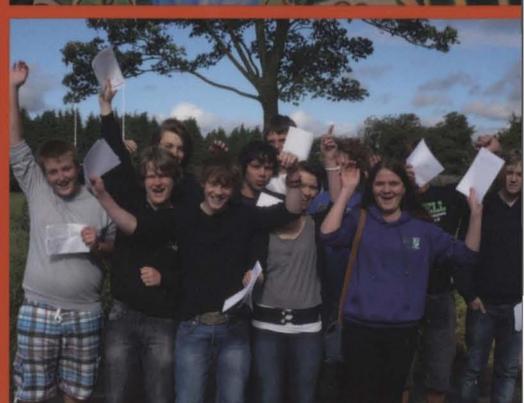
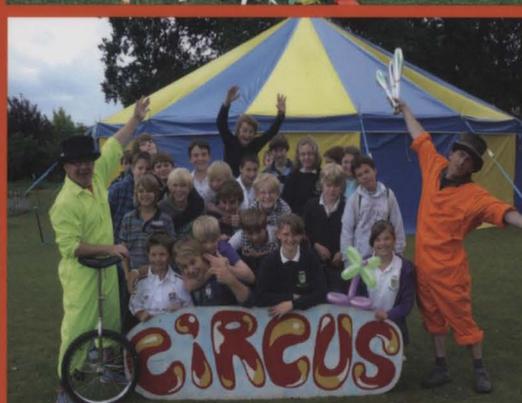
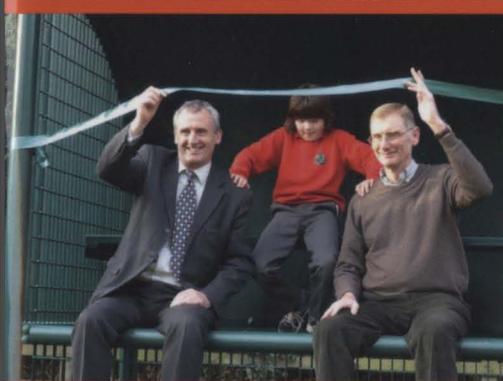


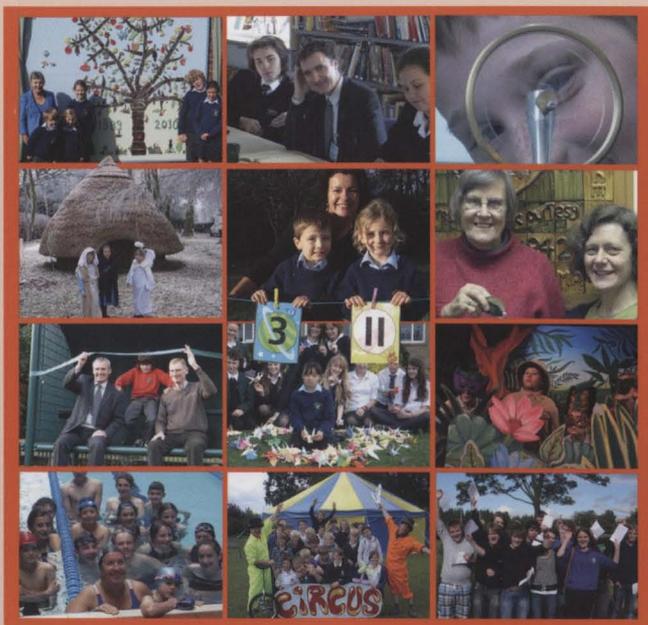


# The Sibfordian

Student Life & Activities at Sibford School  
& News of the Sibford Old Scholars' Association



2011



## A year at Sibford School...

**September 2010: Happy Birthday ...** Junior School celebrates 21 years (see page 30).

**October 2010: Booked ...** Award-winning author William Fiennes opens the newly refurbished library (see page 7).

**November 2010: In Focus ...** students eye up how to be more energy efficient (see page 20).

**December 2010: Happy Christmas ...** A frosty roundhouse makes a perfect setting for our Nativity scene.

**January 2011: The Young Ones ...** Sibford welcomes three-year-olds into the Junior School (see page 30).

**February 2011: All Change ...** Outgoing Clerk of Committee Judith Weeks hands over the keys to her successor Seren Wildwood.

**March 2011: Joint Venture ...** Pupils and villagers benefit from the opening of a new multi use games area at Sibford School.

**April 2011: In Flight ...** Pupils make and sell origami cranes to support the Japanese Earthquake appeal (see page 10).

**May 2011: In the Jungle ...** Students rehearse Rudyard Kipling's classic story in preparation for the Sibford Festival of Theatre (see page 23).

**June 2011: Splashing! ...** Three-times Great Britain Olympic swimmer, Helen Slatter, dives in at Sibford pool (see page 33).

**July 2011: Roll Up Roll Up ...** The circus comes to Sibford (see page 11).

**August 2010: Top Marks ...** students celebrate exam successes (see page 8).

## In this issue ...

From Michael Goodwin	page 3
Sibford leads the way	page 4
Going for Gold	page 5
World Book Day	page 6
Author passes on trade secrets	page 7
Celebrating exam results	pages 8 ~ 9
Charity fundraising	page 10
Enrichment week	pages 11 ~ 14
Caring for the Environment	page 15
Out and About	pages 16 ~ 19
Sibford Snapshots	pages 20 ~ 21
Drama	pages 22 ~ 23
Music	pages 24 ~ 25
Art	pages 26 ~ 28
Design & Technology	page 29
Exciting Times for Junior School	pages 30 ~ 31
Open Day 2011	pages 32
Sports News	pages 33 ~ 37
New Staff	pages 38
Sibford Old Scholars' Association	pages 41 ~ 50
including ...	
Sibford and the King's Speech	page 39
Fred Dinenage Murder Casebook	page 43
Spick and Span Cottages	page 44
Recollections of a Refugee	page 46
Leavers' Destinations	page 51

*A summarised set of Accounts for year ended 31st July 2011 will be available upon request from 31st March 2012 following the approval of these figures by the School Auditors.*

# The sound of silence

Over the summer holidays I was asked to speak at Britain Yearly Meeting, the annual gathering of British Quakers, held this year at the University of Kent.

The theme of my short talk was that of my journey to Sibford School from being previously the Head of a maintained comprehensive school. As I prepared for the talk, I found myself asking a number of questions that many of you will have asked and which I answer dozens of times in a year as I talk to prospective parents as they think about sending their own children here. 'Why Sibford?', 'Why a Quaker school?', 'How distinctive is a Quaker education?'

In many ways, the articles in this edition of the Sibfordian go a long way to answer the questions. When I consider the opportunities our young people enjoy and read of their many successes, I feel proud to be part of this community, and privileged to be its spokesperson. However, I suspect that many school magazines will have a similar look (though I have not seen many as good as this!) and it is perhaps the **feel** of Sibford that is harder to capture. I know that a great many of our families are drawn to the

Quaker 'ethos' of the school, to the Quaker practice, principles and values that underpin our work.

An academic at a Scottish University is undertaking research on the part played by, and value of, silence in schools. As part of her research, she visited a Quaker school and I, together with a colleague who is Head of another Quaker School, was asked to write

**I feel proud to be a part of this community**

a contribution to the book, explaining the place of silence in our schools. We wrote:

"Each of the Quaker Schools holds regular silent Meetings for

Worship, in keeping with the practice of the Religious Society of Friends. This collective

period of silence provides a powerful vehicle for the whole school community to come together, while allowing individuals to gather and explore their own thoughts. We do not necessarily think that our students use this time for deeply spiritual thought, but the great strength of Quaker schools is that they encourage pupils to be comfortable with themselves, to think independently and express themselves clearly. The silence contributes to the pupils' ability to engage in higher level thinking and adopt a state of mindfulness as they navigate their way through their time at school.

"Shorter periods of silence are integral to the daily life of the schools, such as before meals, meetings or to open and close

events. It is amazing how quickly pupils get used to falling into silence without being told, and how soon they learn the value of the silences that punctuate the day. The overall atmosphere of quiet reflection is not disturbed by the ringing of bells between lessons but there is still a sense of energy and purpose in the schools."

I don't think that our practice of silent collective worship alone defines this or any other Quaker School. We are governed by a Quaker 'School Committee', which operates according to our Quaker business method, and we try to be led by Quaker testimonies to

**The silence contributes to the pupils' ability to engage in higher level thinking**

peace, truth and integrity, honesty, justice, simplicity, equality and community. The Quaker website describes each of these testimonies in more detail and acknowledges that they are not always easy to follow, but goes on to say that 'with loving advice and a supportive community, Quakers are encouraged to keep trying'.

Perhaps this is the essence of a Quaker education and the true spirit of Sibford.

This sense of a supportive community shines through the pages of the Sibfordian and is, I am sure, why so many families continue to choose us.

**Michael Goodwin**

# Sibford leads the way with new App

Sibford School has become one of the first schools in the country to release its own App.

The Sibford School App is available as a free download for anyone with an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad (via the App store) or with an android smart phone or tablet (via the Android Marketplace).

There are also plans to extend the App to BlackBerry users in the near future.

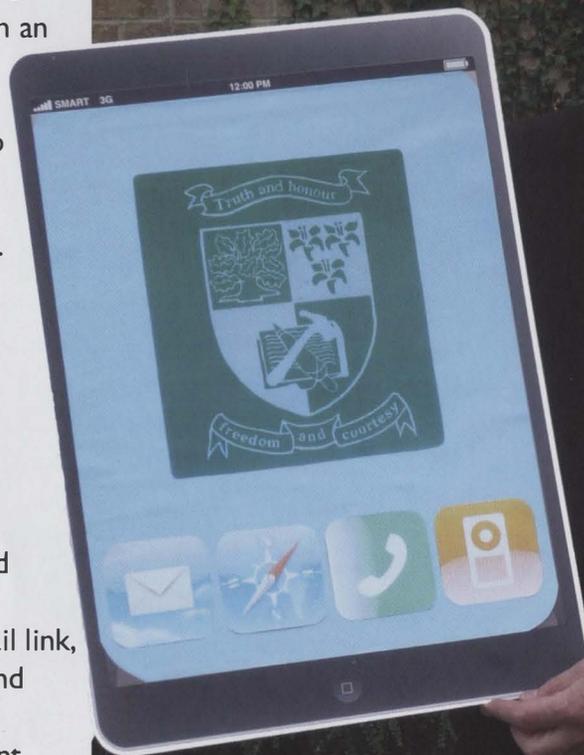
Sibford head Michael Goodwin, said: "Apps are becoming increasingly popular but are still a very new idea as far as schools are concerned.

"Certainly we believe we are the first school in the area to embrace this new technology."

The Sibford School App will enable parents, pupils and friends of the school to keep up-to-date with news, events and information.

It also features a direct phone and email link, a map showing how to find the school and photo galleries.

"In today's modern world it is important that we use as many different forms of communication as possible," said Michael. "We already have a website, use email and texting to send messages home, and share information on Facebook and Twitter. The new App provides us with yet another tool we can use."



## Megan receives award for bravery



When Sibford pupil Megan Shemmell was diagnosed with a serious hip problem she refused to let it get her down. Despite numerous operations, and being forced to stop her all-consuming passion of horse riding, Megan remained cheerful.

And her triumph over adversity was recognised earlier this year when she was invited to attend the Oxfordshire Youth Awards where she was named runner-up in the Jake Spicer Special Recognition Award, presented to a young person who has faced challenges and difficulty with great determination and resolution and who is an inspiration to others.

More than 300 young people, along with proud family and friends, packed Oxford Town Hall for the awards night. Debbie Egan, Oxfordshire youth awards coordinator said: "There were so many inspirational stories. You see so many negative stories about young people but here you really see the positive."

Megan is pictured left with her award.



# THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Four Sibford students struck gold this year after completing the highest level in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme.

Sixth formers Helen Thain, Beth Birkbeck, Patrick Reckitt and Georgie Bowen have each gained the prestigious Gold award.

As part of their activity programmes, Helen sailed from Lowestoft to Amsterdam, Patrick spent a month in the Arctic with the British Schools Exploring Society and Beth and Georgie went to Dartmoor for their assessment expedition. All four have also spent a considerable amount of time helping out in school and in the local community. Patrick was a regular helper at the Fielding Day Centre, which provides lunch and social companionship for senior citizens, and Georgie helped teach cookery classes in the Junior School.

Sibford DofE leader, Mike Spring, said:

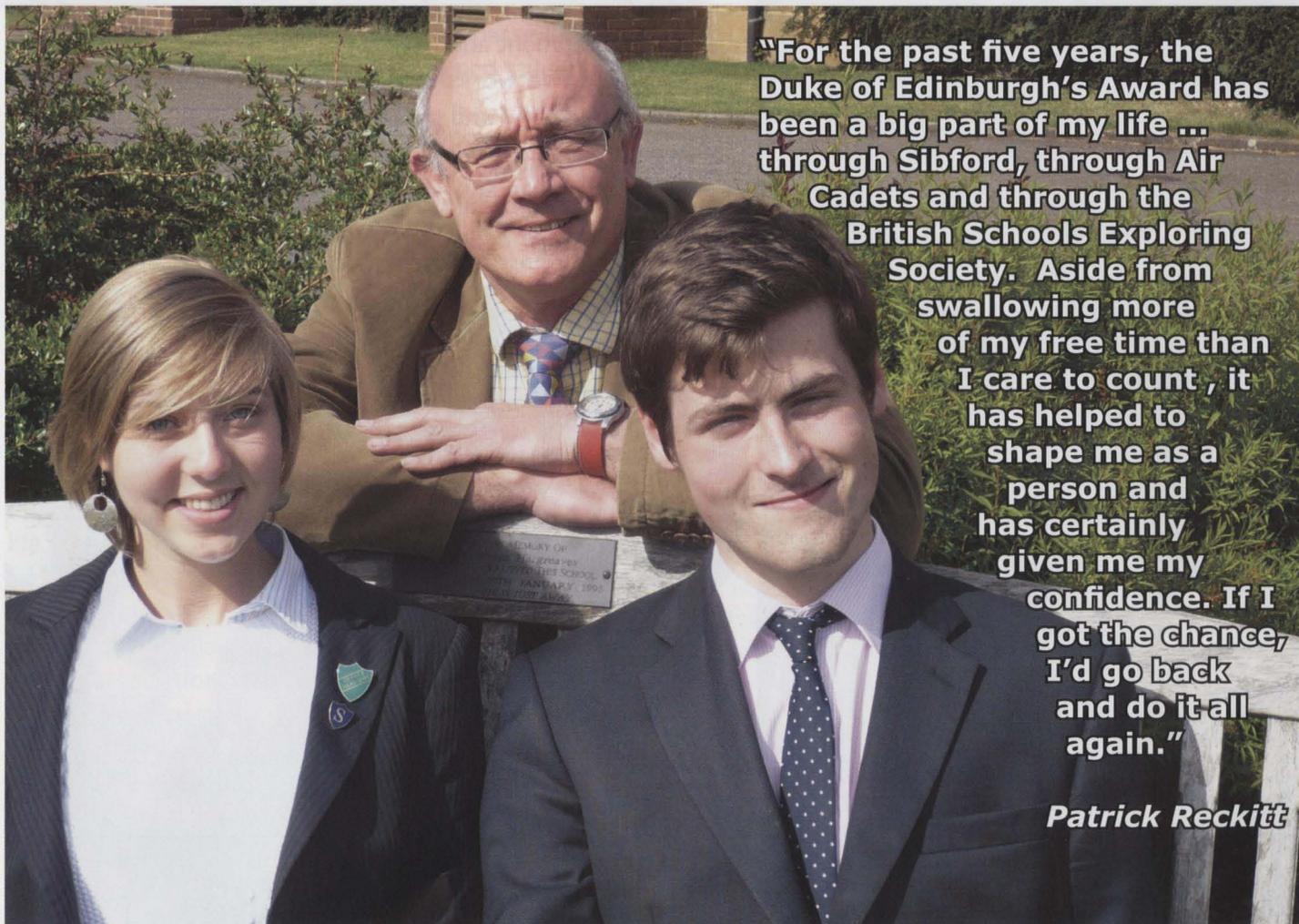


Above: Beth on expedition in Dartmoor. Right: Georgie. Below: Helen and Patrick pictured with Mike Spring



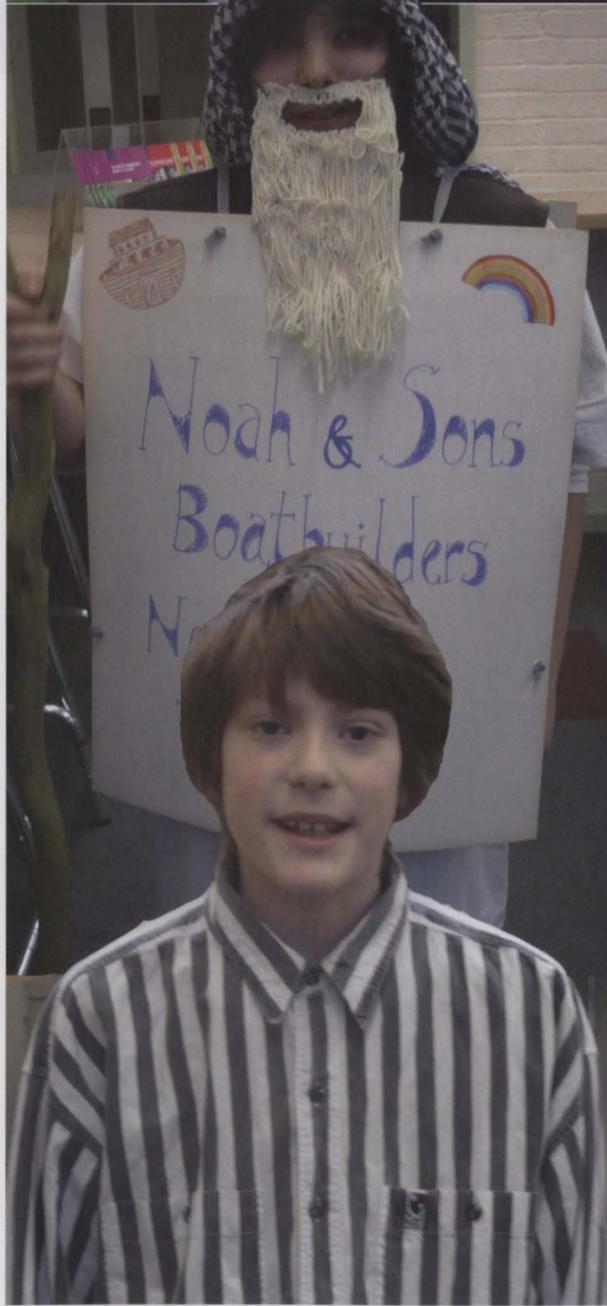
"The dedication and determination that these students have shown has been fantastic. They have worked extremely hard and are great ambassadors to our younger pupils who are just starting out on their Bronze Awards."

Michael Goodwin added: "The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award is a great challenge and it is a credit to Helen, Beth, Georgie and Patrick that they were able to balance the demands of their studies with a commitment to achieving this award."



**"For the past five years, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award has been a big part of my life ... through Sibford, through Air Cadets and through the British Schools Exploring Society. Aside from swallowing more of my free time than I care to count, it has helped to shape me as a person and has certainly given me my confidence. If I got the chance, I'd go back and do it all again."**

**Patrick Reckitt**



Pupils and staff dressed up as characters from their favourite book to celebrate World Book Day in March.

They were joined by actor, playwright and stand up comic, Kulvinder Ghir.

Best known for his roles in TV's Goodness Gracious Me and the film Bend it Like Beckham, Kulvinder spoke about his career development and his struggle with dyslexia.

He also led two workshops looking at the creative use of literature in film, TV and theatre.

Pictured: Kulvinder with sixth form students Helen Everett, Georgina Chapman and Aderogba Haastrup; Librarian Jessica Memarzia; Yr 10 pupils Kate Bowen and Maddy Fletcher; Yr 7 pupil George Johnson-Briscoe and Yr 9 pupil Noah Stone.



# Author passes on trade secrets



Award-winning author, William Fiennes, passed on some secrets of the trade when he joined students at Sibford for a writing workshop.

William, whose books include *The Snow Geese* and *The Music Room*, told pupils: "A lot of writing comes out of real life experiences, but it's the little unexpected details that bring things alive in the reader's eye."

The son of Lord and Lady Saye & Sele of nearby Broughton Castle, William was also at Sibford to undertake the official re-opening of the recently refurbished school library.

"A school library is like a treasure trove," he said. "It's a great resource ... there are things in here that could really change your life."

He also revealed that the library, which was refurbished thanks to support from Sibford old scholars and the school's parent association, was the first thing he had ever opened.

"My father has been called upon to open numerous things," he said. "But this is the very first time I've been asked to open anything so it really is something to celebrate."

I looked at the front door of my terraced house. The misted glass door that I have always hated. I couldn't even count the number of times that I asked my dad to get a different one. Maybe a bright red one with a big number '2' on it and a brass doorknob? That was always the type of front door that I wanted. I put my key into the lock, turned it, and waited for that satisfying suction sound that always occurred when opening and closing the door. Then I walked in as usual, wiped my feet and removed my comfortable new shoes. My parents had insisted that I was to buy 'proper' shoes for once.

There were still tracks of tears on my face. I had noticed as I looked into the mirror that hung just left of the door. I turned on the lights, only two of three came on. The third one merely flickered and then returned to its dormant state. The only sound that passed my ears was the haunting unease of the ticking clock that hung solemnly on the wall beside the fridge.

I looked closer at the fridge and walked towards it. My favourite 'sleepy time tea magnet' was holding a photo down. The magnet had on it a big grizzly bear wearing a sleeping cap. I removed the magnet and studied the photo. It showed dad, my sister and me. Dad was wearing a very and a Jerusalem white shirt. He had his arm around his sister, was on the other side of him. She was wearing a very becoming red dress and her hair was up with a loose curl framing her face. I looked beautiful. I wish she had never got into that car ... I heard a sound; my cat, my lovely cat. Bob, pattered into the kitchen. She yawned and started to lick her paw. I watched her. She was so oblivious to what had happened. So innocent.

Workshop writing by Flossie Boyd, pictured right.

Top William Fiennes with Michael Bell and Emily Sloan



# EXAM CELEBRATIONS

August 2011 saw Sibford students in celebratory mood following the publication of exam results.

At A Level, five students were awarded the coveted top A\* grades:

Beth Birkbeck received an A\* for both Art and Biology. In addition, she gained an A grade in Chemistry.

Luke Gartside and Calum Jelf each received an A\* in Media: Communication and Production. Their A Level films, *The Severn Bore* (Luke) and *Modern Marriage* (Calum), have both been hailed as 'outstanding' and their A\* grading was a further boost for Sibford which, only a month earlier, was named by the Good Schools Guide as **the** top English independent school for students taking A Level Media.

There were also A\* grades for two Year 12 students ... Guiming Zhang received an A\* in A Level Maths and Erfan Hosseini in A Level Persian.

*Pictured from top: A\* artist Beth Birkbeck; media successes Luke Gartside and Calum Jelf; Charlotte Smith (who gained an A in both History and Religious Studies and a B in English) with mum Janet; Patrick Reckitt (who gained an A in History and English and a B in RS); Erfan Hosseini and Guiming Zhang.*

- **The next step ... for news of recent leavers' destinations see inside back cover**

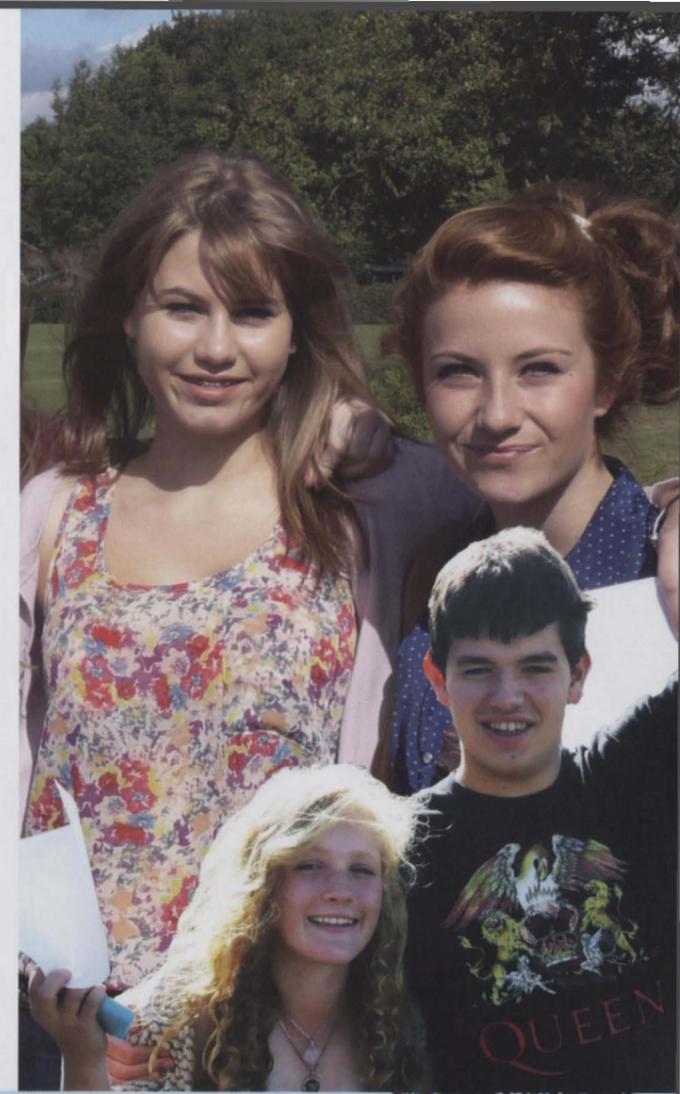
At GCSE level, 92.9% of pupils gained five or more passes at Grades A\* ~ C and 4.5% of all grades were at A\*.

The boys performed exceptionally well with Tom Brewis achieving 2A\*s, 7As and a B and Ross Atkin 2A\*s, 6As and 2Bs. And there was further success for our Countryside Management students, with four pupils, Kate Mitchell, Kate Neal, Jack Trinder and Anna-Rose Critchley, all achieving Distinction in their BTEC National Award (the equivalent of an A grade at A Level) and Simon Couzens gaining a Distinction\* in the BTEC Subsidiary Certificate (the equivalent of an A\* at AS Level).

Michael Goodwin said: "I am delighted that Sibford students have again achieved so well and I congratulate them on their success.

"A persistent emphasis from government and the media on 'league tables' can make people lose sight of the real importance of these results to individual students and their teachers who give an immense amount of time and energy to ensure that our students do the very best they can.

"The A\* and A grades are the ones that hit the headlines; however we need to remember that a C grade for a particular student might represent a fantastic achievement and we must not let this be overshadowed."



# Charity activity is hair-raising!

When it comes to raising money for charity, Sibford students and staff have a wealth of ideas.

Science teacher Alan Wallis (left and below) stuck his neck out and had his famous curly locks shaved off to raise money for Comic Relief.

An initiative, which grew from the regular lunchtime origami club, saw pupils showing solidarity with Japanese students Mariko, Aiko and Yuriko Fukuda, and making 1,000 paper cranes to raise money for the Japanese earthquake appeal. Teacher Derek Bottomley explained: "The Thousand Origami Cranes are a symbol of world peace so they seemed a novel and appropriate thing to make in the circumstances."

Meanwhile, the 'Sibford Apprentice' competition resulted in students taking stalls on Banbury market to raise money for NSPCC, Bone Cancer Trust and the British Heart Foundation.

Visitors to the school included Julia Sharpe (pictured left), volunteer coordinator with the charity Pets As Therapy, and her dog, Teddy, who joined Meeting for Worship to collect a cheque for £100 ... the result of a break-time cake sale.

Other charities to benefit throughout the year included Ronald McDonald House, Epilepsy Action, Dyslexia Action, Oxford Homeless Charities and Katharine House Hospice.





# Living Adventurously

**Quaker Advices & Queries 27** urges us to 'live adventurously' and that's exactly what Sibford pupils did during the last week of the summer term as they took part in Curriculum Enrichment Week.

Simon Baker, who co-ordinates the activities explained: "The aim is to provide pupils with educational experiences outside the classroom which we wouldn't have the time or opportunity to cover as part of the general curriculum.

"Enrichment week involves team building, learning new skills and discovering more about the world around us and this year's event was certainly one of the best we've had to date."

**Highlights of the extensive programme included visits to:**

- the Norfolk Broads for a four-day cruise;
- Banbury town centre to visit the Police Station, Museum, Tooley's Boatyard and historic Blacksmith's Forge, where there was also the chance to enjoy a trip on a narrow boat;
- Oxford Crown Court;
- Youlbury Activity Centre in Oxford;
- Garlands Leisure in Coventry; and
- the Oxford Botanical Gardens.

**We also welcomed a number of visitors into school including:**

- RightAngle Events who ran a crime scene investigation and forensic workshop;
- Cineclub, The Young Filmmakers Network, who helped pupils create their own short films;
- Boomtown Rats guitarist Garry Roberts;
- Circus Sensible ... complete with their 'baby' Big Top ... who ran a circus skills workshop which culminated in a performance for parents.

*For more Curriculum Enrichment Week photographs see following pages ...*

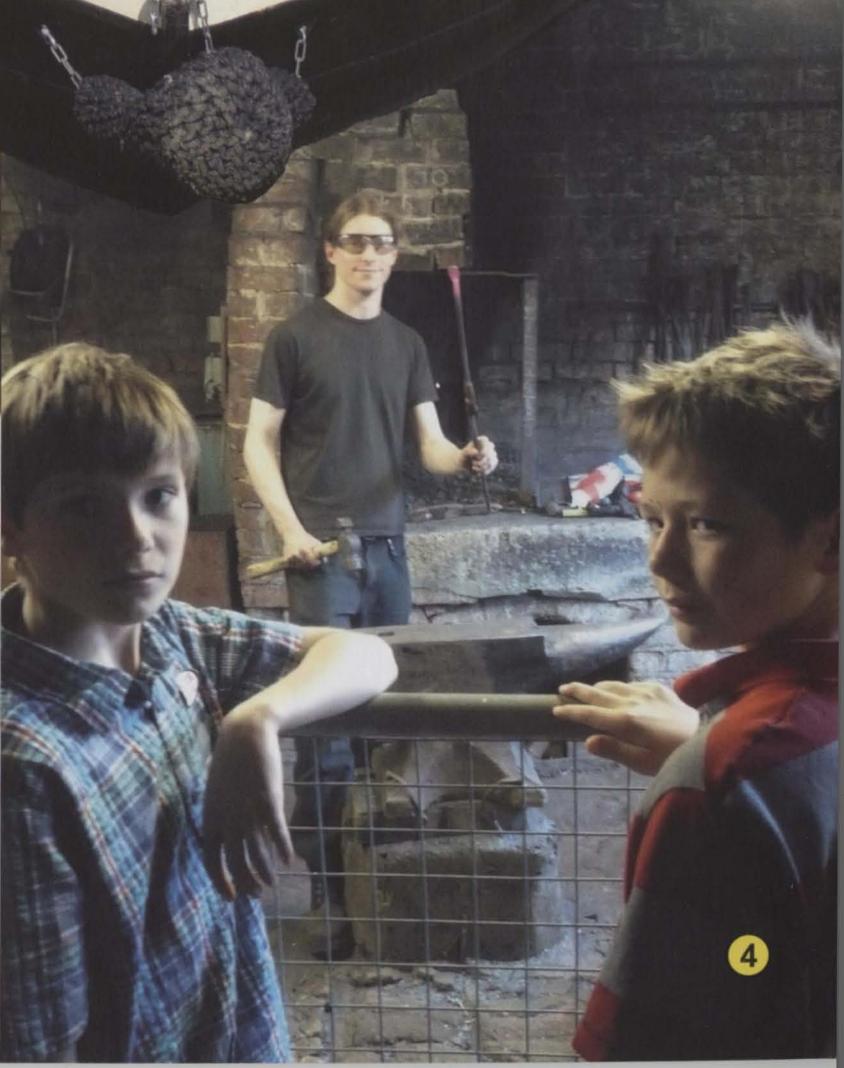


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- 1: The circus comes to Sibford
- 2: On patrol at Banbury Police Station
- 3: Canal boat trip
- 4: Tooley's Boatyard and Forge
- 5: Film making with Cineclub
- 6: Crime Scene Investigations



5



4

# The guitar man

When Boomtown Rats guitarist, Garry Roberts visited Sibford as part of Curriculum Enrichment Week, he had more in common with our pupils than many realised.

As a youngster, Garry attended Newtown School in Waterford, Ireland, which, like Sibford, is a Quaker school.

"I didn't realise Sibford School had Quaker connections until I drove in this morning," he told Sibfordian. "But as soon as I saw the sign it sure brought back a lot of memories."

Garry enrolled at Newtown at the age of 10 after a couple of disastrous years at Dublin High School. "My Dad had been a prominent past pupil of the High School and thought it only natural that I went there," he said. "To this day I can't remember what it was that I did, but just as Maths and Geography were permanent fixtures on the timetable so too was Wednesday afternoon detention.

"In the end, the Headmaster called my dad and recommended I be sent to boarding school where someone could 'keep an eye on me'. Newtown was suggested and

Dad thought that sending his son to a Quaker school seemed quite trendy, so off I went."

Not that his initial impression was very favourable. "To be frank, I hated it," he said. "I was an intelligent kid and maybe, looking back, I was a bit too smart for my own good. Either way, I didn't seem to fit in and so, at the start of the 2nd form, I ran away and got the train back to Dublin."

While Garry's mum might have been pleased to see him, his dad was far from impressed and less than 24 hours after making his 'great escape' Garry was back in school. And it was then that Newtown's Quaker principles, which aim to 'foster a sense of caring for others', came into play.

"It seems the Headmaster spoke to the whole school and told them to back off giving Garry Roberts a bad time. They did ... and from that moment on I started enjoying school."

Which was just as well, because, in addition to receiving an education which saw him graduate with an Honours Leaving Certificate and gain 97% in his final Latin exam, Newtown also instilled in Garry a love of the guitar ... which was ultimately to lead him to a successful career as a professional musician.

"I remember being deposited on the gravel drive at the start of term and seeing a guy called Andrew Deane arrive with his Vox Electric Guitar and thinking 'I want one of those'. But I didn't realise what a fab sound they made until the Supper Dance when the school band was allowed to hire in a couple of PA systems from the local record shop. To hear the sound coming through an amp

was so different from anything I'd heard before, I was transfixed."

Garry's dad was happy to loan his son his own acoustic guitar. And, when that was damaged by a fire at the school, he provided the funding for an electric replacement.

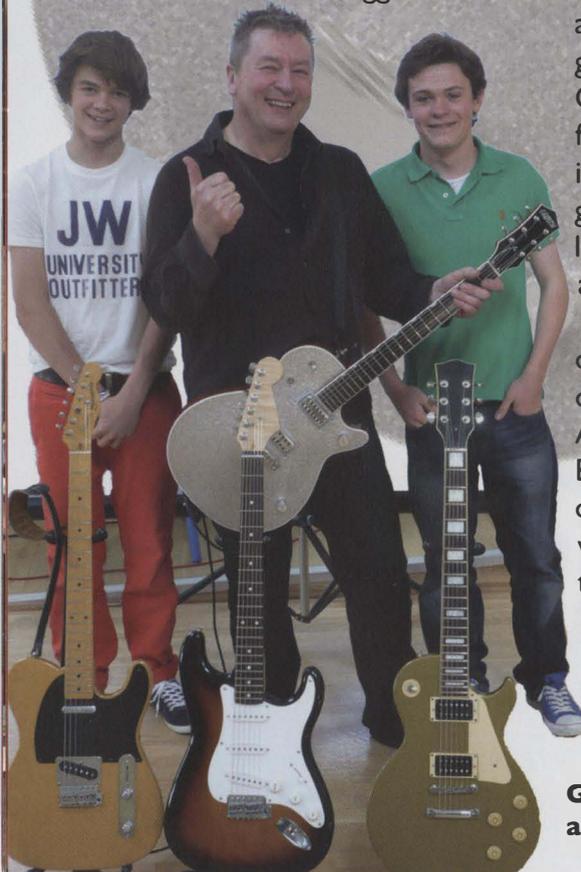
Today Garry has six guitars 'you can never have too many' and his favourite is a Gretsch Silver Jet which he bought in memory of his dad.

"My dad was a very successful commercial photographer and when he died my mum sold a lot of his negatives to the museum. She gave my brothers and me some of the money as a gift. Rather than spend it on something perishable, I bought the Gretsch to remember my dad ... I just love the sound of it." And it was with that favourite guitar that Garry joined pupils Luke Platt, Toby Seely, Jake Wilson-Wainwright, Tom Smith, Thomas Brewis, Jack Neil and Noah Stone for a jam session.

"You play really well," he told them "there aren't a lot of school kids who play at your standard. I've enjoyed myself immensely."

And his parting tip to anyone thinking of going into the music business?

"The most important thing is to listen to each other; play in time; and look like you're enjoying yourself. If you're enjoying it, so will the people watching."



**Garry Roberts left with Toby Seely and Jake Wilson-Wainwright and top with Tom Smith and Isaac Roberts.**

# Caring for the environment

Sibford School's on-going commitment to sustainability has seen a number of activities taking place this year.

In January, Year 7 pupils joined together to plant a new hedge by the pond and conservation area.

Since 1984, it has been the custom for every new pupil in the senior school to plant a tree but, with more than 1,600 trees now growing, the last couple of years have seen a break with tradition ... with the focus turning instead to hedges. The planting was organised by Countryside Management students Kate Michell, Kate Neal and Anna-Rose Critchley, who hope the hedge will create a buffer zone to reduce the amount

of agriculture spray drifting into the area from the neighbouring farmer's field.

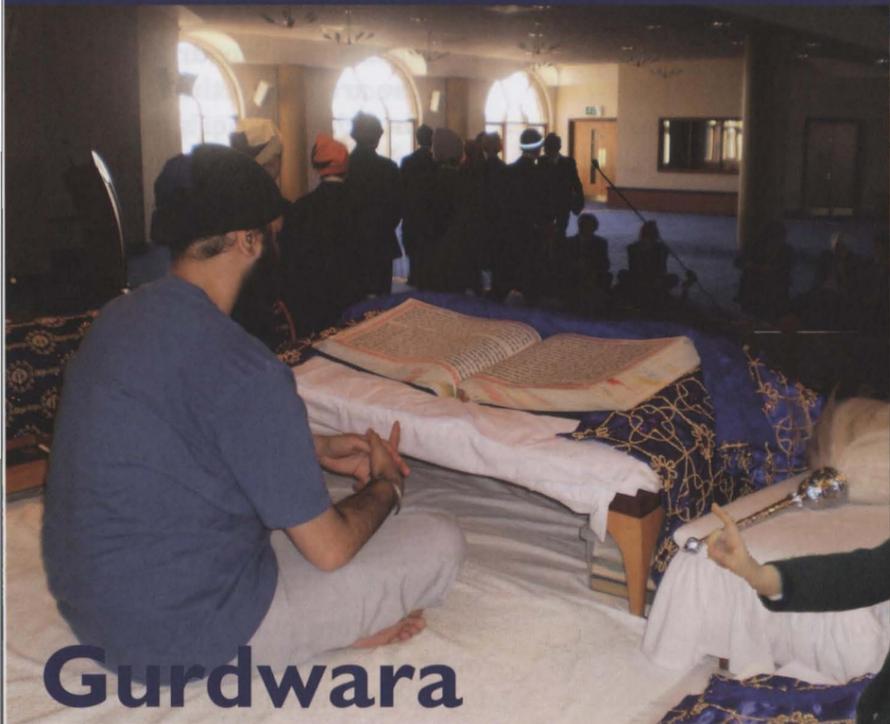
In February half-term, 50 solar panels were installed on the roof above the English corridor.

The 9KwH photovoltaic panels will help the school to cut down on electricity bills and will also feed power into the National Grid.

Michael Goodwin, said: "Since being awarded the Eco School's top award of Green Flag status in 2010, we have continued to look at ways of cutting our carbon footprint. Installation of solar panels was an obvious step forward and at the end of the summer holidays we had generated more than 64,900 kilo watt hours of electricity."



Educational visits form an important part of life at Sibford School. The following pages detail just a few that have taken place in the last year.



## Gurdwara

"In March, Year 8 went on a visit to the Gurdwara in Leamington Spa. When we arrived, I was thinking, 'Wow! This is a huge and magnificent building.' We put scarves on our heads as a sign of respect and then we were given a talk about Sikhism in general. We were shown all the prayer rooms on different levels where boys and girls sat separately, to avoid distraction, and we saw the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs which had the 'chauri' being waved over it. We also saw the harmoniums and other Sikh artefacts. At the end of the afternoon we were shown the 'Langar' room and given biscuits, chocolate and orange drink which was really tasty. The Sikh people are always very welcoming and the Gurdwara provides a meal for anyone who visits or is in need."

Andrew MacLennan



## The Jewish Museum



"Year 9 went to London to visit the Jewish Museum in Camden Town. When we arrived we were taken to the main hall where we were introduced to a woman called Martha (pictured left with Vanessa Evans). This elderly lady had survived the holocaust and she told us how she and many other kids had escaped because she had been taken on the 'Kindertransport' which the Quakers had arranged to get the Jewish kids to England. She was brought up by Jewish foster parents in Devon but sadly, never saw her parents again. We were shown a spice box and some other artefacts which the Jewish people had buried when they were forced to leave their homes. Then we split into two groups and went upstairs to look at the museum and do a workshop. We even met an old Sibford scholar there! It was an interesting visit."

Joshua Mosley

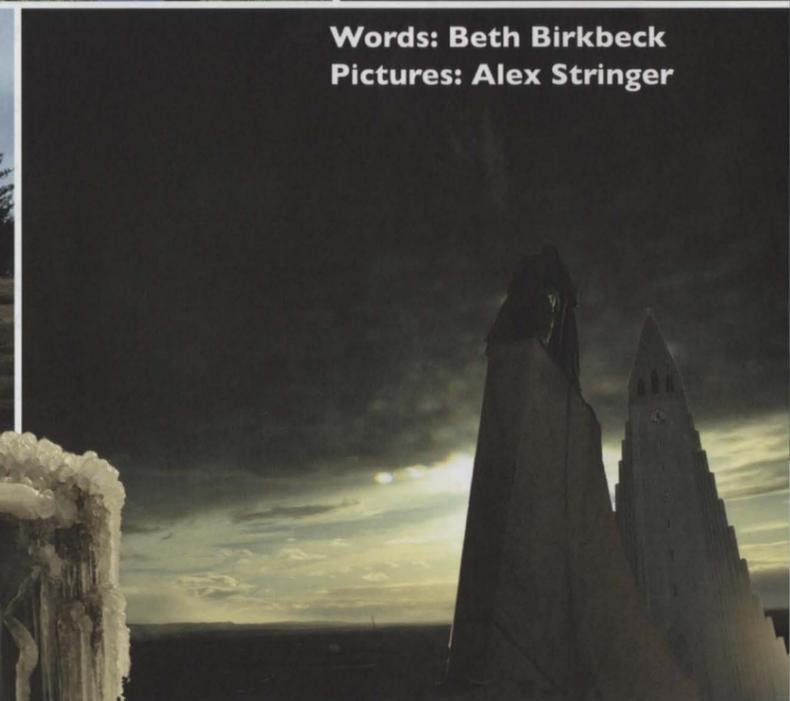


The most powerful thing about Iceland was the views. Wide plains of churned volcanic earth, twisted into thousands of rocky sculptures. Snowy hills, icy lakes and glacier topped volcanoes. Littering this landscape are Dr Who-esque bubbling, sulphurous mud-pools, geysers, black beaches and hot springs that you can swim in whilst it snows! It was amazing crossing from Europe to America and back in a blizzard; seeing the only banana plantation in Iceland; and trekking out at midnight to see the sadly non-existent Northern Lights. It was certainly a unique experience. Iceland is a truly fantastic place and I am so glad I was lucky enough to go. A big thank you to all the wonderful staff who organised it!



## Iceland

In November, 47 pupils enjoyed a visit to Iceland. Based in Reykjavik, their stay included excursions to the Hellisheidi plateau, the hot springs at Hveragerdi, the spectacular Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfalls, Lake Thingvallavatn and the famous Great Geysir. Two students share their experience ...



Words: Beth Birkbeck  
Pictures: Alex Stringer

# A trip to hell and back

by Sixth Form student  
Charlotte Smith

**I never thought that a place could feel intrinsically evil, or could seem to echo so much sadness and suffering.**

Visiting the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camps was an experience that will be stuck in my mind for the rest of my life.

The camps are still and quiet, like a graveyard, and I don't think I saw any wildlife or a flock of birds the entire time I was there ... the animals know to stay away.



Head Boy Patrick Reckitt and I were chosen out of hundreds of school pupils in the Thames Valley to be a part of the Lessons from Auschwitz project, organised by The Holocaust Educational Trust.

We were given the opportunity to attend an introductory lecture before our trip, during which we met a holocaust survivor, whose words were moving, but still failed to fully prepare me for the emotional rollercoaster to come.

A trip to Poland and back in a matter of hours is not for the faint hearted! Patrick and I rose at 4am, headed to the airport, and boarded our plane to Krakow. We would be up for the next 24 hours.



We began by visiting a pre-war Jewish cemetery in the town of Oświęcim to emphasize what death for Jews would have been like before the Nazi regime.

There was a mournful presence in this place and we were told that the local council maintains the site, as there is no Jewish community remaining in the town.

We journeyed on to the first of the sites: Auschwitz I. We entered through the infamous iron gates over which hang the words: 'Arbeit macht frei' which translates as 'Work will set you free'. For many prisoners, the only freedom came with death.

The site held many horrors, ranging from 'standing chambers' ~ a tiny cell, roughly a metre wide, in which four men would be packed so they could not lie down, and would often die of exhaustion ~ to the gas chambers themselves, which we had to pass through in total silence.

However, the part that stood out the most for me was the barracks which contained the 'evidence'

of the Nazi persecution.

Our guide informed us we would see evidence of personal items stolen from the victims, such as pairs of glasses and shoes. I thought there

would be maybe six or seven items. There weren't. There were thousands. Rooms, bigger than the main school hall were packed to the ceiling.

For many though, the breaking point was seeing the possessions of the Nazis' most innocent victims: toy dolls, baby blankets, and children's clothes.

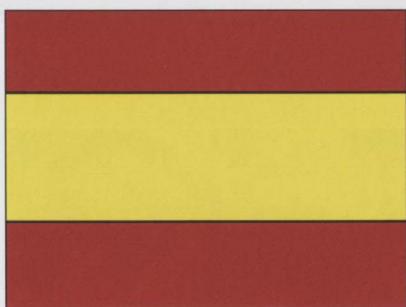
The second site, Auschwitz II-Birkenau, told a similar story, and the sheer size and vastness of the site, with the bitterly cold Polish winds whistling around us, highlighted the extent of the cruelties and crimes that took place here.

Not much remains of the original site, as the Nazis, fearing their ultimate demise, blew up the gas chambers and barracks to eradicate any evidence of their war crimes.

As the day drew to a close, the group held a memorial ceremony for the millions of victims: Jews, Romany gypsies, homosexuals, political prisoners and many more.

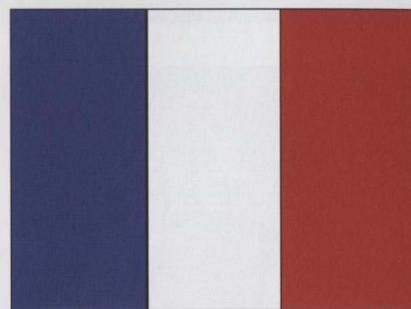
We were all given a candle to light, to symbolize our appreciation and respect, and I struggled in vain to light my candle as the chilling wind whistled around me. Eventually, the cold became too much for me, and I left my candle unlit.

But I wish, to this day, that I had stayed and lit it, and shown just a fraction of the bravery shown by the millions of people who lost their lives during the Holocaust.



Learning a foreign language can be challenging, but it can also be fun ... as Sibford's Modern Foreign Language department has shown.

Recent activities have included exchange trips, cooking fajitas, helping with the junior school ... and a visit to Arsenal Football Club!



## Hola Valencia

A week before the Easter holidays, Year 9 pupil, Beth Whitaker, headed off to Valencia in Spain for a four-week exchange. She tells Sibfordian what it was like:

"After a whole day of travelling, I finally arrived in Spain to see a family of six waiting for me at the airport. My exchange student Amaia, her three sisters and her parents met me at the airport and brought me back to their house.

"The next morning I started at the Spanish school called Caxton College. It is a massive school, much bigger than Sibford, with seven lessons a day. Everybody there was very nice, friendly and best of all, they all spoke perfect English! In spite of this, however, I learnt a lot of Spanish whilst I was out there and I think it really was an experience I will never forget."

Susan Brown of the Exchanges & Boarding Department at Caxton added: "We hope that Bethan enjoyed this brief contact with Spanish culture and language and that she will find it motivating for future studies of the Spanish language or future visits to Spain."

Beth is pictured above with Spanish students Clarisse Fenty and Amaia Bac.

- Year 8 pupils have been using their Spanish skills closer to home by running a lunchtime language club for junior school pupils. Yr 2 pupil Lexie Harwood said: "Me llamo Lexie. I love Spanish Club because Danielle [Tharani] and Claire [Neil] are so funny and are very good at Spanish."

## Bonjour Arsenal

Year 7 have been enjoying the award-winning Arsenal Double Club French Language programme which uses football and fun to motivate pupils. The course culminated with a fieldtrip to The Emirates Stadium. Max Ostrand reports:

"It was very uninspiring weather as we set off on the French trip to Arsenal football ground. To start with we weren't sure what the connection between learning French and Arsenal FC would be; however all was revealed as we were greeted in French (bonjours all round) and given a guided tour of the stadium and grounds ... in French.

"The size of the stadium was staggering! The most exhilarating bit was walking onto the pitch through the tunnel and imagining the adrenaline rush the players must feel as they emerge onto the pitch. We also sat in the dugout where Arsene Wenger and his team of psychologists and subs usually sit.

"The trophy room and time capsule containing Arsenal memorabilia were extremely impressive, showing their many successes in the past. The visit was rounded off by a short test in French of sporting terms and club knowledge. Un jour très agréable."





Sibford School has always had an excellent reputation for the quality and variety of the performances it stages ... and the last 12 months have been no exception. Here are just a few of the highlights....



Hedda, a contemporary version of the Ibsen classic by Lucy Kirkwood (writer of the E4 teenage drama *Skins*), was performed in the Oliver Studio in December and provided senior pupils with a great opportunity to tackle the challenging themes of obsession, liberation, love and entrapment.

Maria Jackson, Head of Drama and director of Hedda, said "It is always inspiring to work with young people as they develop their creative instincts. We set our senior actors a very challenging task, and it has been a pleasure watching them rise to it."

Evie Lovell (left) who took the title role said: "I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to play such a complex character. The rehearsal process was intense, but the hard work paid off, as the standard was so high."

The production received critical acclaim. Parent Helen Bowen said: "The play was gripping from beginning to end. Evie Lovell portrayed a truly beautiful and enigmatic Hedda and led a star studded cast – each performer bringing their own unique interpretation to the character they were playing."



Jo Wall and Daisy Everett in the A Level Drama & Theatre Studies performance of the *The Memory of Water* by Shelagh Stephenson.

Julius Wills, Josh Gardner, Jordan Spencer and Robert Davies are pictured above in the GCSE drama production of the John Godber play, *Bouncers*. Said the cast: "GCSE drama has been amazing. It has fired our imaginations and we have learned so much. We had a great time rehearsing *Bouncers* and were really proud of the performance."

# Jungle Book



Pupils in Years 7 ~ 10 received some tips from the top for their summer production of Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*.

Actor Nasser Memarzia, whose recent film and TV work includes *The Kite Runner*, *Midnight Man* (ITV) and *House of Saddam* (BBC TV), directed the play.

The youngsters also received coaching in performance techniques from members of Cherwell Theatre Company, of which Nasser is Artistic Director.

Cast member Chris O'Donnell said: "It was really exciting having a professional actor come in to direct us. When we first began rehearsing we didn't really act but instead did lots of exercises like discovering how to move like an animal and how to get our

vocals right. That really made a difference when we then moved on to start learning the play."

The *Jungle Book* formed part of the annual Sibford Festival of Theatre which saw performances from the school's own pupils combine with appearances from professional artists.

Other highlights of the Festival included: a special production of the *Railway Children*, performed by members of the Junior School; The Rain or Shine Theatre Company in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Archers'* actress Sunny Ormonde who joined the Antonious Players for *A Roll in the Hay*, a light-hearted celebration of the countryside which was performed at Sibford prior to moving to the 2011 Edinburgh Festival.



*Pictured (clockwise from bottom left): Tina Gandy and Sunny Ormonde in A Roll in the Hay; George Urquhart, Julia Beaumont and Elizabeth Hudson in The Railway Children, and the cast of Much Ado About Nothing.*



# QUEEN

## GREATEST HITS

When it was announced that this year's Mill concert would be a tribute to Queen I cried out in happiness. For as long as I could remember the four legends, Freddy Mercury, Brian May, Roger Taylor and John Deacon, had been strong musical influences. As a guitarist, Brian May is one of my all-time legends ... and as soon as I knew we were to be playing Queen I called my mum and said: 'Phone the costume shop, I'm gonna need a wig!'

Our hard work and rehearsals paid off with fantastic results and as March approached, the excitement and anticipation grew.

The first half saw a mixed set list including a tribute to Gary Moore; Stevie Ray Vaughan's Cold Shot and Cee Lo Green's Forget You. And I'm sure many of us will never forget Jake Wilson-Wainwright's air guitar skills during the Eagles' Hotel California.

As the first half came to an end, the audience shuffled out to the bar for drinks and peanuts while backstage, the scramble began. Costumes were pulled on and make-up applied ... even to some of the boys. This was just how I had imagined the evening to be ... costume madness and attempts by certain people, myself included, to become members of Queen.

When the second half started, the atmosphere was electric as the students rolled out hits like Somebody to Love, We Will Rock You, Don't Stop Me Now and many many more. It was brilliant. The show ended with a guitar rendition of God Save the Queen as all performers joined the stage and took a well-earned bow. To me the night had been a magical experience, possibly made in heaven. I didn't want it to end. If I could, I would have kept the show going every night. This was now a great memory of my time at Sibford and always will be.

**Tom Smith** (pictured with wig top left)



# Banbury Young Musician 2011

In March, Sibford School once again hosted the annual Banbury Young Musician of the Year Competition.

Now in its 21st year, the competition, which is organised by the Rotary Club of Banbury, attracts musicians from schools across North Oxfordshire.

Rotary president, Ron Barnett, said: "There can be no doubt that the standard of musicianship has risen year on year, and this year proves to be no exception."

Sibford students were among those taking part ... and the home team did exceptionally well.

George Johnson-Briscoe (Yr 7) was named Junior Musician of the Year 2011 and was also awarded the Brooks Trophy for Junior Brass.

Emily Sloan (Yr 10) was awarded the One Man Band Trophy for the most improved student taking part in the competition during the last three years and Max Ostrand (Yr 7) was awarded the Pearson-Smith Trophy for Junior Woodwind.

There was also success for pupils from Sibford Junior School. Sam Banbury and Benjamin Thompson (both Yr 5) were awarded the Inner Wheel Trophy for Junior Duets and Benjamin also picked up the Tony Rye Memorial Trophy for Junior Piano.



From top left: George Johnson-Briscoe; Sam Banbury and Benjamin Thompson; Emily Sloan; and Max Ostrand



## Celebrating talents

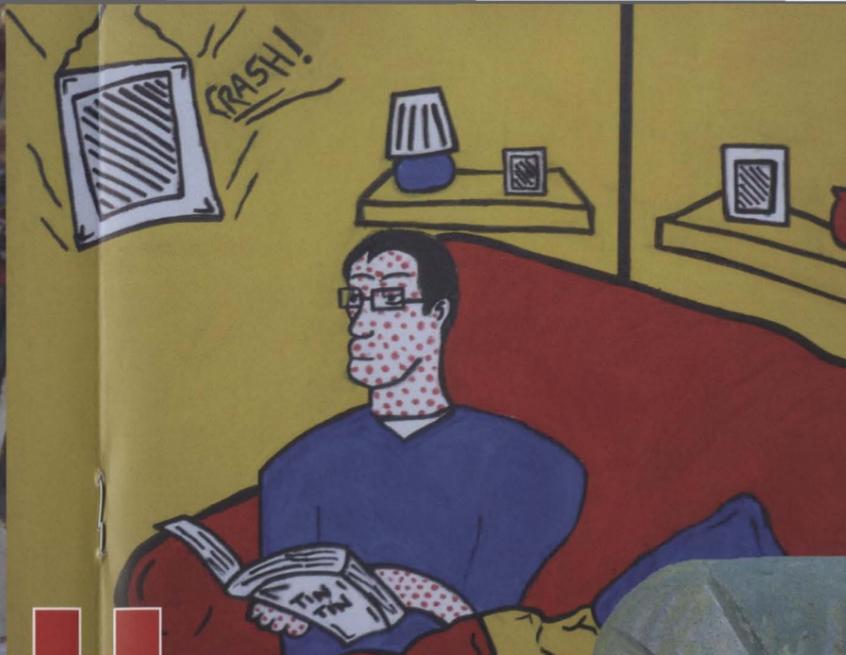
Quaker musical talents were shared in May when around 40 pupils from Friends' School in Saffron Walden, Essex, visited Sibford Junior School.

The Saffron Walden Junior Band and our own Junior Choir entertained each other during a special concert held in the Oliver Studio.

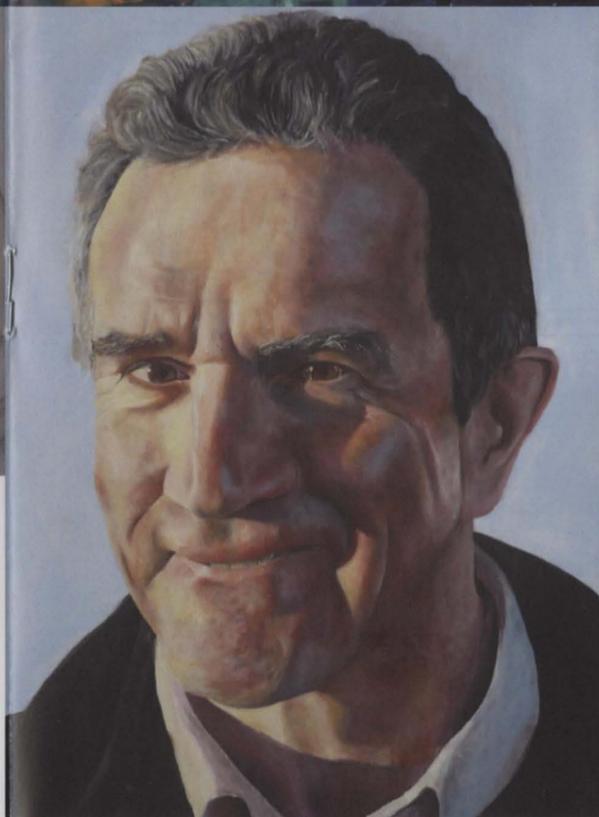
The following month, a small ensemble of Sibford senior students took part in a celebration of Quaker song, poetry and prose held at Adderbury Meeting House.

The Meeting House has remained almost unchanged since it was built in 1675. It has no heating, water supply or electricity ... and so it was a strictly acoustic line-up that performed songs including Fox's 'Walk Cheerfully Over the Earth' and 'Old Leather Breeches'.

Amanda Howson, one of the organisers of the event said: "A huge thank you to everyone involved. We got a really positive response and some great feedback."



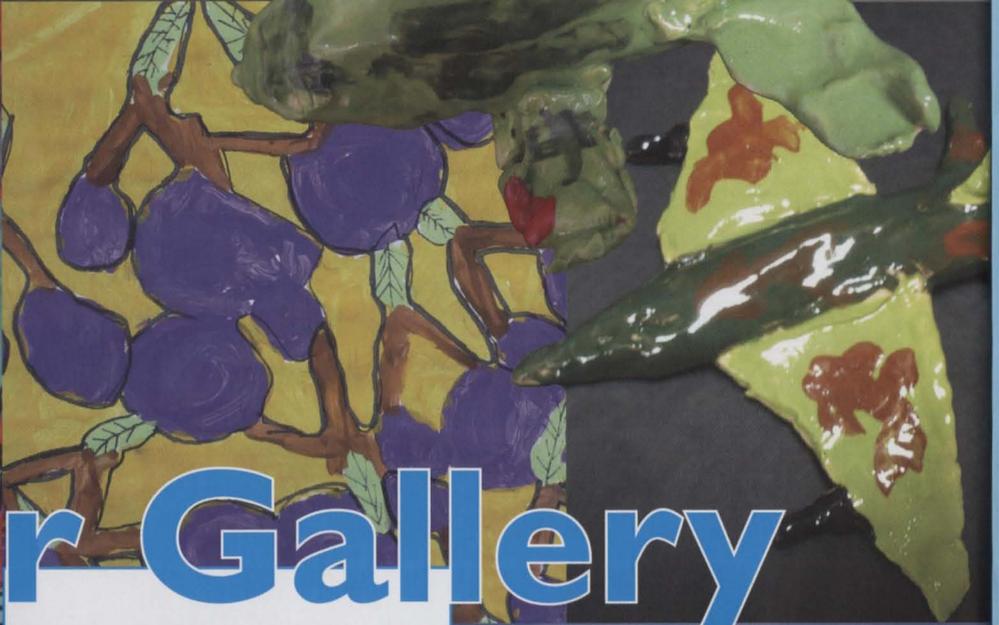
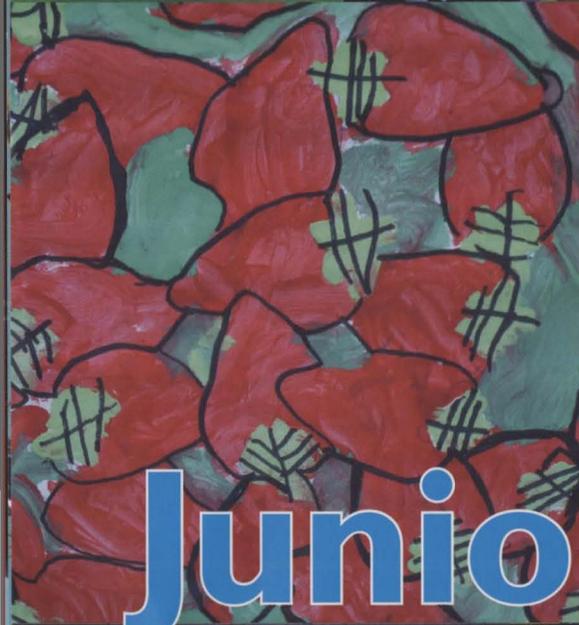
# Gallery



### Exhibitors

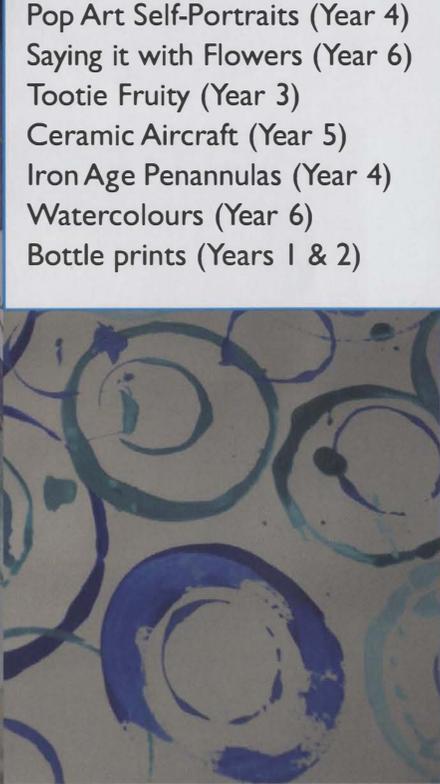
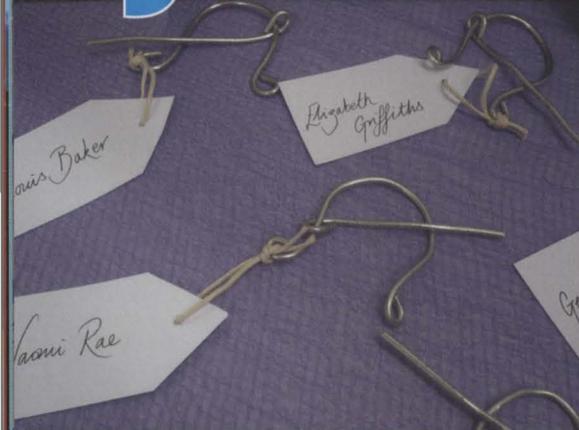
- 1) Year 8 (Ceramic High Street)
- 2) Jordan Spencer (Year 11)
- 3) Ellie Carr-Smith (Year 11)
- 4) Joe More (Year 11)
- 5) Becky More (Year 12)
- 6) Sophie Hunsley (Year 13)
- 7) Year 9 (Bird Tree)
- 8) Zoe Trafford (Year 12)
- 9) Mariko Fukuda (Year 11)
- 10) Beth Birkbeck (Year 13)
- 11) Erin Burton (Year 11)





# Junior Gallery

- Pop Art Self-Portraits (Year 4)
- Saying it with Flowers (Year 6)
- Tootie Fruity (Year 3)
- Ceramic Aircraft (Year 5)
- Iron Age Penannulas (Year 4)
- Watercolours (Year 6)
- Bottle prints (Years 1 & 2)



# Design and Technology

Year 12 Design and Technology students have been experimenting with our new vacuum bag which enables them to make their own plywood shapes in a variety of shapes and forms.

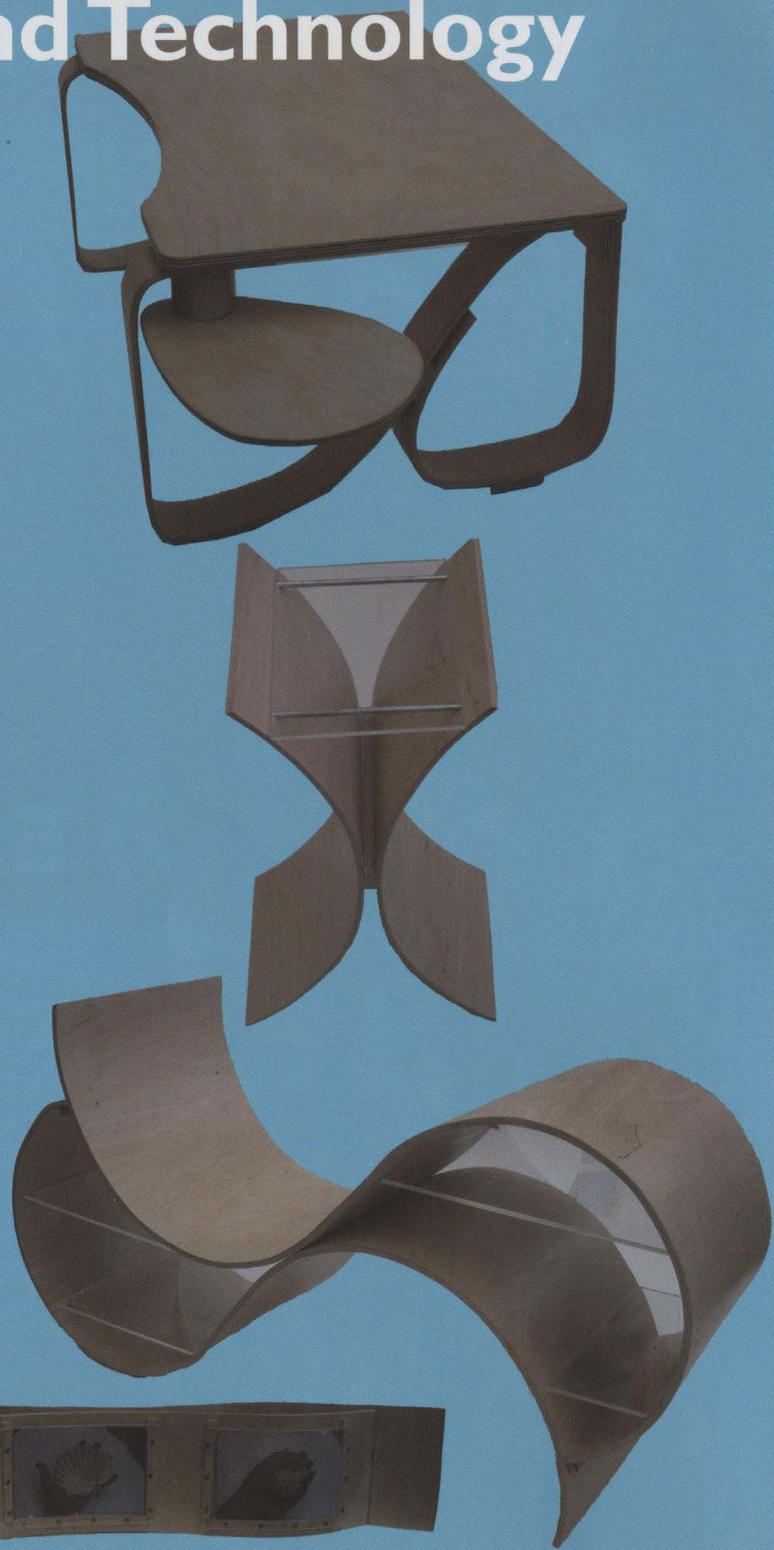
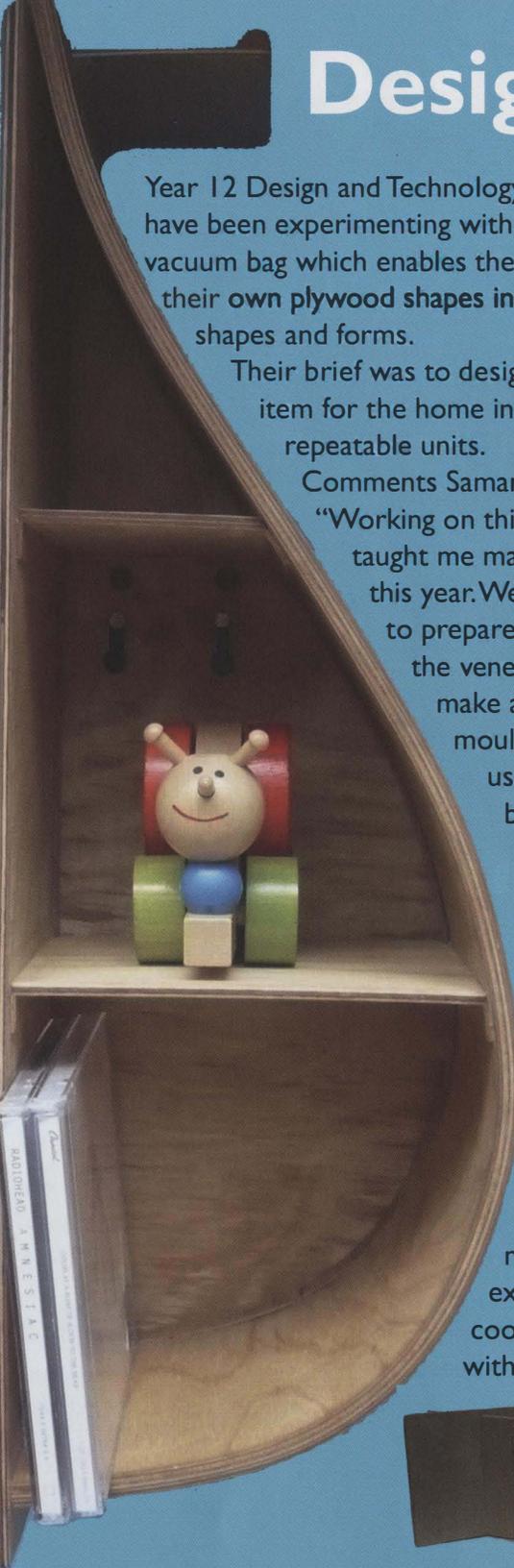
Their brief was to design a small item for the home including some repeatable units.

Comments Samantha Veres:

“Working on this project has taught me many new skills this year. We learned how to prepare and glue up the veneers, how to make a styrene

mould and how to use the vacuum bag to squash all the layers of wood together.

It was really interesting to make our own plywood and to be able to make so many exciting and cool new shapes with it.”



Sibford School Design and Technology teacher Victor Stannard rubbed shoulders with comedian Rory Bremner when he attended the TES (Times Educational Supplement) Schools Awards gala lunch held at the London Hilton Hotel in July.

TES provides a website that enables teachers to share learning materials including lesson plans, activities, games, teaching ideas and worksheets.

Vic was invited to be a guest of the organisers in recognition of the contributions he has made to the site. Gerard Kelly, TES Editor, said: “We chose our

most-valued resource uploaders to come to the event. The resources they have shared have helped thousands of teachers around the globe.”

Vic’s contributions have included Year 9 Candle Holder examples, a revision guide and a Manufacturing Gantt Chart which was rated five out of five and described as a ‘hidden gem’ by the TES Board.

## TES Resources



## Exciting times for Ju



The last year has been especially exciting for Sibford's youngest pupils.

September 2010 saw the Junior School celebrating its 21st birthday. To mark the occasion a special ceramic mural was created which now has pride of place on the school wall.

The mural features an apple tree ~ picked to reflect the fact that the junior school is based within an orchard and was previously known as Orchard Close ~ with seven branches, representing the different year groups from Reception through to Year 6.

All the children and staff made a variety of apples, leaves, animals, birds and mini-beasts to their own design and size. These were then individually glazed before being put together to form the final piece.

The mural was unveiled as part of the 21st birthday celebrations by former junior school head teacher Liz Young, and Lord Saye and Sele, who had performed the original opening ceremony of the junior school back in 1989.

Also present at the celebrations were a number of former pupils, including the very first registered pupil at Orchard Close, Lucy Bromwich, now aged 30.

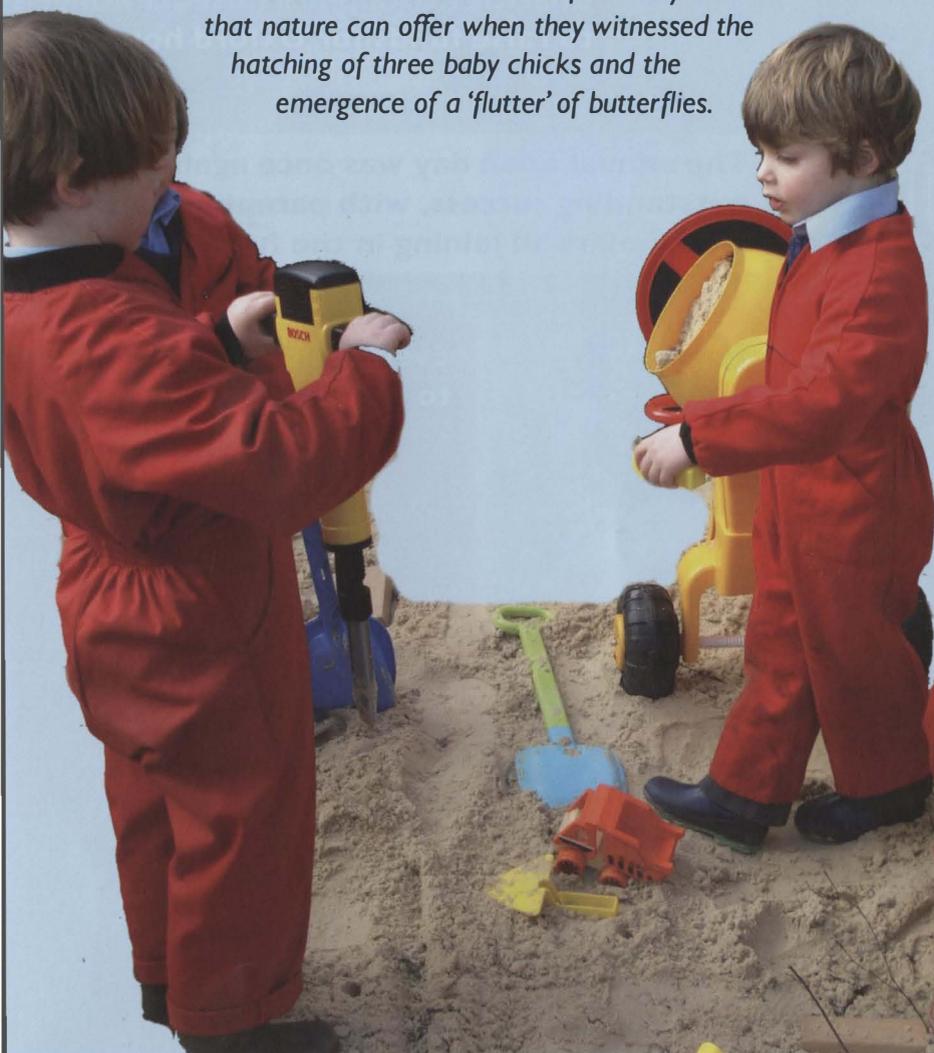
In January we extended our Reception Class to welcome three-year-olds. The move followed a decision by the Department of Education to register the school as a '3 – 18 provider' and followed a report by the Independent Schools Inspectorate which assessed Sibford Junior School's Early Years Foundation Stage as 'outstanding' and congratulated the school on providing its youngest pupils with a learning experience that is 'enjoyable' and where 'individual needs are met'.

*Pictured: Left: Liz Young unveils the mural. Above: Lucy Bromwich with Theo Whalley and Lord Saye & Sele with Frannie McClymont.*



# Junior School

*Since joining the school, our three-year-olds, together with their four-year-old classmates, have been able to make the most of our outdoor learning environment and were also able to see some of the very best that nature can offer when they witnessed the hatching of three baby chicks and the emergence of a 'flutter' of butterflies.*





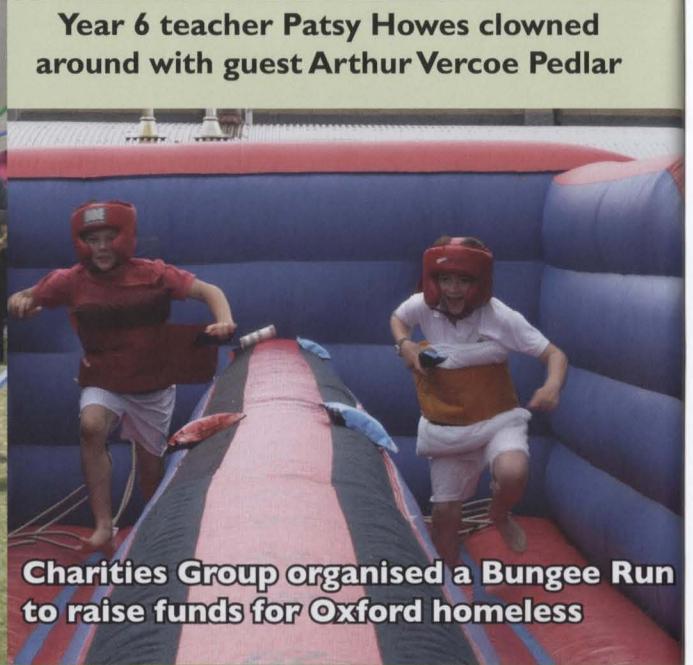
**Musicians entertained**



**Year 6 teacher Patsy Howes clowned around with guest Arthur Vercoe Pedlar**



**Parents joined Junior School pupils round the Maypole**



**Charities Group organised a Bungee Run to raise funds for Oxford homeless**

# **OPEN DAY 2011**

**The annual open day was once again an outstanding success, with parents, friends and old scholars all joining in the fun.**



**Special guests Professor Forte (left) and Arthur Vercoe Pedlar (right) are pictured with Michael Goodwin**



**Even the odd shower failed to dampen spirits**

# Olympic athlete makes a splash

Three-times Great Britain Olympic swimmer, Helen Slatter, visited Sibford to share her experiences of competing at Seoul (1988), Barcelona (1992) and Atlanta (1996).

“My journey to the Olympics started on my 10th birthday when my parents took me to the local pool and the lifeguard asked if I could swim 25 metres,” she told pupils. “I swam the length and was invited to join the swimming club, and that was the start of me becoming an Olympic swimmer.”

Harrison Donley (Yr10) said: “Helen had so much knowledge and the tips she gave us were really helpful. She was very open about how she felt when getting ready to compete in the three different Olympic Games and really pushed us to go for our dreams.”

Teacher Claire Ferley added: “Helen was very inspirational. It was terrific for our pupils to be able to receive coaching at such a high standard, an opportunity which I know they appreciated ... we had extra pupils turn up to our early morning training session the following day which I think says it all!”

Helen was at Sibford immediately prior to jetting off to China for the World Swimming Championships



in Shanghai and shared her hopes that team GB would come away with a medal in the Open Water Marathon in the 2012 Olympics ... a hope that came a step closer when Keri-Anne Payne won the gold medal in Shanghai, becoming the first British athlete to qualify for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

There was an extra special treat for three lucky pupils ~ Antonia Clack, Molly King and Lara Mills (pictured above) ~ who were picked out by Helen to receive their very own Team GB swimming caps.

## Kate's long distance challenge

Seven years ago Kate Mills was petrified of water ... however an intensive swimming course in 2004 with Sibford pool manager Angie Wiffen saw her learn to swim in a week.

Today the Year 7 pupil is 'passionate' about swimming and has just completed a 22-mile sponsored swim to raise money for a community defibrillator and competition starting blocks for the pool.

Kate covered the distance, equivalent to swimming the English Channel, in a total time of 10 hours, 24 minutes and 45 seconds and to date has raised more than £3,000.



**THEN ... Angie teaches the young Kate to swim**

**NOW ... Kate has swum the length of the English Channel**

## Gala champs

Five schools competed against each other and against the clock in January for the 2011 North Oxfordshire Sport Partnership Swimming Gala, held at Sibford School pool.

More than 60 young swimmers from Banbury School, Blessed George Napier, Cooper School in Bicester, the Warriner and Sibford took part in a range of events including front and back crawl, butterfly and breaststroke.

Scores were close, but the home team of Sibford came top, BGN second and Banbury School third.

There was also success for swimmers in the junior school who took first place in the North Oxfordshire School's Aquasplash Swimming Gala held at the end of March.

# England spinner presents sports awards

Former Kent and England spinner, Min Patel, was guest of honour at the first Sibford School Sports Dinner, which was held at Ettington Chase Hotel near Stratford.

Min presented awards to recognise success in a number of sports including netball, hockey, football, rugby, cricket, athletics and swimming.

Overall Sports Person of the Year was Alex Robertson (pictured with Min right).

It was Min's second contact with Sibford this year. In March he joined Kent teammate, Robert Ferley, to host a two-day cricket-coaching course.

Robert, who is also a former Nottinghamshire player and England under 19s spinner, is brother of Sibford sport teacher, Richard Ferley.

"The course offered students an ideal opportunity to learn about the game from



people who have played against the best," said Richard. "Those who took part were able to gain first hand insight into how to develop their technique."



## Home and away rugby fun

Young rugby players from across five counties descended on Sibford in March for the 13th annual Sibford Sevens Tournament.

A total of 16 schools from Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire took part

in the event which was won by Royal Latin School.

Sibford players took to the road later in the same month for a rugby tour of the south west.

Some 34 boys in Years 8, 9 and 10 enjoyed a master class at Plymouth RFC from Fijian coach

Nat Saumi and Plymouth scrum half Ruairi Cushion.

They also competed in matches against Millfield School and Barnstaple Rugby Club and watched Exeter Chiefs take on Northampton Saints in an AVIVA Premiership encounter.

# Learning to sail at Farmoor

Year Six have been taking to the waters at Farmoor Reservoir. Instructed by the Oxford and District School Sailing Association, they have been studying the Royal Yachting Association Stage 1 course ~ which provides a basic understanding of how a boat sails and some experience of steering and handling a boat. Some have also progressed to Stage 2, which aims to enable them to become confident small boat sailors.

Two pupils share their experiences:

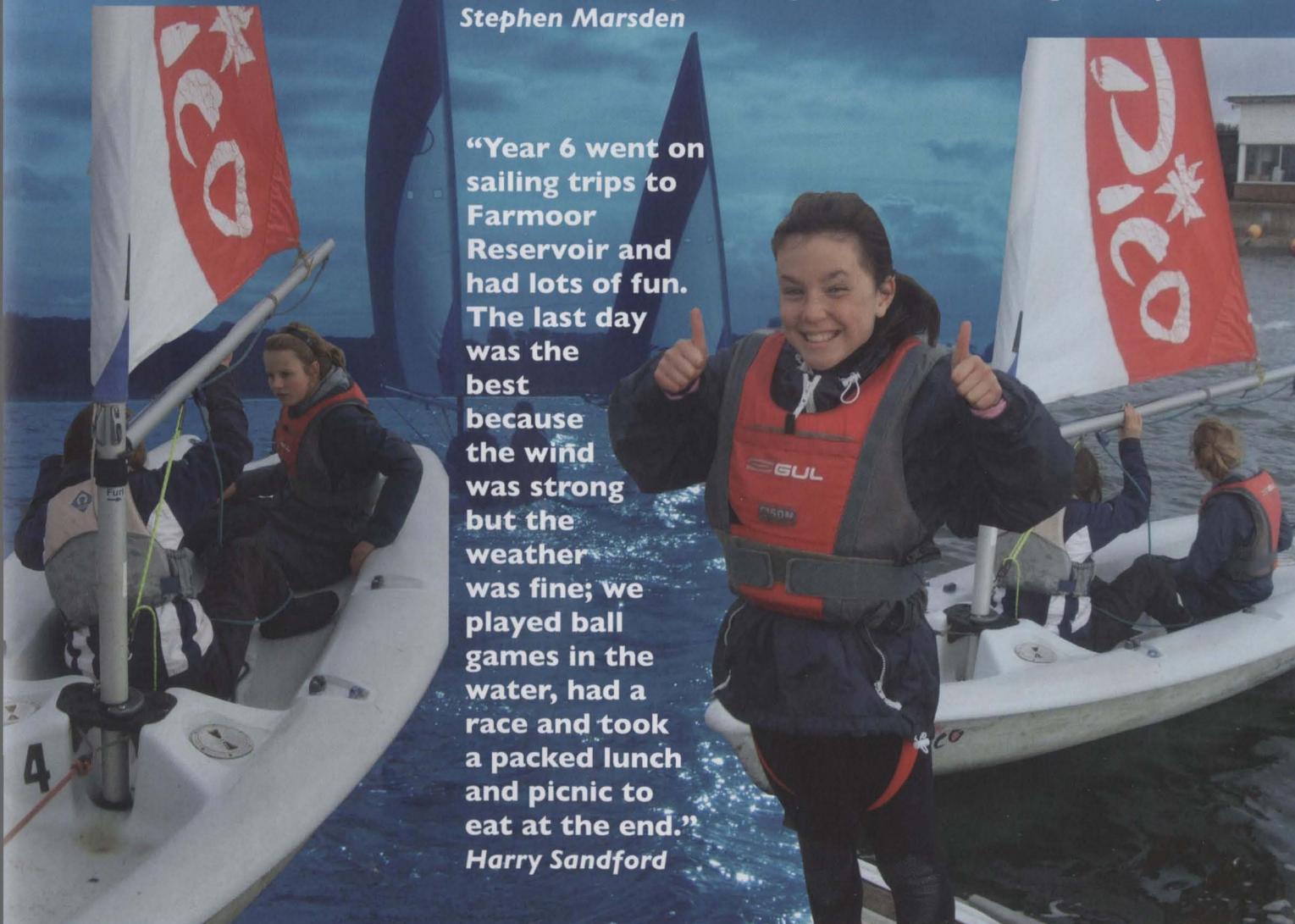


“The two instructors told us how to sail and how to put up the sail and mast. Once rigged we tied the boats together and the instructors got on the safety boat and they took us to the far end of the reservoir so we could get some practice before going into the strong winds (and I mean strong winds).”

*Stephen Marsden*

“Year 6 went on sailing trips to Farmoor Reservoir and had lots of fun. The last day was the best because the wind was strong but the weather was fine; we played ball games in the water, had a race and took a packed lunch and picnic to eat at the end.”

*Harry Sandford*





Proud in purple ... Gillett show off their new colour



Caught!  
Mums in hiding as  
the parents' race  
is announced



# What a sport!

This year's Senior School sports day in June provided the perfect platform for Gillett House to unveil its new house colour.

After some discussion it was decided that the original 'Gillett Green' was a bit too close to 'Sibford Green' and so house members voted to change their hue ... to purple.

However, while Gillett members looked impressively regal in their new shade they failed to take victory and instead it was left to Fry House to lift the winner's trophy for the second year in succession.

At the Junior School sports day, which took place in July, the winning house was Terry.



# NEW STAFF

Introducing the new faces who have joined Sibford in the past academic year

working I love spending time with my family and friends, travelling, going to the gym, reading and cooking.

## Lotty Andrew, Teaching Assistant

I was originally a pupil at Sibford and left in 2005 to go to Oxford Brookes University to study History of Art. I am currently studying for a PGCE, with the aim of becoming a teacher in Art and Design, and am working one day a week at Sibford. I really enjoy the friendly atmosphere here and the enthusiasm of the pupils. When I'm not working or studying I enjoy riding, playing polo and skiing.

## Lesley Cooley, Learning Support Assistant

I qualified from Sheffield University with a degree in Materials Science and worked for 10 years in industry (at that time female engineers were very few and far between!) I love the atmosphere at Sibford School. The relationship between staff and pupils is unique – a special mix of mutual respect and friendship. When I'm not at work I like to play squash and tennis. I also enjoy walking.

## Chris Dudley, Economics Teacher

I was born in Birmingham, am married with three grown up children and support Aston Villa FC. I particularly enjoy working with the students here at Sibford. In my spare time I enjoy walking, gardening, reading, visiting the theatre and the cinema and doing the crossword.

## Rachel Harvey, Pastoral Support Administrator

I worked for a legal firm, specialising in domestic violence and child abuse, for 10 years and then went to live

in Spain for a complete change! I've been lucky in life to always work with good people and Sibford has really lived up to my expectations – everybody has been welcoming and friendly. I have two great sons and we spend our weekends walking our wire-haired fox terrier, playing or watching sport. I also love visiting galleries; going to the theatre and seeing bands play live.

## Beata Molska, Cleaner

I originate from Poland where I was a volunteer in a school for disabled children and later worked as a security guard at Tesco. I came to the UK in 2006. Sibford School has a nice atmosphere and lots of very friendly people. When I'm not at work I enjoy reading books with a cup of coffee or going for a bike ride.

## Emma Robinson, House Parent, Penn

Having been a primary school teacher for 18 years I decided I would like a new challenge and change in career, whilst still working in a school environment. I began working as a house parent in Penn House last September, just as my daughter Bethan started in Year 7. Being a house parent is a very rewarding job as I believe the boarders need a caring, homely environment in which to relax and to enable them to fulfil their potential. Sibford School is a great place to work and live because of the ethos of the school and the support of both the teachers and the students and we have been made to feel very welcome. When I am not

## Ali Sayer, Junior School Teacher

I have been teaching for many years and at some point in my career have taught every age from Reception to Year 6. I have taught in Avon, Wiltshire, London, USA, and, prior to coming to Sibford, spent 25 years teaching in Warwickshire, latterly as deputy head of Kineton Primary with a couple of stints as acting head. Two years ago I decided to give up the stress of a management role and go back to enjoying class teaching. I like the advantages of the small classes here at Sibford as it enables you to get to know the children and their parents really well. I also love the wonderful outdoor environment Sibford has to offer. I like to keep fit, I swim twice a week and run most other days. I also play tennis regularly and squash in the winter. I enjoy spending time with my family, which this year meant visiting America with my husband to see my son and his wife and going to Australia over the summer to see my twin daughters.

## Joseph Zetter, French/Spanish Teacher

Having lived and worked in Spanish and French speaking countries I decided to share my passion for languages and foreign cultures by becoming a teacher. I enjoy Sibford, especially the feeling that everybody knows everybody ... it makes for a really close-knit community and a sense of belonging. When I'm not at work I can usually be found relaxing at home or planning my next trip abroad.



# Sibford and the King's Speech

A Sibford old boy put in an Oscar winning performance when he traded a chain of emails with an Australian speech therapist.

As a result of their inter-continental correspondence, movie-makers re-focused their plot and the result was the multi-award winning film, *The King's Speech*.

Mark Logue, who attended Sibford School from 1977 – 1980, is the grandson of the now famous royal speech therapist, Lionel Logue, played to international acclaim by Geoffrey Rush.

And certainly some of the film's success can be attributed to the additional information he was able to unearth.

"The film was basically written by the time I came on the scene," said Mark, "and to be honest, the scriptwriter was absolutely mortified when he was told of my existence. Here was the person who was going to scrap his script! But it was pretty much on the mark, and the information I held was to provide the detail."

Mark came to Sibford in September 1977 having previously lived in Brussels, where his father worked as a lawyer at the European headquarters of Procter & Gamble.

"I was faced with the challenge of transferring from the French Lycée system to the British education system which was quite difficult," he said. "Sibford helped me with that ... I wasn't dyslexic but I was practically dyslexic and would have struggled sitting the common entrance exam.

"I enjoyed my time at Sibford and made some good friends. My older sister Nicola joined the sixth form in 1980 and it was nice to have a sibling at the same

school. But I have to confess I was a bit of a rebel, and I probably didn't work as hard as I should!"

So when did Mark first become aware that his family had royal connections?

"During our time in Brussels we moved between various houses but there was one constant: regardless of where we were, a collection of photographs and

mementos would be set up on a mantelpiece or windowsill. "Among them was a photograph of my Australian-born paternal grandfather, Lionel, and his wife, Myrtle. Also, more intriguingly, there was a leather-framed portrait of King George VI, signed and dated 12 May 1937; a picture of the King with his wife and the



*Mark Logue*

*at Sibford 1977 ~ 1980*

>>>

# SOSA

## Keeping in touch

For further information about Sibford Old Scholars Association visit the website: [www.sibfordoldscholars.com](http://www.sibfordoldscholars.com)

For general enquiries about SOSA email [enquiries@sibfordoldscholars.com](mailto:enquiries@sibfordoldscholars.com)

For membership enquiries contact Wendy Finch [wfinch@sibfordschool.co.uk](mailto:wfinch@sibfordschool.co.uk)

To submit information for inclusion in the Sibfordian magazine or SOSA newsletter, contact Ali Bromhall Community Development Officer Sibford School 01295 781216 [abromhall@sibfordschool.co.uk](mailto:abromhall@sibfordschool.co.uk)

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## facebook

Become a fan of Sibford School on Facebook ... a great way to keep in touch with other old scholars.

two princesses; and a third picture of the royal couple, dated 1928, when they were still the Duke and Duchess of York, signed Elizabeth and Albert.

"The significance of these photos must have been explained to me but I never paid too much attention. I

understood the link with royalty was through Lionel, but he was ancient history to me having died 12 years before I was born."

It wasn't until his own father died in 2001 that Mark first set eyes on a document wallet containing some of his grandfather's records ... but even then the importance of the contents was to remain hidden for a few more years.

"I thought it was interesting and put it to one side to look at when I had time. I then didn't return to it again until 2006," he says.

"I had been contacted by an Australian speech therapist called Caroline Bowen who back in 2002 had written a paper on my grandfather. She was seeking more information so I replied and said I had some archive material. We started corresponding and it was then that I finally got round to having a proper look at the old letters and documents in the wallet."

Skip forward to 2009 and, out of the blue, Caroline Bowen forwards an email she's received from a



Mark's grandfather, Lionel Logue, pictured on his engagement to Myrtle Gruenert

picture researcher who had been hired to find out more about Lionel Logue in connection with a new film.

"At that time, about the only thing you could discover about Lionel on the internet was Caroline's paper," explains Mark. "I responded to the email and within minutes Iain Canning, the producer of the film, was on the phone!"

The diaries, letters and photographs that Mark had discovered were able to provide the extra information that until then the film had been missing.

"The photos showed what my grandfather and Myrtle looked like and the style of dress they preferred. The letters and journals, meanwhile, were able to add more facts to the script."

Suddenly Mark, his wife and their three children, found themselves moving in circles they would previously never have dreamt of.

"We were treated like royalty and were invited on set to meet the film's stars including Geoffrey Rush and Colin Firth. It was really bizarre to stand by and witness scenes featuring my own father ... but at the age of 10, I became particularly fascinated by a scene in which Rush's character hovers over my father and his elder brother while they are made to recite Shakespeare. It reminded me of a similar real life scene when I



Mark pictured during his time at Sibford

was a boy and my father obliged me to do the same.”

By January 2010 the film was wrapped up. A year later it was released in the United Kingdom and became a major box office hit and received numerous awards including seven Baftas and four Academy Awards. But the story doesn't stop there for Mark.

“The film spans only a few years of my grandfather's life, from 1926 to 1939. But I'd got an itch for the story and wanted to tell more.

“I found myself an agent and we approached a publisher with a view to writing a book. There was an appetite out there for the story but we needed to act quickly so the schedule was going to have to be very tight. The first publisher turned us down which was when we approached Quercus who were small enough to take on the challenge.

“I started transcribing the journals but we needed a writer to put the book together. Again, we had a false start, but I was then introduced to Peter Conradi. As a journalist he was used to working to deadlines and also had a deep knowledge of 20th century history.”

The pair got to work with the manuscripts and journals with the aim of completing the book by the end of July. However, there was a further frustration ... the journals only told half the story. It was then that fate stepped in once more.

“My cousin contacted me to say she had found some documents relating to my grandfather. To my absolute delight they turned out to be the missing link. The papers I had were my grandfather's journals and drafts of letters he had written to the king. This new find contained the king's replies!”

Mark and Peter were given a month's extension to complete the book. It was eventually published on 10 November 2010 and, like the film, received critical acclaim going to the top 10 in both the Sunday Times and New York Times best sellers list.

“It's been an amazing time,” said Mark. “Finding those papers really did change my life. I've done numerous interviews and have been on TV in the UK, the United States and Australia. It's been great but it has also been a bit of a distraction. I'm now looking forward to things getting back to normal.”



Sibford School has a further connection with the film *The King's Speech*. Actress Jennifer Ehle, who plays Lionel Logue's wife Myrtle, performed the official opening of Margaret Fell boarding house in October 1995.

Above: Jennifer with Geoffrey Rush and Colin Firth in a scene from the film and (right) opening Margaret Fell.

Thanks to old scholar Chris Leo, a contemporary of Mark Logue, who alerted us to this story.



## The bee's knees!

When Sibford School Business Manager, Peter Robinson, established a new beehive at the school this year he prompted a host of memories.

We know that bees were kept at Sibford during the 1930s. According to the Sibford Story DVD (*available from the school price £7.99*) pupils used to 'catch the bee in a test-tube then give it a whiff of ether to keep it quiet'. The purpose of this activity which, incidentally, was carried out without any protective clothing, was to enable the bee to be tagged so that its activity could be followed in the hive.

However, it's more recent memories that have been flooding in since news of Peter's bees was tweeted on Twitter and shared on Facebook.

Jo Buffrey Ferguson says: "I remember the beehives in the 1970s and being shown how to extract the honey in Biology."

Antoinette Bebbington says: "I remember the glass beehive in the science classroom, it was in the early 1970s. We also had outside hives which we got honey from and put into jars to be sold on parents' day."

And Maggie Hough offers further detail: "Gordon Wright was our rural science teacher and was instrumental in our bee keeping."

Pictured: Peter at the beehive which is situated near Penn boarding house.

# Family of Conrad Lewis adopt mascot dog

The family of a former Sibford pupil who was killed in Afghanistan has brought home the stray dog he was caring for at the time of his death.

Private Conrad Lewis, who was at Sibford between 2001 and 2005, was serving with the 4th Battalion The Parachute Regiment in Helmand province when he befriended the three-year-old mongrel he was to name Pegasus, after the winged-horse on the regiment's emblem.

Peg was pictured with Conrad in the photograph released by the Ministry of Defence at the time of his death.

And now his family, with help from the regiment, the Afghan National Police and a charity that rescues dogs from war, have

brought Peg out of Afghanistan to live in the UK.

Speaking on BBC News, Conrad's father, Tony, said: "He wrote a letter within the first few weeks to say he'd befriended this dog and that he was sharing his rations with her."

Mum, Sandra added: "When Conrad came back at Christmas, he said that he wanted to bring Pegasus back at the end of his tour so, after he died, we thought that's what he'd want us to do so we set about doing it."

Peg has to stay in quarantine until November before she can join the family at their home in Warwickshire. In the meantime, Tony and Sandra, together with



*Side by side ... Peg and Conrad*

Conrad's brother, sister and girlfriend, are making regular visits to the kennels to be with Peg. Said Sandra: "I can't look after Conrad but I can look after his dog which is what he wanted."

## Return of scholar with royal connections

Old scholars return to the school for a variety of reasons. Some, who have only recently left, come back to catch up with friends and staff. Others find themselves in the area and pop in. While still others come back on a nostalgic visit after years of absence. However, few come back to experience the stress of exams ... until now.

Tim Middleton was a pupil at Sibford from 1970 to 1975 and this June he was back for the fingernail biting experience of the exam season.

To be fair, it wasn't Tim who was sitting the papers on this occasion ... rather his 16-year-old son Jocelyn.

Explained Tim: "Jocelyn has been home schooled and because he is dyspraxic and dyslexic qualifies for extra exam time. When we couldn't find anywhere suitable near our home in London my wife



*Tim pictured with son Jocelyn during his recent visit to Sibford*

suggested we try my old school ... and here we are."

After leaving Sibford, Tim entered the music industry where he worked as a sound engineer. He moved into TV when he decided he was 'getting too many grey hairs' for the music industry and

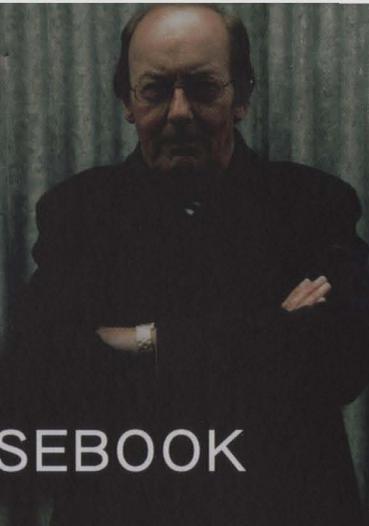
currently works for Arqiva, the TV and radio transmission provider which is handling the digital switchover.

"Sibford School seems a much friendlier place now than it did when I was a pupil," said Tim. "Lots has changed, the Manor has gone and Lister boarding house is now the sixth form centre, but other bits look exactly as I remembered them."

And, for those of you who are wondering, 'yes' Tim does have connections to the future Queen of England!

His father, Tony, was the brother of Kate's late grandfather, Peter Middleton. Tim and his wife were guests at the wedding but as Tim says: "We were 10 rows back in the South Transept so it was very difficult to see. I didn't know what the dress looked like until I got home and saw it on TV!"

The case of Derek Bentley has been described as 'the single biggest nail in the coffin of capital punishment'. In 1952, PC Sidney Miles was killed in a shootout on a warehouse roof in Croydon. Derek Bentley and Christopher Craig were found guilty of his murder. Craig, the only one of the pair who was armed, escaped the noose because he was only 16. But 19-year-old Bentley was sentenced to death. Over the following years, Bentley's family was to campaign for justice, claiming the boy, who had a mental age of eight, should never had been tried for murder, let alone be found guilty. Their campaign helped bring about the abolition of the death penalty in 1969. And, eventually, on 30 July 1998, the Court of Appeal quashed the conviction and, 45 years after his death, Derek Bentley was granted a posthumous pardon.



## FRED DINENAGE MURDER CASEBOOK

Bentley's story has recently featured on TV as part of the 'Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook' series, and one of the key contributors to the programme was former Sibford head, Hugh Maw, who first met Bentley back in 1948 when the teenager was found guilty of two minor offences and sent to Kingswood Approved School in Bristol. "Derek was quite small and completely illiterate," Hugh tells his TV audience. "He could only sign his name with a cross.

He had a low average non verbal IQ and was, what they called in those days, ESN ~ educationally subnormal."

Kingswood ran on strict military discipline and it will come as no surprise to learn that this did not sit comfortably with someone

who was to be the future head of a Quaker School.

Fred Dinenage explains: "Hugh Maw was popular with the pupils because he refused to carry out beatings. He was known as 'Slasher'



because of his haircut at the time." To which Hugh adds: "I had to go frequently to Mr Adam's [the principal's] office and witness the beatings with Derek in particular. He was beaten for very minor offences and I looked so worried when I came out with him that

he said: 'don't worry Slash I've got corns on me bum, it's no problem as far as I'm concerned!'"

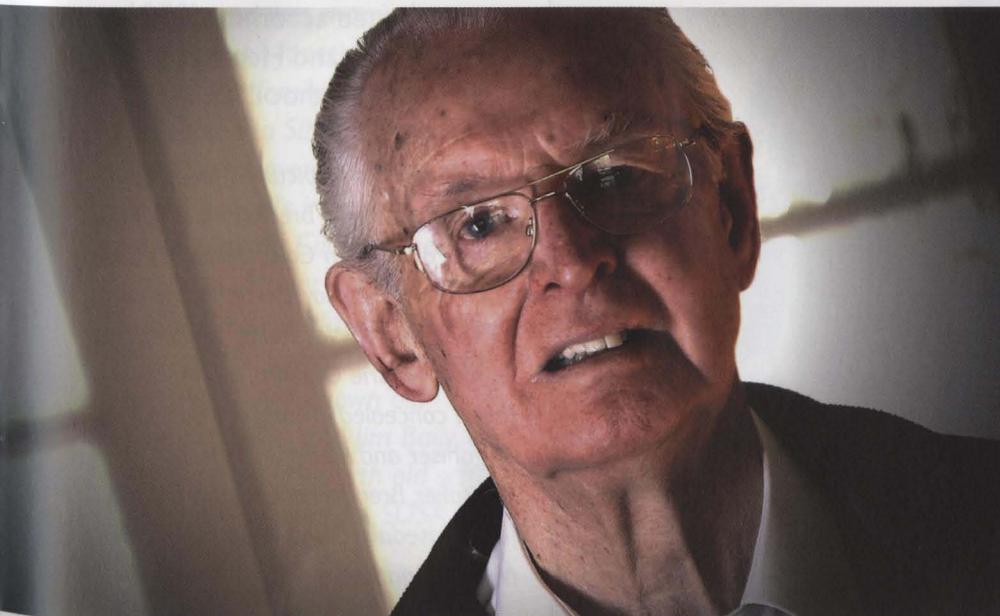
The programme was filmed in September 2010, although it wasn't aired until the summer of 2011.

"The recording was done in our old bungalow 'Mendip' which now belongs to our son Richard, because our flat was thought too small," said Hugh. "However, until the crew arrived, I hadn't realised what a major project it was. There were three TV cameras, five technicians plus the producer Alex Gliddon, presenter Fred Dinenage and his assistant!

"Fred was a charming and very professional interviewer and presenter who was very well briefed. While we were being filmed we were not allowed notes so the interview lasted more than 50 minutes but they seemed very happy and thought it should be given a high priority because of its contemporary significance ... student violence, injustice, police issues and so on.

"We believe I am the only teacher still alive who was in contact with Derek Bentley at Kingswood Approved School so it was amazing that the producer managed to track me down after 60 years and that she did so by contacting Sibford School!"

*Pictured: Above: Hugh chatting to Fred Dinenage. Left: in a still from the TV programme.*



# Spick and Span Cottages in the

An interesting story from Sibford's past has surfaced recently thanks to Bill Sessions – a prominent member of the famous printing and publishing firm, Sessions of York.

In a letter to the School, Bill wrote: "In Michael Finch's excellent new book 'A View from the Hill', he writes that during the Second World War Roland Herbert, the then Crafts Teacher at the School, 'organised Sibford pupils into work parties to assist in the Friends' War Relief Service activities in the area in renovating empty cottages to house evacuees.' In fact Roland Herbert was the instigator of the innovative Sibford scheme in patching-up empty cottages for evacuee use arising out of his Great War experience in the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU)."

## Bugler Herbert

For more information we need to turn to Bill's own book "Sessions of Silent Thought" where he writes: "Roland Herbert had been in the Friends' Ambulance Unit in the 1914-1918 War, where he had been nicknamed 'Bugler Herbert'. (Did he just play it for recreation or for the wakey-wakey call for his ambulance unit I wonder?). His wife (Eva) too was

also a tower of strength at Sibford School, with a magnificent line in home baked scones served to appreciative visitors. Early on in the war Roland Herbert noted a country cottage near the school which stood empty and rather derelict. He made enquiries, got the key for an inspection and drew up a costed scheme for senior Sibford pupils under his direction to do minimum repairs to make it habitable for wartime occupation by a London evacuee mother with young children. I guess he got agreement to recoup the cost of out-of-pocket materials, but whether from the landlord or agent or from the billeting officer I cannot now recall. He must have done this, for a Quaker school in wartime would have no spare funds available.

"Under Roland's practical enthusiasm the boys and girls set to with a will; and soon a London East End mother and her young children was safely away from the bomb terror and in reasonable comfort. Staff and pupils also kept in frequent contact and made friends helping in diverse little ways, as the cockney family adjusted to the strange new country ways. (As for instance

Jimmy seeing his first Skylark 'look Mum at that sparrow in the sky: it can't get up and it can't get down and it ain't 'alf hollering.')

"Certainly the first empty derelict cottage reconstructed by staff and pupils led to the next, and one by one to the next and the next at a wider radius, until by the time the Daily Mirror, much to the embarrassment of Quakers, featured these 'Spick and Span Cottages in the Cotswolds' there were, I think, around twenty homes for twenty little families safe from the London blitzkrieg.

## Hard work

"But why 'embarrassing to the Quakers'? Because there was never a particle of difficulty in finding a resident family for each newly available cottage, and the Daily Mirror feature caused a flood of letters applying to Friends House in London for just such a 'spick and span cottage', which all needed acknowledging, sifting and some few personally following-up by an already stretched and hard worked tiny but dedicated and resourceful team of selection caseworkers. Nevertheless this catchy 'spick and span' heading circulated nationally to the Daily Mirror's huge readership led, I feel sure, to other bomb-perimeter areas undertaking similar work for extra evacuee accommodation – well done Roland Herbert and well done Sibford School!"

*The 'Sibford gang' pictured enjoying a well-earned picnic break: Hazel Parkin, Frank Parkin, Alan Cole, Desmond Collins, Eric Parkin, Eva Roy, Bertie Robinson (of the Friends' War Relief Service), Nan Taylor, Marjorie Oldham, Ina Herbert (head concealed), Margaret Baker (organiser and settler of families), Beryl Whitaker, Brenda Parker, Joan Oyston, June Grisedale, Duncan Cummins and Meriel Manasseh.*



# Cotswolds

Interestingly, in another part of Bill Sessions' book where, he describes the work of the Friends War Victims Relief Committee (FWVRC), he refers to some of the staff who happened coincidentally to have had strong Sibford connections.

## Familiar names

"In those early months of 1941, there was a tiny FWVRC central staff at Friends House. There was Joseph Sewell\*, a qualified accountant, unflappable and unrigid, steady as a rock on the finance side. Then there was Eustace (Benny) Gillett\*\*, a London Quaker solicitor, who had I think been appointed committee treasurer by the original FWVRC, and who helped with the original renting of premises whether for hostels, for equipment store or whatever. Benny came and went between us and his London solicitors office. Then there was Kenneth Baily\*\*\* on the 'Information' side (Quakers did not believe in 'Publicity') but FWVRC was soon extremely short of ready cash and in any event regularly informing Quakers up and down the country and across in the USA was of the essence."

\* Joseph (Joe) Sewell was the popular Sibford School Committee Treasurer in the 1970's and was married to former pupil Janet (nee Eavis).

\*\* The Gillett family has been connected to Sibford School in many ways over the years back to the School's inception in 1842 when Martha Gillett helped to scrub the Manor House floors in readiness for Sibford's first pupils.

\*\*\* Kenneth Baily was the younger brother of well known old scholars Leslie and Jim Baily, and, although an Ackworth old scholar, he was often seen at SOSA reunions.

Extract from the News Chronicle of Monday June 9, 1941 (pictured right)

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 farmboy's battered hat.

## "SETTLERS" LIKE IT

"And it's a better education too," added the senior master, Mr. Frank Parkin.

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 flourished 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".

## Schoolchildren Rebuild Old Cottages For Bombed Families

From LOUISE MORGAN  
SIBFORD FERRIS (Cotswolds), Sunday.

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## 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.

## 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 ARKUBS

By J. F. Horrabin



Beryl Whitaker, instructor (above), works in one of the old cottages which are helping to make habitable for bombed people. Some of the workers were pictured (above) when they stop for a cup of tea. Below: One of the repaired cottages.



In the late 1930s the spread of Nazism throughout Europe was forcing large numbers of people, including many Jewish families, to flee their homes and businesses. In the months immediately preceding the start of World War II, nearly 10,000 children were sent from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia to safety in Great Britain. Sibford was just one of the many schools that offered a welcome to these refugees. To quote Mike Finch in his book **A View from the Hill**: "The majority could not speak English when they arrived, but Sibford pupils of that generation remember how quickly they adapted to their new surroundings. Some only remained at Sibford for a term or two before moving to live with overseas relatives, although many stayed on for their entire school life."

Two of those refugees were Rainer (Ray) Guillery and his sister Evamaria. Ray went on to international acclaim as a neuro-scientist, specialising in ocular brain surgery and associated research. He now lives in Oxford and over the summer holidays returned to Sibford to share some of his memories.



Ray is pictured with Michael Goodwin during his recent visit

## Recollections of a refugee

I spent the first eight years of my life in Berlin but by 1938 it was obvious we would have to leave. Initially we went to Switzerland but were then sent to school in Holland. My mother, meanwhile, had good friends in England who offered her a job as a domestic helper looking after three children in Highgate. It was in the summer holidays of 1939 that we first came to England to visit her ... and we never returned.

With the threat of war looming we were evacuated to Oxford and for the next year I attended a prep school in North Oxford. We had good contacts with the Oxford Friends (my mother was an unusual person in that she was a German, Jewish, Quaker!) and, in 1940, I got a scholarship to come to Sibford. My sister joined me the following year.

Having spent my formative years in Berlin I was amazed at just how wonderful the countryside was. We used to go for walks at the

weekend ... they were called Pig Drives when you were younger because we were all herded together, but when you got older you were able to go and explore on your own.

I remember growing vegetables in the vegetable patch, which was situated underneath what is now the hall floor! And I used to especially look forward to Sundays as it was the one meal of the week when we were allowed to take time to eat. We used to grow rhubarb at the school and on Sundays you could have as much rhubarb as you liked which was a real treat given the wartime rations.

In 1942 we celebrated the centenary of the school and, as I recall, we all had to dress up in Victorian clogs. One of my favourite memories of Sibford was the woodwork lessons with Roland Herbert, who was an incredible man. The skills I learnt back then have stayed with me

throughout my life. When I lived in Madison, Wisconsin, I had my own workshop and made many toys for my grandchildren, including a rocking horse. I also made a walnut desk for my eldest grandchild who lives in the UK. I had to make it so that it could be transported flat and put together on the other side of the Atlantic, which was quite a challenge! ☺

Ray left Sibford in 1946 ("I was here a year longer than most because I suffered a burst appendix which meant I was out of school for a long time") and went to study A Levels at a school in London.

He was accepted as a medical student at University College London but interrupted his medical training to study the brain and never went back.

"I was fascinated by the brain. I had an inspirational teacher and have spent the rest of my life studying the brain and teaching other people about it."

His CV is impressive ... after

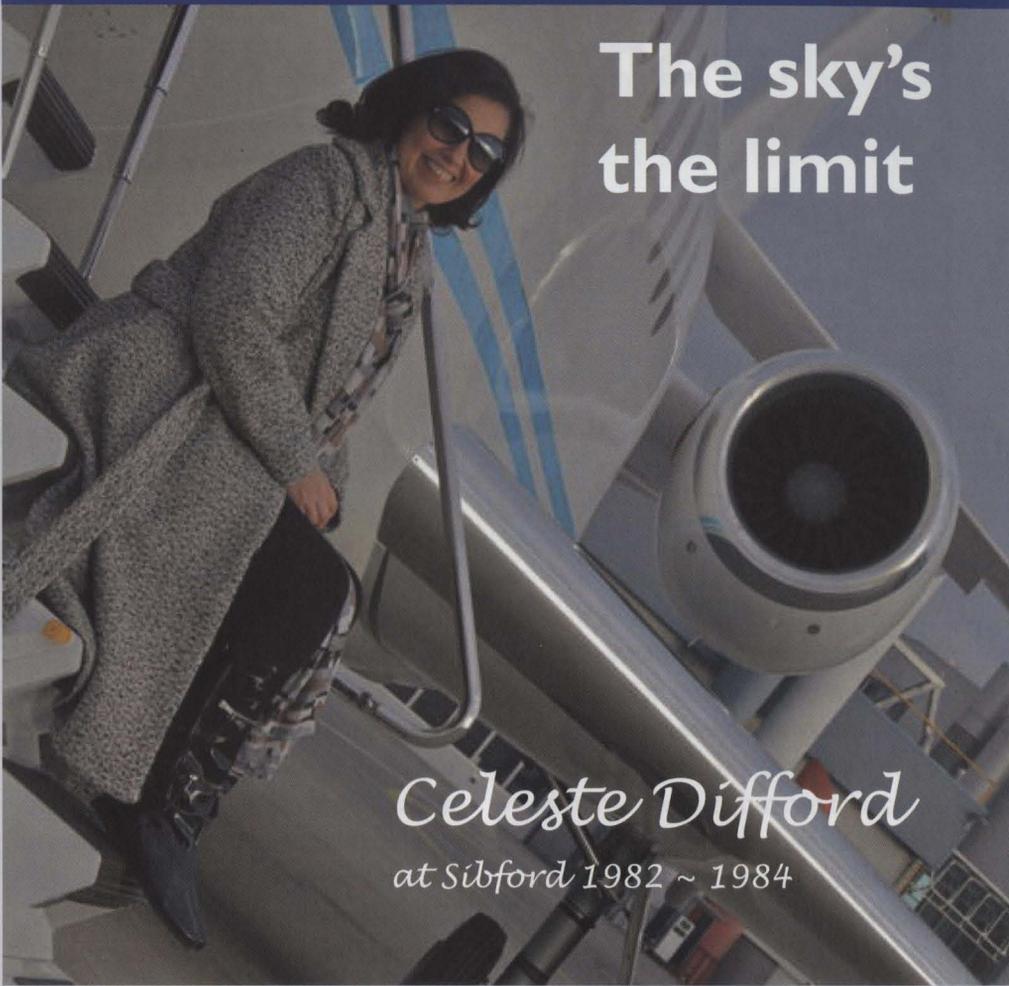
graduating with a BSc and PhD, he worked for the Department of Anatomy at UCL before moving to the States to take up an appointment at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

In 1977 he was appointed Professor at the Department of Pharmacological and Physiological Sciences and Chair of Committee on Neurobiology at the University of Chicago. In 1983 he was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society and the following year he moved back to the UK to work at Oxford University as Dr Lee's Professor and Head of Department of Human Anatomy.

1996 saw Ray move back to Wisconsin as Visiting Professor and, in 2002, he moved to Turkey (where his daughter lives), accepting a position as Professor in the Department of Anatomy at the School of Medicine of Marmara University. After four years, however, he decided to return to the UK and, although strictly speaking retired, continues his links with Oxford University spending much of his time at the Anatomical Neuropharmacology Unit working on his latest book.

He also continues to lecture, and in February this year visited the School of Biomedical Sciences at the Chinese University in Hong Kong where he delivered a lecture titled: 'My Life in the Visual Pathways' Comments Ray:

**"It's an interesting thought that while I was at Sibford I was in Nansen House and, although I didn't realise it at the time, I now know that Nansen was a neuroanatomist ... just like me!"**



## The sky's the limit

*Celeste Difford*  
at Sibford 1982 ~ 1984

Celeste Difford joined Sibford School at the age of 14 in January 1982 and fondly remembers her first day. "I had been bullied at my previous school so was nervous to meet my new school colleagues but thankfully they all turned out to be wonderful friends.

"My father remembers dropping me off at the dorm on my first day and instantly knowing I'd be well looked after. A hectic flurry of girls were there to meet me ... Vicky Jupp, Kerry Wheatley, Frances Reese and Louise, who at the time was fixing a poster above her bunk ... with a hockey stick!"

Today Celeste is based in the Middle East but spends much of her time travelling as she explains: "I have lived in Bahrain since joining Gulf Air as a flight attendant almost 20 years ago.

"For the past seven years I have worked on a private jet for a lovely Saudi family on a month on/month off schedule. For the month on we are based out of Jeddah and

on standby for when the family wants to fly. We travel mostly to Switzerland, Paris, London, Beirut, Dubai, the South of France, Italy and the USA.

"We carry the Sheik, (the boss, who is 84), his wife, his children and the grandchildren. It's usually holiday trips so we get some good stop-overs!"

Celeste is still in contact with many of the friends she made at Sibford. "Thanks to the joys of Facebook a lot of us are all still in touch and although I haven't been able to make any of the reunions I hope to do so some time soon.

"My parents still live in Banbury so I do occasionally get to Sibford just to take a stroll down memory lane and take some photos and video (a real passion of mine). My times at Sibford, living in the beautiful English countryside, were filled with many wonderful memories, due mainly to some great friends and good teachers ... so thanks to everyone who made it all so special."

# From Sibford to Mozambique

## ... an amazing journey

When I was asked to explain how I managed to end up in deepest Africa, it prompted deep reflection on a journey that started more than 30 years ago when I left Sibford.

Born into an expatriate family I spent my formative years in Lebanon and Kuwait. After leaving Sibford I was determined to carve out a career in the hospitality trade. However, a diploma in Hotel Management followed by a management training scheme and a few hotel assignments confirmed to me the need to be on the expatriate circuit! So, in March 1985, at the tender age of 23, I boarded a jet for Saudi Arabia ... and have never looked back.

I had a ball in Saudi. I travelled extensively and, contrary to popular belief, the social life was great. I made some of my strongest friendships ... not least my wife Sharon.

After seven years I was asked to take a job in Thailand in a family owned company based in Songkhla on the Malaysian border. Songkhla was very basic and many of the things we take for granted could not be got ... a major

highlight was our regular shopping trips to Bangkok to fill up the grocery cupboard!

With Sharon expecting our son, Stephen, we gladly accepted an invitation to return to Saudi, this time to Jeddah, where I was offered the role of Operations Manager for Mars Inc.

We spent three years in Jeddah and Stephen's birth was followed 22 months later by the arrival of our daughter Georgina. However, with the children getting older, the lack of mobility for Sharon was becoming an issue – in Jeddah women could not, and still can't, drive! So when I was asked to consider a role with Coca-Cola in the United Arab Emirates, it seemed a good move.

Initially based in Al Ain, we then moved to Dubai where we spent four happy years during which time I progressed through various roles before landing the job as acting General Manager for the UAE, Oman and Qatar.

The great thing about working for Coca-Cola is that it is available nearly all over the world so opportunities spring up in the strangest places! Next stop was Ljubljana where I was appointed Country Manager for Slovenia.

Alas, with Slovenia joining the EU it was decided to rationalise the business and so it was time to move again! Having enjoyed our spell in Dubai, and being impressed with the education standard, we decided to move back and I spent the next seven years in property development.

Then, last year, out of the blue, I had a call from Coca-Cola saying there was an opportunity for a Country Manager in Mozambique and, a couple of weeks later, I was on my way to Maputo.



*Simon Everest*

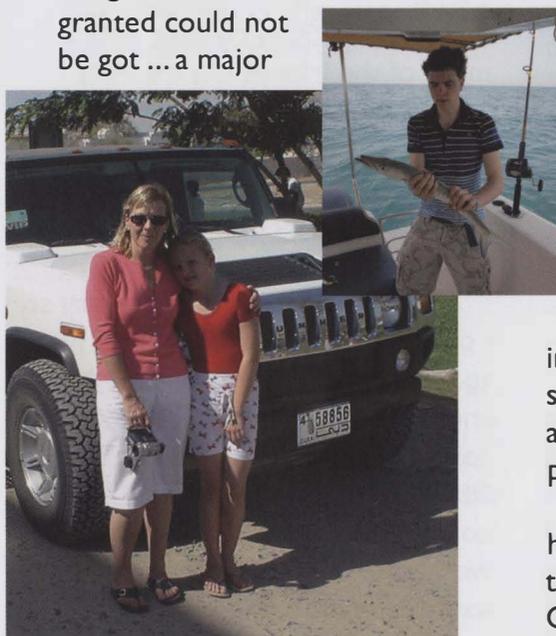
*at Sibford 1972 ~ 1977*

The first few days were a real culture shock. Even for a seasoned traveller I remember thinking 'am I going to be able to cope with this?' However, a few weeks down the road, and I was settled again and loving the new experience.

Africa has a real 'soul' and, whilst it is poor, the people are warm and friendly and appreciative of the support and effort you put in. The work environment is challenging to say the least with 2,500 kms of coastline, three plants and 900 staff to manage! Being based in Mozambique has several advantages – the beaches are some of the best I have seen anywhere in the world – totally unspoilt.

So what is the secret of globetrotting ... my view is remain open minded and adapt quickly to local terms and conditions. Accept there will be good and bad with your new environment. Embrace the positives and don't let the negatives get to you.

I often reflect on the happy time I spent at Sibford which helped form many of the values that have carried me well through this incredible journey across the globe. The most important thing is that there is good in most people and you need to provide the right environment for these attributes to thrive.



*Sharon and Georgina (pictured above in 2005) and (inset) Stephen.*

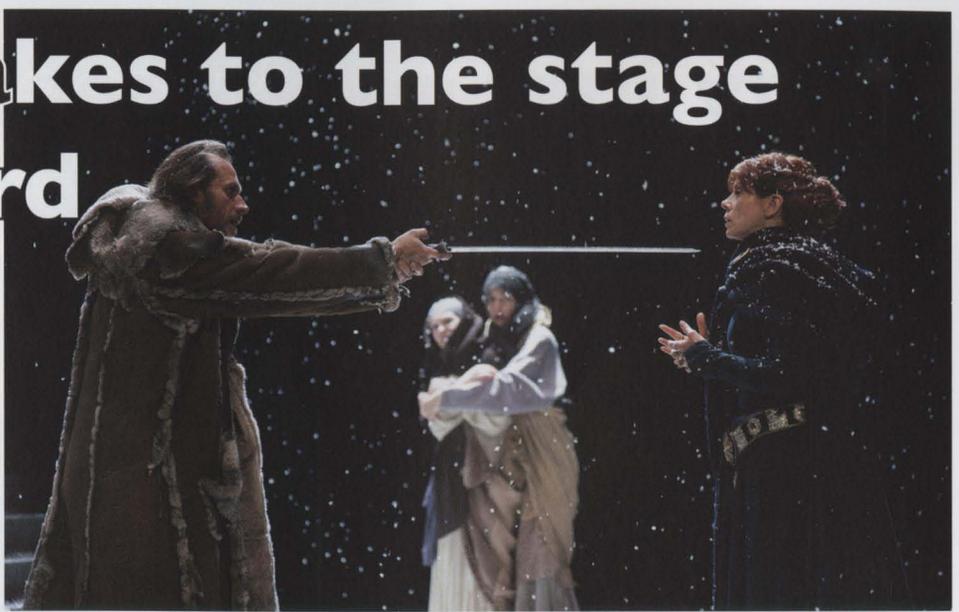
# Reuben takes to the stage in Stratford

'Absolutely incredible' is how former Sibford pupil Reuben Davies describes his appearance at the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

"To stand on that stage and look out at all those people was awesome. I never imagined I would be playing to such a sizeable audience so soon after leaving school. It was brilliant."

Reuben left Sibford last summer and his aim was to spend a year out before going to drama school ... but then fate stepped in.

"I thought I'd get some experience under my belt and so I joined the Year Out Drama Company in Stratford," he explained. "The company offers an intensive course with lots of practical experience culminating in a performance at the Edinburgh Fringe. This year, however, coincided with the reopening of the newly refurbished RSC Theatre in Stratford and we were invited to perform a small piece called



Jonny Phillips and Siobhan Redmond in a scene from *Dunsinane*

(photo courtesy of the National Theatre Scotland).

'Handbag' as part of the opening events."

While at the RSC, Reuben became friends with one of the stage managers and, as a result, was asked to audition for a part in the RSC/National Theatre of Scotland's production of *Dunsinane* ... a sequel to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

"It was just amazing to be working with a professional company," said Reuben. "Everyone was really great backstage and I even got to meet Patrick Stewart!"

*Dunsinane* played to critical

acclaim at The Swan from 15 June - 2 July, after which Reuben was straight into rehearsals for his role as Armado in Year Out's Edinburgh production of *Love's Labour's Lost*.

"It's been an incredible year and, because of the experience I've had, I've decided to skip drama school for the time being and have signed up to work with the Wise Monkey Theatre Company."

**Another former pupil making a name for himself in the theatre industry ... this time behind the scenes rather than in the spotlight ... is Tom Stevenson.**

Since leaving Sibford in 2009, Tom has been working in the West End on a number of shows including *We Will Rock You* and *Wicked*, and he has just been offered a place at the Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in London.

"I never thought I was good enough to get into Mountview, especially as 4,000 people applied for the 20 places," said Tom. "My thanks go especially to Debra Collins ... if I hadn't had her on my case, keeping my prep together and getting me out of the many holes I managed to dig myself into, I never would have got this far."



**Will Bovill, who left Sibford Sixth Form in 2007, has just graduated with First Class Honours from the School of Art and Design at University College, Falmouth. He was selected to exhibit at this year's New Blood Art Exhibition in London following which he moved to the New Designers Exhibition at the Business Design Centre in Islington.**

# Angy just can't keep away!

Old scholars have been sharing their memories of Angy Bovill who retired in July.

Angy joined the school in September 1984 and led Sibford's countryside, environmental sciences and horticulture department. Latterly, she was also Assistant Head of Sixth Form.

Lucy Haworth (nee Winslade 1983-1990) says: "I remember Miss Bovill in the Science labs along with Mr Newbold and Mr Cox. I seem to recall many of the boys in my year, in fact in all the years around at that time, harbouring a bit of a crush on her!"

Elliott Jennings (1991 - 1998) adds: "Mrs. Bovill was absolutely wonderful. I loved nothing more than to turn up to the walled garden and don my boiler suit for an hour or so before lunch. Her enthusiasm for all things horticultural was infectious. Myself



and many others ended up with green fingers and to this day I still use the skills that she taught me. I guess no matter how many times you wash your hands the indelible green ink that she marked our fingers with will never be removed!"

And John Fenemore (1992 -1995) says: "I will never forget going near

Islip to drive tractors. Even though I was a farmer's son (and now farm myself) it was the best school outing ever! Angy Bovill taught me a lot. A fantastic lady."

Angy, however, won't be entirely absent from the school ... after the summer break she re-joined as a part-time teacher ... of horticulture!



New SOSA President, Erica Strofton (nee Eden), visited school in July to welcome some of the Association's newest members.

As sixth form students marked their last day at school with a strawberry tea, they were automatically recognised as 'old scholars' and presented with SOSA pins. Erica is pictured with Charlotte Smith who, since leaving Sibford, has been accepted by Cardiff University where she is to study Ancient History and Philosophy.

Another former pupil who returned to school



towards the end of the summer term was historian Dilip Sakar.

Dilip spoke to Year 9 students about the Battle of Britain. He also presented the annual history cup, which he donated in his name, to Megan Denham, and enjoyed a tour of the school to see how it had changed since he left in 1977.

"The school's facilities are clearly excellent," he said. "I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and am proud to say that I was once a pupil here."

# 2011 Leavers' Destinations

Having gained some terrific results (see pages 8 & 9) our Year 13 sixth form students are off to pastures new. We wish them all the success for the future and send them out with the following reminder ... 'Live adventurously. When choices arise, take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community. Let your life speak' (from *Advices & Queries* 27).

Beth Birkbeck	Sheffield University ~ Biology
Harry Blackwell	Employment
Eleanor Bowen	Gap Year
Georgina Bowen	Gap Year
Thomas Callnon	Employment
Hooman Chahian Broujeni	Essex University ~ Business
Georgie Chapman	Manchester University ~ Classics
Simon Couzens	Gap Year
Anna-Rose Critchley	Gap Year
Mark Davey	London Metropolitan University ~ Aviation Management & Operations
Bella Eames-Matthews	London Metropolitan University ~ International Development
Tom Embury	Gap Year
Alex Falk	Birmingham University ~ History
Hamish Fleet	Gap Year
Asher Freeman	Winchester University ~ Creative Writing
Luke Gartside	Plymouth University ~ Photography (2012 entry)
Aderogba Haastrup	Oxford Media & Business School ~ Media
Andrew Hunsley	Keele University ~ Economics and Mathematics
Sophie Hunsley	Gap Year
Arty Hunt	Gap Year
Calum Jelf	Bristol University of Western England ~ Media Practice
Jack Johnson	Employment
Alex Lincoln	York University ~ Physics and Astrophysics
Evie Lovell	Gap Year
Kate Mitchell	Moreton Morrell College ~ Professional Gardening
James Morel	Swansea Metropolitan University ~ Sports Management
Kate Neal	Gap Year
Juliet O'Connor	Gap Year
David O'Shea	Manchester Metropolitan University ~ Philosophy/Psychology
Dan Pickles	Leeds Metropolitan University ~ Events Management
Lucy Plant	Oxford Cherwell Valley College ~ Foundation in Art & Design
Patrick Reckitt	Leicester University ~ History
Charlotte Smith	Cardiff University ~ Ancient History/Philosophy
Robert Smith	Gap Year
Alex Stringer	Bournemouth University ~ Business and Management
Lewis Taylor	Hull University ~ Computer Science
Helen Thain	Gap Year
Jack Trinder	British Racing School in Newmarket ~ Foundation Course
Josh Walker-Savings	London Metropolitan University ~ Aviation Management
Kevin Yeung	Kingston University ~ Business Management



# The Sibfordian

Student Life & Activities at Sibford School  
& News of the Sibford Old Scholars' Association



**Student Forum members Esther Hudson and Rebecca Sleath model the new range of Sibford School scarves. Launched in September 2011, the scarves feature house colours while at the same time reflecting some of Sibford's heritage. Rebecca said: "Recent scarves have been tartan but, in the 1960s and 70s they featured seven stripes, so we wanted to return to this idea ~ but with a modern twist." After viewing a number of samples, Student Forum selected a combination of wool front and fleece back. "Some of the scarves felt scratchy but these are really snuggly," said Esther. "It was good to be part of the team helping to make the decision and we hope that other pupils will enjoy wearing the scarves as much as we did choosing them."**

**Scarves are available to current pupils and also to Old Scholars. For further details contact the uniform shop on 01295 781278.**

## The Sibfordian

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