

CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND SCHOOL EVENTS

CHESS

Enthusiasts have continued to play chess throughout the year on Monday lunchtimes. The level of interest was raised by the Junior School Chess Competition at the end of the summer term. The individual winner of this competition was Jonathan Darlington (1R), with Mohammed Al-Himdani (2K) and Farooq Ateeq (2K) as runners-up. The Turabi trophies, for the Junior forms contributing the most competitors, were won by 1J and 2K.

We hope next year to return to competition against other schools by joining the Manchester Chess League.

M.H. Gracey

DEBATING SOCIETY

The Junior section has gone from strength to strength this year and has met most weeks. A wide range of topics has been covered, from whether or not we should legalise hand guns to whether smacking should be allowed. The maturity and quality of the speeches is remarkable and the commitment of the stalwart members is faultless. Unfortunately, Senior Debating has not met with the same success with extremely poor attendance at all meetings, but hopefully this will not be the case next year.

S R Tandon

OBSERVER MACE

This year's team was Jonathan O'Keefe and Chris Hewison, who spoke well in opposition to the motion, 'This house believes religion has no place in our schools', and although they were successful in debating, the motion, did not qualify for the next round of the competition.

S R Tandon

HOUSE DEBATING COMPETITION

This was another excellent year for the competition and the quality of both the floor debate and the speakers was excellent. The first debate was between Gaskell and Fraser on the motion, 'This house would censor the Internet'. Aaron Greenall and David Melmoth spoke well for Gaskell, and Luc Zentar, whose team mate was absent, put up an excellent opposition convincing the audience to vote against the motion. Whitworth and Dalton debated whether or not animals have rights, with Jonathan O'Keefe and Jemma Cohen (the youngest speaker by far) representing Whitworth, and Affan Burki and Niki Jerath providing the opposition. All four speakers were well prepared and most convincing.

The final debate was between Heywood and Byrom on the motion, 'This house does not believe in capital punishment'. Wumni Ademosu and Kamran Tahir spoke most eloquently for Byrom as did their opposition Laura Leveson and Matthew Kay.

The winning House was Heywood and Laura Leveson, Aaron Greenall, Matthew Kay, Jonathan O'Keefe and Affan Burki were all commended.

My thanks go to Mrs Brown and Mr Briggs for judging the competition.

S R Tandon

PUBLIC SPEAKING

This year students have taken part in a wide range of public speaking activities, from reading in assembly to external competitions.

This year, the Upper School got to the semi-final of the Rotary Public Speaking Competition which was held in Xaverian Sixth Form College. The school was represented by Matthew Kay and Wunmi Ademosu. They had to prepare and deliver an 'after dinner speech' of not more than five minutes on a subject of their choice.

The evening of the performance arrived. Wunmi had the daunting task of going first, yet she coped admirably and delivered a lively and varied speech on 'Belief Power gets results'. Wunmi addressed the audience with confidence and the judges were impressed by the originality of the topic.

Matthew's forward thinking speech about the aftermath of the IRA bomb in Manchester focused on the progress and prospect for new development in the City, rather than dwelling on the horrors of that near tragic day. His delivery showed considerable presence and poise.

The standard of the competition was extremely high, and although neither member of the school got through to the final, they should both feel proud of their achievements.

In an attempt to prepare students for this type of competition, all the Lower School took part in a similar public speaking exercise. Two representatives from each form had the formidable task of presenting their speeches to the whole of the Lower School.

The standard of the competition was extremely impressive and the speeches were varied and interesting.

Nazish Ahmed of 1K dazzled the audience with her speech 'Science Fact or Science Fiction', which involved a complicated mind game. Ferretesh Jebelli of 2K gave a powerful and thought-provoking speech about Comic Relief and the place that 'entertainment' has in collecting for charity. Leon Jackson of 1J prepared an extremely informative speech on Malcolm X and this was supplemented by a well-worked rap with Timi Pearce. 1S's Ade Ademosu's speech on positive thinking was interesting and original, and Paul Keenlyside of the same form produced a down-to-earth and enjoyable speech on swimming. These are just examples of the wide range of topics discussed. All of the competitors worked extremely hard in gathering information about their subject. The job of the judges was almost impossible but eventually 1R's Nick Travis was declared the winner with a superb speech on Commercialism in Football. Not only was the topic original and thought-provoking, but Nick addressed the audience with confidence. His presentation skills really impressed the judges. The talent displayed in this year's competition bodes well for future public speaking exercises.

Finally, The Hopwood Reading Prizes were awarded to Shelley Turnberg of 1K and Laurie-May Edwards of 4G. Once again the standard of the competition was formidable and the judges found choosing winners a difficult task.

Overall this has been an excellent year for public speaking and I would like to thank everybody who took part in the various competitions and encourage others to get involved next year.

Miss L C Derby

THE COMPUTER CLUB

The Club continues to be popular at lunch times and more and more pupils are using it to work on projects and homework. A collection of CDs given away with computer magazines has built up over the past few years and so I have started distributing them as 'prizes' for the best work done in the IT Room.

We have now replaced our multimedia machine which, as reported last time, was getting rather long in the tooth. The old machine has been let out to pasture (i.e., it has been given to another department) and our new machine is a Pentium 166, a zippy machine when we first got it but now unable to keep up with the Physics Department's Pentium 200. Nevertheless, it is still a fast machine and it is the only one in the IT Room which can run Windows 95. We have a good range of software for it and it has been very popular with the regulars in the Computer Club when members of staff let them get their hands on it. Since it has a more modern word processor, pupils who work at home on MS Word or other word processors are able to import their documents and print them in colour. It also has a flatbed scanner attached to it which pupils can use to scan pictures into their documents. This has proved to be very popular since it is much easier to use than the old handheld scanner which we had before. We have also recently acquired copies of Corel Draw 6 and MS Publisher for use on the multimedia machine. These programmes now enable us to do just about anything of a graphical and DTP nature which we are likely to want to do.

The new multimedia machine also has access to the Internet which more and more pupils are using for research projects. This is free but surfers who want to use it for non-school work are charged a hefty premium to discourage them - at lunchtime the Net is usually so slow that we do not want the machine tied up for frivolous reasons when legitimate users might be wanting to use it.

C MacLachlan
(Teacher i/c)

FRENCH CLUB

On Tuesday lunch-times pupils went to Room 68 to watch French television on our satellite system. As they were Sixth Formers they were particularly interested in watching the news but it can also be quite fascinating to watch French game shows and light entertainment. Copies of Paris Match were also made available and some pupils did research into topics such as the Royal Family of Monaco or French fashion. Younger pupils would also be welcome to look into some aspect of French Studies not covered in lessons, or to play games, and 4th or 5th Formers looking for a topic for their coursework may find inspiration! Speak to your French teacher if you have any requests or suggestions for what you might want to do.

L.A. Ballantyne

CHARITIES WEEK

The charity chosen this year was Petty Pool outdoor centre for physically and mentally disabled children. After great discussion this was the one picked because it had a link with the prefects, as both Jackie de Freitas and Asha de Silva had worked there voluntarily and seen what a great and worthwhile charity it is.

The charity founder and President Mr Colin Cooke came and spoke to the whole school about how the money was needed to extend their educational and training facilities, before wishing them all the best of luck.

There were three main events that were strongly supported by the whole of the school. The Charities Walk was a great success with the help of Fingland's who kindly denoted the buses for the afternoon. The Fashion Show saw a full house of people with extra rows needing to be added to the back. The review saw similar numbers of people who seemed thoroughly to enjoy what they were seeing. My thanks go to everybody who gave their support to these events.

The two sixth form balls were a great hit, raising nearly £2,000 thanks to the tireless work of the ticket sellers and the whole of the Sixth Form bringing friends from outside school along. An excellent time was had by all on both occasions.

Other money raisers such as soak-a-prefect, guess-the-teacher and the rag mag proved very popular with our having to make up extra copies of the magazine due to the massive demand. I would like to give special thanks to Mr Loveland and Mr Simkin for all their help, as well as that of all the staff whose help throughout was first rate. I would personally like to thank the office staff, not only for the huge amount of work they helped with during Charities Week, but also for bearing so well with the general hassle I have caused them throughout the year. Whilst it would be usual now to thank specific prefects for the great amount of work they put into an event that helped raise the amazing sum of £8,300 I would consider it unfair because every prefect put in incredible effort.

The amount, which is the highest raised for five years, will pay for the total equipping of a disabilities learning classroom to help people learn skills that we take for granted. Thank you to the whole of the pupil body for making this possible.

Jonathan O'Keefe (UEGT)
(Joint Head of School)

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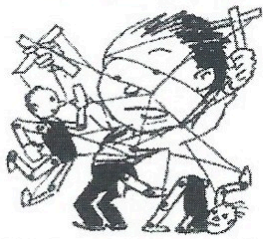
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That's Entertainment?



A Review of The Prefects' School Revue

In these days of pre-packaged this, irradiated that and genetically engineered the other, it was refreshing to be part of the Prefect' School Revue in aid of Pettypool Charity. A mixture of talent, raw energy and Dutch Courage resulted in a cross between "The Good Old Days" and "Wheeltappers and Shunters Social Club" and the producers, Aaron Greenall and Kate Williams, should be congratulated on having the nerve to undertake such a production. Trying to co-ordinate a host of singers, dancers, comedians etc is no easy task, but to do so in the midst of Charities Week whilst modular A Level exams are being taken is a Herculean feat. That there was any show at all was almost miraculous.

On the opening (and closing) night, the New Hall was packed with a baying audience eager to be entertained. A delayed start only heightened the anticipation. Would "they" arrive or not? Then onto the stage burst The Spice Girls (Kate, Rachd, Rachel, Asha and Jackie) and the hall erupted with song, cheers and applause. Lights flashed, feet stomped, hands clapped as the audience begged for more. Desperately trying to keep control of the situation were our compères Rob Seddon and Jonathan O'Keefe, who stoically introduced each act as if nothing had previously happened.

Act I was a mixture of songs, comedy sketches and TV advert send-ups. The Headmaster's Sketch was brilliantly funny and masterfully played by Aaron as the caring, understanding Headmaster who believed that boys can't possibly be thugs if they played rugby. Vikram and Karen brought tears to our eyes with "Suddenly Seymour" from "Little Shop of Horrors" while Guy, Aaron, Rob and Jonathan brought tears to Eric Clapton's eyes with their rendition of "Tears in Heaven". Marguerita Pracatan would have been proud of them! Local hospitals were put on stand-by as the girls fainted at Guy's rippling muscles in his version of the Diet Coke advert and just as we thought it couldn't get any better, on burst the Spice Girls to end Act I. Singing "Wannabe" they brought the house down as they revealed the letters S P I C E on their knickers as they took a bow (should somebody tell them that they should face the audience when they bow??).

Act II opened with a superb sketch about a new recruit to the CCF who thought that the sole purpose of joining the army was to kill people. Having the errors of his ways pointed out to him, he decided to join the RAF where at least he could bomb cities! Sam and Kate continued with the comedy in "The Shoe Shop" sketch and Aaron had more girls swooning as he repeated his unforgettable Dentist Song from "Little Shop". Caroline Shaw's version of Victoria Wood's "Let's Do It" was nothing less than brilliant while Kati Greenall's Soul Sisters were equally superb as they sang in beautiful harmony. Surely the ?????? didn't improve? But then came back the Spice Girls - not only the original but also The Old Spice Girls (Miss Boothroyd, Miss Collier, Miss Matthews, Miss Raw and Miss Smith. The memory of the Spice Girls cartwheeling and leaping across the stage will long haunt our memory. That alone would have made it an unforgettable night. That's Entertainment—you're damned right it was!

The Prefects.

B.T. PAPERDAY - FRENCH

When we heard about the BT Newspaperday, we in the Lower Sixth had no idea what it was and what was required. So we were told well in advance to start preparing articles for "The Newspaper".

February 3rd was when the Modern Languages department burst at the seams with verbs, endings, past participles etc. I was involved in the French and German newspapers as I was doing them for 'A' Level. The BT Newspaperday day is where pupils produce a full newspaper in a complete FOREIGN language in just one day (and trust me that day went very quickly!). The School produced three Foreign Languages Newspapers on that day.

With being involved in two papers I wrote a couple of articles for each. All that day's news came off the Internet, teletext or certain "real" newspapers. All this information was dished out to the writers, who started tapping away on their keyboards. When the article was written, it was printed out and sent to the editor (or whoever it was holding the big draft copy)! We all had to agree on layout such as which things should go where and what should be included.

Then when all was stuck down, we "tippexed" out unwanted lines and checked through. Some photocopies were made but now the race began. The newspapers had to get down to Chorlton Post Office, letting nothing get in their path!!

The day was extremely busy and very exciting. It was also a huge amount of fun. I think everybody enjoyed working together and eventually seeing the finished product. Thanks to all the teachers for their help and assistance.

Matthew Whyatt (LGJT)

MILITANTS VERTS DANS MANIF DE PISTE D'ENVOL

Par Emma Weeden

Des activistes écologistes ont installé leur camp au chantier de la deuxième piste d'envol à l'aéroport de Manchester, en croisade contre l'agrandissement de Ringway.

Les militants, qui s'appellent 'Coalition Against Runway Two', ont envahi le bois de Hooksbank, dans la vallée du Bollin près de Styal samedi soir, à la faveur de la nuit.

Ils ont immédiatement commencé à construire des refuges dans les arbres et ils ont déployé des bannières avec des messages comme: 50,000 jobs? Pigs might fly! Ask us why!

Il est presque certain que, comme la manifestation gagne du terrain, cela suscitera l'intérêt d'un nombre croissant d'activistes venus d'autres régions, de la même façon que la

manifestation à Newbury.

Les manifestants ont assuré que ce sera une manifestation entièrement non-violente et ils appellent même les gens du pays à se joindre avec eux. Comme un activiste a déclaré: "nous y sommes nous y restons."

En ce moment, des inspecteurs de la sécurité de l'aéroport de Manchester patrouillent le périmètre du camp pour les avertir qu'ils sont dans une propriété privée et pour leur demander de partir.

Les militants ont refusé jusqu'à présent, et on attend que les chefs de Ringway commencent des mesures d'expulsion auprès de la cour suprême.

Les manifestants veulent augmenter la conscience écologique et gagner un soutien pour leur

manifestation: "Les aéroports et l'aéronautique ont un effet préjudiciable à l'environnement. L'aéroport pollue et contribue au réchauffement de la planète."

Les chefs de l'aéroport assurent qu'ils introduiront des projets pour combattre la pollution écologique et les nuisances sonores et pour limiter la perturbation de l'environnement.

La bataille continue...



"Pouvez-vous dire à vos copains au-dessus qu'il y en a qui essaient de dormir."

Included by kind permission of The Daily Express

TEMPÊTE DANS UNE TASSE À THÉ ?

Des politiciens ont condamné Noel Gallagher qui a déclaré que l'usage de la drogue est aussi normal que de boire du thé:

LE GRAND DÉBAT:

**'LA STAR D'OASIS ET LA DROGUE'
EST-IL IRRÉFLÉCHI?**

OUI

Le chanteur d'Oasis, Noel Gallagher, dit que la plupart des gens en Grande Bretagne se droguent et que plusieurs politiciens sont des toxicomanes eux aussi.

Il est vraiment insensé et irréfléchi. Pour qui se prend-il? Il devrait comprendre que ce qu'il dit peut influencer ces adolescents qui sont à un âge où l'on est impressionnable.

Ironiquement, Oasis était la bande favorite de Leah Betts, la victime tragique d'Ecstasy.

Néanmoins, cette sorte de comportement scandaleux et des remarques légères sont tout ce que nous pouvons attendre du duo de Manchester-Noel et son frère Liam. Il a vraiment exagéré cette fois!

OUI 0891-557767

NON

Naturellement, les aristos trouveront répugnant un individu débraillé comme Noel Gallagher. Mais, peut-être- juste pour une fois- devraient-ils écouter ce qu'il dit. Il est clair que Gallagher veut simplement que l'on admette la réalité de la situation en ce qui concerne la drogue en Grande Bretagne. "Il est grand temps qu'on se rende compte que la majorité des gens dans ce pays se droguent". Une majorité? Une exagération, peut-être, mais certainement il y a du vrai dans ce qu'il dit. Il a dit aussi que ce n'est pas une situation scandaleuse, "pas quand on a un gouvernement qui vend des armements. Écoutez Noel, vous autres politiciens. Il se peut que vous appreniez quelque chose."

NON 0891-557768

BT NEWSPAPER DAY - GERMAN

This year was only the second time we were going to enter the competition so Mrs Wright and Mr Turner were also learning from our experiences.

The first major hurdle was the name which had to be decided before the big day. After much deliberation with the Upper Sixth students, we settled upon the name, "Heute, Die Zeitung aus Manchester", a simple and self-explanatory name that would suffice for now.

The next obstacle was the content. We were always going to struggle to put enough pages together because there were only seven in the group. Mrs Wright had rather cunningly led into the topic of travel and we had discovered our first major article which could easily cover a whole page! All of the Lower Sixth worked on a travel brochure style article about North West England and Manchester.

As the days flew by, we found ourselves in a situation where we would only have three or four pages at most! The panic had already started to settle in as the big day arrived.

Monday, 3rd February. Registration was over and it was time to join the Spanish and French students in the Computer Room. Already, the atmosphere was tense but everyone was looking forward to the experience.

The hours ticked by and the pressure was mounting. Articles began to flow, with the aid of Mr Turner, Mrs Wright and the ever reliant Internet. Ideas entered our heads and were duly incorporated in the paper. The work on the previous Sunday by Matthew Whyatt, Eleanor Heynes and myself was paying off.

The German newspaper was the first one to be finished! A moment of relief for Mrs Wright who was worried we wouldn't make it, but with team work and good leadership by Eleanor Heynes, we really got down to work.

We sat back and admired the good work we had done while adding finishing touches and the moment we officially handed in the paper was a proud moment for us all.

With the help of Matthew Whyatt, Glynn Roberts, Nicola Whiterod, Asha de Silva, Joanna Zucker, myself and the excellent leadership of Eleanor Heynes, we did it!

Nishant Agarwal (LGJT)

BT NEWSPAPER DAY - SPANISH

This was a great day, and it took place on Monday, 3rd February.

The previous week, we were all briefed on what we would be doing on the day. A good thing too, as the time whizzed by at a great pace and it was go-go-go from start to finish.

My Spanish class and 3 girls from the year above worked really hard all day and we soon learned how difficult it was to compile a newspaper, never mind trying it in a foreign language.

Somehow, we got over any little difficulties (stories "disappearing", only to be found under a pile of rubbish, etc) and we managed to get the paper in for the deadline. There was a slight panic, however, when we had just "finished" and another page was thrust before me.

All the same, I think I can speak for us all and say what an enjoyable experience the day was. I certainly learned a lot about journalism and the pressures of the Newsroom.

Some of the enjoyment was probably due to the vast quantities of Tipp-ex used all day!

Finally, we would like to thank all the teachers who helped to organise the event.

Alexandra Preston (LGJT)

'DIE PHYSIKER' (DÜRRENMATT)

Möbius ist der Hauptcharakter, der Wissenschaftler ist, im Spiel 'Die Physiker' von Dürrenmatt.

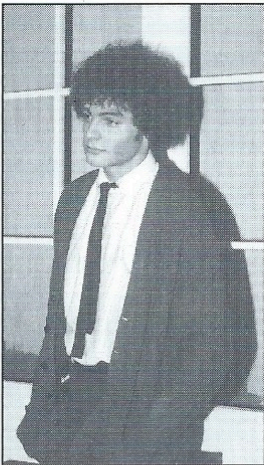
Er hat etwas entdeckt, wir wissen nicht was. Wenn er erkennt, dass seine Entdeckung gefährlich ist, tut er so, als ob er geistig krank sei.

Im Irrenhaus trifft er zwei andere Menschen, Einstein und Newton. Einstein ist wirklich ein Spion für Russland. Newton ist wirklich ein Spion für die Vereinigten Staaten. Newton und Einstein wollen Möbius' Forschungen kennenlernen.

Newton hat seine Krankenschwester ermordet, weil sie weiss, dass er nicht geistig krank ist. Sie weiss, dass er lügt. Einstein tötet auch seine Krankenschwester aus demselben Grund.

Dann kommt die Polizei und macht Fotos. Der Polizist sagt, "Am besten haben Sie Krankenpfleger."

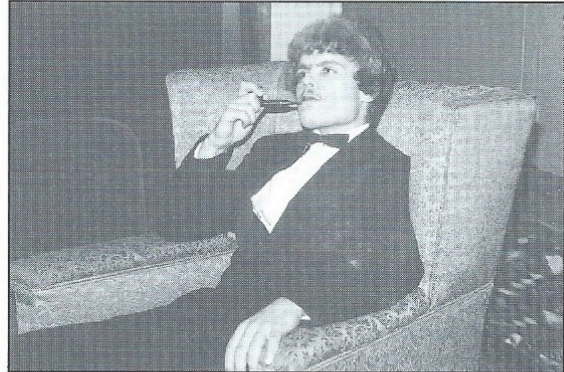
'Die Physiker' bewahrt alle von Aristoteles' Einheiten. Das ist ironisch, weil es sonst die Regeln der Antike bricht, zum Beispiel, es gibt vier Akte, statt drei oder fünf.



Vorigen Oktober haben alle Deutschstudenten /-innen aus der Oberstufe in WHGS eine Aufführung dieses Stücks in Manchester Girls' High School gesehen. Die Schauspieler hiessen 'The European Theatre Company.' Um es verständlicher zu machen, hat die ETC das Stück verkürzt, also fehlte leider die lustige Szene mit Möbius' Familie.

Vor neunzehn Jahren hat Herr Langford, Deutschlehrer und Fachleiter Unterstufe in unserer Schule, dieses Stück inszeniert.

Bilder folgen...



Du wirst immer wieder
kauen und kauen und kauen und

kauen und kauen und kauen und....

Big Red

5

The pictures are from Mr Langford's production of "The Physicists" here in 1978, an appropriate tribute to our longest-serving German teacher in this, his retirement year.

Noticias Mundiales

Luto en el deporte español por muerte de Saporta

Raimundo Saporta falleció ayer en Madrid a la edad de 70 años a causa de una afección renal. Saporta, vicepresidente de la Federación Internacional de Baloncesto y presidente de honor

del Real Madrid, club en el que permaneció desde 1952 a 1990, murió en el hospital Ruber Internacional, en el que permanecía ingresado al complicarse la enfermedad que padecía. El deporte español y el

baloncesto internacional están de luto. Saporta será enterrado hoy en el cementerio de La Almudena. La conducción del cadáver se efectuará (13,30 horas) desde el Ruber.



La situación económica de Alemania no retrasará el nacimiento de la Unión Monetaria

Alemania está decidida a llevar el proceso de integración en Maastricht a pesar de su situación económica actual. La propuesta de una profunda reforma tributaria para reducir la presión fiscal permitirá ampliar su

competitividad. España cumplirá los requisitos de Maastricht si cumple la política económica que está llevando adelante el Gobierno a través de las medidas de contención del déficit público. Si continúa depreciándose el

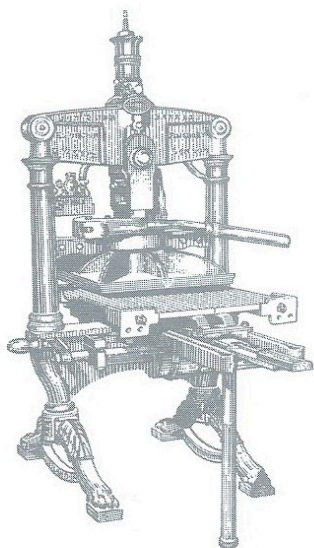
marco alemán podría tener, tarde o temprano, ciertos efectos inflacionarios. Estas son algunas afirmaciones del miembro del Consejo Alemán de Expertos Económicos, Juergen B. Donges, en declaraciones a ABC.

La niebla causa retrasos en Barajas y accidentes en las carreteras

Madrid amaneció ayer cegada por la niebla. Lintensa bruma se agarró al asfalto y se tragó a un coche que circuló por sentido contrario durante tres kilómetros en la M-40, según la Dirección General de Tráfico. El vehículo acabó estrellándose frontalmente con otro turismo en el kilómetro 29 de la autovía, a la altura del barrio de la Fortuna. En el accidente resultaron heridas leves tres personas.

El carril rápido de la Nacional VI tampoco pudo abrirse por la niebla. En el aeropuerto de Barajas hubo que desviar dos vuelos nacionales que aterrizaron en Sevilla y Málaga.

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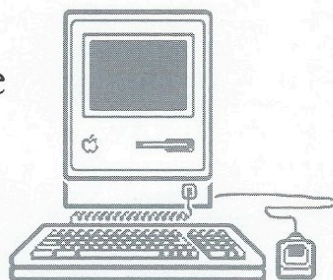
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POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

1. LECTURES

During 1996-97 the Politics 'A' Level groups attended the following lectures at Manchester University:

From Attlee to Major: The Changing Role of the Prime Minister and Cabinet - Dr Martin Smith (Sheffield).

Will Hutton: The State We Are In - David Coates (Manchester)

Party Politics in the 1990's - Martin Durham (Wolverhampton)

Politics and the Media - Dr David Denver (Lancaster)

The Nature of British Politics - Prof Mick Moran (Manchester)

The Fascination of British Politics - Dr David Denver (Lancaster)

Can Labour Make A Difference? - Paul Foot (The Guardian)

Recent Developments in Local Government - John McHugh (Manchester Metropolitan)

Recent Reforms and Developments in the Civil Service - Peter Barberis (Manchester)

Voting Behaviour in an Electoral Year - Lynton Robins (De Montfort)

Recent Developments in Parliament - Prof Philip Norton (Hull)

All the lectures were delivered by leading academics journalists and politicians. They proved an excellent complement to the EDEXCEL syllabus.

2. GREATER MANCHESTER RADIO

Throughout 1996-97, members of staff, the Sixth Form and pupils appeared on the Allan Beswick show or other current affairs programmes. In September 1996 Timi Pearce, Ozy Solati, Penny Cochrane and Rasheed Ayodola all of 1J were interviewed on the Allan Beswick programme. They were asked about their first impressions of their secondary school in the light of recent national surveys regarding stress in young people. It was very entertaining and reassuring to note how friendly they had found William Hulme's Grammar School in their first few weeks.

In March 1997, the Lower Sixth Politics girls were interviewed about the recent Young Citizens' Award Scheme launched by Greater Manchester Police. Many of the group welcomed the opportunity for young people to be publicly recognised for a lot of the good work they did in their local community and for charity. In June 1997, the Lower Sixth Politics group were interviewed about an infamous article in the recent Bratler magazine, about what young people should have achieved by the time they were 18 years old. Needless to say, the girls disagreed with the open defiance of the Police and Parents, but agreed with the ideas about greater independence and over travelling.

Throughout the Mock Election in April 1997 the G.M.R Radio Car came to the School to cover the Campaign, Candidates and the results.



Affan Burki puts the case for the British Muslim Parliament. (Ms Tandon in the background)

3. MOCK ELECTION 1997

For the second time the School was a participant of the BBC's Newsround Mock Election programme. A special election kit was sent to the School and we had to run our own election at least a week before the General Election on May 1st. The date for our election was Thursday 23rd April.

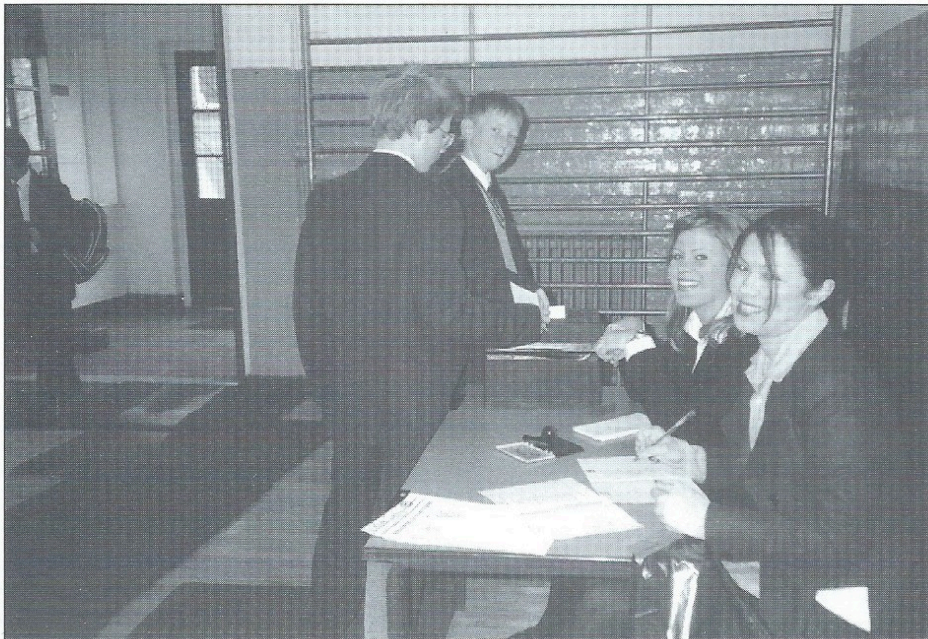
Immediately after the Easter vacation an electoral register had to be compiled. This was a major undertaking and was successfully administered by the Lower Sixth Form Politics group. Indeed 688 pupils out of 751 were registered. It was significant that a number of younger pupils were confused over registering for the vote and normal attendance registration. One frequent comment was "But I register every day, why do I have to register again?" As with the real election, voting is not a natural right, it is a privilege that has to be earned.

Once the Electoral Register was completed, candidates were allowed, since they had to be nominated by five pupils in the register. It was significant that there were no candidates from the three main political parties; perhaps this was due to a degree of alienation and apathy in young people from our national politicians. However, it did not seem to matter since all eight candidates brought to the election their own brand of humour and blend of policies, especially in their posters!

Hustings were arranged in the Lecture Theatre and chaired by Miss. S.R.. Tandon. All the candidates were given a chance to explain why people should vote for them and then took questions from the floor. This proved to be very informative, as well as entertaining exercise in public relations. Eventually the day of the election duly came and the Sports Gym was converted to the Polling Station.



Greater Manchester Radio interviews with the Mock Election candidates



Polling Clerks Louise Wellock and Dawn Sing

Although it was disappointing not to have candidates from the three main parties, all the candidates who took part were extremely committed. Indeed Paul Hartley of GMR who came to cover the election was very impressed with the quality of our pupils and the interest that the candidates had generated about their policies.

Overall the election was a great success and it was good to have the whole school involved! I would like to thank the following for their assistance: Mr. M. Loveland, Miss. S.R. Tandon and all the girls in the School Office (Bernie, Kate, Sara and Jackie). In particular a special word of thanks to the Lower Sixth Politics group, Helen Collins, Leanne Connor, Sarah Moore, Matthew Naylor, Rachael Ordman and Dawn Sing, to 1R for all the clearing up and the Upper Sixth Politics group for being there!

M.P. Jones,
Electoral Returning Officer.



Lucie and Geraldine share a joke during shooting

4. CABLE T.V.

In March 1997 Nicola Barnes, the producer of the teenage programme "TROUBLE", asked for five Sixth Form volunteers. They were to be interviewed on a wide range of important topics such as Politics, The Press, The Media, Fame, Fashion and Teenage Problems; five of the Upper Sixth Politics group immediately volunteered!

The television camera crew and the children's TV presenter Lucie Cave (re: the Mad Scientist) duly arrived and interviewed the students at various locations around the school.

Geraldine Brook was particularly vocal about relationships; Katrina Mackay was very informative about fashion; James Leinhardt knew all about the pop scene; Mathew Robinson talked at length about youth employment and Ashley Marks was a quiet expert on everything. The television crew was very impressed at the manners, knowledge and articulation of our five interviewees. Snippets of all their talks were shown on Cable T.V. throughout May and the company kindly sent two complete videos of the talks.

M.P. Jones.

VISIT BY ANGLO-AUSTRIAN SOCIETY

In October, the Third Year Germanists were introduced to Mr Martin Murray, a member of the Anglo-Austrian Society.

Mr Murray told us how the Society started and that it is still a great success. He reminded us of how the Austrians also speak German (although they do not live in Germany). He himself had a soft Austrian accent. He showed us some exciting pictures of Austria and told us of many ways to enjoy a visit to the country, one of which was the exchange visit. Although we have our own exchange school, it was interesting to hear about a different type of exchange. Mr Murray gave a thorough and informative talk. This was definitely one of the advantages of the afternoon, along with missing our Day 3 vocab test!

On behalf of all those present, I would like to thank Mr Murray for his enjoyable insight into Austria and Mr Langford for hosting the afternoon.

Iram Choudary (3D)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Do you know what you want to do when you leave school?

Have you started to investigate various careers?

Following their G.C.S.E. examinations in June thirty four members of the 5th form took the opportunity to do work placements with various employers. This gave them the chance to see what a particular job is really like and hence whether or not they would like to aim for it.

We would like to thank each of the following employers who gave time to one or more of our students this year.

Alexander Hospital
Avoca Textiles
Bower Harris Solicitors
Bridgewater Hall
B.U.P.A. Hospital
City Hospital Birmingham
Dr Birtwistle (Stretford)
Dr. Chen (Chorlton)
J. Feinstein (Barrister)
Hattrell and Partners Architects
Hope Hospital
Inland Revenue
Khullar Chemist

Ladybarn Medical Centre
Manchester Airport
Manchester Crown Court (press room)
Manchester Evening News
Manchester Royal Infirmary
Manchester University (cancer research)
Manchester Youth Theatre
Mighty Micro Computers
P. McDonald Chambers

North Manchester Jewish Day Centre
Royal Bank of Scotland
St. Benedicts R.C. Primary School
Sale Pharmacy
Salford Met. Borough Council
South Manchester Reporter
W.H.G.S. Prep School

Wormold Ansul (U.K.)

L. Standing
C. Grimshaw
R. Comar
D. Coghill
A. Jackson
F. Youssef
Z. Razaq
A. Jackson
L. Simon
E. Chui
S. Arshad
K. Karam
R. Hussain
A. Kapoor
K. Hayden
N. Mcleod
L. Endlar
J. Shaw
P. Trivedi
S. Kershaw
N. Sadeghi
C. Smith
J. Arnold
G. Sathi
S. Becker
E. Barker
S. Khafagy
S. Ash
R. Fisher
J. Balderstone
S. Jackson
E. Hyde
N. Matthews

G. M. Brown

MY TEACHING WORK EXPERIENCE

I had chosen to do my work experience at School as I am hopefully going to be a PE teacher. Mrs Brown had given me and a friend, Stephanie Jackson, information on work experience at William Hulme's Preparatory Department.

We immediately accepted and the day after our last GCSE examination we went along (very smartly dressed) and very nervous but excited at what our week would entail. We were introduced to the Head Teacher, Mrs Wilson, with whom we would be working. The bell rang at 9.00am and the children came into the classroom. They were aged between 5 and 6 and Stephanie had a class of 7 and 8 year olds.

A few children asked who I was; it felt strange to say "I'm your teacher"! I got to sit with four boys adding up pennies. The rest of the day I read to them and drew pictures. The children were really keen to do things and were constantly clammering for attention! Eventually it was 3.30 and time for me to go home. I didn't think that I could go back the next day, as I was so shattered after looking after them. One day I went up to our own School with about 20 or 30 seven and eight year olds as it was their PE Lesson.

My work experience week passed and soon it was Friday and 3.30pm. All the children said "Goodbye and Thank You" to me (some asked me to come back the following week!).

It wouldn't have been possible for this to happen without the help of Mrs Brown so I would like to say thank you to her for everything.

Taking part in the work experience certainly made me realise that teaching young children was just too much. Although I had enjoyed the week, that was enough for me! I don't know where Primary and Prep School teachers get their energy from!

Elizabeth Hyde (5S)

WORK EXPERIENCE AT THE SOUTH MANCHESTER REPORTER

I arrived at the South Manchester Reporter at 9.30am on a Monday morning, nervous, but thrilled I'd finally found a placement in the Media. I was introduced to Jen, the paper's general dogsbody, and Claire the receptionist, who had just finished her exams, like me.

I spent the first day learning the ropes in reception and quickly made friends with Claire. Everyone at the paper was very friendly and when I went home that day, I felt part of the family. With each of the five days I spent there came a new experience and I didn't want the week to end.

Jen made sure I saw every part of the running of the paper, and had a go at everything. On the Thursday I went on two jobs with one of the reporters. I was allowed to ask questions and I found the experience completely amazing. I was also able to write two articles, which were printed in the paper. They were only small, but when I saw them in the paper, I knew I had found the career of my choice.

I was extremely sad to leave and as we exchanged boxes of chocolates on Friday afternoon, I was glad to have experienced the week. I still get to hear what's going on with the paper, as I've kept in contact with Claire, the receptionist.

I enjoyed the week and would love to go back again.

Jane Balderstone (5J)

WORK EXPERIENCE

I have always wanted to do medicine so I was lucky to have the opportunity to do my work experience in a hospital.

After my G.C.S.E.s I worked at Manchester Royal Infirmary for 5 days in the Neurology Department. On my first day the doctor whom I was shadowing wasn't quite sure what I could do, but he soon found something.

The first thing I did was a ward round. This is where we go and talk to the patients on the ward and see how they are coping with the new medication and to see if their condition has changed. It was interesting to see how people's symptoms differed even though they had the same illness.

I was taken to see some ECG's (Electrocardiograms) which are nerve conduction tests. In this they send an electric current through the nerves in your hands or legs which cause your fingers or toes to twitch. The speed of the reactions are monitored. I also witnessed a couple of lumbar punctures which seemed extremely painful. This is where they extract some of the fluid from the spine for examination.

These five days were extremely valuable for me. It gives you a realistic view of working in a hospital and you can definitely feel the difference from the television programmes. The staff were very helpful and it was an excellent experience.

Parveen Trivedi (5J)

THIRD FORM HISTORY INTERACTIVE DAY 30th June - 1st July

Although there have been many newspaper days in the past, there has never been one where information from all different sources has been used for history students. The difference being - the Internet!

3L used the Internet on 30th June and 1st July to gather information sent down the Internet from a site on Teesside. We were required to use this information to produce a newspaper, newspaper article, or cartoon on the causes of World War I. This was a very exciting thing to do, as it gave us the chance to use the Internet, which most of us had never been able to do before.

Most of us used the information quite well, combining the information we were sent through the Internet with our own knowledge of World War I, which we had studied earlier in the year. Sometimes we were a little confused, but all our problems were resolved by Mr. Callaghan, Miss Tandon and Mr MacLachlan. The staff gave us help whenever we needed it, but also left us enough scope to help ourselves and the other members of our team.

We had a very interesting two days, and at the end of the event we sent our completed work by e-mail to Teesside. Who knows, by September we may have won a prize for the School!

Leanne Davidson (3L)

BIOLOGY/PETS CLUB

This year, it was decided to open a Pets Club Section in response to demand from a number of members of the Lower School. This would cater for those who already had pets of their own and also for those who, for different reasons, could not keep pets at home.

Two Syrian hamsters were obtained by Ben Radnor and the members voted to call them Schizo and Phrenic. They are easily the most popular individuals and take all the attention they receive in their stride!

Clare Keable gave us Robert the rabbit, who quickly adapted to his new circumstances and is now also a favourite. We were also given two gerbils, named Mulder and Scully, who were young and unused to being handled at first. They have gradually got used to this and are now delightful pets.

All the animals are looked after by the members, and this includes feeding, cleaning and tender loving care! A Newsletter was produced by Peter Irving for the Open Day.

Activities in the Summer Term were greatly restricted by the inclement weather. A proposed trip to Hardraw could not take place as the Centre was booked by outside organisations and it is hoped to do this next autumn.

This summer, ten of the fifteen nest-boxes were occupied which statistically is the best-ever occupancy rate. Nine were occupied by blue tits and one by great tits.

Many thanks to the Laboratory Technician, Mrs Traynor, for all the help she has given to the club.

D A Myers/E Matthews



FIRST YEAR LATIN DRAMA FESTIVAL

This was a new event for staff and pupils. Each form had to put on a play which told the story of Caecilius' death in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius (which occurs at the end of the first year text book). Most pupils were enthusiastic about acting in this but were then told that they would have to perform it in Latin!

It was rather like a scene from 'Challenge Anneka'. Where were they going to get togas from? What props and scenery would be needed for the atrium of a Roman house? How would they represent a volcano which throws out ash and flames and makes rumbling noises? Above all, how would they make their production different from everyone else's? All this had to be decided and rehearsed in two and a half weeks, using about eight lessons.

A lot of pupils must have put in extra time to make props and rehearse. A chicken-wire volcano, silly string, plastic fruit, plants from the Biology department and an electric keyboard were all involved on the afternoon of Monday, 30th June when each performance took place in the Upper Hall. Mr Parkin (of Junior Drama Group fame) and Mr Jackson, former Head of Classics here, were the judges. They were impressed and surprised that all the performances could be so different. It was also impressive to see how many pupils had managed to learn their lines in Latin and spoke them with understanding. In the end, 1S won the trophy for the best production and Timi Pearce won the best individual performance for his role as Caecilius.

Many thanks to all members of staff in the Classics, English and Art departments who helped to make this event a success, as well as the judges. I hope that the pupils learned about Roman life as well as the language, especially the one who suggested to me that a television would be a useful prop for a Roman living room!

J C Howling

MY MONTH AT WILLIAM HULME'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

A lot of you may have seen me looking around, taking photos and observing lessons (in November). Maybe you asked yourself who I was? I am a teacher from Germany and stayed at William Hulme's Grammar School through the hospitality programme of the Central Bureau of Educational Visits and Exchanges and the Pädagogischer Austauschdienst. This programme gives German teachers of English (and English teachers of German) the chance to be integrated into the routine of a school, and live in a family. You will certainly appreciate that it is very important for a language teacher to know more about the country whose language one teaches.

So I used this chance of a 3 week visit to Manchester in November 1996, and to William Hulme's Grammar School. My article would probably be pages long if I wrote about everything I did during that time, but I'd like to mention a few things. A lot of your teachers were so kind as to allow me into their lessons and so I could see a lot of you working very hard. By the evening I had got to know the whole school. After one week I felt quite at home. But what I think has been most important are the experiences, impressions I gained, and contacts established. No doubt, these will continue to flourish.

During the next two weeks I experienced the feeling of being a native speaker by contributing to German lessons, and even took part in the oral exams. I enjoyed dealing with the history of my own country again (because I normally teach about that of GB and the USA). In History and German lessons I taught about Martin Luther who made my hometown very famous.

The intention of my visit was to stimulate penfriendships, pupil and teacher exchanges and school links. Not everything will be possible. We managed to initiate a few things; the future will show. What I take with me is a lot of visual material, provided by Mr J Thomson, which will help me to speak about the British School system, culture and history (especially Manchester). In a word, my visit was a giving and taking.

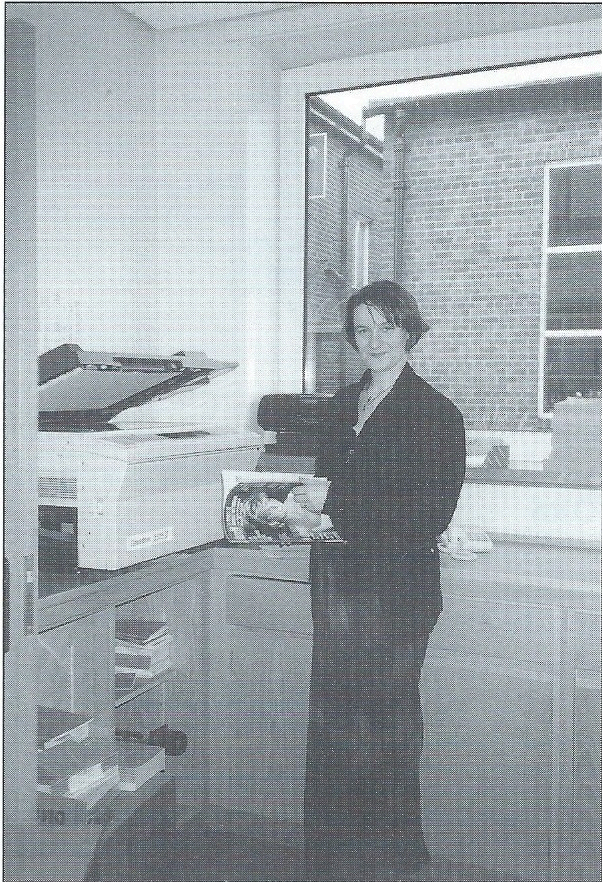
My special thanks go to William Hulme's Grammar School as a whole, to the Modern Language Department and especially to Mrs. B. Wright who made the whole visit possible.

Auf Wiedersehen!

Bärbel Gauert
Martin Luther Gymnasium Wittenberg

AN ASSISTANTE'S EYE VIEW

In 1995, Sylvie Grevais (former assistante from Toulouse) wrote in the Hulmeian how "foreign" she felt in the UK. I was struck by her article: even though we both came from the same region of France, we seem to have cast a radically opposed look at England. I felt at home straight away, and loved everything in Manchester, from the Eccles cake



Mlle. Ginestet

to the Magic Bus! During my year at WHGS, I was often asked if I was really French. People who hate wine, cheese and heat cannot be French, can they? Well I am, but if reincarnation exists, I am sure I was British in a previous life! Anyway, this shows how meaningless stereotypes can be.

As for WHGS itself, its organisation is quite different from that of French collèges or lycées. Its facilities would make the average French state school green with envy. When I took my bac ('A' Levels), there were 39 pupils in my set ... Working with the teachers of the Modern Languages Department and teaching the pupils was a unique and unforgettable experience. I hope I was a good ambassador for France; that I made the pupils enjoy French: don't forget that other languages than English can be useful in our smaller and smaller world, and be open-minded, young Mancs!

I would like to end this article by quoting, not Dante or Virgil for a change, but Eric Cantona, who said, addressing the Mancunians: "I don't know why, but I love you!"

Gaëlle Ginestet
(French Assistante)

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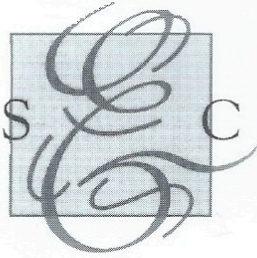
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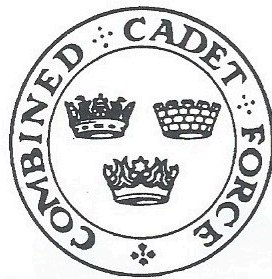
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



ARMY SECTION

NORTH WEST CHALLENGE, WARCOP, 6-8 September 1996

The CCF year began with an entirely new event in the cadet calendar. Conceived by Brigadier Shapter, Chief Executive TAVRA and planned by Major David Oak, S03 G3 Cadets at 42 Brigade (in other words the gentleman who facilitates and manages cadet training in the North West), North West Challenge is modelled on the Ten Tors held annually over Dartmoor. It is open to CCF and ACF units all over the region (from Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and the Isle of Man!). It is a 48 hour navigation exercise, one of the aims of which is to qualify individuals for the Bronze or Silver D of E awards. Two routes were designed, a Junior and a Senior covering 30 and 40 miles respectively. WHGS CCF entered a Junior team consisting of Lance Corporals Richard Fisher (Captain), Edward Barker, Ben Green, Stephanie Jackson, Neil McLeod, and Andrew Wall. Term had started only three days before the event so that preparation was minimal. Most of it took place in the back of the minibus during the journey from Manchester, in fact! Route-cards were prepared in the dark after our arrival on Friday evening at Moor House Farm, and by 0730 on Saturday morning the six cadets had had their rolled oats and bacon grill, packed their tents, sleeping-bags, food and cooking gear into their rucksacs and were ready for the massed start.



The WHGS Team on North West Challenge 1996
(Photo: Maj Fisher)

Conditions were extremely good and the day passed fairly uneventfully, our team coming into their overnight campsite an hour ahead of the next group (although this was not a race, but a challenge walk!) Accompanying adults (Team Managers) had had to remain in the vicinity of the Start/Finish point throughout and so the cadets had to be entirely self-reliant from Saturday morning until the end of the Challenge on Sunday afternoon. Nevertheless they managed to be up and away on Sunday by 0630. This was obviously the harder of the two days: the weather, having made route-finding tricky in the early morning with a blanket of mist, turned very hot so that the cadets found it increasingly difficult to maintain a steady pace. Two of them had foot problems which threatened to put them out at one stage in the afternoon, but the sight of Stephanie Jackson striding on ahead must have raised their morale (or at least made it unthinkable for them to drop out?) Regular checkpoints and water replenishment kept everyone going and they were lucky enough to avoid the rather unsympathetic shooting parties which some teams apparently encountered. For a while they joined forces with one of Cheshire ACF's teams but then decided that it was a matter of pride to be first home again for the second day as a complete team, and so they jogged painfully in to the Finishing Post.

Presentations were made by the Brigade Commander, Brigadier David Shaw, and by Brigadier Shapter, all participants receiving a certificate, a badge and a superb display medal to mark their considerable achievement over a long and arduous weekend. Our sincere thanks to Major Oak and his team who planned and ran this excellent event meticulously and who managed to cope with every contingency efficiently and with good humour, to 26, 28 and 40 Cadet Training Teams, and to all the ACF adults whose participation enabled this first NWC to take place.



The Reviewing Officer, Lt Col D Tasker TD JP with (l-r) WO1 Dewhurst representing 42 (NW) Bde, Major Fisher, Contingent Commander, the Head Master and Mrs Briggs, Flt Lt Keable i/c RAF Section and WO1 Davies RSM 5/8 King's.

The Review, or Inspection, took place in the School grounds a month into the Michaelmas Term. We were delighted to be able to welcome as our Reviewing Officer this year Lieutenant Colonel David Tasker TD JP, Commanding Officer 5th/8th (Volunteer) Battalion the King's Regiment, to which our Corps is badged. Lieutenant Colonel Tasker was able to see the wide range of activities our Army and RAF Section cadets are involved in during a typical year's training.

The circuit of demonstrations began prematurely as the Colonel's driver failed to locate the entrance to the Head Master's drive and took him instead into the Quad. Lieutenant Colonel Tasker was then directed down towards the swimming pool outside which C/Sgt Guy Brocklehurst was rehearsing the Reviewing Officer's Honour Guard, unfortunately! After meeting the Head Master, Mrs Briggs, guests, the OC and Contingent Officers and cadets at the Head Master's house, Colonel Tasker came out to inspect the Guard, consisting of boys and girls from both Sections, and was then taken round to see canoeing, abseiling (from the Biology Lab roof), command tasks, a confidence course, flight simulators in the IT Lab, an Air Experience Flight briefing, a First Aid scenario oozing with realism, a Signals Exercise, and instructional periods on weapons, drill, campcraft and shooting in the miniature range. Several of these activities had been both conceived and run by the cadets themselves, though of course we had to call on 26 CTT for help with the adventurous training elements.

The morning culminated in two demonstrations on the playing fields: the Duties of a Sentry, enacted with impressive panache by Captain Simkin's Recruit Platoon, and finally a large scale Platoon Attack involving most of the Contingent. The Reviewing Officer then addressed the cadets out at the pavilion, congratulating them on the morning's display and emphasising to them the importance of working together effectively as a team, not only in the CCF but in the world of work as well. It hardly needs saying that our cadets, all 120 of them, did themselves and the School a great deal of credit, as they always do.

Lunch at the Head Master's house with officers, senior cadets, Old Hulmeians and guests from within and outside the School brought the proceedings to a satisfactory close, and cadets and their officers traipsed reluctantly back into the classroom for afternoon school.

KING'S CUP 1997



WHGS CCF's muddy King's Cup Team, 1997
(Photo: Maj Fisher)

Facing a stronger and better prepared field of AFC's and CCF's than ever, our King's Cup Team of C/Sgts Ed Choularton (capt) and Alex Xidacis, Sgts Preyesh Vara, Ben Kent and Jake Royle, Cpls Richard Fisher, Ed Barker, Chris Lindley and Gurpartab Sathi performed commendably in every element of this hectic and challenging weekend. Even the Drill Competition did not show them up unduly (or at least they did not come last.) All nine of them worked together in a spirit of cooperation and good humour from start to finish, whether repelling Merseysiders in the billet at night or on the football pitch, or helping each other over the assault course on the final afternoon. Their final placing of fourth, ahead of all the other School CCFs, was about right, and all the cadets and their Team Manager Miss Matthews were satisfied with this just reward for their efforts.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING CAMP



Everyone enjoys climbing!
(Photo: Maj Fisher)



On the lakes at Plas y Brenin
(Photo: Capt Simkin)



Time out half way up Snowdon
(Photo: Maj Fisher)

Camp follows a tried and tested pattern, developed over the last few years as the best way of providing upwards of thirty cadets whose ages and experience range widely with the fullest and most challenging programme of serious yet enjoyable outdoor activities. We use an area - Northern Snowdonia - that we know well, that gives us all we need, and that fortuitously is within two hours' drive of the School. Capel Curig Training Camp permits us the use of excellent facilities right in the heart of the area, between Betws-y-Coed and the mountains, and we don't even have to cook our own meals any longer!

Details of our programme are much the same as last year's, since we tend to repeat the Expedition route if it has worked well the previous year. This is the broad outline:

 WILLIAM HULME'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL COMBINED CADET FORCE ADVENTUROUS TRAINING CAMP 		
TRAINING PROGRAMME 27 Mar - 04 Apr 1997		
DATE	TRAINING	REMARKS
THUR 27	1200 noon Meet WHGS 1400 hrs Dep WHGS 1600 hrs approx Arr Capel Curig Training Camp	Load vehicles; packed lunch
FRI 28	am: Pack day sac: familiarisation day/map and compass etc eve: Exped prep/briefings/route-cards	Higher walk if conditions permit. Bouldering?
SAT 29	am: Exped prep (draw and pack stores, rations, kit) 1400 hrs: Move to Beddgelert: EXPEDITION I via Aberglaslyn Pass, Cwm Bychan, Moel y Dyniewyd	Lunch meal in Camp Bivouac site at Bethania
SUN 30	EXPEDITION II all day - Cnicht summit and ridge	Rtn bivvy site at Bethania
MON 31	EXPEDITION III all day - Snowdon summit via Watkin Path and East face; Pyg Track to Pen y Pass: transport to CCTC.	Evening meal in Camp
TUES 01	} (from 1330 hrs) Rock-climbing, abseiling, canoeing, MTB's, orienteering, dry-slope skiing	am: R&R in Betws-y-Coed (Tues)
WEDS 02		
THUR 03		+ Mountain walk if requested (Thurs)
FRI 04	Clean and hand over all accommodation; load vehicles 1030 hrs approx: DEPART CCTC 1300 hrs approx: ARRIVE WHGS Unload vehicles 1430 hrs approx: Dispersal.	

All aspects of the programme went virtually without a hitch and Snowdon was conquered this year by all cadets save the injured in nearly perfect conditions.

Several visitors came to see and help us this year: Mr Grange, Mrs Fisher and Mr Veevers, of course, with Lauren and Nathalie, Old Hulmeians Jonathan Greenhowe (now Flying Officer RAF) and Giles Fisher with Shelly Casley, Miss Raw and Miss Collier, more recent Old Hulmeians Sally Ward and James Brocklehurst, and much more recent Old Hulmeian David Hufton. Captain Chris Tuckwell came down too to help Sgt Conrad Ainsley run the rock-climbing, so we were extremely well catered for in terms of instructors and helpers. It is a great pleasure to be visited and supported on Camp in this way and it greatly enhances everyone's enjoyment of the week. Long may the practice continue.

The following promotions were made at the end of Camp:

to CSM	C/Sgt Sarah Cochrane
to C/Sgt	Sgts Preyesh Vara
	Stephen Flood
	Ben Kent
	Glynn Roberts
to Sgt	Cpls Chris Johnstone
	Paul Murphy
to Cpl	L/Cpls Richard Johnston
	Nicola Whiterod

NORTH WEST CADET SKILL AT ARMS MEETING



2/Lt Matthews and Maj Fisher with the WHGS CSAAM Team and assistants, May 1997.
(Photo: WO1 Williams)

Another respectable performance in this excellent series of competitions, this year from a mixed team of Army and RAF Section cadets. Much of our preparation took place in the Corps's own Indoor Range using the Cadet rifle with .22 conversion kits. These were not always available when we needed them, however, so as usual our training was minimal. Our results were as follows:

Montgomery of Alamein Competition:	21 st	} (out of 34 teams)	
Ensign Rifle Competition:	14th		
Earl Roberts Competition:	21 st		
Marling Competition:	10th		
Individual Scores Overall:	Cpl Paul Edmondson RAF	25th	} (out of 136 firers)
	Sgt Matthew Whyatt RAF	61st	
	Sgt Glynn Roberts	83rd	
	C/Sgt Alex Xidacis	108th	
Overall Team Position:	17th (out of 34)		

Alex Xidacis was particularly disappointed with his form during the weekend. He has consistently been one of our most skilled and successful shots since joining the Corps in 1993, but he simply had two off days. In fact he shot well in two of the competitions, and moderately in two, and I hope he will draw some solace from that.

These results bring credit to all our firers, operating in the very unfamiliar environment of a military shooting competition and on a variety of ranges within the complex at Altcar. Thanks to L/Cpl Nicola Whiterod, and Cadets Kati Greenall and Kessr Ali who volunteered to attend the meeting ostensibly to work in the butts. In the event they were given a variety of jobs to do, acting as runners for the RSM, and no doubt the experience gained will be of use to them when and if they are selected to take part in the competition in years to come.

This report would be incomplete without recording Miss Matthews' success in the adults' pool bull shoot. We were all delighted to see her march out to collect her prize from the Brigadier.

Major D M Fisher

RECRUIT/JUNIOR PLATOON

The recruit platoon this year consisted of eighteen Fourth Formers and two Lower Sixth Formers. It is always nice to get Sixth Formers joining the Corps late when they find out what they are missing! To assist me with the platoon, I had a number of NCOs, all of whom helped in different ways but Glynn Roberts was the one who made the major contribution, always willing to get involved himself.

The training in the Michaelmas Term was focussed initially on the Biennial Inspection. The Recruit Platoon took part in various activities including a demonstration of the duties of a sentry. After the Inspection, training switched to weapon training and most members of the platoon were able to pass the Shooting and Safety test at the end of the Term. Field Day was held at Holcombe Moor Training Camp and included patrolling and the Krypton Factor Assault Course.

In the Lent Term, the training was mainly in preparation for Easter Camp and hence Map & Compass work was the order of the day. The majority of the cadets managed to reach an acceptable standard in the Map & Compass Test and were able to use this knowledge to good effect in Snowdonia at the end of the Term.

Field Day was spent at University Barracks and hosted by our Cadet Training Team (26CTT). Captain Jones and the CTT gave the recruits a full and varied day's training including Signals, Shooting and the use of the indoor climbing wall.

Midsummer Term saw the first serious attempt at drill culminating in a Passing Out Parade in front of Major Fisher. Attention then switched to fieldcraft in order to ensure that those going on Summer Camp would gain the maximum benefit. Field Day was spent at a wet and windy Holcombe Moor with live firing on the range and reinforcement of the work done in the classroom on Section Battle Drills.

The platoon will be taken over by Captain Jones next year. It is nice to know that they will be in good hands and I wish them well.

Captain A Simkin

SENIOR PLATOON

The large fifth year platoon was excellent all year. High levels of attendance, punctuality and enthusiasm were evident in all their activities, which was always noted by other Instructing Adults. The main priorities this year were the successful completion of the Army Proficiency Certificate and to get as many cadets promoted to the rank of full corporal.

The platoon's first Field Day was spent at Holcombe Moor in September, preparing for the Biennial Inspection. The training involved Platoon Battle Drills, the Krypton Factor Assault Course and shooting on the Range. This was quite an intensive and tiring day for all the cadets but well worth it to see everyone's smiling faces on the coach home!

Throughout the year, the platoon was split into a number of groups, each one having to complete a section of the APC syllabus. The Cadet Training Team ran a Cadre Course which involved a mixture of instructional sessions and each cadet performing a 15-minute lecturette. All the officers who witnessed the presentations by the cadets were amazed at the variety of topics and planning. Highlights included Alison Featherstone's dance lesson, Ben Green making bread, Jo Shaw's Spanish Exchange, Lauren Standing on the Homeless in Manchester and the Suzannes - Ash and Nathan - on aspects of their religion. Miss Matthews ran an excellent Map and Compass package and Major Fisher put everyone through their paces with an intensive First Aid course. In March, for their last Field Day, the platoon went to Harris House, Hardraw to complete a self-reliance exercise as well as be tested on all their knowledge to date. This went remarkably well, with everyone enjoying the walk and jokes by the OC.

Throughout the year, members of the platoon were also involved with all the main CCF activities - the Biennial Inspection, North-West Challenge, the King's Cup, the Cadet Skill-At-Arms Meeting and camps at Capel Curig and Culybraggan. The cadets proved to be a real joy to teach and a great asset for the School. It was appropriate, then, that the retiring Head Master, Mr P D Briggs, took the salute for the platoon's second term. It was also significant that the vast majority of this platoon have stayed on in the Army Section in the Sixth Form.

Both Miss Matthews and I were very impressed with the countless number of times individual cadets volunteered to help out, such as with the third year recruitment session, Open Days and the June Field Day. They have been a terrific platoon all year and the following table lists their achievements:

	FIELD CRAFT TEST	WEAPONS TEST	FIRST AID TEST	MAP/COMPASS TEST	CADRE LECTURE	A.P.C.	PROMOTED TO
Jeremy ARNOLD	P	P	P	M	P	P	CPL
Suzanne ASH	D	P	M	P	P	M	CPL
Edward BARKER	P	P	P	M	D	M	CPL
Katie CHESWORTH	P	P	M	P	D	P	L/CPL
Anya DEARDEN	M	P	M	P	P	P	CPL
Alison FEATHERSTONE	P	P	M	M	M	M	CPL
Richard FISHER	D	P	P	D	P	D	CPL
Ben GREEN	D	P	M	P	M	D	CPL
Jo GREGORY	P	P	P	P	D	P	CPL
Kim HAYDEN	M	P	M	P	D	D	CPL
Alison HAWCROFT	D	P	M	P	D	D	CPL
Stephanie JACKSON	P	P	P	P	P	P	CPL
Kim KARAM	P	P	M	P	F	P	X
Chris LINDLEY	D	P	P	M	P	M	CPL
Neil McLEOD	P	P	M	P	M	P	CPL
Jonathan MILLS	P	P	P	P	F	P	X
Suzanne NATHAN	M	P	M	M	P	M	CPL
Chloe PEPALL	P	P	D	M	P	P	CPL
Gurpartab SATHI	P	P	M	M	P	M	CPL
Joanna SHAW	D	P	M	P	D	D	CPL
Lauren STANDRING	M	P	D	P	P	M	CPL
Pareen TRIVEDI	M	P	M	P	P	M	CPL
Fady YOUSSEF	P	P	D	D	P	D	CPL
Marc ZENTAR	P	P	M	P	P	P	L/CPL

F
P
M
D
L/CPL
CPL

=
=
=
=
=
=

FAIL
PASS
MERIT
DISTINCTION
LANCE-CORPORAL
FULL-CORPORAL

Captain M P Jones
2Lt E L Matthews

CENTRAL CAMP, CULTYBRAGGAN, JULY 1997



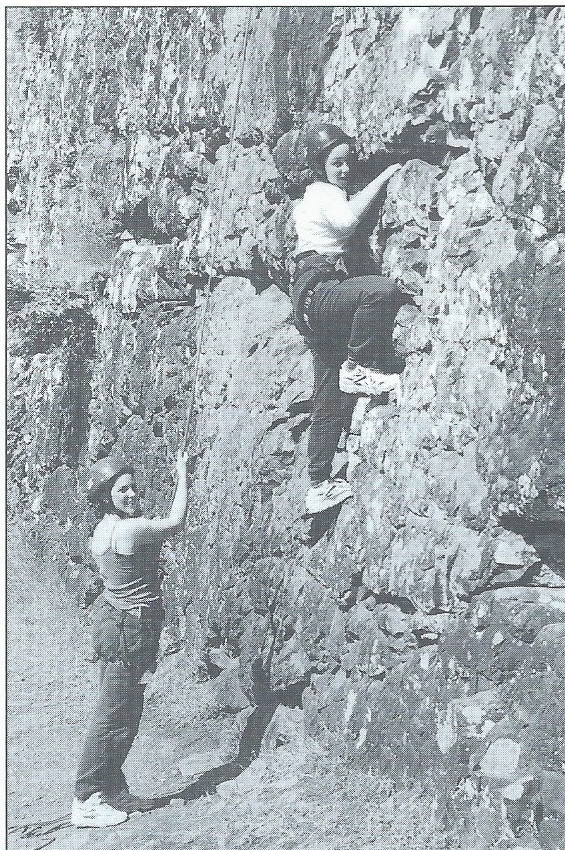
One of several command tasks
(Photo: Capt Simkin)



Inter-School Assault Course Competition:
Glynn Roberts manoeuvres the
log over the wall with support from Alex Xidacis,
Stephen Flood and Sarah Cochrane.
(Photo: Maj Fisher)



Chris White, Chris Johnstone, Stephanie Jackson and Ed Barker enter Camp in the
March and Shoot Competition.
(Photo: Maj Fisher)



Laurie Edwards belays Vanessa Cohen on her first climb.
(Phot: Capt Simkin)



Royal Engineers' stand: moving a bridge section into place.
(Photo: Maj Fisher)



Cpl Kim Hayden learning how to break up concrete.
(Photo: Maj Fisher)

At the end-of-Camp debrief, the following promotions were made:

with effect from 12 July 1997:

- to RSM CSM Sarah Cochrane (*only the Contingent's second female RSM*)
 - to CSM C/Sgts Guy Brocklehurst, Edward Choularton, Alex Xidacis, and
C/Sgts Ben Kent and Glynn Roberts
 - to C/Sgt Sgts Rachael Lee and Jacob Royle
 - to Sgt Cpls Edward Barker, Richard Fisher, Alison Hawcroft, Kim Hayden,
Chris Lindley, Gurpartab Sathi and Joanna Shaw
 - to Cpl L/Cpls Nicola Whiterod and Katie Chesworth
 - to L/Cpl Cdts Tabassum Safdar, Kessr Ali, Sarah Baker, Nicholas Barratt,
Caroline Bell, Joe Holland, Kati Greenall, Jonathan Murphy,
Neel Shah and Chris White.
- Best Recruits on Camp were: Emily Cochrane and James Meers

NORTH WEST CHALLENGE 1997

The week after our return from Scotland, we were off again to Warcop to take part in this year's NWC. Both a Senior and a Junior team were entered. Both completed their routes, not without some difficulty, and one member of the Juniors dropped out through a predicted combination of footwear and injury troubles. The Senior Team decided that their route was insufficiently gruelling so took a deliberate wrong turn early on Sunday morning before anyone else was up and trekked happily on for several hours more than they needed. As it happened only three other Senior teams, of the thirteen that started, managed to complete the Challenge anyway, which makes our Seniors' achievement all the more remarkable (and foolhardy?) They and the Junior Team impressed a good few people in reaching their goals and thoroughly deserved the congratulations they and I have received.

The Teams consisted of:

<i>Senior:</i>	<i>Junior:</i>
David Melmoth	Iain Gage
Stephen Flood	Kessr Ali
Will Laird	Jonathan Murphy
Glynn Roberts	Graeme Laycock
Ben Green	Danny Wood

Our thanks to Miss Matthews, Team Manager for the fourth time this year, for her tireless organisation and for giving up so much of her time to support cadets' activities.

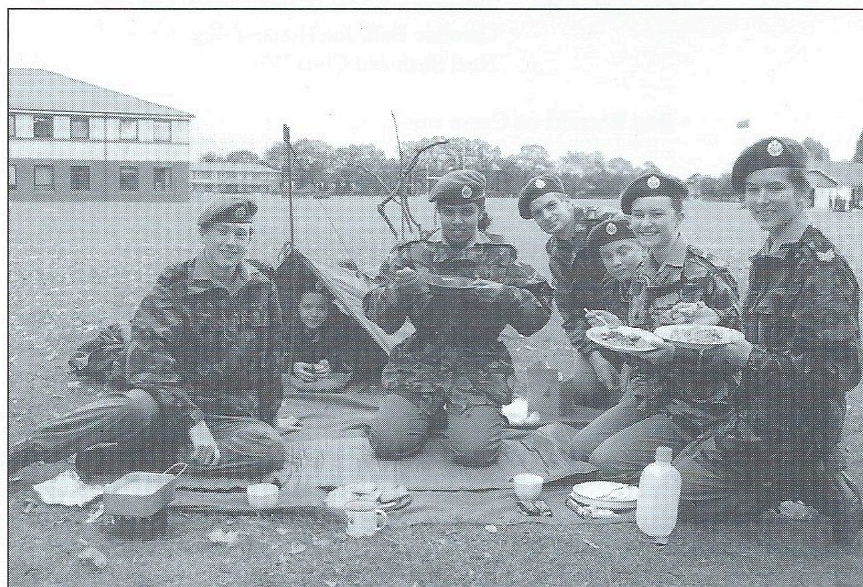
And in brief...

- Pareen Trivedi, Claire Lelonek, Ed Barker and Richard Fisher all attended Naval First Aid Courses at Aldershot;
- The Colin Midwood Prize for Army Section cadets has been jointly awarded to RSM Sarah Cochrane and CSM Edward Choularton;
- C/Sgt Ben Kent and Sgt Jake Royle were selected for a Leadership Course at the Cadet Training Centre;
- The Army Section Stores and the Armoury were run this year by Sgts Stephen Flood, Ben Kent and Rachael Lee, with much assistance from Jake Royle; thanks to all of them for their conscientiousness;
- The Corps displays/presentations on Open Days/Evenings have again received tremendous support from volunteer cadets from both Sections who revealed unsuspected talents for public relations!
- Over thirty Third Formers have joined the Army Section Recruit Platoon this summer and have spent the traditional wet night at Holcombe Moor Training Centre and tried their ability and confidence on the Krypton Factor Assault Course with their Platoon Officer, 2 Lt Matthews. Fourteen of them came to Camp in Scotland at the end of term.

Maj DM Fisher

RAF SECTION

Late in the summer term, we were all deeply saddened by the sudden death of Corporal Tim Edwards. He was one of our best cadets, quietly competent, responsible, always polite and a skilful and experienced map-reader and excellent walker. He is pictured here below at the Biennial Review in October 1996.



Biennial Review 1996: RAF Campcraft demonstration.

Of the many opportunities available to cadets the most exciting is the International Air Cadet Exchange. Only a lucky few have the chance to take part in this exchange but they have the holiday of a lifetime. Flight Sergeant Sarah Porter is unlikely to forget her trip:

INTERNATIONAL AIR CADET EXCHANGE

I couldn't believe it. I'd been selected to go on the International Air Cadet Exchange to the USA. When I was first interviewed, I had no idea that I'd eventually be selected, let alone end up going to America. After sorting out my uniform (not standard RAF uniform fortunately but it did include white shirts with union jacks on the shoulders!) and collecting various gifts for hosts and other international cadets, I was almost ready to go. I just had to work out how to get it all into one suitcase and manage to keep it under 44lbs!



Air Cadet Exchange Group outside the White House.

I had to be at the Cavalry Barracks in Hounslow, Middlesex, by 4 pm on Monday 17th July. So, with all my bags packed and feeling both excited and apprehensive, I left Manchester Piccadilly by train. I finally arrived at Hounslow West Underground station (after my first trip on the London Underground!), where I met another girl going on the exchange. She was off to Turkey. We shared a taxi out to the Cavalry Barracks, only 2 miles away, and then spent the rest of the day getting to know the other cadets taking part in the exchange. I met cadets who were going to places as various as Israel, Australia, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Norway and Belgium. We were also introduced to our escorting officer, Flight Lieutenant Bill Teague, who would be with myself and the other seven British cadets, going as party A to the USA, for the whole trip.

On Tuesday morning, after a good but short night's sleep, we got up at 4.30 am for the first in a series of very long days. We ate breakfast at the barracks and then left for Heathrow, where we flew out to Frankfurt, Germany, for an overnight stay in the Sheraton Hotel - a far cry from the normal accommodation provided by the RAF for cadets. There were cadets from most of the other participating countries there too, so it was great to start to get to know some of them.

The next day, Wednesday, was another early morning, 5.30 am. We then flew out for the USA along with about 150 international cadets. After a nine-hour flight we arrived in Washington D.C., where we were to spend the next three nights. Again we were accommodated in the lap of luxury in the Stouffer Renaissance Hotel, just outside Washington, in Crystal City. After meeting the CAP (Civil Air Patrol - American air cadets) members, who were to act as the guides in Washington, we spent a quiet evening by the hotel pool, enjoying the warm weather.

The next two days were spent touring round the capital. We saw all the sights including the White House, the Washington Monument, the Pentagon (which houses their equivalent of the Ministry of Defence) and the Arlington National Cemetery, where JFK is buried. Friday evening was spent in the Hard Rock Cafe, where I think nearly all of us bought one of those world-famous T-shirts.

On Saturday 22nd July, we flew out to the state of Oklahoma, where we would be staying for the next ten days. We were greeted by our hosts who were all parents of CAP cadets in Oklahoma. I stayed with the other female cadet from the UK, Lindsay, in a lovely house in the city of Edmond, just north of the state capital, Oklahoma City. After going out for lunch with all the other cadets and host families, we went back to our host's home and spent the rest of the day getting to know them and settling in a bit. We went off to a local "Country Club" that evening, which was fun - I never realised that there were still real cowboys around. We even learnt the two-step. Country music takes a bit of getting used to but it's fun really.

The following day, Sunday, was quite a quiet day. Lindsay and I went to church with our hosts in the morning where they made us feel very welcome. Then we went to a local shopping mall in the afternoon. All the cadets and hosts got together in the evening for a big barbecue (very popular in Oklahoma!) at Lake Arcadia, a local lake and park. After we'd eaten more than enough, we went down to the lake for a swim. It was incredibly warm considering that it was about 9 pm but I suppose we shouldn't have been surprised since the temperature ranges from about 75 degrees Fahrenheit at night to over 100 degrees during the day in Oklahoma.

Monday turned out to be a very busy day. It began with a tour of Tinker Air Force Base, including a building known as 3001, which is nearly a mile long. In the afternoon we met the Lieutenant Governor at the State Capitol, where we were given a tour. Then, after visiting the site of the Oklahoma bombing, we were guests at an Edmond Chamber of Commerce (equivalent to City Council) meeting, where they declared that week to be official "TACE Week" for the whole city! I don't quite know how that will affect them in the future but we all had to sign an official proclamation anyway. That evening was spent at a local rifle range, where we got to fire both rifles and pistols, which was fun.

On Tuesday we were taken to meet the mayor of Oklahoma City. Then we went on a tour of FAA, where we were given the opportunity to fly a simulator of a Boeing 727 that is used for training Air Force pilots. It was great fun and very realistic, although I don't think I'm quite ready to fly the real thing yet. That afternoon was spent at the Kirkpatrick Centre, which was Oklahoma City's version of the Manchester Museum of Science and Technology. We got to go to a roller hockey game that evening too, which was great fun despite the fact that the Coyotes, whom we were supporting, lost 10-8 to the L.A. Blades!

Wednesday morning was spent at the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, which was followed by a barbecue lunch and then a trip on a T1 simulator at Vance Air Force Base in Enid. We had a barbecue (again!) at our host family's house and then spent a quiet evening in with the family.

Thursday gave us the opportunity to get some cheap Levis from an outlet mall in Straud, on the way to the Illinois river. We all canoed down the river for about six miles and only capsized three times, which I thought was quite impressive. We ate Chinese for dinner and then went to see the River City Players perform at the local University Playhouse. Apparently they were big during the Big Band era but I'm not sure.

We decided that Friday should be quite a relaxing day, so we spent it down by Lake Arcadia, where we could go out in a speed boat and water-ski or just sit and sunbathe - I did a bit of each! Then, that evening, we went to see Ben Travers' "Wild Oats" in the park. It was an outdoor production and the English accents were (generally!) quite impressive considering it was an all-American cast.

The next two days were spent at an encampment in Fort Sill, where we had the chance to compare a CAP camp with a CCF/ATC camp. The drill left a lot to be desired and the early morning run at 4.45 didn't sound too appealing, but they seemed to be having a good time so it can't all have been bad. While we were there we also visited a nearby Indian museum where we saw Geronimo's cell and his grave, and of course we saw Fort Sill itself too. We travelled home from the encampment on the Sunday afternoon via Turner Falls, which were incredible, and had a swim in the pool below them. That evening was also the official farewell party and yes, you guessed it, we had a barbecue!

Well, Monday was our last full day in Oklahoma and we finally got the chance to go Cessna flying, which is what the cadets there learn to fly in. They were a little bigger and slightly more modern than our Chipmunks (not difficult!) but as I didn't get to fly myself, I don't know how different it would have felt to be behind the controls. That afternoon was spent at White Water, a large outdoor water park with loads of big water rides - it was like a wet version of Alton Towers really. It was brilliant fun and a great way to end our stay in Oklahoma.

There were quite a lot of tearful farewells early the next morning as we said our goodbyes to all the families we had stayed with and all the CAP cadets we had got to know over the last ten days, most of whom we would probably never see again. We'd had an amazing time in Oklahoma and we were so grateful for all their hard work and hospitality. They had all made us feel so welcome and we left with some really wonderful memories. We flew back to Washington that morning and met up with some of the other cadets who had all been to different states in America. We spent the rest of the day just relaxing at the hotel and comparing stories from each other's trips. Everyone seemed to have had a good time but, like me, I think they were all feeling rather tired and, although it was sad to be going home, I was looking forward to it as well.

Once we'd packed up all our stuff for the last time, we left the hotel just after lunch on the Wednesday. After spending a few hours at the airport, we finally took off at 6.55 pm back to good old England, where we landed at 6.55 am our time! Then it was back on the Underground across London and by train to Manchester to get some well needed sleep ... in my own bed! I'd had a trip of a lifetime and, if any of you reading this are in the RAF, then it's definitely worth applying for if you get the chance.

Membership of the RAF Section gives you the chance to see the world; it also prepares you for the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. If you can survive the Air Cadet Leadership Course at RAF Halton, you can survive anything. Corporal David Melmoth recounts his experiences:

AIR CADET LEADERSHIP COURSE

The Air Cadet Leadership Course at RAF Halton is renowned throughout the country as being the most physically and mentally demanding course available to cadets. Out of 42,000 cadets nation-wide, 160 successfully apply each year. On average, 100 cadets pass the course each year.

"That's the sort of thing you should go on, David", was the phrase used by Flight Lieutenant Keable as I joked with other cadets about the course in mid-May. I found myself applying for the course and received a place for the week of the 5th - 12th July - months away.

All of a sudden it was the end of June and I was issued with a booklet of instructions (including a three-sided kit-list!). I was given a rail-warrant to Wendover (somewhere due south) and left Manchester on the morning of the 5th via London Euston.

Upon arrival in London, I struggled on the Underground with all my bags, went to Marylebone and caught another train to Wendover. On the train I met a few other nervous-looking cadets who were also on their way to RAF Halton for the leadership course.

When we arrived at RAF Halton, we were confronted with a large noticeboard full of information and were told to make notes and memorise what was on it. Following this, we were tested and given two white denim rank slides (these were to be kept clean all week and were to replace ordinary RAF rank slides. They made everybody equal).

Having found our sparse barrack block, we had all of five minutes to unpack and be outside for parade! After parade there were various fire and safety briefs, map-and-compass revision and an inspection before lights-out at 11.45 pm.

On Sunday morning, instead of my usual 11.30 lie-in, I was rudely awakened at 5.00 am! Dressed in P.E. kit, the whole course proceeded to march two miles down the road to a large field. It was misty, and a damp dew clung to the grass underfoot. This field was to be the site for our BFT (Basic Fitness Test), a mile-and-a-half run, to be completed in 10 minutes! (This may not sound too bad but try doing it in freezing conditions at 5.30 in the morning!)

We had a short warm-up before we began. Not being a super athlete, I found myself close to the back. Realising that, if I failed to complete the run, I would be sent home, I stepped up my pace. I finished just within the time limit.

The rest of Sunday was taken up with four hours of leadership theory lectures, drill and then, to top it all off, a 25 km walk (including navigation technique tuition), known as Exercise Singleton. By 11.45 pm (lights out) I felt like going home, and this was only the first day!

Monday morning arrived all too soon (again at 5.00). We were introduced to our early morning exercise, known as the TRIM-TRAIL. It was a gruelling 2500 m run, interspersed with ten areas where different exercises had to be carried out, all under the close eye of our commanding officers. It was 6.00 am. I found myself on a nightmare of a course with another six hard days to go. Luckily all the other cadets were in the same situation, so making friends was easy.

The rest of Monday and Tuesday was filled with more briefing, leadership theory, command task demonstrations, drill and our own attempts at cadet leadership.

Tuesday evening was our mid-course interview with both of our instructing officers. When it was my turn, I marched in, saluted and stood to attention while I was asked how I was "getting along". I gave the standard reply: "Fine, sir, no problems so far". I was then told that Phase 1 was over and we were now moving on to the more demanding Phase 2 of the course. I went into my scruffy little box-room and cried myself to sleep.

Wednesday morning arrived and I really was in a bad way. The early wake-ups, intense physical exercise, late nights and mental stress were building up inside me and I felt as though I couldn't carry on. The officers told us that we should pack into our two large rucksacks anything we might need over the next two days. We all went back to our rooms and packed up everything.

After marching up a hill with all our things, filling a four-ton lorry with supplies and equipment and being briefed on bivvy-making, we marched three miles down a road to the "campsite" (still carrying all our kit). My flight decided that it would be a good idea to build a "ten-man bivvy" by attaching all our canvas ponchos together! This may have been a good idea if we hadn't chosen an area of dense nettles in which to build it! After we had set up camp, the rest of the day was filled with more simulated command tasks, involving tripod-building, canal-crossing, bomb-disposal, rescuing stranded dummies, moving radioactive isotopes and other everyday tasks!

After a gorgeous "chicken-casserole-with-dumplings" boil-in-the-bag ration-pack meal, the officers decided to give us a mess-tin inspection. Unfortunately one of the members of my flight had inadvertently left a piece of grass in the bottom of his tin. Our collective punishment for this "disgrace" was to throw our tins over a rope, about 50 metres away! Although Mr Fisher's mess-tins perform cooking tasks to the highest standard, unfortunately they weren't designed with aerodynamics in mind! My tin flew all of 5 metres before crashing alongside everybody else's. Our poor throwing and "unhygienic food preparation equipment" meant that we all had to go for a run!

After the run I was just about ready to die due to lack of sleep and malnutrition. We all staggered off to our home-made shelter, where we met our two commanding officers, who told us about the NITEX, a long command task, including navigation, search and rescue, code-breaking, bomb-disposal and a lot of running around in the dark. The exercise ended at 3.00 am and we looked forward to diving into our shelter. To our dismay some friendly officers had decided to dismantle it. Fighting in the dark in a patch of nettles to find bits of equipment (like sleeping-bags) was no fun. We finally got to sleep at 4.00 am.

Parade on Thursday morning at 6.00 am was seen to be a luxury by the officers. More command-tasks throughout the morning wore us out before we were briefed on the afternoon's little exercise. EXERCISE TOP DOG was a 20 km run through dense forest with 20 orienteering posts to be found along the way. Each of the flights also had to carry a 14-foot pine pole round the course! By the last 200 metres, three out of the four flights (including mine) were in the same place. Two of the biggest lads in my flight were crying and saying that there was no way they could carry on. A great team effort pushed our flight to victory by just five seconds. Winning the race and becoming "top dogs" greatly boosted team confidence (even if we did almost die achieving it!)

After a five-minute break, we returned to the camp and cooked up another delicious "chicken-casserole-with-dumplings" boil-in-the-bag ration-pack meal. That evening, having recovered from severe indigestion, we had inter-flight games. Our flight won the tug-of-war contest because of our extra confidence (and the fact that one cadet in our flight was in his school's tug-of-war team!)

It was Friday morning and I realised that the course was nearly over. We repacked all the camping equipment and marched back to the barrack block on the RAF base. Each flight had to fill in a sheet describing the good and bad points of the course before our final interview with our commanding officers. I passed with credit and was told how I could improve. Friday evening was free. Our first break all week!

The climax of the course was Saturday morning. Our final parade. We paraded in front of a Group Captain and were presented with the reward for our week of pain an AIR CADET LEADERSHIP BADGE. It had all been worth it. I had managed to get through the week without breaking any bones, dying or, even worse, being sent home. Only 31 of the 46 cadets who started the course made it to the final parade (about average we were told). After a small presentation of a bottle of whisky to our commanding officers, we marched back to our barrack block, where we were shouted at to clean it up and get our kit outside ready for the next set of cadets.

At the time I found the course a living hell, and looking back, it was very demanding. However, during my week, I learnt a lot about leadership and teamwork. Some of this I hope to pass on to other members of our WHGS CCF in the future.

Finally I would like to thank Dr Keable, Mr Gracey and Mr Addison for encouraging me to go on the course and I hope that other cadets from our CCF will have the opportunity to go on the course.

Leadership and teamwork are encouraged by the programme of activities during the term. They were brought into greater focus by a Field Day at Sandiway Forest Scout Camp in March, described here by Cadet Richard Lee:

FIELD DAY, 14th March 1997

On Friday 14th March, the RAF Section went to Sandiway Forest Scout Camp instead of its normal visit to RAF Woodvale for flying. When we arrived, each group loaded up four empty barrels and several wooden poles with rope into a trailer and took them up to a nearby lake. When we got there, we were told that we had to build a raft to go from one side of the lake to the other.

We split into teams and began building. Building the rafts took most of the morning. At 11 o'clock we began to put the rafts into the water for the race. The fastest team to get all members of the team to the other side of the lake would win.

When the race started, only one raft managed to stay intact, Flight B's, built mainly by Corporal Tim Edwards who was good at tying knots and designing the raft as well.



The team who built the raft which made it to the other side of the lake . . .



. . . and the raft that didn't with some of their team.

Flight A's raft looked good at first but when the four people got on it, the barrels shot out! Flight C's raft totally collapsed but we managed to fix it in 5 minutes and set off before Flight A. Flight B got to the other side first followed by Flight C and then Flight A. The race was a third of the way through. The rafts of Flights A and B both stayed together after the initial start but Flight C's raft finished with two barrels and a rope and a paddle missing.

The race carried on without any more disasters, Flight B winning, A coming second and, needless to say, C last.

After the race, we had lunch, got changed out of our wet clothes and then tidied up the place and dismantled the rafts.

Then we went on a short orienteering exercise and then got the coach back to school.

WEST MIDLANDS AREA CCF COMPETITION

A second activity which has become part of the RAF training year is the West Midlands Area Competition. Flight Sergeant Kate Williams has written about what was involved:

In March, the RAF Section took part in the West Midlands Area Competition. After weeks of preparation of drill, first-aid, aircraft recognition and shooting, a team of fourteen cadets was chosen to take part.

The competition took place on a Saturday in March at RAF Cosford against other CCF (RAF) Sections. Our team consisted of thirteen cadets and one reserve. Each member could take part in one of the three events: shooting, first-aid and aircraft recognition. Four cadets were needed for each event. The whole team of thirteen had to take part in both the leadership exercises and the drill.

All of the events went well and after they had all finished, there was one final stage: this involved flying an aircraft which had been built by each section before the competition. Marks were given for how long the craft stayed in the air, how strong the aircraft was and how attractive it looked. Before launching there was an opportunity to describe the aircraft to the judges to try to "sell" it to them. Our craft was built on the principles of a glider by Junior Corporal William Laird. It had maximum-lift wings and go-faster stripes.



The Area Competition Team.



Will Laird with his glider.

The aircraft was launched by Corporal Tim Edwards and flew extremely well.

In the end we came about half-way down the list of competitors but this did not matter too much as everybody had a great day. Well done to everyone who took part, especially to Will Laird, who was our reserve and who built our fine flying machine. Also thanks to the officers who helped organise the event.

EASTER CAMP AT RAF KINLOSS

Rather less strenuous than the Leadership Course are the regular camps, which most of the cadets in the contingent are keen to attend. One of those who went on Easter camp at Kinloss near Inverness in the Highlands of Scotland, was Cadet Rachel Smith. Her diary went as follows:

Wednesday: we arrived at school for 8.15 to be picked up by coach. After about an hour's drive we stopped at Liverpool to pick up some cadets from Merchant Taylors School, Crosby. At around 5.30 pm we arrived at RAF Kinloss.

After dinner we were put into Flights A, B and C, and then into half flights. I was in Flight B2 and it was in these groups that we were to do most of the exercises. The first of these was the FAMEX (familiarisation exercise). After we did this, we had free time to unpack and get to know the cadets from other schools before going to bed.

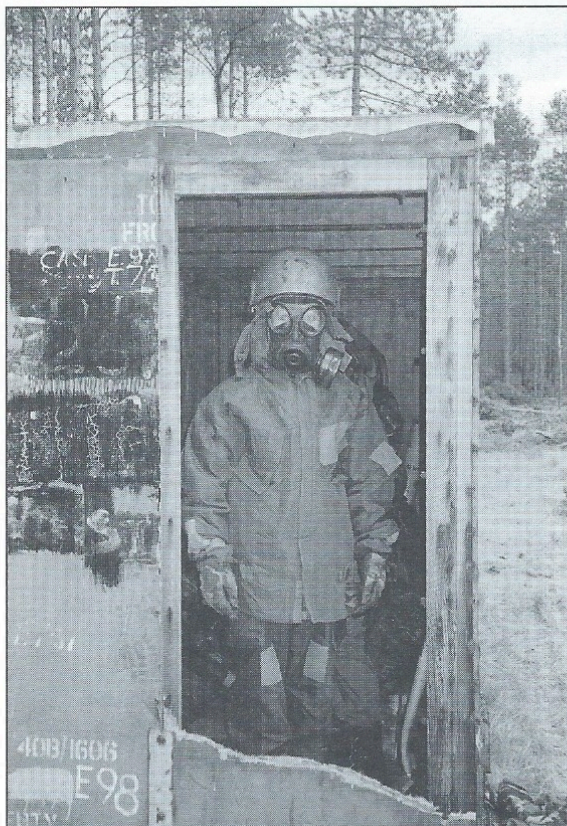
Thursday: we got up at 6 am, dressed and marched to breakfast. After breakfast we were faced with an unwelcome hour of drill. We spent the rest of the morning doing various activities, including a very comprehensive tour round a Nimrod, a big jet based on the Comet, which is used for submarine-spotting and air-sea rescue. We also had our first camp photo ruined by the beautiful Scottish weather (rain, hail, wind). After lunch we visited the Fire Section and Air Traffic Control. This was followed by an oh-so-interesting station brief.

Dinner was followed by the NITEX (Night Exercise). This involved running around a forest at about 10 pm, looking for empty sonar-buoy cases. This was more fun than it sounds although it was pitch-black and about -3 degrees. My team managed to find three of the four cases in our area.

Friday: mountain-rescue and ARCC (Air Rescue Co-ordination Centre) were our destinations for the morning, along with another photo. After dinner we did sport in a huge hangar on the other side of the airfield, where we had the choice of football, hockey or netball.

Saturday: after drill, which was done for an hour every morning, we went orienteering in Forres Park. We then went to Inverness for some shopping and lunch, after which we drove along Loch Ness and visited the Genuine Loch Ness Monster Museum, which was quite good. From the museum, we caught a boat for an hour-and-a-half trip up the loch. Much to our disappointment we didn't see the monster.

Sunday: after breakfast we went to church and then had lunch. Then it was back to the forest, where we did the NITEX, to do leadership exercises, in which each person in our team had to lead an exercise. In one we had to cross a pretend river with 4 poles (we ended up with 3 because one of ours got washed away when it was dropped in the river!) If we went in the river, we died. We managed it, with no help from the Scottish regulars taking the exercises, who tried to push us in at every opportunity.



Cdt Porter dressed to search for a "nuclear missile" during a leadership course.

Monday: Today is my birthday! After breakfast we had drill, then we went to EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), which is where they fix Nimrods, and then on to NMSU (Nimrod Major Servicing Unit) where we had the chance to ride in a tank.

After lunch we had the drill competition which my flight won. Then, while everybody went to the police dogs, I went to the Officers' Mess, with three other people, for a look around. Then it was on to the Nimrod flight simulator, where we got the chance to fly (and crash!) a Nimrod.

After dinner we went on to the laser shooting range, which was really good because we got to shoot people instead of paper targets! After this we went back to the block where another boy and I were given birthday cakes (thanks to Dr Keable). Finally we had to clean the barrack block thoroughly, on the assumption that some ATC people were coming the day after and we were to have a white-glove inspection, which we didn't have.

Tuesday: after breakfast we went on to the firing range at Lossiemouth. Although fun, this involved a lot of waiting around. However, being the capable cadets we are, we made good use of this time sorting out a little problem we had with a Flight Sergeant from another school. After dinner we had the camp debrief, where we were reminded of the programme of the week and were told who had won the Inter-Flight competition. B Flight (my Flight) won the competition, Sergeant Kate Williams was Best Cadet and was promoted to Flight Sergeant and I was Most Improved Cadet from our school.

Wednesday: breakfast was followed by an eight-hour journey back to Manchester.

Thanks to Flight Lieutenant Keable, Flying Officer Gracey and Flying Off Addison for making the camp possible and so enjoyable.

Corporal Richard Longworth also went to RAF Kinloss for his fifth camp which he writes about below:

As we had expected, the journey up to the north of Scotland was long and arduous. We shared the coach with a group from Merchant Taylors School in Crosby.

Finally, we arrived at the RAF base and were shown the block in which we would live for the next week. The block was very nice and it was single rooms which are, in my view, better than the normal dormitory arrangement.

Once we had unpacked we were made to do a familiarisation exercise which meant going round the base and finding the answers to the clues given.

This base is the home of the Nimrod which is soon to be replaced by the new and updated Nimrod 2000.

The week comprised shooting, a navigational exercise, looking over a Nimrod and the hangars, a night exercise (which was absolutely superb as it was pitch-black and my flight actually won it), ten-pin bowling at RAF Lossiemouth only about a twenty minute drive away, a trip to Loch Ness (unfortunately we didn't see the monster) and finally no camp would be complete without lots of drill, morning, noon and night.

While we were there, the weather wasn't very good, as we had expected, but that really didn't put much of a dampener on things, except for that fact that we were not able to fly.

I think I speak for everyone when I say that we were sorry to leave our new acquaintances behind, some more than others, especially those who had formed friendships with people from the other schools.

Our thanks go to Flight Lieutenant Keable, Flying Officers Gracey and Addison and also to Jim Vickers.

EASTER CAMP IN CYPRUS

Junior Corporals William Laird and Ben Stafford spent two weeks at RAF Akrotiri in April which they here recount:

The greatest proof of a good holiday can come from the strangest of memories. Just looking back through the photos, I realised that the first (sleepless) night at Gatwick, with people we had never met before, but would be spending the next fortnight with, was possibly the best part of the whole camp.

Spending two weeks in Cyprus seemed quite challenging at first, but as we touched down in the ten square miles of the Southern peninsular that is RAF Akrotiri, the camp organisers told us to make the most of it. "It" would range from snowball fights in the morning to sunbathing in the afternoon, and from suncream one minute to waterproofs the next.

People who knew each other were deliberately split up in order for more friends to be made. We, as the only two Mancunians, found ourselves surrounded by people speaking a strange new language (Will actually got quite good at Brummy by the end) but friends were easily made and the camp had really begun. To be honest it wasn't just a holiday, we were waking up at six every morning and were taken on section visits around all the base, with trips ranging from the electronic range to the American USAF part of the base, which were ideal ways to be entertained in the mornings. By eleven all the station's activities had begun, from Search and Rescue training in the Mediterranean Sea to the five or ten daily C-130 cargo flights which bring in and pick up most of the RAF's world-wide cargo. The Red Arrows, who use Akrotiri as their winter-training base, flew twice daily displays which actually became a bit boring after the third time of seeing it and by the end of the fortnight we all began to feel that they were just too noisy and low.

Some of the visits were a little tedious whilst others tended to be really interesting. The Army Marine Corps took us out one morning on a boat trip from where I'm told the views were spectacular. A combination of a late night, an early breakfast and the rocking boat meant that it became a bit too much for me and I didn't see any of the views due to long periods of hanging over the side. On another day, one hundred and twenty teenagers were let loose on top of a snow-covered mountain, and, whilst some went to look at the views as advised, the other one hundred and ten found ourselves having a huge snowball fight which left us all soaking, freezing and fighting to get on to the warmth of the bus.

Forty Cypriot pounds (£50 sterling) covered all the meals for the fortnight and the food, although not up to the Ritz standard (how would I know, I've never been near the place?), was actually quite good: a choice of English and Greek dishes was always on offer but the curries are best avoided when you have seen what really goes into them.

The Cypriot heat tended to affect most of the personnel on the base and as the base stood down at two in the afternoon, the rest of the time we were free to relax. Several days were spent on the beach along with full day trips to Larnaca, Paphos, Limassol and the Cypriot capital Nicosia, a place where the UN are constantly patrolling and looking for signs of trouble.

After our evening meal, we were free to relax and found ourselves in places such as the "Lash Inn" and "Akrotiri Arms" where most would argue we had the best time on camp. On two occasions we were taken to the not world-renowned "Chris' Restaurant" where food poisoning is practically on the menu but the disco-like feel of the place ensured that we all had a great time.

No holiday is complete without people trying to sell you things you don't want, and Akrotiri is no exception. Its own two "resident" menaces will stop at nothing to sell you their products, so much so that you are warned never to walk alone day or night as they will catch you and, using finely-tuned techniques, rob you of one Cypriot pound from your pocket and give you one of their goods: they are of course the ice cream men from hell. These daring brothers will stop at nothing to try and beat each other, following you as they do like that big bubble thing in "The Prisoner" (ask your Mum or Dad), never letting you escape to the safety of the mess hall. Any potential visitors be warned: always walk in big groups and never think that you have won until your plane takes off.

You seem to do about as much as you would expect on a week UK camp in the two week Cyprus camp. This is due to everybody having a much more laid-back attitude and much more free time. The RAF regulars are generally very helpful with any questions you have and actually prefer people taking an interest in what they are doing. Work experience was offered by most of the sections on the base and I highly recommend this to anyone who is considering joining the RAF. I spent ten days with Air Movements, who handle all the freight and cargo. Will worked with the JSHU health unit on the base and other people had experience with Air Traffic, Armoury, Police and Catering. Some people thought it would be really good to clean Red Arrows on a blazing hot day (these sad people actually went back to do it again the next day when the rest of us turned up to see the display, saw them and expired with laughter). Most of the people we met gave us their honest opinion of where their department would be in five or ten years' time in view of constant defence cuts. If anyone is thinking of joining the services then camps like this show better than anything else what joining the real thing would be like. There is a great sense of unity at Akrotiri, a sense that everyone is there to protect British interests and it is this more than any other memory that will stay with me. If we wanted to see what the real RAF was like then this camp is the closest we will ever get.

There are many benefits to be gained from going on the Akrotiri camp and we both regarded a sun tan as one of them. We were however to be disappointed: Cyprus in April is not what you would expect, with a chilly sea wind, almost total cloud cover and the occasional thunder storm (seriously).

Will and I flew back into Gatwick feeling tired, withdrawn and having not had the holiday we had expected. (It was the coldest and wettest April in Cyprus in sixteen years). Our tans, for what they were worth, made us look as if we had spent two weeks in Cleethorpes and not a on a small Mediterranean island, but we had had a great time and would have loved to have stayed longer.

From time to time, cadets are able to attend courses run by the other services. Junior Corporal Claire Lelonek attended a First Aid Course run by the Navy which she describes here:

NAVAL FIRST AID COURSE

The whole course got off to a slightly bad start. We had to travel to Ashvale by train, which entailed going across London on the Underground dragging large suitcases behind us. When we finally arrived at Ashvale station, we sat outside on our suitcases in the cold, waiting to be picked up. Here, we met the other cadets on the course and immediately got on with them.

We were finally picked up and taken to Keogh Barracks, Aldershot. We were given bedding and shown to our rooms and given time to unpack. The food was amazing - which is kind of unusual. We then had a short briefing, where we were told all the usual stuff - like when breakfast was and what time lessons started. But we were also told that we weren't allowed in the NAAFI bar and weren't allowed to fraternise with the TA and Squaddies!

The second day, we went straight into lessons. We did some basic anatomy, which was easy since I am studying 'A' level Biology. Then we started to learn how to approach situations, diagnose breaks, burns, cuts, internal bleeding, hypothermia, heat stroke - the list was endless. We also learnt how to deal with them. We learnt how to do artificial ventilation and external chest compressions, how to bandage wounds and keep burns clean. This actually took about two and a half days. The best wounds we learnt to deal with were sucking chest wounds and abdominal wounds. We also saw some really gory slides of gunshot wounds. Each night we played sport for one and a half hours. It got quite violent but we had a great time.

After learning all this, we were faced with a practice situation. There were two armoured vehicles in a wood and half of us got made up as injured soldiers, while the other half had to deal with us. Apparently, I handled my injured person really well but the girl who had to look after me actually killed me by putting me in the recovery position when I had an injured spine. We had a good laugh though.

The last day was spent on exams. We had a theory test, a CPR test and a situation exam. Only one person failed. That night, all but 3 people left. Many tears were shed, and everyone hugged each other. I really enjoyed it, learning a lot, and now I have a qualification.

SUMMER CAMP AT RAF CONINGSBY

RAF Coningsby is inland of Skegness in Lincolnshire and a working base with several squadrons of Tornado jet-fighters. Cadet Graeme Laycock looks back with a not uncritical eye:

We left school at about 9.30 am and arrived at RAF Coningsby three hours later. We were the first of the schools to arrive and were there just in time for lunch. What about food? Well, the chips were okay and so was the bread.

After lunch, we unpacked and got changed into those most comfortable of trousers, blues, commonly known as "itchies"

for obvious reasons. We then walked around the base trying to complete the FAMEX (familiarisation exercise), which took about 90 minutes, if you were really slow.

After another wonderful meal, it was time for a briefing on camp rules and other regulations, such as that no alcohol was to be consumed. After this, we were allowed some free time for the rest of the evening but we had to be back at the block for 2200 hours (that's 10 pm for all normal people).

On the first full day we were woken up at the reasonable time of 7.15 am, had half an hour to get dressed, clean ourselves and make our rooms ready for inspection and form up outside to march to breakfast. Breakfast was the best meal of the day because you really can't go wrong with cereal and toast.

After breakfast it was time for drill before we split into Flights, made up of members of all three schools (WHGS, Brentwood School and Dean Close, Cheltenham), half to do the NAVEX first, the others to do the river crossing. We reversed the activities in the afternoon. Did you know that narrow rafts are highly unstable? If we didn't know already, the group I was in soon found out when we fell in. Fortunately the quickest way to cross a river is to swim and this is what we had to do when we gave up on the idea of sitting on our raft. However, when we started to pull away, the other groups jumped in and swam as well. Everyone got sunburnt, some more than others.



Cdt Hickman launching his team's raft.

In the evening it was drill before we went bowling.

We were up at 7 am on Monday morning to clean rooms, bodies and corridors before breakfast. Dressed in "itchies" and light blue Wedgewood shirts, we marched to breakfast, marched back and then started drill. With the sun on our backs, burnt necks felt sore as we marched to Aircraft Maintenance Flight to look around broken Tornados before marching over to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, where we had our photograph taken in front of the Lancaster. We were then taken on a tour of the Lancaster Bomber, numerous Spitfires and Hurricanes. After we marched to lunch and back, it was off to the Fire Service and then to Air Traffic Control. When we got back to the block, it was more drill before and after dinner after which we were treated to some free time.

We were woken at the same time next morning to do the daily duties. Before we began weapon-training, it was time for breakfast and yes, you guessed it, drill. Training lasted all morning and in the afternoon we tried to complete some taxing leadership exercises. I am sure that there was some more drill before we started the adventurous NITEX (Night Exercise) in the evening, which was basically running around the forest trying to find a person who didn't want to be found and trying to avoid others.

Wednesday morning: after daily chores we got to do some more drill. Thankfully at 11 am we went flying. It was a gloriously clear day and everybody experienced the thrill of aerobatics. We arrived back in time for dinner after which we did some more drill before firing on the range.

Thursday morning saw us cleaning up before breakfast and doing drill afterwards. We were then sent to our work experience, for which we were dotted around the base. This we did both morning and afternoon. In the evening the three flights went on three different walks and the teachers did the map-reading. Our group walked for an hour longer than the others as a result of a small mistake by a teacher.



Cdts Ahmed, Lee and Otoche before their flight in the Dakota.

Next morning everyone was very tired as we set off to our work experience posts after breakfast and room inspection, which had taken place everyday during breakfast. And of course there was drill after breakfast as well. After lunch most of the cadets went to Lincoln for an hour or two while a fortunate six had the chance of taking a flight in a Dakota, a transport aircraft of Second World War vintage from the BBMF. When we arrived back from Lincoln, there was a barbecue. After this we got ready for the drill competition, which was to decide the winners of the interflight competition. Points had been awarded for bowling, the NAVEX, the NITEX, leadership exercises, the raft race and, of course, for the drill competition. The overall winners were B Flight and Cadet Waqar Ahmed was named Best Cadet. The officers were also thanked for giving us such a wonderful time with so much DRILL!

Next morning tears ran down faces as we all said goodbye to the other schools and Upper Sixth Formers who were leaving school. It was a three hour journey home. Spirits were high as we said goodbye after an enjoyable camp.

Corporal Richard Longworth also attended the camp and submits this report:

Three officers and twenty-four cadets got on an executive coach which would take them 20 miles south east of Lincoln to RAF Coningsby, the home of the Tornado F3 and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Once we had arrived after stopping off at a service station (where there was a Burger King which didn't have any burgers), we unpacked and met Flight Lieutenant Keable who had arrived on Thursday evening as she was to be the "Camp Com", i.e. she was in charge, "the boss!" It wasn't long before another school arrived and we found out they were from Cheltenham and that they seemed okay.

The block that we had been assigned was called "Hertford" and was very 'plush' as RAF accommodation goes, with wash basins in each of our single rooms (for most people). We were then made to do the familiarisation exercise which meant walking smartly in uniform around the deserted RAF base (deserted because it was the weekend and they only fly during the week). This got us talking to the other school and when we returned to our block, the third school had arrived; they were from Essex.

We had all been put into flights, led by Kate Williams, and also two other Flight Sergeants from the Essex school. That evening, we had the usual fire, police and general appearance lecture which was really interesting.

On the Sunday, we had been split into two groups. One had been sent on a navigational exercise first and the others, which included myself, had gone to a water centre where we were to build a raft. It had to cross a certain part of the reservoir. This was for me the best day on camp and we all got completely soaked, as the best way to get the raft across was to all get into the water and push it. Once everybody had been 'on it' we had to disassemble it and wait for the other group to arrive before we sat down for packed lunches provided by the RAF. Once everybody had returned and eaten, we swapped tasks and we went on the navigational exercise (after getting some of the answers beforehand!).

Monday came and we were woken up by the loud voices of the Essex lads' "Wakey, wakey rise and shine, you've had yours and I've had mine, this is the voice of Frankenstein." After breakfast, full of calories and cholesterol, we did drill for forty minutes and this was the routine each morning.

Tuesday and Wednesday were the days when cadets had the opportunity to go flying in the Bulldog and perhaps 'experience the thrill of aerobatics'. I had a superb pilot who let me taxi, take off and do the approach for the landing. While the other groups were flying we did leadership tasks which in some cases became very physical with people jumping 4 foot high 'electric' fences. When they were completed we went off to do dry weapon training with the Flight Sergeant in order for us to shoot later in the week.

Work experience had been arranged for all the cadets and I went to Refuelling where I was driving huge tankers around the airfield filling up the Tornado, visiting Hawks and the Lancaster and Dakota (part of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight which was stationed there alongside the Tornado F3s). My next slot was at the Armoury. Matt Whyatt would have told me what it was like as he had already been there but he played in their five-a-side team instead. (What an experience!).

During the evenings, there were various activities which included ten-pin bowling (in which I got the highest score, even beating Rachel Aldersley (who was supposedly injured and hadn't got her own ball and shoes!!), shooting and a night exercise which wasn't conducted at night for some reason or other. Shooting on the range also took up an evening. On Tuesday evening, we went swimming at the local pool which was pretty good and Mr Gracey joined in the fun!

The weather throughout the camp was superb if not a little too hot at times.

Our thanks go to Flight Lieutenant Keable and Flying Officers Gracey and Addison for all their help in organising activities. It was a camp to remember.

This June we were very sad to say goodbye to Flight Sergeant Dave Ryan who has been our Liaison senior NCO for many years. He has been very supportive to the section, visiting us once a fortnight, and the cadets and officers owe him a great deal. We would like to thank him most sincerely for all his help and wish him all the best in his retirement from the RAF. In his place, we are pleased to welcome Flight Sergeant Rob Purbrick.

The variety of the section's activities owes much to the efforts of Flight Lieutenant Keable, who not only has to grapple with RAF bureaucracy throughout the year but is not even spared this on camp - as Camp Commandant she was responsible for the smooth operation and administration of the camp at RAF Coningsby. Flying Officer Addison's quizzes are also much appreciated, as was his organisation of the highly successful visit to Sandiway Forest Scout camp for the raft-building competition.

Fg Off M H Gracey

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DRAMA



“LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS”

This year's major School production, staged in January, was the musical drama “Little Shop of Horrors”, book and lyrics by Howard Ashman, music by Alan Menken, who also wrote the lovely score for the delightful recent Disney cartoon “Pocahontas”. Our producers were Mr Dewhurst and Mr Greenall, who gave us, in the words of one letter of appreciation from a Hulmeian of very long standing, one of the most stunning and complete performances we have seen here, with a “combination of good lead performances, polished minor roles, slick staging and a chorus that had discipline and projection, all together in the same show”.



Backroom persons.

The action all takes place in a flower shop in a very down-town American inner city, a recipe for economic disaster. “Who has customers when you run a flower shop on Skid Row?” Seymour, our male lead, young employee at the shop, finds a strange and interesting-looking plant at the wholesaler's. Audrey, our female lead, employed at the same shop and admired by the bashful Seymour, whose timid advances she spurns because of her unhappy involvement with a sadistic young dentist, is touched by his naming the plant after her. But the name turns out to have an ironic ring - the plant immediately brings new trade for the shop and material success for Seymour, but at a terrible price. It demands to be fed only on fresh blood, and Seymour ends up literally substituting Audrey II for Audrey I in his life, sacrificing Audrey's dentist beau, his employer Mrs Mushnik, and eventually even Audrey herself, to maintain his own lifestyle and to appease the plant's insatiable appetite. Audrey II meanwhile grows from a tiny bloom into a huge monster dominating the stage. Finally Seymour too becomes the plant's victim. Like the devil, it does not even deliver what it promises. The parallels with the Faust legend are striking, and by transplanting the Faust story (no pun intended) to “a time not too long ago, in a place not too far away, on an ordinary day”, the author points the comparison with our possible destiny - “a series of events that could change the world as we know it”, as Mr Greenall's sinister voice warned us within moments of “curtain up”!

Every production reveals the hitherto unrealised talents of at least one actor or actress. In this case the “find” was Vikram Luthra as our hero Seymour. Vikram came across perfectly as the down-trodden loser in his affection for Audrey as in his job. He brought out well the efforts of the bashful, George Formby - type suitor to overcome his shyness, only to have