, which of course I knew. However, even leading astronomers with the best cameras in the world cannot photograph the furthest stars. Why is this?



*Committee members on duty, Monday meal check-in: Cindy Poulton, Nick Bennett and Mike Finch.*

Imagine you are standing on the platform of Banbury station waving goodbye to a friend at the end of term. As the train pulls out your friend runs towards the rear of the train (one of the old sort with a corridor). Only when the train gathers speed and is moving faster than your friend does he actually start travelling away from you.

Now imagine an express train approaches the station, blowing its whistle, whee... but this time the pitch of the sound has dropped wheee-whoooo, because the sound waves are extended rather than being compressed. This doppler effect when applied to light gives rise to what is known as the red shift; certain gaps in the spectrum being shifted to the red end if the object emitting the light is receding from you or to the blue end if approaching you. The red shift appears

to increase the further a star is from us; the furthest stars yet photographed having the greatest red shift and apparently receding at nearly the speed of light. Here comes the interesting bit. Should a star recede in excess of the speed of light any light it emitted in our direction would still be travelling away from us just like your friend on the train and could, therefore, never be seen by us however good our cameras or however long we waited.



*Ian Hedger, John Hughes and June Dawson.*

I will return to the expanding universe later.

I think my earliest experience of infinity was in Birmingham shopping centre when about four. There was a clothes shop with a big concave window, at either end of which were mirrors. As I leant forward whichever way I looked, right or left, I could see an endless line of my reflections disappearing into the distance - for ever. That, I was told, was infinity.

Human thought is infinite. When teaching design I used to tell my pupils that the only limits to the variety of their solutions were of their own making. They'd come up with only one solution and I'd say, "Go away and think up another half dozen."

We had one lad who, having designed a mouse trap, found that when he tried it out the mouse always got away with the cheese. It had a ramp leading to a hole through which the mouse had to put its head to reach the bait. A guillotine was meant to drop and dispose of the mouse. It wasn't quick enough. When told to design an improved version his effort had the examiner puzzled. The ramp was still there, so was the hole, but in front of the hole, just below it, was a razor blade and beyond the hole was no bait. "How does it work?" he asked the lad. "Well, sir, the mouse, knowing where the cheese is runs up the ramp, pokes his head through the hole, looks for the cheese and slits his throat on the razor."

The world's libraries and, before books, the spoken words contain the beginning of an infinity of human thoughts. Does a thought have to exist before it can occur to a human mind or is it created spontaneously?

Here at Sibford, both Arnold Darlington and Frank Parkin helped to enlarge my views on infinity be it of space or time or purely mathematical. Take the mobius strip. Theoretically it should have an infinite area since its surface is continuous. Theory does not match reality.



*'On board HMS Fielding'. Mike Ladell, Tom Evans and Barbara Abercrombie.*



Jack and Monica Simpson.



Ronald Kennedy, Jeanne Southam, Norman Coxon, Irene Coxon-Smith and John Hughes at the Sunday barbecue.



Hockey Match. Ellen Salway leads the field.



Hockey Match. Chris Legg takes a breather.



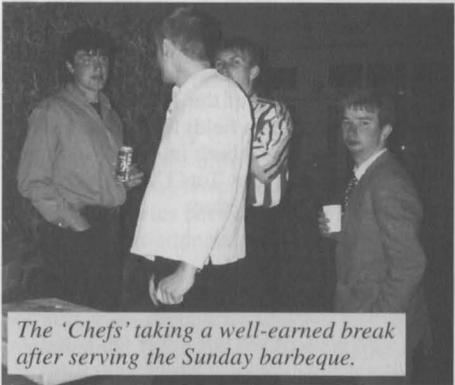
Sunday after Meeting at the Gower. In the foreground Loraine Brown chats with School Committee Guest Barbara Pensom. Also, in the background, Jeanne Little and Marjorie Fielding.



Doreen and John Taylor, Don Ryan and Irene Coxon-Smith.



After Sunday Meeting, Pat and Chris Grimes with Paul Frampton. In the background: Nick Bennett with Phil and Loraine Brown.



The 'Chefs' taking a well-earned break after serving the Sunday barbeque.



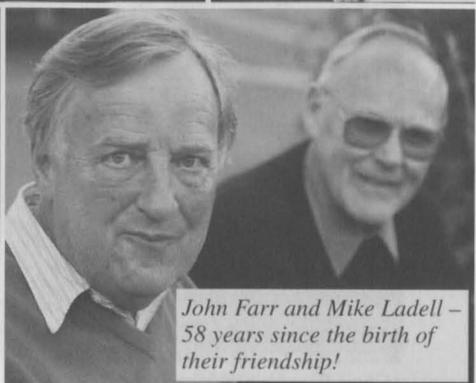
Tom Lane and Rachael Davis.



'Hearts Aglow', David Haines, Christine Wincott, Freddy Seefeld and Jane Gunston.



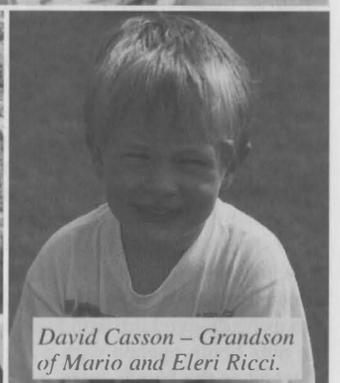
Mike Farr.



John Farr and Mike Ladell — 58 years since the birth of their friendship!



Jeanne Southam — (South-West events organiser)



David Casson — Grandson of Mario and Eleri Ricci.



*Annual General Meeting – General Secretary Ashley Shirlin delivers his report. President Philip Morris is in the chair.*

There is expanding infinity and contracting infinity. Arguably you can never touch your own nose. Given the starting distance between finger and nose this must be halved before being completed thus creating a new starting distance which again must be halved ad infinitum. Again theory does not match reality.

Ah! Ad infinitum! Fleas! Remember the poem?

Great fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em. Little fleas have lesser fleas and so ad infinitum. The great fleas themselves in turn have greater fleas to go on, and these again have greater still and greater still and so on.

If this makes your mind spin think on this:- We live in a spinning universe. From the quark to the stars the greatest of spin doctors is at work. The little bundles of energy that we call electrons are spinning round nuclei to form atoms. These, locked together, form molecules which compose all the substances of this world. Earth is a spinning ball of energy rotating about a bigger bundle of energy - our nearest star. How similar to an atom is the structure of our solar system. It is an insignificant dot in our galaxy all of which is spinning and the likeness of which there are unimaginable millions. I used to think our universe was infinite, but it can only be the space into which it is expanding that is infinite.

The currently accepted theory of the Big Bang is, I think, unsatisfactory. I can't accept it as the beginning of creation. What if there have been infinite big bangs all over the place? What if galaxies, appearing and disappearing, expanding and contracting, are but the molecules of something much vaster than science and astronomy can comprehend? I back Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington's continuous creation. That fits in with my feeling for infinity. Here again I don't think theory matches reality. What do you think?

## 21st LESLIE BAILY ADDRESS

*Given by Anne Wood, Creative Director, Ragdoll.*

Anne Wood introduced us to her work with the BBC making children's films for the very young. She had sponsored an international gathering of film makers. They had been set the task of producing a short film with the story-line, child comes out of a door, has an adventure, goes back through the door. These had been broadcast under the title, "Open a Door".

Anne then showed us one of this series made in the Philippines. A little girl came out of her house to watch a man cutting coconuts and fronds from the top of a tall palm. When he came down she followed him as he dragged the fronds away to the open air kitchen. She saw the nuts being opened with a knife and the milk being drunk. She watched as the fronds were stripped from their stem and each was



*Following her Leslie Baily Address, Anne Wood is closely questioned by Leslie Harrison and Ronald Kennedy.*

rolled up and filled with rice for cooking in a huge cauldron. When she had eaten her rice she re-rolled the frond to make a flute and ran off back through the door blowing it.

Anne contrasted the sense of security and community, felt in this film, with that almost of anxiety in the next film, made in Sweden. Here they were so taken with the technique that the story was, at times, improbable. The film opens with a magpie stealing scraps from a bag on the front doorstep. A little girl runs out to fetch the newspaper from the letterbox. A gust of wind snatches it into the air. She chases it through woodlands and over fields. It disappears into a barn loft, but as she climbs the ladder it is whisked off again. One can almost see the wire attaching the sheet of paper to the helicopter, but the effect is still pretty convincing as it flies into a bell tower and tolls the bell only to escape ahead of the girl again. It is nearly caught on the boot of a car and then comes to rest on the horns of a cow. The girl picks some dandelions to feed the cow, but off goes the paper again, high in the sky over her farm. It is her dog who finally retrieves it and presents it to her neatly folded! With much relief she goes back indoors welcoming in the dog.

Anne pointed out that one and two year olds have difficulty seeing things and hearing things at the same time but tend to concentrate on one or the other. How often had we said, "You're not listening to me", when a child was absorbed in play?

Anne had not known when asked to give her talk, that she would become the centre of a heated national debate on the validity of Ragdoll's new series for the BBC, based on children's perception of the world seen through play. She told us of the Teletubbies, in her latest production, that rushed around green fields loving one another and watching happy things on televisions built into their tummies. Having won two BAFTA awards for her Tiny Tots TV, she had hardly expected such hostility to this latest production.



*Chatting after the Leslie Baily Address, Mavis Stiles, Philip Manasseh, Philip Morris, Rosamond Morris and Juliet Nichols (Chris Wood's girlfriend).*



Watch these on BBC 2 and decide who's right.

We saw two more films. One from China involved a little girl whose father transported her and her dog, on his bicycle, to her daily activities; her music and movement class; her school; the market place and her private music lesson. Everywhere her dog sought her out until she carried it back through the garden gate.

The last film was from Brazil and showed a young boy in a shanty town. He rushes out from his house with his mother's saucepan lid, pursued by sister and others. We see a hectic chase down the mountainside with lots of narrow escapes. On the way he steals someone else's pan lid. Dashing through a football match he scores a goal and ends up in a fair ground where he joins the band. On stage his two pan lids become cymbals which he clashes in time to the music, to everyone's delight. Now the hero, he offers to return the stolen lid, but is given it. Returning home in the dark and expecting his mother's wrath he displays both lids. Looking up the mountain side we see his mother emerge from the house and, silhouetted against the night sky, she picks him up and hugs him as they go inside.

Anne then told us a little about her company, Ragdoll, and her shop in Stratford-upon-Avon. She answered lots of enthusiastic questioners on the boundaries between education and play and the aims of her Teletubbies programme, which can be seen on BBC 2.

We thank Anne for a provocative yet reassuring talk and we thank her son, Christopher, an Old Scholar and former Head Boy, for operating the video and for attending his first SOSA gathering.



Anne Wood with the stars of Tots TV and the BAFTA awards.

## GODFREY BASELEY 1904 – 1997

*A tribute to the legend who created 'The Archers', the world's longest running soap opera, compiled by Michael Finch.*

I thought it would be difficult to write about a legend but in fact Godfrey was a very 'ordinary' man who, despite his celebrity status and contacts with the rich and famous, bore no extravagant 'airs and graces' and was very much a man of the people, who held a deep sense of social responsibility and despite his gruff, sometimes irascible exterior was really a pussy-cat at heart.

Godfrey, who was at Sibford between 1916-19, always remembered his time at School with deep affection and gratitude, especially for the "care and devotion that James and Mabel Harrod bestowed upon all of us who were privileged to be at Sibford during that time. They were like second parents to me and I never forgot their love and kindness."

It is also worth remembering from the 'golden age' of the Harrods, that Godfrey was also a contemporary of that other great Sibfordian broadcaster - Leslie Baily - a golden age indeed!

Godfrey was a great-fun character, full of wit and good humour - a charismatic soul who many Old Scholars will recall with affection for his whole-hearted involvement at Reunions especially in the 'thirties and forties', and who will ever forget him dancing the 'Charleston' with Lilian Ward during SOSA's seventy-fifth celebrations in 1978.

He was born in Worcestershire, in the village of Alvechurch on 2nd October 1904, one of three children. His father was a butcher and the young Baseley helped to deliver meat to the rural communities on a horse and cart, soon becoming well known in the farming world.

He briefly joined the Birmingham Repertory Theatre before deciding to make broadcasting his career. After spending time as an outside broadcasting assistant with the BBC in London during the Second World War, he quickly became involved in farming programmes.

In 1948 Godfrey proposed the idea for a daily radio programme based on farming to help farmers to modernise production after the Second World War. In a memorandum in August 1950, he explained to his BBC superiors that he sought an accurate, if "reassuring", picture of country life, drawing "portraits of typical country people, following them at work and at play and eavesdropping on the many problems of living that confront country folk in general." While it should be aimed at the general listener (that is "the townsman") it should be set out to "keep a good balance between the factual and the more entertaining aspects of country life."

At that time, Godfrey was producer of agricultural programmes for the Midland region of the BBC, and the first 15 minute broadcast in the Midland region only, went out during the Whitsuntide Bank Holiday of 1950. (Somewhat ironically the SOSA Reunion was held at Easter that year and not at the usual Whitsuntide!) The first episode broadcast nationally was on 1st January 1951.

Within two years it had an audience of nine-and-a-half-million. The lives of Dan and Doris Archer and their family at Brookfield Farm in Ambridge had caught the listeners' imagination.

Many people, without the intimate knowledge which could only have been given by Godfrey, wrongly assumed that Ambridge was based on the village of Hanbury, in Worcestershire. The BBC used Hanbury parish church to record scenes for Phil Archer's wedding in 1955 and for Peggy Archer's wedding in 1991. The village was regularly used in BBC publicity photographs, but when in 1991 residents of Hanbury suggested that their village was the model for Ambridge, Godfrey soon disabused them, saying that their village was a "bloody awful place." He added "It is totally wrong for these people to claim Hanbury is Ambridge. It is not. I dreamt Ambridge up out of my own imagination."



Godfrey Baseley with Vanessa Whitburn – current editor of “*The Archers*”

Godfrey Baseley remained editor of *The Archers* for twenty-two years. In 1952 he was also agricultural correspondent of Television Newsreel and in 1953 he was appointed television rural programme organiser, London.

He steered *The Archers* serial, the world’s longest running show, until 1972 when the BBC decided not to renew his contract. By then Godfrey was already 67 and perhaps regarded the show as his own and didn’t take kindly to criticism from people who he referred to as “*Johnny-come-latelys*.” He was the squire and was not a man to suffer fools gladly. He said that he would never again set foot in the studio where the programme is recorded - and was true to his word, that is until 1989 when he buried the hatchet with the BBC after attending a special dinner to mark the 10,000th episode of *The Archers*.

He remained a genuine countryman. (“*London? Hate the place. Can’t breathe there.*”) He liked to dress in a brown suit with a check shirt and a brown floral tie. His face was ruddy under a fringe of grey hair and he had a wonderful booming bass voice.

After he left the BBC, Godfrey became very popular as a speaker, usually about *The Archers*, and I remember very clearly a magnificently funny talk at a SOSA Reunion about *The Archers* with some ‘inside’ information on some of the characters in the plot.

He became increasingly critical in the way in which the programme was now being run. “*They ought to take it off the air until they get it right again.*” he commented in 1986. “*It’s the townsman’s view of life in the country and utterly phoney. Petty politics and sex have crept in, which would never have happened when I was there.*”

Many thought that Godfrey came to look and sound uncannily like an alternative Dan Archer. With that wicked sense of humour he conjured up some bloodthirsty fantasies for the *Archers* characters. “*I’d kill the old ones off in a car crash,*” he said at a 1990 BBC party to celebrate the serial’s fortieth anniversary. “*I’d like to put a gun to Phil Archer’s head - he’s had it! As for Eddie Grundy, I’d push him down a well. He’s a libel on the countryside. I’ve never met anyone like him in my life. When I started ‘The Archers’ forty years ago, it changed peoples lives - but now its all just gossip, with no vision any more.*”

Godfrey’s beloved wife Betty, whom he married in 1934, died in 1988. They had two children, Jane Brodie, now aged 61 and Helen Sims, who is 59. He also had six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

To those of us who belong to the Sibford fraternity, he was a hero, who is sadly missed but who will always have a place in our hearts.

Thanks for the memories Godfrey, may you rest in peace.

## KATE LONG 1930 – 1997

*A tribute from Anne S. Muir*

Kate was born and brought up in Worcestershire. She was the only child of elderly parents, and was educated at Lawnside School, Malvern. Once she was grown up, she felt she had done enough Bible-reading and church-going to last her a life time! Her parents’ convictions, although perhaps over-zealously practised, must have played some part in forming the wonderful person we knew.

This background also left her with a life-long love of choral singing. Kate’s ambition on leaving school had been to study music at one of the London colleges, but her parents would not hear of it. It was in the face of this opposition that she ran away from home and secured a junior post in the San at Sibford. In due course she married Henry Long, and later on their children Jill and David both attended the School.

When her children were no longer very young Kate returned to the School to work in the Sewing Room, then as Secretary to the Director of an Appeal. When the post of Secretary to the Headmaster suddenly fell vacant, Jonas Fielding saw in Kate an ideal person to fill the gap, and she continued in this rôle during the headships of Kenneth Greaves and Jim Graham. Her practical secretarial skills were entirely self-taught - this was typical of Kate’s personal response to any challenge: “Just get on with it!”



Kate Long.

Kate’s twenty-nine years of service and her unique contribution to Sibford were admirably and more fully described in the magazine by Marjorie Fielding and Jim Graham at the time of her retirement in 1989. That she was first-rate at her job was only a fraction of it. Her gift for diplomacy, her talent for meticulous organisation and her enthusiastic participation in events and activities - these alone would have made her of incalculable value to the School; but she will be best remembered by everyone who came into contact with her - children,

colleagues, parents and visitors - as someone who could be turned to at any time, whatever the problem, and whose knowledge and common sense, personal warmth, understanding and sympathy could help one find a solution.

In due course Kate combined her work at the School with caring for each of her parents in turn to the end of their lives, then likewise for her husband, Henry. That long haul of devoted service was followed by a few years in which she was again able to go out socially, travel abroad for short holidays, and generally enjoy herself before her own failing health gradually restricted her freedom once more.

After leaving Sibford, Kate worked part-time for several years at Featherton House, a residential home for the elderly which had been founded in Deddington by Karen and Eric Turburfield with their business partners. Once more Kate’s office became the hub of the establishment, and again her personality helped to create a lively, caring ambience for residents and staff alike.

In her leisure time Kate created beautiful tapestries and enjoyed jigsaws puzzles. She was an avid reader of novels, a passionate devotee of the Daily Telegraph crossword which she rarely failed to complete, and a correspondingly awesome opponent at Scrabble. The same cerebral skills came eagerly to the fore every year for the SOSA car treasure hunt! Her elevation to Honorary Life Membership of SOSA gave her great pleasure.

Above all, Kate loved people and being in company. At Sibford we knew the quality of her enlivening and supportive friendship. It is not the least of her achievements that she was also appreciated as a friend by her children, her children-in-law and her grandchildren.

Perhaps Kate’s wry sense of humour would accept an ending with a Biblical allusion - that a person reaps what she sows. Kate Long sowed a great deal of love during her life time.



Kate Long (right) celebrating her birthday in 1995 with her daughter, Jill Smith.

# TIME SLOT – TIME SLOT – TIME SLOT

This is the label we are giving to a series relating to Members' individual years at Sibford. – Ed.

## 1941 - Sibford Helps to Re-house Blitzed Families

The cutting on the right of this page from the 'News Chronicle' (a once renowned national daily) of 9th June 1941, recalls a creditable chapter in our school's history. The press item was recovered for us by Philip Morris and his sister Pegeen after they found it among their grandmother's belongings.

Your editor sought further enlightenment from Ina Lamb, whose father Roland Herbert was mentioned in the item.

Ina kindly sent an additional group picture (provided by the press photographer at the time) and she has put names to most of those featured. How many can you spot?



Enjoying a well-earned picnic break - Hazel Parkin, Frank Parkin, Alan Cole, Desmond Collins, Eric Parkin, Eva Roy, Bertie Robertson, Nan Taylor, Marjorie Oldham, Ina Herbert (head concealed), Margaret Baker, Beryl Whitaker, Brenda Parker, Joan Oyston, June Grisedale, Duncan Cummins, Meriel Manasseh

N.B. All belonged to the school, except Bertie Robinson, of the Friends War Relief Service, and Margaret Baker who did the organising and settling of families.



## Schoolchildren Rebuild Old Cottages For Bombed Families

From LOUISE MORGAN

SIBFORD FERRIS (Cotswolds), Sunday.

Schoolchildren worked here yesterday at plastering, painting, paperhanging and window-glazing in a beautiful old Cotswold cottage which has been boarded up for 30 years and was falling to ruin because nobody thought repairs worth while.

They are boys and girls from Sibford Friends' School, and this is the tenth cottage they have helped during their free time to make habitable for blitzed city families.

"We enjoy it better than tennis and cricket," said 15-year-old Beryl Whitaker, who was whitewashing the parlour ceiling in paint-splashed dungarees and a battered farmboy's hat.

"And it's a better education too," added the senior master, Mr. Frank Parkin.

### "SETTLERS" LIKE IT

Four of the older boys, of 15 and 16, were digging a 75-yards-long trench down the hillside to the main for laying water. Ten-year-olds were acting as "mates."

The children had instruction from their handicrafts master, and are helped by working parties from the local Friends' Meeting and the National Friends' War Victims Relief Committee.

The "settlers," most of whom had been unable to find or live in billets, are delighted with cottage life.

I talked with all the families, most of whom are related. People who had never planted a seed have flourishing vegetable

gardens. Women used to all modern conveniences are cooking in ancient ranges, trimming oil lamps, fetching water from outside, and enjoying it.

Rents are as low as 1s. a week. This is because the farmers allow for having their property put into repair free. The scheme has started to pay for itself and even to show a small profit.

The schoolmasters are keen for other teachers and pupils in out-of-the-way places to start like schemes.

"Children see little use in a school certificate, but a great deal in getting a cottage ready for a homeless family," said Mr. Roland Herbert, master in charge of "the Sibford gang."

### Bigger Programmes

As a temporary concession programmes can be printed on paper of a maximum size of 100 square inches instead of 80 square inches.

Beryl Whitaker and an instructor (above, left) at work in one of the Cotswold cottages which they are helping to make habitable for bombed-out people. Some of the young workers were pictured (above) when they stopped for a cup of tea. Below: One of the repaired houses.



### Hess Questions To Prime Minister

Mr. R. R. Stokes (Lab., Ipswich) is to ask the Prime Minister whether the President of the U.S. has been informed of the object which Hess assigned for his flight to this country; and whether he conveyed or suggested any terms of peace, or any proposal for negotiations.

THE ARKCBS

By J. F. Horrabin

## TIME SLOT: A ROLLER-COASTER RIDE

By Mike Farr (At Sibford 1938-43)

In his autobiography two years ago Paul Eddington recorded his recollection (as he saw it) of my resignation, on grounds of conscience, from the position of Head Boy.

Unfortunately my old friend's memory was playing tricks on him (just as memory does for so many of us in our later years) and this article provides me with an opportunity, among other things, to give a personal recollection of those long-ago events.

[Indeed, because my Time Slot contribution is about events of 50-plus years ago, it inevitably raises the question of 'Selective Memory'. While researching among my contemporaries I have been surprised how individual memories can differ so widely. Some of us lay stress on particular events, for example, which others have either forgotten or can barely recall.]

Sadly Paul had some other memories, rather bitter and unflattering, of Arthur Johnstone, who was Sibford's controversial and complex Head from 1930 to 1956.

In the 1992 Magazine others of our generation had set down their recollections of AJ...

**David Haines:** "...Many of the people who had known him during his reign (including disgruntled members of staff) genuinely thought him mad..."

**Michael van Blankenstein:** "...there was little democratic consultation...AJ ran a tight ship...It is possible that no one really knew him intimately or fathomed how his mind worked..."

Although upon our arrival we'd heard talk of AJ's predilection for violence, including reports of slipper-beating across bare buttocks and clouting boys' faces, we saw none of it during the later '30s and early '40s.

It is pure speculation, but I suspect somebody at a high level might have cautioned AJ around 1937 after which the practice had ceased. That 'somebody' could have been Lionel Geering, a Committee Member and SOSA ex-President, who - unlike some of his Committee colleagues - kept closely in touch with the school. To be fair, I should record also that AJ was seen to mellow considerably towards the end of his career.

My Time Slot's subject matter is devoted to a single narrow topic: "*Boy Prefects and Head Boys appointed under the Johnstone Regime: 1938-1943*"; a topic which, for all its narrowness, encapsulates quite neatly the often painfully-recalled style of 'Johnstonian roller-coaster governance'. I shall not deny that certain events left some emotionally scarred, but I'll strive to minimise that here. It has been mainly the curiosity of younger Old Scholars which has prompted me to write now.

*The precise Time Slot is something which only a very few of us actually experienced, and I am alone in having been privy to certain episodes within it.*

I shall endeavour to keep this narrative as 'compact' as possible, though it is the very minutiae which are so vital. Consequently dear reader, if you have a 'Low Boredom Threshold' please accept my apologies in advance.

### 1938-39: A sudden squall blew up

When I arrived aged eleven in September 1938 there were two boy Prefects (our friends John Osborne and Tim Pye; today in their mid-seventies, we often meet them at SOSA functions). Their year of office started with that Autumn Term. Neither was ever described to us newcomers as the 'Head Boy'; both were simply 'Prefects' and they sported identical enamel badges.

Although having previous experience of prefects, I was simply



bemused by the Honours Board showing earlier years' **Head Boys** and **Head Girls** [I wonder whether others as newcomers have been equally mystified?] As a tiddler, I never enquired the means by which senior boys and girls won that distinction. I was not then aware that the two most recent 'laureates', John Parsons and Margaret Rundle, had in fact been Prefects. I vaguely assumed there was a special quality causing pupils to be so honoured - perhaps like (in soccer terms) being voted European Footballer Of The Year!

Part-way through my first Summer Term said prefects John and Tim, who slept at the Hill, had a secret tryst with their girlfriends - who slept at the Manor. It was at a pre-arranged hour late one night. Tim tells me that the night was cold and that Field Barn was the limit of their short stroll. They soon hastened back to the relative comfort of their respective beds.

This act of youthful bravado, escorting girlfriends on an innocuous midnight walk, initially escaped detection. Nevertheless the miscreants were revealed after a girl had spilled the beans in a letter home. Her parents told AJ and then of course an 'earthquake' erupted!

The boys heard about it when AJ announced that their boy prefects were being expelled for "serious misconduct". He didn't elaborate but naturally the 'lurid details' spread rapidly through the usual grapevine. [I have learned lately that this nocturnal jaunt was not a one-off. There had been others, but suffice to say this was the only one brought to light!]

The girl culprits were not being disciplined - a fact which I and my companions deemed to be inequitable and unjust. Today it would surely be labelled as sexual discrimination. One of the girls incidentally was Jean Sinclair, later to become Head Girl at The Mount (where, unlike Sibford, such a distinction resulted from democratic elections among pupils and staff). Happily she has for 52 years been John Osborne's wife.

Nevertheless (and against all expectations) both 'expelled' boys were later partially rehabilitated - albeit by the very oddest of routes. ('Classic Johnstone', as Messrs Haines and van Blankenstein would agree!)

After some weeks of absence John reappeared alone to sit his July School Certificate Exams (GCSEs in today's language), but he was restricted in his socialising with the rest of the School. There are mixed memories of this particular brief period: John himself cannot clearly recall, but some have said he was housed in the San (today's Ark) and that his stay was limited to the duration of the exam period. In the circumstances that would seem consistent with his status of a 'conditionally returned banishee'. Also of course Sibford's boarding spaces were fully taken up and the Admissions Register shows that two German refugees (Erich Spira and Gerhard Dannenberg) arrived in June to occupy the vacancies left by the expelled prefects.

Tim, for reasons unknown, continued as an exile and he sat his School Cert. in Plymouth, but after that (although no longer a prefect) he actually resumed in September as a 'normal' Sibford pupil, to spend a further year in the top form. He sat the School Cert papers again in July 1940. (He has two sets of quite creditable results as a consequence!)

During his rehabilitation year however Tim was looked upon as something of a pariah by the AJ establishment. He was passed over for some treat-outings and sporting fixtures (in spite of being an exceptional performer) and he couldn't help noticing how he was

no longer invited to participate, as previously, in the light-hearted Boys v Girls hockey 'matches'!

But for *this* impressionable boy (and for many schoolmates) the real 'mind-boggler' came in the Autumn Term of 1939 when none other than the name of 'John Osborne' was signwritten on the Honours Board! (As I say, no one had thus far explained to me the connection between 'Prefects' and 'Head Boys'.)

In our eyes John had ceased to be a scholar during the Summer. We had seen him again briefly in July, but only under restricted conditions. I was utterly bewildered. (Uncomprehendingly I said to myself, "So this is how you become Head Boy!")

There was neither a formal announcement justifying the choice of John's name (even in preference to the now-present, and 'more rehabilitated', Tim) nor why either name should have been deemed suitable for recording on the Board - in the light of everything we'd witnessed of AJ's reaction to their "serious misconduct".

It goes without saying that the boys of the time didn't begrudge the appearance of one of their names on the Honours Board. It was only the high-level hypocrisy and cold cynicism which left us gaping.

**That - for the young Michael Farr - was the 'Defining Moment' vis-à-vis Arthur Johnstone.....**

#### 1939-40: More roller-coaster lurches

In the Summer of 1939, with war threatening, contingency plans were made for the evacuation of Sibfordians whose homes were in potential bombing areas. Following the outbreak of World War II, on 3rd September, my brother John and I were among a number of urban dwellers who sped back to the safety of Sibford. That meant that many of us started the Autumn Term (albeit in a desultory manner) two weeks early. During that *Phoney Phortnight*, in parallel with the piecemeal return of students, some peculiar House and Sports team elections took place. The number of Nansen Boys was so sparse for example that I, then a 12-year old and just starting in Lower Third (but still the oldest present), was duly elected House Captain!

AJ used that 'window of opportunity' to make it known that there would be no Boy Prefects for the coming year - despite there being Girl Prefects as usual. I remember him telling us, in carefully chosen words, that firstly he was piqued by the behaviour of the previous year's duo and that, secondly, there was a dearth of senior boys "sufficiently worthy" to be appointed prefects - although they hadn't all arrived yet!

This latter was an unwarranted reflection on a perfectly decent cross-section of Sibford's young manhood. Among others they included Peter Yeoman, John Dumpleton, Douglas Carn, Jeffrey Chatin, Franz Rosen and Thurston Holmes.

That summer we'd already become accustomed to having no prefects - and here we were contemplating a further twelve months of the same! By then of course there was no confusion in my mind about Head Boys needing to be prefects, and everyone was speculating on how AJ would handle the situation a year hence, with no prefects' names to provide a token 'Head Boy' for the Honours Board.

In the event, the space on the board remained blank for a year; Ishbel Whitaker's name stood alone as Head Girl. We had to wait another year to see how the 'imbalance' between the Boys' and Girls' columns might be adjusted.



Arthur Johnstone.



John Osborne

#### 1940-42: Fudging records and so forth

This time around (from Autumn 1940) AJ appointed two boy prefects, Sidney Geering and Peter Yeoman (the latter had stayed on from the previous year, having been held back with sports injury complications) and - just as with John Osborne and Tim Pye - we saw them as equally ranked; neither was regarded as 'Head Boy-designate'. [Note also that the good Peter Yeoman had been among the senior boys passed over twelve months earlier - then being viewed by AJ as not meriting consideration!]

A year later - September 1941 - AJ did two interesting things. Firstly he had *both* prefects' names - Peter's and Sid's - tabulated together on the Honours Board (giving the misleading impression that the uppermost of them had been Head Boy in the previous year). Thus they remain to this day, bracketed together and ingeniously disguising the shortfall between the Boys' and Girls' columns.

Secondly he announced *in advance* (something new in my experience) the next Head Boy: Hugh Gibson with his attendant Prefect, John Wallis.

That partnership's year passed without incident - and of course we knew that Hugh's name would later go on the Board. [Re-capping the Time Slot to date: there had always been a two-boy partnership - except in that 'Long Fallow Year: Summer 39-Autumn 40' - but only this once had the Head Boy's name been announced in advance.]

#### 1942-43: My generation's turn

At the concluding Assembly of the 1942 Year, Paul Eddington and I took our places on the balcony in the old gymnasium, awaiting the naming of our final year's prefect-duo. We'd mulled over our colleagues' names and we had a fair idea of who the two might be. Naturally never in our wildest dreams had we - as well known reprobates - ever expected to be among the 'possibles'.

Once again though, AJ displayed his talent for springing surprises. This time he announced that the coming year's Prefect Team would be an innovative foursome, made up of Paul Eddington, Derek Gaffee and Geoffrey Winter, with myself - *gulp!* - as their Head Boy. [To this day I can feel that sickening thud in my solar plexus.]

I'd had a low sense of self-worth until then; I knew I was an indifferent scholar, a bit of a slouch (and cheeky with it) and an inveterate rule-breaker. If only my House Master, the revered Frank Parkin, (or even AJ himself) had sounded me out in advance, I might have been better prepared for this change in my fortunes - or I *could* have politely declined.

Obviously, aside from all other considerations, I had by this stage formed a very jaundiced view of the spurious 'honour' or 'distinction' associated with being one of Arthur Johnstone's chosen Head Boys/Prefects.

As I say, our generation was still clearly remembering how Sibford's boys had survived unscathed during a full year-plus (of Arthur's arbitrary choosing) without any prefects. It was generally accepted that prefects' duties were little more than ensuring that shoes were polished and that the young lads' hands were clean on entering the Dining Hall. Now here we were, in the Sibford of 1942, suddenly requiring not 'nil', not two, but four such bodies - and *inexplicably* led by Yours Truly. [If any readers happen also to have read my article in the 1996 Magazine, where I told a little of Paul Eddington's schooldays, they will understand why he and I had discounted

ourselves as potential prefects.]

To cut a long story short, at the halfway point in our final year (during the Spring '43 mid-term weekend) Paul and I found ourselves in deep discussion, over Sunday evening cocoa, with my opposite-number Head Girl, Alix MacSwiney, and another senior girl. We were concerned about the murmurings of discontent and downright jealousy among some senior colleagues (in fact, mainly boys) who, unlike ourselves, were obliged to adhere to the rules about confinement to campus in the evenings, prescribed bedtimes and suchlike.

I should point out that there were no 'black-out' curtains in the cheerless wartime Hill dormitories, meaning that nobody could possibly sit up and read in bed. Furthermore, the luxury of listening-in to a radio (even with headphones to avoid disturbing others) was utterly forbidden. They really did have some genuine gripes!

In contrast, prefects were free to turn in whenever they chose. We two in particular were enviously observed spending evenings in villagers' homes, and occasionally we even boldly joined one of the local day boys for a 'back-room bevvy' at the Blaize or Wykham Arms.

While thus cogitating, the solution suddenly struck me. I told my companions that first thing next morning I would inform AJ that I intended to stand down forthwith. I knew that if I opted to become one of the unprivileged many I would be demonstrating how little I rated the prefects' perks.

With the limited vocabulary of a sixteen-year-old, I tried to explain that it wasn't as if we had been elected by the student body. Mine wasn't a democratic appointment; I hadn't sought to be elevated in such a way, and - especially - I had no need to remind them of recent years' sleazy realities concerning the so-called 'Honours' Board. [This is where Paul's book quite innocently ascribed motives to me which were not wholly accurate.]

I'd not speculated on AJ's possible reaction, but when I saw him on Monday morning, he coolly replied to my stark words with: "Very well Michael, I will announce it at lunchtime." He didn't ask my reasons nor did he suggest that I might discuss things first with my House Master.

Paul and I next visited the Masters' Common Room where naturally those present, including the two seniors Frank Parkin and Roland Herbert, expressed disappointment at my news. Frank and Roland told us then how it had been they who, at a Staff Meeting, had urged a dubious AJ to expand the Prefect Team - from the customary two to four - in order that we two might be included among some already pencilled-in candidates; although how I came to lead the team remained a mystery!

I described my 'pacifying' intentions, concerning non-prefect seniors. I also tried (in my stumbling teenage way) to explain that the "honours", bestowed under Arthur Johnstone's headship, had become simply laughable in my eyes. They had lost serious credibility, they'd been debased to the level of 'counterfeit currency', of 'shop-soiled merchandise'; things I felt better not being associated with.

The younger masters hadn't experienced at first hand the events of 1938-41 - the events which had spawned my jaundiced views; consequently they were less able than their seniors to catch my drift. I believe though that Frank and Roland genuinely understood what I was trying to say; though naturally it would not have been 'good form' for them to show partiality.

AJ duly made his lunchtime announcement, but he just had to add two Johnstonian twists! He said that the boys' prefect team would be maintained at four, with the elevation of Peter Schindler, but he omitted to name a succeeding Head Boy, so the school was still left guessing! [For the record, the 'jealous murmurings' among senior boys ceased immediately, as I'd known they would! I soon realised though that for the remainder of my final year I was to receive AJ's *Tim Pye Treatment* - I was cold-shouldered almost as though I didn't

exist!] Indeed - because there were no term-time occasions requiring the formal identity of Head Pupils as such - it was not until the routine updating of the Honours Board in the Autumn of 1943, that all the School (excepting of course the now-departed senior pupils, including the four boy prefects) saw the name of 'Geoffrey Winter' signwritten as Sibford's Head Boy for the School Year just ended.

Possibly I am mistaken on this point but, as far as I have been able to ascertain, none of the July 1943 boy leavers (certainly not Paul or me) was ever informed of who among us had become Head Boy during the second half of our final year! I alone knew of the Autumn updating of the Honours Board because I happened then to be temporarily on Sibford's maintenance staff.

Naturally I kept my counsel, but it reinforced my conviction that, for Arthur Johnstone, anything required to cosmetically keep up appearances would always prevail over considerations of factual accuracy. He seemed not to care what the 'insiders' (i.e. pupils and staff) knew about any attendant duplicity - all that mattered was that the distasteful realities should be screened from the world at large.

#### Overview — any lessons to be learned?

To sum up: from my five years at Sibford, **four** of the Head Boys' names displayed on the Honours Board are (in some significant way) 'obscuring the truth'; the only pristine exception is that of Hugh Gibson in the year ended July 1942.

There must surely be a host of incidents, similar to those of 1939 and thereafter, which readers could recount from Sibford's past. After all, it has been a perfectly normal school with a typically human pupil body. But I doubt whether any other such incidents were so nearly contiguous, nor would they have led to history being fudged with that level of repeated obfuscation.

I believe that our Time Slot's succession of events would not have developed as crazily had Arthur Johnstone, back in 1939, not over-reacted so unthinkingly and *one sidedly* - to his boy prefects' quite minor transgression. So much else flowed from that - not least my own sense of injustice, which smouldered on until 1943.

In 1939 he should first have sought the counsel of staff, and properly weighed the implications of the girls' disciplining. In this connection it is believed that the strong minded Senior Mistress, Gladys Burgess, to her everlasting credit (heedless of AJ's lack of consultation), used her independent powers to ensure that the girl culprits would escape equally brutal treatment.

Across the years Arthur Johnstone's autocratic style and his repeated errors of judgement left him looking simply foolish. We can be thankful that in these enlightened times, with better external contacts via superb communications, not to mention child protection laws and an enlightened board of governors, such excesses would be unthinkable.

But at least mine is a cautionary tale. It shows how...

**"Power dements even more than it corrupts, lowering the guard of foresight and raising the haste of action."**

*Will and Ariel Durant*



## Postscript

After drafting this article I took the precaution of passing it around among some of the parties most involved (a) to ensure maximum accuracy on points of detail, dates etc, and (b) to obtain any further sidelights on matters generally.

In the latter respect Sid Geering came up with some additional details:

*“Two incidents stick in my mind about the Tim Pye/John Osborne expulsion and they are:-*

*Firstly, the night before they left, Roland Herbert was the master on duty and when he came to the Senior Dormitory, to see that we were all present, he made a short speech saying that he thought the expulsion was quite unjustified. He then walked over to Tim Pye, shook hands and said ‘Goodbye Tim’, and to John Osborne ‘Goodbye, Ossie’, and walked out. Everyone had a lump in his throat and some were actually crying.*

*Secondly, in AJ’s announcement to the school, he pronounced that no one should write to either of these boys. (What a stupid thing to say!). So straightaway Dick Eaves and I wrote to Tim [at home in Cornwall] and he wrote back. Now, the post was delivered to the Manor House and left on a table in the Hall where a senior girl in passing ‘just happened to notice’ a letter addressed to me, bearing a Truro postmark, and she told me about it. When two days had passed and no letter had been delivered to me, Dick and I went to the Masters’ Study and asked for it (we were not brave enough to go to AJ). They all looked extremely embarrassed and wanted to know how we knew about it. However, we stood our ground saying that we could write to whom we liked and they had no right to withhold our post. They meekly handed it over.*

*AJ never said a word.”*

John and Jean Osborne have also composed a footnote which, with its ‘balancing’ intent, I am also pleased to append.

*“Mike had the courtesy to show us the draft of this article, and we had a funny time endeavouring to drag up from our minds memories of nearly sixty years ago. Mike obviously feels strongly about what he sees as hypocrisy with regard to the Head Boys, but we are concerned not only with the selectivity of memory, both ours and the others he has contacted to dredge up the past, but also what he has selected from others to help make his case. We wonder also what we may have blocked out in our minds because our innocent midnight walks were so misinterpreted by adults that we were shocked by their suspicions.*

*A historical slot is certainly an interesting idea for the magazine, but we are not happy about the need to make such a negative statement over something so far in the past. For School Certificate — as GCSE was then — we studied Julius Caesar. Mark Antony’s speech at Caesar’s funeral has the words :-*

*‘The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones’*

*We all know that AJ was a peculiar man but we prefer to recall his good points. The Sunday Evening music - a forerunner of Classic FM? - was one bonus of his time, and there was no doubt that he was a good Maths teacher. The majority of us who were at Sibford have mainly happy memories of the School and the good members of staff, Roland Herbert, Frank Parkin and Barrie Naylor in particular. Surely we Old Scholars would not return as we do if we felt really badly about our time there. Living in the country was good for those of us who were town children and we must have accepted the foibles of AJ and MaJ in an uncritical way that would not happen nowadays.”*

My sincere thanks to the Osbornes for their thought-provoking contribution.

Many Old Scholars of the Johnstone era continue to love Sibford,

but some are less inclined than others to look back at their schooldays through rose-tinted spectacles.

I believe though that few among us would find argument with the words of Carl Jung:

**‘One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.’**

MDTF

## TIME SLOT: REMINISCENCES FROM 75 YEARS AGO – by Isabel Evens, at Sibford 1922–24

Compiled by Michael Grimes

Starting school at Sibford in 1922 was exciting for me. For the first time I was to have a school uniform, best dresses, new shoes, and special name tapes to be sewn onto each garment. Unfortunately a mistake was made and my initials were marked ‘N.J.’ instead of ‘I.M.’ Evens: this was a disappointment. However, shortly before the term began a friend asked if there was anything I needed for school and I said I needed a little bag with my initials on it. A few days later I had the joy of receiving a small leather suitcase with the initials ‘I.E.’ in black on one side. I was so proud, I walked up and down our short road so everyone could see how smart I was.

The day came, everything packed into the trunk and sent by ‘Luggage in Advance’, and I was taken to the station where I met several other boys and girls I already knew. Our destination was Banbury, where we were packed into a red “Midland Red” bus with a lot of excited children with strange accents.

On arrival at the honey-coloured village of Sibford Ferris we were unpacked from the bus and shown through an open door into a squarish Manor House. The headmaster, James Harrod, with his wife Mabel (a tall red-faced, dark-haired lady with pince-nez on her nose) greeted us with a welcoming hand-shake.

My first impression of this hurly-burly of excited children was the utter beauty and simplicity of the interior of the dining room. It was full of light, and the wooden staircases were scrubbed almost to whiteness.

To compare the food in School then and today, I wonder who fares best? Our vegetables and meat all came from the land around the school. Fresh milk was delivered twice a day, and for sweetening a brown coloured syrup in barrels that was impossible to buy in the shops. Everything was very scarce since the First World War ended.

Our first meal was at tea time, and we sat where we liked, filling up the four long tables. On each were solid blocks of margarine, plates of bread - one each end of ‘tack’ - and bowls of runny damson jam. I didn’t like damson jam, it was all stones, juice and skin, and I loathed margarine (in 1922 food was still scarce, and butter was a luxury. Most parents would melt margarine and butter together to make it less unpleasant to taste and easier to spread). There were also large china jugs of hot milk, or cold milk with skin floating on top: would I get fat on that? I was small for my age, 4ft 2ins high and 3 stone 11lbs in weight - some modern three year-olds are nearly as heavy. I soon was known as ‘Skinny Liz’.

Between tea and our bedtime we met in groups to hear which were our classes and classrooms, and where we had to hang our pinafores before and after meals (coloured ones for breakfast and dinner, and white ones for Sundays and tea time. These could be very attractive, many having crocheted yokes or coloured embroidery). Luckily, the children who had travelled with me were able to tell me in advance where the best desks could be claimed, and after meeting the head teachers we all rushed pell-mell to bag a good place. The older children nipped into my classroom and bagged all the window desks.

I ended up in the middle section of the front row. Later on I too got a window seat, and it was nice to be able to watch the village boys follow the cattle up and down through the village for milking and grazing.

By bedtime on the first day I was settled third bed down in a long dormitory of about twenty girls, ten on either side. It was found I was the smallest girl and not quite the youngest.

Down the centre of the lino covered floor was a row of pleasant shaped wooden cupboards - semi-detached and doubled, allowing a cupboard and a drawer for each child on both sides of the dormitory. Each iron bedstead had a chair beside it, and a handle-less chamber-pot underneath.

Down a short staircase was a bathroom surrounded with wash basins with brass taps which we had to clean once a week. There were four bath cubicles with linen curtains, and over the basins were cubby holes for our tooth-paste and brushes. Flannels and towels hung on a central stand. Round the corner were two staff water closets and, beyond, a senior girls dormitory.

Before we settled down for sleep Mrs Harrod came up to the dormitory with a wicker basket full of chunks of bread, suggesting we needed a piece to eat or we would be fainting before the morning. I took a piece of fresh white bread with crispy crusts, as I didn't want to faint! The bread was plain, with no butter - this was the first time I had eaten bread like that.

I had only been at Sibford for about six weeks when my small sister Rosalie died. I was called into the drawing room, where the blinds were half-mast, and Mrs Harrod told me the sad news. She then took me up to the nursery where May, the youngest of the Head's three children, had lessons from her parents. I stayed to tea with her. Having nursery tea was wonderful - the family always had a bowl of sieved apples, white bread and butter, probably cake as well, and to crown this meal was a tiny boiled bantam egg. Having butter and the delicious sieved fruit seemed civilised after pies coated with skins on the apples.

I was tearful and was given paper and pencil to write to my parents, and after finishing it my tears dried up. May and I went off together to post the letter, and she told me she was relieved when I stopped crying as she didn't know what she could do about it.

Later that evening after lights were out, and I was able to cry quietly into my pillow, Mrs Harrod crept into the dormitory and gave me a loving kiss goodnight. After that warmth and comfort I fell quickly asleep.

Apart from staying with grandparents in North Essex and the few holidays we had with my parents, I didn't know the countryside. Here it was high up and one could see as far as Stow-on-the-Wold. Thunderstorms were a magnificent sight, with forked lightning thrashing up across the sky. The School, in Sibford Ferris, was surrounded by agricultural land, fields of turnips and swedes, with a few woods dotted here and there as windbreaks. The colours of Autumn were a revelation, finding wild berries, apples and nuts. In one field we often went through stood a desolate cottage, known as the ghost house. It quickly got put back into use, with or without its ghost, when World War Two came.

The School stood on the corner of the main road at the turning to Burdrop, the middle hamlet of three: Sibford Gower, the third, boasted a pub and the large Friends Meeting House. In between the Gower and Sibford Ferris was a steep valley leading up to the back of the School.

On the other side of the road was a pair of cottages, one used by the school secretary and one as a 'San' for sick children, but this was rarely used. Beside the cottages and facing the schoolroom was the paddock full of fruit trees, with a little summer house half way up. The children went through this paddock to get to the gardens and playing field where hockey and football were played. It puzzles me that although Wednesday and Saturday afternoons were free, on

Wednesday afternoons we had compulsory games (I hated banging about with a hockey stick nearly as big as myself) and if the afternoon was 'free' how did it fit in with 'compulsory'? I was too young to rebel, and doubted if anyone would listen to me and see my point about freedom of choice.

Saturday afternoons was one of my hates. Senior boys and girls went off for a long walk with a master, and the juniors went with a mistress. It meant that the two lowest classes shared each others company, and some of the larger boys would tease and trip up the smaller girls. One boy who went for me was particularly odious: he was short, with a hook nose which had a boil on it. It always surprises me that boys who were so ugly and horrid at school could turn into lovable men when they grew up: he became kind and lovable, and was a much loved friend of mine.

At both the Friends Schools I went to, the staff were equally balanced between men and women. No doubt they had tensions, but I can honestly say that if they had, the children were never made conscious of them. This is part of the wonderful feeling of sharing life together so remarked on by outsiders. When writing about Sibford what I want to get across is the amazing feeling of solidarity and general happiness that existed amongst staff and pupils — it was like being members of a large family, where squabbles take place and soon fade out.

This doesn't mean that we were all little angels, we were a lively set of children having fun and games, teasing and even on occasions fighting. Loves and hates were roused and dealt with with limited punishments. Children were given monthly marks, good and bad, and if the standard was low for several week there would be no extra 'Merit Half', when the whole school would spend a day on a special outing. The boys and girls who had the most bad marks were known to the others, and might arouse a storm of protest.

The Merit Halves were welcome breaks in term. A great baking went on, making Cornish pasties for us to take on a long walk. We would go to places like the Rollright Stones, Edghill, and a lovely Tudor Mansion called Compton Wynyates which had a large garden in front with many topiary-shaped evergreens. It belonged to the Marquis of Northampton, who allowed us the privilege of visiting his home while disapproving of our headmaster for being a pacifist. The smallest group of children, who could not last out on such long walks, were taken with May in an old open Ford driven by the village haulier. To go in a car of whatever size always filled me with delight, as cars were rare in those days and public transport in country places was as bad as it is today.

On Saturday evenings we often had visiting travellers; missionaries home on leave, refugees, or a group of musicians. Two outstanding occasions I remember: one was the talk by a Mr Butler, who told us of Zamenhof who conceived the idea of an international language (as a result Sibford became the first school to teach Esperanto); another was when a Russian man and woman came to tell us about the Russian Revolution, and how they had managed to escape to Europe. When I first learnt to read, I would scan the Daily News and there were horrific pictures of hundreds of starving children lying about in crowds, due to in Europe and the Russian horrors of starvation.

One time a group of musicians came and played quartets to us. Marie Wilson was the young violinist, who later became the leading violinist in one of the large London orchestras.

Whitsuntide brought numbers of old scholars who stayed in cottages all round the village for the weekend. Extra cricket matches and



*Isabel Evens  
at Sibford 1922-1924*

country dancing took place and they would give us a comic concert. They could tell us tales of some of the things they got up to when they were at school, when Robert Oddie was headmaster.

On Sunday mornings we all walked over to Sibford Gower for Meeting for Worship. The smallest boy and the smallest girl (me) had to lead into the Meeting House, where the school sat on forms, in size order, facing the adults — the girls to the right and the boys to the left.

To the side of the Meeting, between adults and children, there used to sit Billy Reason. He was a rotund man, wearing a yellow waistcoat, who would occasionally give you a wink. His wife sat near, quite unsmiling. Visitors came from surrounding Meetings and I enjoyed watching the way they dressed, some sober and dark and others in brighter colours and diaphanous scarves. One elderly man frequently visited and usually spoke. He had an endearing kind of speech impediment and often got emotional, which was a change from the dissertations we sometimes got — Friends have a way of speaking to one's condition. This can sometimes twist and twirl you inside out as what they say makes you feel as they can see inside you, and know some of the things you disapprove of in yourself.

Our teachers were on the whole young and enthusiastic, but there were always days when my heart would sink — double maths ('Double Stinks') were my worst, and what relief it would have been if I could have feigned ill on those dreaded days. Unfortunately the staff had a good understanding of children, and anyone 'shamming blues' would be seen through quickly.

James Harrod had to spend most of his time in organising the teaching, and trying to make the School pay, which must have been a headache. His wife was really remarkable in her width of vision and her cleverness in presenting interesting subjects to children. She had a nervous tic of a sort of twitchy nose, but her warm humanity made up for it.

Then there was Roland Herbert, who had married a village lady and lived outside school. He taught woodwork and clay modelling, and he had a young sister in the senior school. I was interested in woodwork, but being so small I had to stand on a bit of wood to reach the top of the work bench. We had to learn how to do the drawings of that we were going to make. I think my first effort was a matchbox holder, or an iron stand. When I did start to use the tools, the jack plane was so long and heavy that it hurt my small hand. Woodwork was a very disheartening subject. Then the clay modelling class in a cold unheated room in winter was worse: trying to roll out cold clay was just an agony. Still, I was being trained to use my hands. These were freezing and so were my feet. Mr Herbert was a bouncy, friendly person, but rather blind to the aches and pains of small children.

Sydney Gibbon was a tall fair man just recently out of the army, and he could teach Art. His nickname was 'Cop', as he looked like a policeman when making a note on some list to read out to us. His classes were a treat and I found I could copy paintings quite well. Unfortunately when a male member of staff fell in love with a mistress one of them had to leave, and his temporary substitute seemed a queer neurotic person with a very different way of choosing to teach.

Best of all was Frank Parkin who lived up in the village in a fairly big house, where the most senior boys slept. He was a born teacher — his subjects were geography, history, gardening and beekeeping. He had a good plain speaking voice and loved teaching, and no-one ever played up in his classes. He suited the School admirably.

The domestic subjects lady, who got engaged to Sydney Gibbon, was an excellent teacher. She taught both boys and girls to cook. She also taught needlework - showing how the children could mend their clothing and how to dye beans to make into necklaces. She was full of ideas. Known as 'Sarcy', as she was often sarcastic in answer to our questions, she was a blonde, red-cheeked lady who wore Shetland jumpers for work, and lovely silk dresses for occasions.

In my first cookery lesson most of the time was taken up with general kitchen cleanliness: being taught how to scrub tables properly before being told how to scrub even-sized potatoes and put them to bake in the oven. When they were just cooked, we had to cut them in half and scrape out the centres into a bowl. Then the pulp was mashed with milk and butter and seasoned with salt, pepper and thyme. The warmth of the mashed potato with fresh thyme and butter made a most mouth-watering aroma - when I use thyme now I remember this lovely scent. The mashed potato was then put back into the skins and returned to finish off in the oven.

Miss Horton, a jolly old lady who was full of gusto, taught music. I had a good little singing voice and could sing at ease if required to do so.

We had Miss Lindsay for English, a small lady who had no idea how to keep order. Her classes were bedlam. Everyone talked to each other and some of the boys played her up outrageously. I was horrified watching the antics one boy got up to — I had no idea children could treat an adult so rudely. We learnt very little from her as the noise in her lessons was awful, though she knew her subject well. Mercifully she didn't seem disturbed by the interruptions. Later she went off to Australia — I hope she fared better there.

Then there was a housekeeper, and a Matron for both sexes. The Matron was a rather abruptly spoken lady who always sported a red cardigan and looked as if she wore a flat brown wig.

Over in Sibford Gower lived a pageant master in a beautiful Cotswold stone house, who kept fantail pigeons in his front garden. The fairy parts of *Midsummer Night's Dream* were to be acted at the end of one term in the Headmaster's garden, and he was invited to come and direct us. Mr Frank Lascelles was a massive, good looking white-haired man, and the way he put life into our acting was miraculous. Fairies came to life and fluttered and danced in front of Puck, which infected him to be playful. It must have been quite enchanting for the audience.

These were the people who made up the community. There are many of us from that period still living and I think all of us look back and are grateful for all we learnt in such simple, beautiful surroundings, with such warm hearted and friendly people.

Before leaving the subject of Sibford education in the 1920s, I must say that beyond the Paddock a whole new school has been built. The number of pupils is now is over 300. The school has advanced in its ability to meet the needs of dyslexic children, and far more emphasis is given to craft work. No more freezing clay modelling, but a real potter's wheel.

The motto for the Old Scholars Association - "Ye Menne of Sheepford, wendath whithersoever they wilen" - was taken from the Domesday Book and it expresses so much of what I feel for Sibford, and I have felt the values I gained there useful throughout my years.



## THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

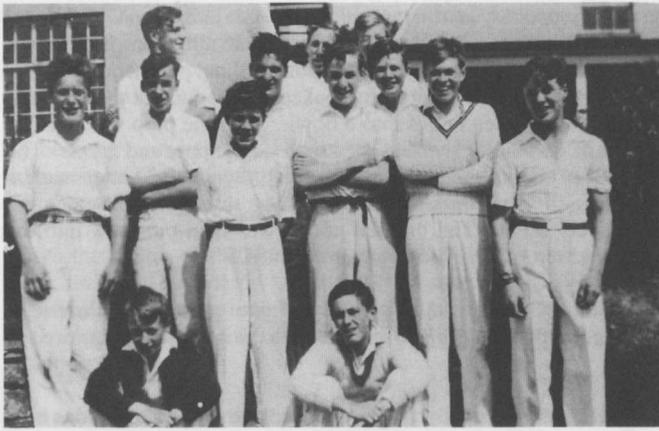
or

**"They who wendath withersoever they wilen"**

We have news of Old Scholars from near and far!

**Chris Phillips (1946-49) Writes from Australia.....**

"It came as something of a shock to realise that it is 50 years ago that I first attended Sibford School. Things must be so different now but I must say that I look back with a great sense of nostalgia and a lot of memories come flooding back.



*Sibford School, 1st XI Cricket Team, June 1949. Back row l. to r. Terry Cemm, David Beedham (Sports Master) and Harry Green (both half hidden). Middle row l to r. Colin Johnson, Bryan Ward, Chris Phillips, Michael Baker, Alun Edwards, Robin Webb, Michael Sarjeant and Geoff Reynolds. Front row sitting l to r. Gordon Richmond (Scorer) and Tony Burgess.*

"I was not very academic and so I prefer to gloss over those less-than-adequate results in the classroom, particularly the French lessons under the tutelage of Jessie Johnstone or "Ma J" as she was known to us. However, I always had a great respect for Roland Herbert who introduced me to the world of woodworking and I suppose ultimately launched me into a career in building and carpentry. The other great influence on me was Arnold Darlington who managed with some success to teach me the rudiments of science. He always seemed so enthusiastic and the extra-curricular activities he organised, in which we all became involved from filming sea-birds and tracking the migration of the Redwing, to recording weather patterns and bee-keeping. Certainly a brilliant and enquiring mind that was really wasted on the likes of a small boy such as myself.

"Sibford to me was not a strictly scholastic environment and I have happy memories of the annual pilgrimage to Whichford Woods and helping to harvest the hay from the playing-fields with Joe Canning during the summer evenings before bed. Freedom was always a great feature of the School and the weekends, apart from the compulsory letters home, were a great time to go exploring the countryside and perhaps visit Theodore Lamb, a recluse who lived in a home-made shelter of branches and corrugated iron which we visited with some trepidation as he never spoke and had a sign outside his dwelling on the Shipston road saying *trespassers would be shot!* He was an object of great fascination as we could never understand how he fed himself or indeed managed to survive at all.

"My first image of the School was the dormitory (*The East facing Littleboy wing, now demolished.*) above the playground (*Now the courtyard*) at the Manor with all the bright red blankets and Matron (*Marjorie Simmons*) presiding over us in her firm no-nonsense way. The playground was the scene of many football matches and enthusiasm often overcame skill with the ball often ending up on the flat roof above the girls' dormitories. The only way to retrieve the ball was to climb the fire escape and then 'shin-up' the lightning conductor attached to the chimney at the back of the Manor! I remember inching my way along the ridge of the roof and being 'sprung' by Matron who on this occasion didn't report me to 'A.J.' (*Arthur Johnstone*) The 'yard' was also the place where we roller-skated and queued for our chocolate ration and made 'slides' on the ice in the cold winter months.

"The swimming-pool was a place of great entertainment for me too, as I always loved the water. We never wore costumes in those days but this enjoyment was tempered somewhat one day when the girls in my class informed me that there was a great view of the top diving-board from the window of their dormitory! The swimming-pool also has another unforgotten recollection for me, as behind it, with great aplomb, I kissed my first girl-friend. This happened after dark at great risk to us both but I fear with very little technique - no names, no pack drill!

"I have lived in Australia for the past 30 years but would love to return and renew my acquaintance with the place that brought me much happiness, but sadly there is little chance of making the trip in the foreseeable future but perhaps, after such a long absence, I would be disappointed although I know that great progress has been made in so many areas. It is just that the ghosts of my youth would no longer be there and perhaps that would be sad. Nevertheless, I would be very interested to hear from anyone who cares to write or, even better, if anyone plans to make a trip 'down under,' I live in a beautiful part of Queensland on the Sunshine coast about an hour north of Brisbane, and I'd be pleased to see you."

**Janet Winn (née Savage) (1949-53)** who also lives in Australia writes "Please give my best wishes to everyone who remembers me and to all my age bracket who are turning sixty this year - happy birthday! For those who are retiring and who are travelling the world I hope they look us up when they arrive in Perth. Now that our son and daughter have left home we have plenty of room!

"It was great last year to have **Maggie Boaden (née Samuel)** and her husband Pat over here and to catch up on School and family talk.

"My husband and I came over to England last year for my mother's 90th birthday. I'm sorry we didn't get to Sibford but time just disappeared catching up on our relatives from both our families.

"John and I have both retired so we are both catching up on hobbies that we never had time for — walking, picture-framing and wood carving classes. I'm sure Reg Rowntree, if he were alive today, would be surprised after my efforts of trying to make a tea-pot stand at School. It finished up very small after trying to get every side equal!

"Perth is a lovely place to visit. I still keep in touch with **Jenny Wilson (née Lamb)** after locating her, but we haven't got around to meeting up as yet.

"I do hope that the May Reunion was successful. I was thinking of you all."

**Hugh Gibson (1937-42)** sends greetings to all who know him and hopes that "you all had an excellent Reunion in May."

**Hilary Mills (née Naylor) (1950-55)** has recently revived her membership and sends greetings to all her contemporaries

**Douglas Carn (1934-40)** has written and sends his greetings.

**Grace Allan (1942-45 Ex Staff)** writes "I thought I would acknowledge the Magazine (1996) received today (10/12/96) - it is giving me much pleasure."

**Joy Mangan (née Morland)** who taught Home Economics during the Johnstone period, and is also a former pupil (1923-25), writes with good wishes and happy memories of her times at Sibford.

**John Saunderson (1939-45)** writes "Although I have not visited Sibford for many years, I still enjoy receiving the magazine and keeping in touch with one or two of my contemporaries at School."

**Nick Towey (1977-82)** extends his best wishes and hopes that Sibford prospers.

Our old friend **Simon Everest (1972-77)** writes from the United Arab Emirates "I left Mars (not the planet!) a year ago to join Coca Cola here in the Emirates - what a contrast to Saudi Arabia - freedom! Both my wife Sharon and myself are fully occupied looking after Stephen (3) and Georgina (18 months). It is years since I have been back to Sibford, mainly because my holiday doesn't usually coincide with SOSA events. Hopefully we SHALL make it before too long." (Ed. Amen to that, Simon!)

**Margaret Masters (née Moore) (1920-22)** writes "Thank you for the most interesting 'Book of the year' again. I did recognise a few of the names of those Old Scholars on the group photograph but couldn't find anyone of them! We all look so different these days -

wearing specs for one thing and mostly white-haired, though I am not white yet! "

**Graeme Sagar (1970-90 Ex Staff)** sends his best wishes to all who remember him and hopes that the May Reunion was a great success.

We also have news of **Edgar Winstanley** who was at Sibford during the seventies and recently wrote to **Stuart and Yvonne Hedley**. "I got married to **Marion** in 1982 and we have four children, all boys named **Adam, Jason, Neil and Ian!** I work as a landscape gardener at a large garden centre in **Brentwood**."

**June Bell (née Baily) (1939-41)** writes that she and **Patrick** have retired from their small hotel and property business in the Lake District. They are living in Cornwall and June would welcome visits from old school friends.

**Norman Smith (1935-38)** writes from Australia to say that he always welcomes the Sibford Magazine, that he keeps in touch with a number of contemporaries and that he hopes to make it some time soon to a SOSA Reunion. [Please don't delay too long, Norman. I was just a newcomer when you departed in '38, but I remember you with affection - Mike F. Ed.]

**Basil Franey**, a wartime contemporary of your Editor (and sundry other wrinklies), now lives in Canada. He was last seen at the 1984 Reunion but has recently re-established contact, while donating some most welcome archival photographs. He has re-joined SOSA. (We're looking forward to seeing you Basil!)

**Mavis Stiles (née Mutch) (1946-49)** was in touch with your Editor in October. Busy as usual and active with SOSA, but currently suffering from two painfully-broken toes. Take care Mavis and get well soon.

**Hugh and Daphne Maw** were unable to join us at the Spring Reunion. They were in Berlin as Guests of Honour at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the ex-members of the Youth Centre, which was set up with FRS assistance in 1947. They sent greetings to all Old Scholars.

Your Editor, Mike Farr, has received a letter from our good friend **Mick Canning**, who writes... "Just a note to thank you for the 1996 magazine and to say how much I appreciated the Paul Eddington tribute.

"The events which you recall from so long ago are just as I remember them and it is a pity that my Mum and Dad, and our much-missed Josie, are no longer here to share your reminiscences. We all had a soft spot for you and Paul.

"Every good wish to you, Mike, and to my many Sibford School friends."

#### **MAGGIE VELLA, (NÉE SMITH), (1946-53) REPORTS FROM VANCOUVER IN CANADA, ON HER INTERNATIONAL ROUND-UP OF CONTEMPORARIES**

One group of Old Scholars held a "mini-reunion" around Easter 1997, to celebrate their respective 60th birthdays. My husband presented me with a plane ticket to go to Kenya (and back home!) to enable me to visit "best friend from school" **Mary Nicholas (née Lewis)**.

I had spent the Easter weekend of 1957 in Bristol with twins **Grace and Mary Lewis**, before I emigrated to Canada, and Mary to Kenya. In the forty years which have passed since then, I had managed to see Mary for 24 hours when I was in Africa on business in February 1985, and the instant success of that brief encounter led me to long for more. The 60th birthday celebration seemed an appropriate moment and so in early March I headed for Nairobi, where Mary, having raised her own four children (all Sibford O.S.) to adulthood, is now housekeeping and family managing for her elder son's brother-in-law, whose young wife died very suddenly, leaving him with three school-aged children. Of these, both boys are at boarding school, the elder one in Scotland and the younger in Kenya, while the 14-



*David Nicholas, Maggie Vella, Mary Lewis Nicholas, Grace Lewis, Easter Saturday 1997, Bristol.*

year-old daughter attends a local day school. Unfortunately, this meant that Mary herself was rather tied to home! except at weekends. Son David was working in Nairobi and was also able to help drive me around, most notably on a marvellous game-viewing drive through the local National Park.

I had a wonderful time, doing day trips during the week and a longer drive at a weekend, crossing the Equator to spend the night with good friends of Mary's just north of Mt. Kenya, which is the second highest mountain in Africa (after Kilimanjaro, Tanzania). The rains were seriously overdue, and forest fires were burning out of control on the Aberdare Mountains, which we could see in the distance from the road, and on Mt. Kenya itself.

I also flew to the Masai Mara and ventured up in a hot air balloon, which was a truly magical experience. Unfortunately, the prevailing wind was such that we had to come down prematurely, with a pretty hard bump, because we were about to be blown across the border into Tanzania, and the Tanzanian authorities apparently do not look kindly on this sort of impromptu intrusion! Next time I shall go ballooning from a base further inside Kenya.

After that, I flew down to the coast, and was made very welcome by the other three Nicholas offspring, Julie and Barry (Tatton) in Mombasa, and "J-J" and his wife "Titch" nearby, as well as Tina and Charlie (Harris) further up the coast at Watamu, where I swam in the Indian Ocean, and visited the 15th century ruins at Gedi.

For those O.S. who know the Nicholas family, all are doing well. J-J is working for a German millionaire for whom he is to build and run a factory manufacturing automotive parts, and is learning to fly his boss's private plane. Julie is working for a Swiss firm, training hotel kitchen staff to meet EEC standards of hygiene, and David was about to start a new job with a tourist lodge that operates ox-cart safaris. I can testify to his skill as a safari guide. Tina's husband Charlie is highly active in the East African Bill-fish Tag and Release Programme, and she helps him with that.

With the start of the school Easter holidays, Mary and I flew together to England and took the coach to Bristol, where a major open-house party was held in the family home on Easter Saturday. We had a telephone call from Ruth Aldworth (née Lizzie Jones) and subsequently, Grace and Mary were able to see Myrtle Gardner. No doubt many of our class-mates will also be celebrating their 60th in 1997, and we hope all of them have a great time too.

#### **THE MARRIAGE OF HARRIET JONES**

On 20th July 1996 Harriet Jones (who left in 1980) married Terry Langridge at Aldershot Registry Office. Harriet and Terry had an unconventional conventional wedding as they both were married in their jeans (something she always said she would do) and had their reception at home, with a large marquee in their garden where they had 70 guests They honeymooned in Texas. We send them our best wishes and wish them every future happiness together.

## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

It is with much pleasure that we are able to announce in these pages that Honorary Life Membership was bestowed upon Philip Manasseh at the May Annual General Meeting amidst general acclaim for his outstanding service to both SOSA and the School.



*Our new Honorary Life Member, Philip Manasseh and his wife Janet chatting with this year's President Philip Morris (left).*

## GEOFFREY LONG BOOK PRIZE

The Geoffrey Long Prize is awarded annually by SOSA — in the form of a £25 book token — to the pupil whose literary contribution to the Magazine is adjudged by our President to have been the most deserving of recognition.

*Philip Morris, our 1996/97 President, writes:*

"It has been a difficult task this year as many of the reports and items in the literature section are of interesting quality and I must have read them all several times.

"My second choice, as runner up, is Hazel Bell for her appreciative report on the Fox Trot. This had obviously meant a great deal to her. Thank you Hazel for a fluid piece of writing.

"The winner, for me, is Malcolm Smith for SPACE in which he shows a fertile imagination, resourcefulness, the ability to occupy himself creatively and to express all this in a short poem. I lived his vision."

Hazel's and Malcolm's works are to be found on pages 32 and 36 of the 1995-96 Sibford Magazine, together with an encouraging volume of excellent school contributions.

## BRANCH ACTIVITIES

Our regional branches have been particularly active and the following are their most up-to-date news.

### London Branch

*Joint Secretaries Chris and Pat Grimes*

Pat Grimes reported at our May AGM: "Currently there are 30 members, 25 of whom have paid their £1 subscriptions for the year. The Branch's policy is to send notice of events only to people who bother to reply and who pay the annual subscription to cover postage.

"The Secretaries' policy in future will be to recruit interested new members through the magazine and by word of mouth rather than to chase up everyone living in the London area.

"So far this year the Branch has held two events and is hoping to arrange two more.

"The first event was way back at the beginning of December when the joint secretaries welcomed the London Branch to an Advent Gathering at their home in St. Albans. 13 Old Scholars gathered for



*John Watson, Mike van Blankenstein, Pat Grimes, Peter Wain, Chris Grimes, Arthur Harrison, Philippa Harrison, Pamela Harrison (& dog), Tim Wardle. In front, Mary Watson. Photo taken by Pat Parsons who led the walk. Mavis Stiles was also present and busy with a camera.*

a walk in Verulanium Park followed by a buffet lunch and a couple of party games. One game contributed by Helen Doyle produced a great deal of hilarity. The joint secretaries had a good time and, judging by comments afterwards, everyone else enjoyed it too.

"Their next venture was also very successful and much appreciated, at least by the joint secretaries. They had a pub lunch followed by a 3-4 mile stroll in the Chess valley. This took place in mid April and was led by Pat Parsons who is a keen walker with an interest in botany. I met for lunch at the Bedford Arms in Chenies and one more joined for the walk afterwards. It was a dry, sunny day with a very cold wind but that didn't prevent them from stopping at a farm shop en route for speciality ice creams. It was a lovely area to walk in with beautiful views and lots to see if not in too great a hurry."

Pat and Chris have updated with a September report as follows: "London Branch had a summer Picnic in the grounds of Capel Manor Horticultural College, Enfield. We chose a beautiful day in July for 11 London Branch members to meet for a picnic lunch together, then we spent a very enjoyable afternoon exploring the grounds and the 50 or more gardens of Capel Manor. We are hoping to arrange a museum visit in London this autumn - no date yet. Anyone interested can contact us for details on 01727-850521."

### Midland Branch

*By Hilary Haddleton - Branch Secretary*

The Annual New Year gathering was held at Selly Oak Meeting House on January 25th, when some 37 Old Scholars enjoyed a buffet lunch, a short quiz and plenty of chatter, finishing with Rockets.

On 12th July, 20 of us gathered at Queenswood Country Park for a picnic lunch. Jack Simpson then led a walk through the woods to a magnificent Look Out. After, we drove to the home of Jack and Monica Simpson for tea and a wonderful variety of cakes and malt bread. Prior to this some of us walked through the fields and along the river close to the Simpsons' home. It was a fine sunny day and we all enjoyed ourselves.

The 1998 New Year gathering will be on Saturday, January 31st at 12.30pm at Selly Oak Meeting House, Bristol Road, Birmingham. Any member who does not get an invitation should get in touch with me.

### South West Group

*Contributed by E Jeanne Southam*

When the South West Group heard that the School Committee had appointed a woman then teaching at Colston Girls School in Bristol as Sibford's next Head, they thought it would be appropriate and pleasant to invite her to lunch with them.

This they did in July 1996, but such was the business of Sue Freestone, and the state of her commitments, that it wasn't until October 1996 that she was able to join the Group for lunch. Then ten members of the Group came together at the home of Jeanne Southam.

After a most enjoyable introduction and lunch Sue had to leave early for a musical commitment. She left behind 10 very impressed Old Sibfordians who were all taken with her constructive and positive approach to education, and by how much she had taken on board about Sibford in just four months. She was particularly pleased and interested to meet Barrie and Sheila Naylor who had both taught at Sibford in the past. The Group wished her all possible success in her new undertaking and felt that they had been honoured by having such an early opportunity to meet her.

The South West Group decided that, with the Annual SOSA Reunion moved from the August Bank Holiday weekend to May (we traditionalists still call it 'Whitsun'), it would be a good idea to meet at the first August Bank Holiday occasion not set aside for our Annual Reunion in many years.

As a result 15 members of the Group, with their relatives, met at Frenchay Meeting House in Bristol in time for Meeting for Worship. This was followed by a picnic (unfortunately not in the garden due to the weather) and a Treasure Hunt-style drive to the Nailsea home of Jeanne Southam. The drive took them 10 miles from the centre of Bristol, collecting answers to the questions cleverly set by Roger Angerson. All could be answered without getting out of the car. After a lively tea on the veranda (the weather had cleared) the Group departed homewards having enjoyed another social gathering.

***We list below details of Old Scholars and friends who have passed on since the last magazine was published:***

ROSEMARY BAKER (née Hill) Rosemary, who was at Sibford between 1939 and 1943, died on 19th December 1996 aged 69. She was a member of Street Meeting in Somerset and a memorial service was held there on 31st December 1996.

ELSIE MAUD BAYLY Aged 87, who lived for most of her life on the Isle of Wight, died peacefully on 6th February 1997. She was at Sibford between 1917 and 1920.

IVY HOBBS (née Rose) who was perhaps better known to some as *Miki Hobbs*, died earlier this year aged 84. She was at School in the Harrod period following her three brothers Alister, Stuart and Ronald.

CELIA LAW, who was a Life Member of SOSA, died early last year on 1st February 1996. (*Unfortunately, due to an oversight, news of her death was not recorded at the 1996 AGM*)

Celia was a former President, having held that office during 1957-58. Although an Old Scholar 'by marriage' she was nevertheless a devoted supporter and will be affectionately remembered by the post-war generation of Old Scholars when she looked after catering at SOSA Reunions. Her husband George Law, who died some years ago was also a former President and much loved OS and her surviving daughter Sally Clayton is also a member of SOSA and an OS.

FLORENCE LISSAMAN, who lived for many years with her sister Hilda at Rose Cottage in Sibford Ferris, died on 26th August 1997. She was a Sibford pupil between 1917 and 1920.

ALAN LITTLE died on 9th January 1997 after a long illness, aged 71. He was a loyal supporter of the Midland Branch and will be remembered by many for his sense of fun and his enjoyment of life. He was one of the great SOSA stalwarts at many a Reunion entertainment during the forties and fifties. His wife Jeanne (née Darling) is also a well known Old Scholar, and to her and her family we extend our sincere condolences.

ELIZABETH MORLAND. It was announced in 'The Friend' that Elizabeth Morland had died on 1st November 1997. She was at Sibford between 1925 and 1926 and was a Life Member of SOSA.

We also received news that one of our oldest surviving members, ELIZABETH PRITCHARD, had died peacefully on 30th December 1996 at Selly Wood Nursing Home in Birmingham. Elizabeth, who was a contemporary and friend of Godfrey Baseley, was at Sibford between 1917 and 1920 and was a Life Member of SOSA.

BETTY THELTON (née Swann). Just as this magazine was going to press we heard the sad news that Betty Thelton had died on 4th November 1997, aged 87. She was at Sibford between 1920 and 1924 and was also a Life Member of SOSA. Betty was a much loved figure and will be remembered with affection for her life-time support of the School and of SOSA. She was President of the Association in 1965. Our heartfelt condolences go out to John, Jim and all their family.

## FIFTY YEARS AGO – 1947

In the last edition of the magazine we featured a scrapbook for 1946, compiled by Mike Finch. This has proved to be such a popular contribution, we have asked Mike to produce a scrapbook for 1947.... Here it is.

### PEACE WORK

It may not be generally known to our readers, but in 1947 the Quakers were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Peace prize committee had noted "*anyone who has participated actively in peace work knows that the Society of Friends can be seen in a way as the oldest peace organisation in the world. This proposal can be brought at any time as Quakers are consistently involved in peace work.*"

The Chairman in his award speech said "It is through the silent assistance from the nameless to the nameless that (Quakers) have worked to promote fraternity between nations. Quaker efforts were directed towards restoring people's confidence in life and giving them something to hope for."

In their acceptance speech for Friends all around the world, Henry Cadbury of American Friends Service Committee and Margaret Backhouse of (British and Irish) Friends Service Council, said, "Simple plain men and women like a few thousand Quakers and their friends, if they devote themselves to resolute insistence on goodwill in place of force, even in the face of great disaster past or threatened, can do something to build a better, peaceful world. The future hopes of peace lie with such personal sacrificial service. To this ideal humble persons everywhere can contribute."

### THE BIG FREEZE

*The outstanding memory for many Sibfordians of the 1947 era was the arctic weather conditions that gave Britain one of its worst winters on record. Some contemporaries of that time recall their personal memories:*

*David Haines writes.....*My memory of the 1947 snow was primarily a feeling of being doubly isolated from civilisation. Rumours abounded that bread had to be dropped by parachute, but I personally never saw the descent of any loaves from the skies. Yet isolation had a major advantage. It made impossible the carrier's weekly delivery of our strangely inedible fish. Oh, the relief at not seeing those two dirty wooden boxes arriving and being dumped in the Archway (horrible liquid oozing from the corners)!

*Martin Dodson continues.....*While David Haines was out on parachute watch, boys from the 4th and 5th forms (*Years 10 and 11 to the uninitiated!*) were asked to make up a bread-collecting expedition to the bakers at Epwell (I think). We walked along lanes piled right across with snow to hedge height, but I do not recollect that we floundered in deep snow - perhaps it had thawed a little and frozen again to make a strong crust. There were no heroics: I think we rather enjoyed the excursion.

I have no difficulty in remembering that this dramatic snowfall took place in early March, for I woke up on the 6th, my fifteenth birthday, to discover that the mail could not get through from Banbury. The lack of cards did not bother me, but the delay in delivery of my birthday cake, concocted by my loving mother from scarce ingredients, most certainly did. For the next few days I eagerly followed the progress of the road-clearing operation. The ploughs reached Broughton, then Tadmerton, then Swalcliffe and finally, about a week late, the cake arrived, a little dry for the unplanned hold-up, but nonetheless welcome. I would like to think that I shared some of it but that memory is ominously blank!

*Janet Sewell (née Eavis) remembers.....*The long winter of 1947 did not begin until February - it was cold but I don't remember suffering more than usual at Sibford!

We were cut off from Banbury for at least a week but since we never went to Banbury the only consequence was no post from home. As



*Posing in the snow of 1947! 1 to r, David Haines, Alan Wragg, Achim Litteck and Noel Crabtree. (Are they really smoking!)*

Martin says, most of the boys had to walk to Epwell to get the bread, carrying every available rucksack led no doubt by able-bodied masters. We helped dig out the farm just past the Elm on a games afternoon. We didn't play hockey for weeks.

The hedges froze over and tobogganing in Oddie's Field was a great activity. Did we go to Meeting in the Gower? I can't remember but others may do so.

*And finally from Australia, Chris Phillips recalls.....*I remember the snow during the 1947 winter when the whole School was cut-off and the heating broke down. I remember walking down the main road to Banbury level with the wires on the telegraph poles and tobogganing down the hill at the back of the Manor. I don't know why but my favourite meals were breakfast, when 'bread and milk' was on the menu and at supper when bread and dripping helped to keep out the cold.

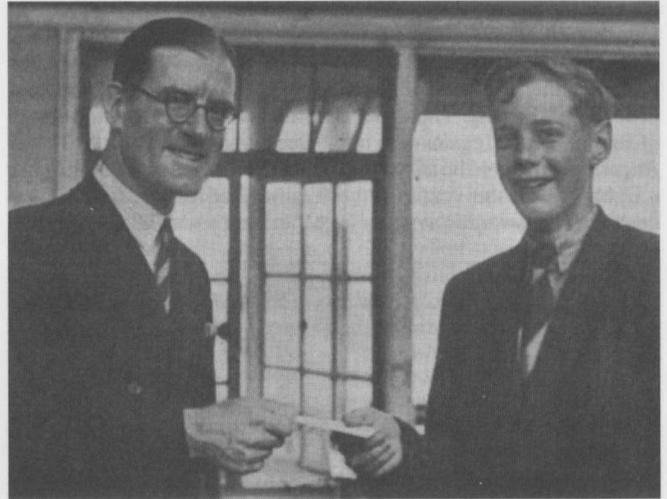


*Holly House Farmyard - Summer 1947. Among those identified are Arnold Darlington (third in from left) and Alice Litman ( by door at rear).*

### THE MABEL HARROD BURSARY FUND

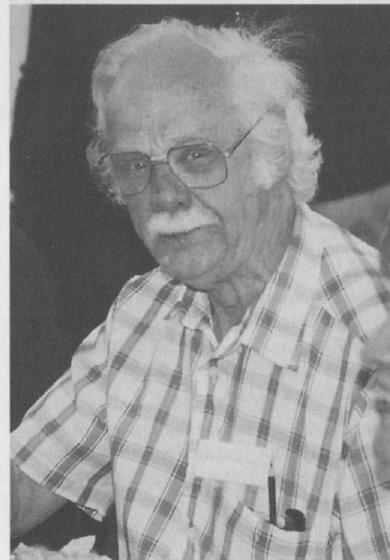
This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration of the Mabel Harrod Bursary Fund, which was raised in memory of the much loved Mabel Harrod who, with her husband James Harrod, superintended the Sibford community for a quarter of a century.

The first recipient of the fund was Martin Dodson, then aged fifteen, who was awarded £25 to help him visit France and Switzerland. Leslie Baily, SOSA's President in 1947 said at the presentation "The Harrods had the gift of friendliness but this was not only inside the School community — they inspired their scholars with the idea of how friendliness could reach out from this School to the world around. This idea - or ideal - imbued us with an international outlook which has coloured our lives. What an inspiration it was to those of us who were here during and just after the First World War.



*Leslie Baily (left), President 1946-47 presenting Martin Dodson with a cheque for £25 at the Annual General Meeting 1947 – the first recipient of a Mabel Harrod Bursary.*

"Mabel Harrod was not only an idealist," he continued, "she was also an eminently practical person. She seized upon the great idea of the League of Nations, seeing in it a practical application of her belief in international brotherhood. Unluckily for us the politicians of the world did not handle President Wilson's great conception of world government at all practically. They blotted-out Wilson's idealism in a fog of intrigue. But for Mabel Harrod the failure of the League did not mean the failure of the ideal - nor did it to Frank Parkin, who also worked so keenly for the international ideal at Sibford and who inaugurated the Mabel Harrod Fund. It became part of the very fabric of a Sibford education and part of the Sibford tradition.



"We Old Scholars are the bearers of that tradition," said Leslie Baily. "It is therefore fitting that the Mabel Harrod Fund, which springs from the very spirit and tradition of Sibford, should be sponsored by the SOSA."

*Martin Dodson at the 1997 Reunion.*

**Mr Johnstone's 1947 Notebook!**

Here are a few jottings.....

*The new art mistress this year is Miss Audrey Farthing. In the School Certificate, 27 out of 29 boys and girls entered were successful. In the various examinations of the Royal Life Saving Society, 50 boys and girls passed at different stages. Among the various awards were one Silver, two Instructors, twenty Bronze and fifteen Bar to Bronze and Bronze cross.*

*In July we received a gift of 150 books for the library from Joseph and Beatrice Gillett, of Banbury. Holmby House is gradually being altered and we hope to enter it in January. The two new houses built in the J.B.Braithwaite field (Now the Piece) are being occupied by the new head gardener, Kenneth Eyden and some mistresses and girls.*

*During the bird ringing season (October to July), 909 birds of 34 different species were ringed. The species included Kestrels, Sparrow-hawks and Owls. Also, our boys and girls gave valuable help in the Swift census during the Summer term and the census of Redwings migrating in the Autumn term.*

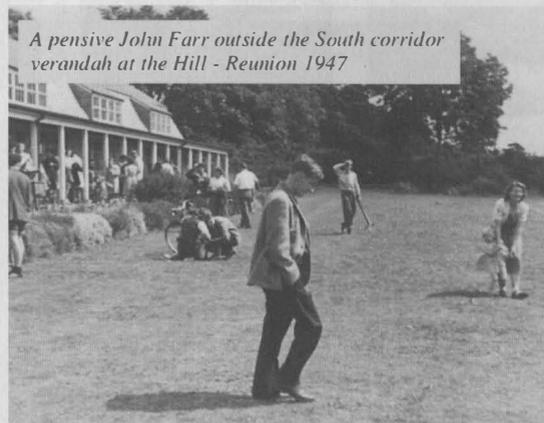
*The 'Archway' was a great success and the first issue of 400 copies was sold out in less than a week.*

*During the last academic year we had twenty-one weekend or Sunday visitors, nine concerts, seven lectures and six entertainments.*

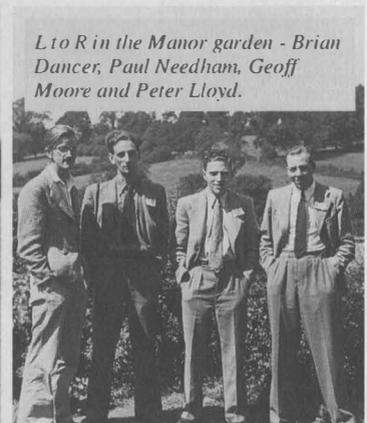
*Water has now been laid on to the Hill from the village supply and we pump from Hill Bottom now only when we are filling the swimming bath. - A.J.*



Field sports outside the verandah at the Hill - Reunion 1947.



A pensive John Farr outside the South corridor verandah at the Hill - Reunion 1947



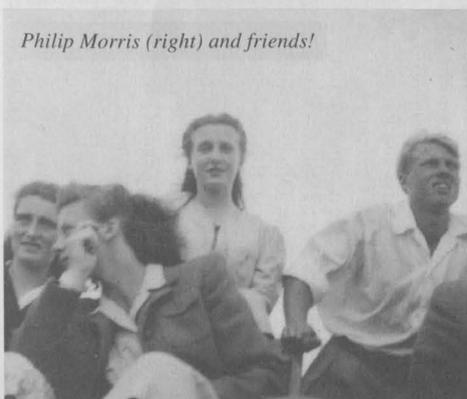
L to R in the Manor garden - Brian Dancer, Paul Needham, Geoff Moore and Peter Lloyd.



The relay race - August Reunion 1947.



Thurston Holmes's jeep and trailer prepare for the Motor Rally - Reunion 1947.



Philip Morris (right) and friends!



The Reunion picnic at Whichford Woods.

(1947 photos kindly supplied by Otto Wolf and Basil Franey - Ed.)



## AMONGST THOSE AT THE AUGUST REUNION 1947 WERE:

Dorothy and Wilf Angerson; Kenneth and Naomi Alexander; Valerie Atkinson; Bernard and Rosa Aylward; Joan Anderton; Erle Bizzell; Grace Bunker; George and Edith Bond; Jim, Elin, Jimmy, Peter and Roger Baily; Leslie, Margaret, June and John Baily; Daniel Butler; Aileen Bowmer; Grace, Philip and Jonty Beckerlegge; Doris and Reginald Barrett; Hans Burg (*Later Sir John Burgh*); Michael and Louis van Blankenstein; Morland Braithwaite; Brian Bartlett; Margaret Buckley; Raymond Baseley; Reg and Vera Barber; Dorothy Bishop; James Boyce; Leslie Carn; Joan and Geoffrey Collins; Leslie Cross; Miriam Carter; Sheila and Pat Chuter; Irene, John and Christine Coxon; John Canham; Jeanne Cottrell; Roy Cheshire; Joe and Josie Canning; Janet and Mildred Chattin; Jeanne Darling; John and Bessie Dearden; Len Dyble; Mary Davidson; Olive, Herbert and Grenville Dalley; Stan Ewan; June Edwards; Ralph and John Edwards; Basil Franey; Alec Fieber; Priscilla Flinn; Peter Fielden; John and Michael Farr; Alix Feist; Betty and Gill Friend; Mary French; Maurice Gardener; Rainer Guillery; Eric, Gulie, Christopher and Diana Grimes; Hugh Gibson; Nellie Grayland; Lionel, Edith and Sidney Geering; Alice, Fred and Wilfred Green; Dorcas Harris; John Hicks; James T. Harrod; Alfred Holland; John Hughes; Patricia Harvey-Lee; Brian Hooper; Leslie Harrison; Roland, Eva, John, Edith and Ina Herbert; Margaret and Norman Hargraves;

Linda, Martin and Thurston Holmes; Harry Iles; Hilda Jenks; Edward P. Kaye; Bettina Laughton; David Laity; Geoffrey, Alice, Judith and Tom Long; Hilda and Florence Lissaman; Peter Lloyd; George and Sally Law; Chris and Alan Little; Henry and Kingsley Lawrance; Hazel Lake; John Lynch; Bernard, Edith and Jennifer Lamb; R.H., Lucy and Philip Morris; Jean, Victor and John Mills; Geoffrey Moore; Tony Manasseh; Lorna Manton; Helena Nott; Paul Needham; Neville Nicholls; Dick and Hazel Neal; Barrie, Sheila, Judith and Peter Naylor; Ruth Osborne; Hilda and Janet Parkin; Janet, John and Ruth Parsons; Phyllis and Idris Payne; Wilfrid and Tony Pollard; Roger Pattison; Reg and Molly Pearmain; Elizabeth Pritchard; Henry and Lewis Poulton; Ken, Jennifer, Howard, Loraine, June, Ron and Barbara Quinton; Marguerite Rush; Joy Rann; Frank, Vera, Jacqueline and Loraine Rollett; Kathleen Rice; Don Ryan; Harold Rose; Harry and Elsie Randall; Stephanie Ritson; John Sykes; Michael Selby; Brian Southall; Geoffrey Smith; Claire Southwell; Charles Schurmann; Barbara Smith; Eric, Ivy, Peter and Margaret Smart; Audrey and George Sims; Ursula Strong; Ann and Jane Sweetman; Mabel and Ellen Sargent; Peter Stewart; Marjorie Simmons; Leslie Thomas; Elsie, John and John Taylor; Graham and Sheila Trout; Kenneth Tettmar; Reginald Tilley; David and Roy Turner; Tova White; Beryl and Winifred Whitaker; Louis, Doris and Beryl Wright; Geoffrey Watkins; Resi Weinberg; John Wallis; Rosemary Worrell; John and Lilian Ward; Otto Wolf; Stephen Wall; Edna Wealsby; Gordon, Phyllis, Billy and Marjorie Wells; Frances Van Cooten; Molly Vine; Peter and Peggy Yeoman.



*Group at a garden fête at Sibford Gower. (How many can you identify?)*



*Nineteen lively Old Scholars who organised the Reunion concert show. Back Row L to R. Pat Stafford, June Edwards, Ruth Osborne, Stan Ewan, Joan Collins, Dorothy Angerson, Hilda Jenks, Geoffrey Watkins, Erle Bizzell, Hilda Lissaman, Wilf Angerson. Front Row L to R. Graham Trout, Irene Coxon, Sheila Trout, Geoff Collins, Tony Manasseh, Marguerite Rush, Frank Rollett and Jeanne Cottrell.*



Circa 1937. Reg Westcott receiving roller-skating tuition from Charles Lacroix on the boys' playground. Looking on from the 'Prom' is Priscilla Flinn (Bond). Others in the picture: Hugh Gibson, Peter Theobald, Stephen Brewer, Duncan Cummins, Don Ryan and Raymond Connell.  
(Contributed by Sid Geering).



16th March 1997. Two committee stalwarts - Nick Bennett and Mike Finch.



June 1997 - Hythe, Kent. The Farris are 'At home' to some very welcome callers: L - R Eileen Farr, Barrie and Sheila Taylor, Jim Hilling, Mike Farr.

## 1937 — 60 YEARS ON

A request from Janet Sewell (née Eavis)

Old Scholars who were at Sibford from about 1937 and throughout the Second World War will remember that, along with all the Quaker Schools, Sibford had pupils who were refugees from Europe. Quakers were actively involved in relief work and their schools were safe places for the refugees. This is an episode in the history of the School which we feel needs to be recorded before it is lost. We have looked at the Admission Register for the period 1937-1945 and have found at least 40 entries of pupils who came from places such as Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia etc. Some are well-known members of SOSA and others have lost touch. We would like to encourage anyone who has memories of coming to Sibford as a refugee, or who can recall any experiences of that time, to send a written or recorded account to us. We will bring these together to place them in the school archives to be available for OS, students and teachers. Edward Milligan (past Librarian of Friends House Library) is writing an official history of Sibford School and is very pleased to hear of our efforts to gather this information which he will find most helpful. We look forward to hearing in the near future from OS of these particular years with their memories. Please send to either Janet Sewell or Mike Farr.

## ANNUAL REUNION 1998

Please note that the Annual Reunion in 1998 will be held over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend between the 23rd and 26th May.

*Due to restricted accommodation - please book promptly when you receive your programme.*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 1998

Midland Branch  
New Year Party, Selby Oak  
Meeting House, Birmingham.

Saturday 31st January 1998  
Start 12.00 noon

All are welcome  
Please contact Hilary Haddleton

SOSA versus School soccer  
match. Please contact Brian  
Holliday if you wish to play.

Sunday 8th March 1998  
kick-off 2.30pm

SOSA Annual Reunion  
Contact Hugo Finley

23rd until 26th May 1998

SOSA versus School cricket  
match. Please contact Brian  
Holliday if you wish to play.

Sunday 28th June 1998

*(N.B. all telephone numbers/addresses for contacts appear in the list of Officers and Committee on page 64.)*

## SIBFORD OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 1997 - 1998

- PRESIDENT:** JULIE GREENHILL.  
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- RETIRING PRESIDENT:** J. PHILIP MORRIS.  
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(No specified retiring date) Tel. 01727 850521
- MIDLAND:** HILARY HADDLETON.  
(No specified retiring date) 8 Park Avenue, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3EJ.  
Tel. 0121 705 0462
- COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** TIMOTHY C. GEBBETT  
(Until 31/8/98) Melbourne Villa, 10 Brownhill Road,  
Chandlers Ford, Hampshire, SO5 2EA.  
Tel. 01703 254728



*At General Committee Meeting on Saturday morning 24th May:  
Paul Lulow, Nick Bennett, Ellen Salway, Mike Farr and Adrian Douglas.*

- NICOLA GRIMES  
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- JAMES J. THOMPSON  
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- ADRIAN M. DOUGLAS  
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Tel. 01295 266645
- GUY KINGHAM  
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- ELLEN SALWAY  
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- CLYDE GOODWIN  
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- MICHAEL HERM  
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- CO-OPTED MEMBER:** MARK BENNETT  
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Near Wadhurst, East Sussex, TM5 6PE.  
Tel. 01892 782354
- EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:**
- HEAD** SUSAN FREESTONE  
Tel. (Office) 01295 780441
- DEPUTY HEAD** PETER LINDSELL  
Tel. (Office) 01295 780441
- BURSAR** BRIAN MORPHY  
Tel. (Office) 01295 780441
- STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:** BRIAN HOLLIDAY  
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Tel. 01295 780500
- PAUL LUDLOW  
(Until 31/8/00) Gillett House, Sibford Ferris,  
Near Banbury, Oxon., OX15 5QL.  
Tel. 01295 788137



*16th March 1997. SOSA General Committee at Sibford for their spring meeting.*

# THE ANNUAL REUNION 1997



## THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE ANNUAL REUNION 1997

Amongst those who attended for all or part of the Reunion, or who were seen at some time, were: Barbara Abercrombie and Tom Evans; Naomi Alexander; Jane Ashdown; Diana Baker; Mark Bennett; Nick Bennett; Lorna Bergstrom; Ann and Ray Bond; Michael and Priscilla Bond; Loraine and Philip Brown; Paul and Ruth Byrne with Dewi, James and Susie; Diana, Matthew and David Casson; Eric Clements; Frank Cookson and Stella Wilson; Liz Cordiner; Martin Cordiner; Naomi Cordiner; Norman Coxon; Irene Coxon-Smith; Clem and Margaret Cox; Barbara Crozier; Rachael Davis; June Dawson; Stella, Liam and Becca Dickinson; Martin Dodson; Adrian Douglas; Martin Douglas; Helen Doyle; Jan, Romy, Bryony and Joost Elias; Margaret Fairnington and Murray Alexander; Theresa Fairweather; John Farr; Mike Farr; Marjorie Fielding; Mike and Wendy Finch; Hugo Finley; Ruth Fletcher; Patrick and Judith Flinn; Paul Frampton; Ken and Elisabeth Francis; Sue Freestone; Tara Freestone; Tim Gebbett; Irene Glaister; Julie Greenhill; Chris, Pat and Nicola Grimes; Jane Gunston; Maggie and Chris Guy; Hilary and John Haddleton; David Haines; Arthur and Pamela Harrison; Leslie Harrison; Ian Hedger; Ben Hedges; Mike Herm; Jim Hilling; Robert Hockley; Brian Holliday; Caroline Homan; Simon and Isobel Horsley; John Hughes; Esther

Jackson; Ronald Kennedy; Guy Kingham; Mike Ladell; David Laity; Arnold and Ina Lamb; Tom Lane; Julia Langridge; Margaret Le Mare; Chris Legg; Paul Levy; Joachim Litteck; Jeanne Little; Diana Lloyd; Paul Ludlow; Philip and Janet Manasseh; Jeanne Mills; Philip and Rosamond Morris; Anne Muir; Brian and Jean Morphy; Barrie and Sheila Naylor; Barbara Pensom; Cindy Poulton; Harold Pugmire; Nancy Pugmire and children; Tim Pye; Eleri and Mario Ricci; Desmond and Margaret Rose; Don Ryan; Navid Sadrzadeh; Ellen Salway; Julian Sandiford; Freddy Seefeld; Margaret Shelley; Jim Shields; Ashley and James Shirlin; Jack and Monica Simpson; Pamela Smettem; Claire Smith; David Carlton Smith; Jeanne Southam; Janet and Russell Steed; Barbara Sterry; Mavis Stiles; Cheryl and Joel Taylor; John and Doreen Taylor; Loic and Miriam Tebbs; Jim and Sue Thelton and children; James Thompson; Sheila Trout; Jonathan Tutte; Louis van Blankenstein; Michael van Blankenstein; Elizabeth, Hilary, Hester and Luke Waterfield; Ian Weatherhead; Bryony Denton Williams; Christine Wincott; Ethel Wright; Anne and Christopher Wood with Juliet Nichols.

Total known 170 - sorry if we've missed anyone!

