

Without them there would be no polls and no results! Finally, I would like to thank Mr. M.P. Jones who guided not only the pollsters, but everyone involved in the mock election, and on how to go about conducting their work. For the pollsters it was how to administer the opinion polls!

I hope this article has given you some idea of what role the opinion polls played in the school's mock election and also an insight into how important they are on a national level in conjunction with a general election.

Sabeen Quyoum L6A3

YOUTH AND STUDENT DAY WITH PADDY ASHDOWN

On Thursday, 20th February, the Lower Sixth Politics group were guests of Gordon Hennell (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Manchester, Withington) at Central Hall, Westminster. We had been invited to take part in the third Youth and Student Day organised by the Liberal Democratic Party. The purpose of the visit was to give young people a chance to tour the Palace of Westminster, to participate in Question Times with M.P.'s from the three major parties and to be involved in various workshops, debates and discussions on current political issues with leading politicians.

The opening plenary session was concerned with the National Health Service and the next General Election. The M.P.'s who took part were Charles Kennedy, Ken Livingstone and Gerald Howarth. Given the emotive nature of the topic and the recent impact of the Health reforms it proved to be a loud condemnation of the Government's policy. The second session dealt with Education and the M.P.'s involved were Matthew Taylor, Tony Benn and James Pawsey. This session proved to be another condemnation of the Government's policies. There was an impressive number of young people who asked some very impertinent questions to the panellists!

The morning session was brought to a close by the launch of the Liberal Democrats' "Manifesto for Young People" with Paddy Ashdown. This proved to be a fascinating insight into how a leader of a national political party met the public. Mr. Ashdown quite happily walked amongst the audience, shaking hands and signing autographs! Later, during an impromptu Question Time, Mr. Ashdown was very impressive at handling controversial issues from the floor and widely predicted a Conservative disaster at the next election.

After lunch, the group had a choice of workshops and discussions. The session on "Europe - Is Federalism the way Forward?" was well attended and ironically Bill Cash, a leading Conservative critic of John Major, was warmly applauded by the Liberal Democrat audience for his hostility to European unification! Other sessions on Animal Rights, the Environment, AIDS and Young People, Aid to the Under-Developed Countries and the Housing Crisis in Britain were all packed out. However, by far the most sedate session was on the proposed Ministry for Women, with Clare Short M.P. and Hilary Campbell for the Liberal Democrats. Since both the Labour and the Liberal Democratic Parties were in favour of such a Ministry and there being no Conservative spokesman (sic) available, the two main speakers tried to upstage each other on criticising the Government.

We returned to Manchester tired but very satisfied at being with so many M.P.'s and being able to discuss the great issues of the day.

M.P. Jones

GRANADA T.V. VISIT

On Wednesday, 3rd June 1992, ten members of the Lower Sixth Politics group made up part of the television audience at Granada Studios. We had been invited to watch the making of one programme of the new series of the Krypton Factor. This proved to be very interesting and enjoyable insight and was made even more memorable by the warm-up act of Barnaby and our own Sir!



ARMY SECTION

ARMY PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATE (A.P.C) RESULTS 1992

During their fourth year recruits follow the syllabus of the A.P.C. This included sections on drill, fieldcraft, weapon-handling, duties of a sentry, map and compass work, first aid and a self-reliance exercise. Throughout their first year's training (June 1991 to April 1992) the Recruit Platoon's attendance, enthusiasm and competence was very commendable. Below are the results of this year's A.P.C.

NAME	SCORE (150)	CLASSIFICATION
BOYS		
Aslam	104	Credit
Alvi	102	Credit
Anjum	76	Pass
Brocklehurst	107	Credit
Brown	97	Pass
Casson	103	Credit
Chance	109	Credit
Djeddour	138	Distinction
Grove	91	Pass
Marchant	101	Pass
Mawson	121	Distinction
Moodie	93	Pass
Parry	120	Distinction
Rao	110	Credit
Sales	110	Credit
Sethi	81	Pass
Slack	86	Pass
Stansfield	138	Distinction
Young	85	Pass
GIRLS		
Arran	110	Credit
Bancroft	87	Pass
Borg	94	Pass
Cowan	92	Pass
Jones	70	Pass
Reichl	104	Credit
Soper	110	Credit
Ward	105	Credit
SIXTH FORM		
Hay	94	Pass
Jameson	93	Pass
Jones	89	Pass

Lt. M.P. Jones

FIELD DAYS

SENIOR PLATOON (FIFTH YEAR)

The first Field Day in September 1991 was spent at Holcombe Moor Training Camp. The Senior Platoon, along with the majority of the Sixth Form N.C.O.'s, took part in a long twenty-four battle-handling exercise run by their officers. The purpose of the Field Day was to draw upon all the military skills that had been acquired throughout the last year and this was achieved. The exercise included tests on section battle-drills, patrolling and harbour areas. All the cadets had to be competent in their weapon-handling, field signals and section formation drills. The Field Day ended with instruction on the Krypton Factor Assault Course.

Lt. M.P. Jones

In March, as the final part of the Army Proficiency Certificate (A.P.C.) a select band of cadets, accompanied by Major Fisher and myself, travelled to Horton-in-Ribblesdale for a self-reliance exercise. This involved camping at Horton in almost blizzard conditions followed by a trek the next day. In spite of the testing conditions all cadets completed the A.P.C. successfully.

Capt. A. Simkin

RECRUIT PLATOON (FOURTH YEAR)

Having had a successful Field Day in June 1991 and an excellent camp at Wathgill in July, the Recruit Platoon came back to School in September full of enthusiasm and expertise.

Their first Field Day of the new academic year was spent Orienteering with Major Fisher in Lyme Park. Almost all the cadets took up the challenge and performed creditably, learning new map-reading skills as they went.

The second Field Day in March was spent at Swynnerton Training Camp in Staffordshire, taking part in a thirty-six hour exercise "Operation WHIGS Revenge". Thirty-five cadets took part and before they left School they all had to be combat-ready! On arrival at Swynnerton, the cadets were met by the Cadet Training Team, who led them in to the tactical harbour areas. During the evening two recce patrols were sent out by each platoon, sentries were posted and everyone else concentrated on their harbour drills. The recce patrols successfully navigated their way to their respective rendezvous with two OP's and returned to camp with fresh intelligence. An attack by an "enemy" force was expected during the night, as the cadets had been warned to expect members of the CTT and their officers to try to infiltrate their harbour areas. This meant the cadets had to avoid lighting fires, gossiping and generally doing anything that would give their positions away. Unfortunately this proved to be very difficult to achieve since it began to rain very heavily, it became bitterly cold and the wind wreaked havoc with the camp sites. Everyone was grateful when Lt. Jones declared Endex at 0300 hours.

The next day was spent firing on the 30m range and learning all about section battle drills. This proved to be a very demanding but exhilarating day's training as all the cadets' military skills were really tested.

Many thanks to the Cadet Training Team and Mrs. Jameson for all their help.

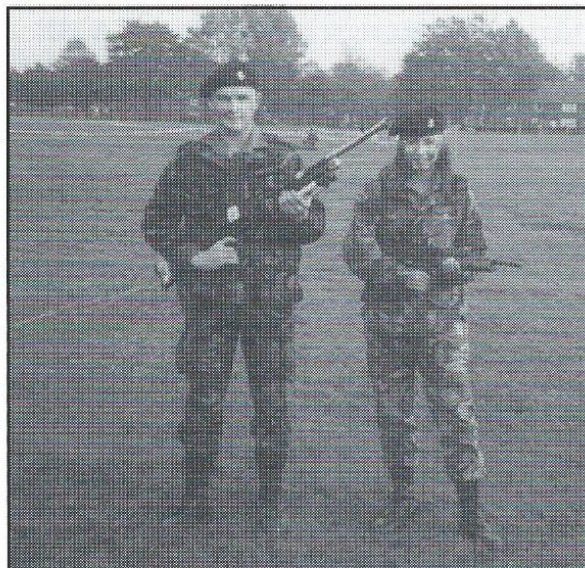
The third and final Field Day was spent at Holcombe Moor. The purpose of the Field Day was to practise a number of drills that the cadets would require for their summer camps at Warcop and Münster. As with all Field Days the cadets established their harbour areas, erected their bashas and tucked into their compo rations! Then under the guidance of the Senior N.C.O.'s they had several "walk through, talk through" sessions on section battle drills. The next morning was occupied by a series of aggressive section attacks all around the training area and command of each section was rotated so each cadet had to concentrate just in case he or she was chosen to lead the section. The morning culminated in a demonstration section attack by the N.C.O.'s.

Lt. M.P. Jones

ANNUAL INSPECTION

In October we held an Inspection to which we invited Major John Turley, then Training Major of 5th/8th Kings, sometime OC of 26CTT, and an old friend of the Corps. We had intended this innovative style of Inspection to act as a dry run for our full Biennial Inspection a year later, but in the event it proved to be a successful and worthwhile exercise in its own right. In dispensing with the parade, General Salute and march past, we released quite a lot of time so as to expand the stands, demonstrations and lessons which more accurately reflect the training the cadets receive in the Corps. I am thankful, not only to Major Turley, the officers and cadets, but also to 26CTT, to Mr. Loveland, to Commander Peters, to Mr. Gregson and to Mr. Seddon for their co-operation and assistance in mounting this complex event.

Major D.M. Fisher



Cadets Steven and Amanda Jones on Inspection Day, the Corps's first brother and sister team.
(Photo: Lt. Jones)

VISIT TO 5/8 KINGS

On Saturday, 14th December 1991, 10 army cadets were guests of the 5/8 King's Regiment at their garrison in Warrington. The purpose of the visit was for the cadets to be aware of Territorial Army role that the Regiment has to perform. It was a classic "hands-on" open day and the cadets were encouraged to get involved in all the stands available. The cadets were able to test-fire the Wombat battle simulator, abseil down from the Head Quarters block and indulge in aspects of Combat First Aid! There were over a hundred and fifty cadets from all the units affiliated to the King's Regiment, handling weapons, mortars and "recce" Land Rovers. This proved a sight! Perhaps one of the highlights of the day was the feeding of all these cadets with fish and chips by the field kitchens. A truly remarkable feat!

Lt. M.P. Jones

SIGNALS TRAINING (1991/92)

During the academic year 1991/92, the contingent received its allocation of radios which enabled us to establish a Signals Platoon. It has proved to be a very busy year. In October 1991, a Royal Signals team visited the School and gave an excellent presentation to the Sixth Form. Their talk included a video and slide show of the role of the Royal Signals, especially during the recent Gulf War. As a consequence of this visit two female N.C.O.'s, Hay and Jameson, volunteered to attend a familiarisation weekend at Blandford Camp in Dorset. The two girls eventually stayed with the Royal Signals in February 1992 and thoroughly enjoyed their time in the Officers' Mess. Later in February and March 1992, four N.C.O.'s took part in two "crash-course" weekends at Altcar T.C. near Formby.

The purpose of the weekend was to pass the basic signallers course, which normally takes six months constant training! The results were as follows:

	RADIO PRACTICAL	LINE-LAYING PRACTICAL	WRITTEN TEST
SGT. MASON	90%	88%	78%
SGT. IRELAND	92%	92%	94%
L/CPL BRATT	77%	84%	96%
L/CPL HAY	95%	84%	84%

Sergeant Peter Ireland was awarded the Best Signaller for his overall top score of 92.3%. All the cadets were now allowed to wear the coveted crossed flags emblem on their uniform.

In April 1992, Sergeant Simon Copsey spent a week at Blandford Camp taking part in the Advanced Signallers Course. This was a very demanding course which included tests on voice procedure, line-laying, antennae-erection as well as numerous exercises using the 349 radio. Sergeant Copsey also had to prove his competency with Morse code, the National Radio Net and Methods of Instruction! Needless to say, we were very pleased when he passed the course with a very favourable report.

Lastly in July 1992, Lt. Jones and Flt. Lt. Keable attended on advanced officers course at Blandford Camp. The week long course included a wide range of practical sessions, lectures and exercises. Both the officers thoroughly enjoyed the course and have reached the appropriate levels of qualification to run our Signals Platoon.

Lt. M.P. Jones

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING CAMP

TRAINING PROGRAMME, ADVENTUROUS TRAINING CAMP, Capel Curig T.C. 1-8 Apr. 1992

- Wed. 1 Apr 1400 - Depart W.H.G.S.
 1630 - Arrive CCTC. Take over accomm., store etc.
 Camp briefing.
- Thurs. 2 Apr All Day - Pack day-sac. Move to Plas y Brenin. Hill-walk to Summit of Moel Siabod for map and compass-work and micro-navigation
 Eve - Exped. briefing.
- Fri. 3 Apr A.M. - Expedition prep (Draw stores and rations, pack kit, prepare routes etc).
 Lunch at CCTC
 P.M. - Move to Capel Curig village. Expedition begins
 (2 groups, 2 separate routes)
 Camp at Gwern Gof Isaf (gp.1) and N. end of Llyn Cowlyd (gp.2).
- Sat. 4 Apr All Day - EXPEDITION in the Carneddau mountains.
 Both groups to meet up on Carnedd Llewelyn, then continue separate routes to camp site at Gwern Gof Isaf.
- Sun. 5 Apr All Day - EXPEDITION continues over the Glyder mountains.
 Transport back to CCTC from Ogwen Cottage (1700 hrs)
- Mon. 6 Apr All Day - Rock-climbing/Abseiling (Capel Curig)
 and Tue. 7 Apr Mountain Biking (Betws-y-Coed) } activities on a rota system over two days
 Orienteering (Betws-y-Coed)
 Canoeing
- Wed. 8 Apr A.M. - Clean billets, rooms, stores, and load vehicles.
 Hand over accommodation.
 Dep. CCTC 1000
 Arr. WHGS 1300 - Unload vehicles. Dispersal.

Camp followed a similar pattern to previous years, but with one or two notable differences and innovations. First of all, it was decided that, in view of the considerable experience we had among our more senior cadets, a more challenging expedition should be attempted. This meant altering the route of the first two days to take in some wilder stretches of the Carneddau, and more significantly, it meant that the senior group, accompanied by Major Fisher and Capt. Simkin, would need to carry everything with them during the day, instead of being relieved of tents and sleeping bags as on previous expeditions. With extra rations for two days, plus a great deal of water, cadets were carrying expedition sacs rather than merely day sacs. Since the idea had come from the SNCO's in the first place, though, they weren't able to complain when things got tough. There was quite a lot of snow on the hills during the expedition, and all the cadets found the three days exhausting, although fortunately the weather never deteriorated to the blizzard conditions we had encountered on Moel Siabod on the very first day of Camp.



Mr. Jones and section heading for Y Garn. (Clockwise from top left: Tarik Djeddour, Ed Buckley, Jonathan Bratt, Avi Rao, Damian Brown, Dominic Stansfield and Giles Fisher).

(Photo: RSM Greenhowe)

This year our Climbing Instructor was Sgt. Dougie Yates of our own 26CTT. He proved not only to be a superb instructor, keeping the cadets grinning through the usual steady Welsh rain, but was excellent company as well, and we are all very grateful for his help. We were also lucky enough to have the very welcome assistance of Mr. Veevers, who gave up two days of his holiday to lead the mountain bikers round the lakes and forests above Betws-y-Coed. By this stage of Camp the officers were becoming rather thinly spread, and it was a great help having a keen and experienced colleague who could take a large group of cadets for one of the many activities on offer. Fg Off Gracey also took the mountain bikers, and then joined Mr. Jones and the canoeists on the lakes at Plas y Brenin. Meanwhile the cadets who had opted for orienteering almost managed to beat the officers again.



Cadets Suzanne Jameson and Kathryn Arran on the lake at Plas y Brenin
(Photo: Lt. Jones)



Mr. Sherwin serves dinner while the Head Master and Mr. Veevers look on in disbelief.
(Photo: Maj. Fisher)

The cadets appreciated the visit by the Head Master and his son, as did the officers, and we were able to show off not only the cadets in action, but also our marvellous new catering arrangements!

Mr. Mel Sherwin had volunteered to come and cook for us at Capel Curig, partly to free Capt. Simkin to spend more time training in the hills and partly to add his experience and expertise to our rather humble efforts of past years. Mr. Sherwin's cooking, and his personality, transformed this year's Camp. Nothing was too much trouble, the food was copious and of an unhoped for standard, and we could not have wished for a more entertaining companion during the week. Our gratitude was fully expressed before Mr. Sherwin's departure at the end of the Camp, as was our earnest wish that he should come back to Wales with us again in 1993.

Major D.M. Fisher

SKILLS-AT-ARMS MEETING

Eight cadets represented the Army section at the annual Cadet Skill-At-Arms Meeting held at Altcar Ranges on 15th/17th May, 1992.



1992 CSAAM : our male and female shooting teams)
(Photo: Maj. Fisher)

The first shoot involved three separate practices on the Electronic Target Range (ETR) for the Ensign Rifle Match. The highest possible score was 400 and we were very pleased when both teams scored 144 points each and came joint 28th out of 43 other teams.

The second shoot involved three separate practices for the Montgomery of Alamein Trophy. Although quite a complicated shoot, the 'A' team did remarkably well, gaining 189 points out of a possible 340 and coming 16th overall. Unfortunately the 'B' team struggled to hit the targets over the long distances and scored 74 coming 42nd.

The third shoot was for the Earl Roberts Trophy. Again the 'A' team shot well scoring 148 out of 400 and coming 25th out of 43 teams. Unfortunately the 'B' team performed badly and gained 38 points and came 42nd!

However, our disappointment at some of these results was more than made up for by our success in the Falling Plates Knock-out. Each team of 4 had forty rounds to knock down 10 lead plates at 200 metres as quickly as they could. The 'B' team beat their first opponents but lost to the eventual winners in their second round. The 'A' team did remarkably well by winning five rounds and reaching the semi-finals, only to lose out to the eventual winners from Cheshire ACF. The 'A' team were Sergeants Buckley, Copsey, Ireland and Mason. The 'B' team were: Lance-Corporals Hay and Jameson, Cadets Cowan and Ward.

Overall the weekend proved very valuable in learning about marksmanship principles, safety drills on the Cadet Weapon and the need for constant practice. However, our overall performance was a significant improvement on last year and the female 'B' team did very well considering their lack of experience. We will do even better next year!

Lt. M.P. Jones

SUMMER CAMP AT WARCOP : July 1992

A total of 45 cadets attended the camp in Cumbria. The training was varied and of a high standard. It included live firing at Battle Hill Range, canoeing, rock climbing, combat first aid, signals, watermanship and platoon attacks. There were also two competitive events, Battle Initiative Tests and the March and Shoot.

The Battle Initiative Tests involved a team of ten orienteering from one point to the next. At each point a Command Task had to be attempted. We entered four teams in this event. Three teams performed respectably while our strongest team excelled. They led the competition almost to the end of camp only to be beaten into second place out of over 300 teams. Two teams were entered for the March and Shoot which involved a three mile run, followed by negotiating the assault course carrying a log and a weighted ammunition box, and completed by shooting on the 30m range. The first team achieved a good time, as did the second team, which included two female cadets. This event was excellent for developing team spirit.

At the end of Camp the following promotions and commendations were made:-

Best Male Recruit:	T. James
Best Female Recruit:	N. Mason
Promoted from cadet to Lance Corporal:	L-M. Borg, J. Brocklehurst, D. Brown, W. Casson, A. Chance, T. Djeddour, D. Grove, A. Mawson, M. Parry, C. Reichl, D. Slack, D. Stansfield and S. Ward.
Promoted from Lance Corporal to Corporal:	A. Sheldon.
Promoted from Corporal to Sergeant:	J. Bratt and G. Roberts.
Promoted from Sergeant to Colour Sergeant:	E. Buckley, S. Copsey, P. Ireland and W. Mason.

My thanks go to Lt. Jones and Miss Roberts for their help throughout the Camp.

Capt. A. Simkin

C.C.F. VISIT TO MÜNSTER



The party pictured at the end of the exhausting BFT, PT and Games Day.

(Photo: Maj. Fisher)

In July, twenty-one cadets accompanied by Major and Mrs. Fisher and Major Wilson spent ten days as guests of 2nd Field Regiment Royal Artillery in Münster. Our hosting officers were Capt. John Kingdom and 2nd Lt. Gerry West who together with L (Néry) Battery arranged a varied programme of military and leisure activities.

We spent the first day drawing equipment and touring the regiment. Other trips included visits to the 14th/20th and Royal Hussars which afforded an introduction to the big guns and tanks used in the modern British Army. We also heard many different accounts of events in the Gulf and with supporting video footage were able to obtain a much fuller picture of this recent conflict.

The Basic Fitness Test which all soldiers must pass provided us with a stern challenge in harsh conditions which most cadets achieved successfully. The hockey matches against the battery were fiercely contested affairs resulting in a 2-1 victory for each team and a 2-2 draw. The local water park proved a popular attraction during the heatwave and a tour of Münster and visit to the American PX at Giesen were also interesting excursions.

A barbeque in the Officers Mess was a favourite for many of the cadets as it gave them the opportunity to sample officer life and meet the officers on an informal basis. This was followed by a reception in the Sergeants Mess for the Officers and six Upper Sixth Under-Officers which will remain in the memory for a long time.

The highlights of the week were undoubtedly the live firing of the SA80 and 9mm pistol together with driver training (Land Rover, Scorpion and 432 APC) on the Dorbaum Training Area. The week culminated in a 24 hour exercise called Iron Cadet which was most enjoyable and enhanced by the use of night viewing equipment and the presence of the Army Air Corps.



Dr. Wilson patches up a damaged knee.
(Photo: Maj. Fisher)



Jonathan Greenhowe manoeuvres an armoured personnel carrier through the training area.
(Photo: M. A. Bratt)

As a permanent souvenir of the visit we were presented by the Battery with a print of the Battle of Néry which is to hang above the Corps notice board in School.

This was a fitting climax to an enjoyable and worthwhile trip. Our thanks are extended to the 2nd Field Regiment for their warm hospitality and to our own officers for their efforts in making it such a successful visit.

At the end of the Camp Cadet Terence Sales was promoted to Lance-Corporal, and Corporal Jonathan Lamb to Sergeant.

U/Oftr Jonathan Greenhowe

The Contingent was very sorry to see the departure this year of Capt. Simon Babyut-Peyton, OC 26CTT, and Sgt. Chakrabarti, also of 26CTT, both of whom worked over and above the call of duty for our School. They will both be missed. Capt. Brian Page took over several months ago as OC 26CTT and has already done a great deal for us.

Finally, we said goodbye this summer to WO1 Brian Jenkins, the Administration Assistant from N.W. District whose role was to assist CCF contingents in the region with the complicated day-to-day admin required by the Army. Without Brian's help over the last eighteen years, both at School and on camp at Warcop, it is certain that this contingent could not have functioned. Since Major Chudleigh's retirement two years ago, Brian has supplied help, encouragement and advice in equal measure and has been generous in his praise of the School and the Corps. Cadets and officers alike will miss his monthly visits and cheery good humour. A CCF plaque is being presented to him in recognition of the esteem and affection in which he is held.

Postscript: Mrs. Greenhowe, the mother of erstwhile RSM, Jonathan, has become our honorary Regimental Tailor over the last four years, having spent many hours cutting out and sewing on red to the berets of our recruit cadets. Recently she offered to embellish twelve pairs of epaulette slides for our Under Officers with the distinctive white strip which was required for Germany. Mrs. Greenhowe has earned the sincere thanks of the Contingent for her generous and skilful work on their behalf.

Major D.M. Fisher

RAF SECTION

The Section has had an active year. Each term a regular fixture is a visit on Field Day to RAF Woodvale, where the cadets go flying in Chipmunks. This does however depend on the weather, which in March prevented the Chipmunks from getting off the ground. The time was nevertheless well used - all the fourth form cadets completed their part one training; they also, to their credit, all succeeded in passing their Part II Exam in March.

The high points in the year are however the camps. The first camp of the year was attended by Cadet Porter:

"This year's Easter camp took place at RAF Henlow which is down in Bedfordshire (18 boys and 6 girls went from W.H.G.S. but in total there were 54 CCF and ATC cadets). We left School after morning assembly on 1st April (April Fool's Day) and arrived at RAF Henlow part way through the afternoon. The rest of the day was spent unpacking and generally getting organised, though it included an interesting visit to the Fire Station.

The following morning, Thursday, we took part in a mini-orienteeing exercise to familiarise ourselves with the station. We then visited the various sections around the station. In the afternoon we visited the Shuttleworth aircraft museum which contained some fascinating exhibits.

Most of Friday was spent in Cambridge where we had a chance both to go flying and to visit Cambridge itself. It's a beautiful town.

On Saturday we did a map and compass exercise in Henlow itself and the surrounding area. This was quite enjoyable, though it took one flight three and a half hours (instead of two) to complete it. The rest of the day was spent in the gym and swimming pool, which were very conveniently on the station itself.

Sunday was by far the most relaxing day of the week. We did a little drill in the morning and then spent the afternoon watching football on TV.

On Monday we did some weapon-training with GP rifles and then visited Amphill, a large park in the middle of nowhere. This was great fun.

The following morning we had a drill competition; we then did some initiative exercises and shooting; some of us were also lucky enough to go gliding later.

Wednesday was our last day and so it was just a matter of clearing up. But we all had a great time and were sad to leave."

During the year we sometimes have a chance to take some cadets gliding. The first time our number came up was in the depths of winter. It was a freezing day and the airfield was swathed in mist. No gliders left the hangar, let alone the ground. This year we were more lucky.

Cadet Jalali reports:

"On Sunday, 17th May 8 cadets left School at 8 am for a day's gliding at RAF Sealand. We arrived about 9.30 am and were first shown the gliders and safety procedures.

The gliders were launched by means of a hydraulic winch which flung them, accelerating from 0 to 60 mph in a few seconds, into the air. They seemed to climb vertically but in fact at about 60 degrees to the ground. The gliders were very different from the Chipmunks. They were much neater and more comfortable inside; and the parachutes were much lighter and easier to strap on. Also, as there was no engine, you did not have to wear a bulky helmet but could speak freely and directly to the pilot.

Once in the air we glided around for at least three minutes. Unfortunately we encountered no thermals, which would have allowed us to stay up longer. Thermals were most likely to be found over cornfields. The pilot could circle in the rising air and with its help gain height.

Launching the gliders was not too difficult. As long as you had made sure that the tail dolly (a device which attached a wheel to the back of the glider) was removed and had the wings level, there was nothing to worry about.

We also helped to retrieve the gliders from whichever part of the airfield they had landed. This involved a ride in a Land Rover and a long walk back. We had to make sure that the wings were kept level as the glider was towed back for another flight.

We set out for home a couple of hours earlier than we had expected because the winch broke down. We had nevertheless all had a chance of a flight in a glider and expressed our gratitude to the pilots who had given up their Sunday to give us a chance to go gliding."

Sergeant Edwards and Sergeant Duffy both attended a Gliding Course during the summer and gained their Gliding Wings.

There is a summer camp after the end of the School term. So many cadets wanted to go that Flight Lieutenant Keable went to considerable lengths to organise at short notice a second camp.

Cadet Ahmed clearly had a good time at RAF Leuchars in Scotland:

"This camp at Leuchars, on the east coast of Scotland, was, as far as I can gather, one of the best the Section has ever been to.

After a six hour journey we finally arrived and were shown to our dormitories. Apart from some holes in the walls, a few graffiti on the wardrobes and toilet paper which was neither soft, strong nor very long, everything was satisfactory. We had arrived just in time for tea and were directed to the Junior Ranks Mess. We were surprised by the quality of the food, definitely an improvement on school dinners. After a brief and informative talk by the Camp Com., we were dismissed and were free to explore the base. Lights were to be out by 11 p.m. every night and the girls' section was out of bounds to the boys. These two rules were, of course, obeyed to the letter!

Numerous activities had been planned for the week. Firstly there was the familiarisation exercise, to help us become acquainted with the base. It was a simple exercise - walking around, identifying buildings on a map but all the groups scored terribly and some even managed to get lost. The navigation exercise gave us a second chance to show what we could do. We were driven out into the Scottish countryside and we had to find our way back to the base using a map. Simple we thought, just get a taxi to the gate of the base and walk in looking extremely tired. Unfortunately we were also given a sheet of questions about some of the places on the way. So, after over two and a half hours of walking and running up and down

country lanes, we finally made it back, only to find that we had been beaten by another group.

At various times during the week we were shown round some of the sections of the base. During our visit to 43 Squadron we were given a guided tour of a Tornado. Most cadets were allowed to sit in the cockpit, which was quite an experience. Then there were the Maintenance and Electronics Sections. Again we were shown around by officers who worked there and we learned a great deal. We also visited Air Traffic Control. We were shown how they operate their computers and then were taken upstairs into the control tower. The view was amazing. We could see every runway clearly and we saw three Tornados landing in succession, which was spectacular. Two other memorable visits were to the Dogs' Section and the Fire Section. At the Dogs' Section we were given a demonstration of the dogs' abilities. They managed to persuade someone to put on a few pads and run out into a field and the dog handler instructed the dog to capture him. This doesn't sound too bad but when the dog caught up with the "criminal", he didn't seem to want to let go of his arm. At the Fire Station, we were given demonstrations of how to put out fires with fire extinguishers and we were given the chance to try it for ourselves. This however turned into a giant water fight. After this we were all given a ride in a fire engine; the driver though seemed to think he was driving a Ferrari (I never knew fire engines could go so fast!). And finally, as usual, they turned their hoses on us and we all left looking as though we had been for a swim.

We were entertained well during the week. There was a bowling alley on the base and we were taken there one evening. We had an enjoyable night even though some of the cadets never managed to knock over a single pin. Then there was the quiz, in which the William Hulme's contingent naturally did well, and beat all the other schools! On Thursday night we had a disco and we all had a great time (especially Flight Lieutenant Keable, who turned out to be quite a dancer - with a little encouragement). Just as entertaining was the drill competition, which made some of us look as though we had never done any drill in our lives. Still, it was an enjoyable and educational experience.

Our Air Experience Flights were a little different on this camp, as we flew in Bulldogs, not Chipmunks. They weren't actually all that different from the Chipmunks except that you had to sit next to the pilot. We all had at least half an hour in the air and some cadets took control or performed aerobatics. Thankfully the weather remained fine for most of the week and everyone managed to fly.

On our last full day, Friday, we first went for a swim and then we had three hours in which we could wander round Dundee and buy souvenirs. On our return to Leuchars we were escorted to a field, where fieldcraft was demonstrated. This is basic camouflage and involves putting on "Cam Cream" to camouflage the face, and techniques of hiding in undergrowth. We were also shown the contents of a ration pack, which was later handed out to people mad enough to accept it. The fieldcraft was actually preparation for the night exercise, in which we had to locate three pilots in a dark forest while being pursued by the opposition. Everyone managed to gain something from this exercise - mainly mosquito bites! It was an enjoyable experience, though, and I look forward to doing it again.

As I have said, this was probably one of the best RAF camps ever, and this is due to the work put in by senior cadets, NCOs and especially Flight Lieutenant Keable. I hope future camps will be just as successful and just as worth attending."

Cadet Faulker attended an extra camp at RAF Benson, home of the Queen's Flight. He also had a good time:

"After a four hour journey, we were all quite exhausted. When we reached our tents, the Flight Sergeant, who had arranged the camp for us, told us that, because we were sleeping in tents, the other schools which were supposed to be joining us had cancelled at the last minute. This left us with a better week as there were only twelve of us. After unpacking, we were given a tour of all the facilities which we would be using throughout the week.



(Photo: Dr. J. Keable)

On Sunday we had quite a relaxing day as in the morning we all went to church which was quite an experience as the vicar was not the "boring Bible basher" type but really quite a character! We spent the rest of the day exploring and playing volleyball, which we played every day. Even Pilot Officer Hargreaves joined in!

Even after a relaxing day we found a ten mile walk tiring. However, we all survived. And there was plenty of flying. This was one advantage of our small numbers. If the weather was fine, some of us went flying every morning.

On Wednesday some of us went in a five hour flight in an Andover, which is a 20 seater plane used to calibrate radar systems on airfields all round the country. The rest of us got a 15 minute flight in a Wessex helicopter, which took us to the top of a hill and we had to walk five miles back to base. We all survived except Cadet Byrne, who had a bit of trouble with his foot.

On Thursday we visited 115 Squadron, which has four Andovers, and also 60 Squadron, which has 6 Wessex helicopters. We all learned a lot about these two squadrons.

Friday was the highlight of nearly everyone's week. In the morning we all got a long flight in a Chipmunk; then in the afternoon Cadet Crawshaw got acquainted with some RAF Police dogs. He volunteered to get dressed up in a padded suit and run away from an RAF Police dog (trained to kill). Unfortunately Cadet Crawshaw did not get very far as the dog had him on the floor before he could run two metres! The handler then decided to introduce him to another dog. But by this time Cadet Crawshaw had had enough!

After this Junior Corporal Vickers and Cadet Pimblott arranged some Command Tasks for us to do which kept us well occupied until dinner time. These two earned promotion to Corporal by their excellent efforts towards making this such an excellent camp.

We all appreciated the work put in by Pilot Officer Hargreaves and we thanked him by presenting him with a small token of our gratitude on the last day.

Overall we had a good camp and were all sad to be leaving."

Corporal Vickers also distinguished himself by gaining a place on the Hereford Leadership Course during the summer.

We would like to thank Mr. Loveland and Major Fisher for supporting the section when they visited the Camp at Leuchars and we are grateful to Major Fisher and to Mr. Beggs for acting as taxi drivers to and from Benson.

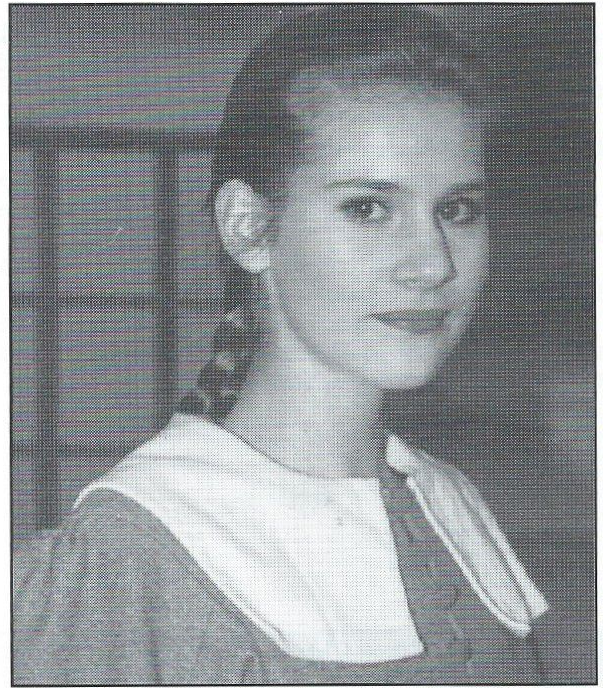
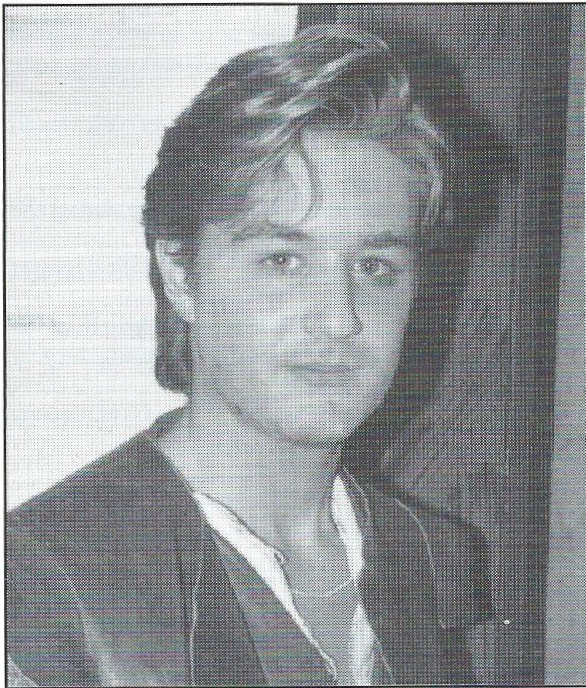
The Section greatly regrets the loss of Pilot Officer Hargreaves and would like to thank him for all his efforts on the Section's behalf. Much gratitude is also owed to Flight Lieutenant Keable for her unstinting hard work during the year to keep everything running smoothly.

M.H. Gracey



(Photo: Dr. J. Keable)

DRAMA



'THE CRUCIBLE' - DECEMBER 1991

A reviewer of the School Play always comes to praise rather than to bury, but no special pleading is needed to celebrate this outstanding production.

The co-producers, Mr. Briggs and Mr. Lord, provided a lucid and coherent rendering of Arthur Miller's famous play about the Salem witchcraft trials of 1692 and brought a most talented cast to perform up to the peak of their several abilities. So high a standard of acting was achieved that a fascinated audience was never distracted from attention to this lengthy play's complexities by any inadequacy of representation.

The lasting importance of Miller's drama lies not, I think, in its quaintly articulated portrayal of New England Puritanism caught up in a purgative frenzy of persecution, nor in its allegorical resemblance to modern 'witchhunts' whether of Joseph McCarthy or Joseph Stalin. Miller's debts to Shaw for a drama of ideological conflict ('The Proctor's Dilemma?') and to Ibsen for surfacings of suppressed guilt ('all our old pretence is stripped away!') may not have been wisely incurred. There may be some banality in the expression of its liberal messages ('life is God's most precious gift; no principle.....may justify the taking of it') and there is certainly strain and contrivance in the operatic rhetoric at the ends of the acts. What does compel attention, however, and this the cast excelled in showing, is Miller's sure feeling for the passions, perplexities and prevarications of ordinary, fallible men and women confronted by extra-ordinary opportunity or subjected to extra-ordinary stress.

Salem's social disintegration is triggered by the involvement of a group of young girls in woodland experiments in black magic; their subsequent efforts to transfer responsibility result in a large number of fellow citizens being fatally accused of complicity. As Miller himself puts it in a textual interpolation 'The witchhunt was...a long overdue opportunity for everyone so inclined to express publicly his guilt and sins, under the cover of accusations against the victims...Long held hatreds of neighbours could not be openly expressed and vengeance taken... land lust...could now be elevated to the arena of morality...the envy of the miserable toward the happy could and did burst out in the general revenge!'

The producers chose to establish the crucially catalytic effect of the girls' occult experimentation by adding to the play a darkly lit, enigmatic and weirdly effective opening dance, sinuously executed by Laura Owen, Amanda Jones and Louise Borg. Jonathan Lazarus' music - an important factor in the overall effect of the play - had here both a sombre dignity and distinctly eerie overtones suggestive of a conscious surrender of civilised values to the forces of the wilderness.

In contrast to this darkly impressive vision, long sketches of the remainder of the play were executed in plain, unambiguous light - itself an ironic commentary upon those shadowy horrors so vividly imagined or counterfeited by the protagonists. The solidly constructed set - a v-shaped perspective interestingly leading the eye to the heart of the stage - along with the sober substantiality of the properties, the convincingly realistic costumes and the characters disposed as if in some genre painting of everyday 17th century life, further accentuated a contrast which brought to mind Goya's warning that 'The Sleep of Reason produces Monsters'.

The entering audience, before the lights dim for the dance, encounter the disturbing image of a father, Reverend Parris (Matthew Booth), praying before the prostrate form of his daughter Betty (Claire Reichl) who was later to accomplish the tricky acting feat of rising from a long, silent, bed-bound torpor to weirdly deluded 'possession'. Matthew Booth was to play Parris at consistently high voltage as a combination of passionate egotism and craven fear. His strident urgency perhaps lacked a little in shading but exacted full audience attention.

'The Crucible' - and presumably this is why the Sheffield Theatre is named after it - is essentially about a community but a successful production must stand or fall upon the casting of Abigail Williams (the dominating leader of the girls), John Proctor (whose brief, adulterous liaison with Abigail has blotted an otherwise decent life) and Deputy Governor Danforth (who enforces his cruelly limited, if pragmatic, ideas of justice at the end). The three parts were splendidly achieved by Melanie Clare, Andrew Babicki and Richard Mattison.

Melanie Clare's Abigail embodied all the diabolical and ingenious resource of beautiful youth untrammelled by the constraints of conscience. Abigail orchestrates the hysteria of the 'possessed' girls towards her ends of security, revenge and sexual manipulation. The contained triumph of this coldly self-sufficient teenager (orphaned in an Indian raid) was brilliantly conveyed. At least as impressive as her full-bloodedly fabricated terror in the 'yellow bird' scene - which had some of the audience scanning the rafters - was her silent registration of victories and alert opportunistic reassessments of her position and chances, not least on her picking up on Reverend Hale's '..... perhaps a bird?' It is unusual in school drama to find someone capable of suggesting subtle changes in mood and apprehension by the slightest look and gesture but such was the case here.

No-one who saw this production will forget how it pivoted upon the commanding and assured performance of Andrew Babicki - perhaps one of the finest seen upon the William Hulme's stage. He gave us Proctor as an intelligent, forcefully passionate countryman bewildered and at bay. A handsome man who has betrayed himself into deceit and evasion through lust for Abigail and resentment at his wife's coldness, his protracted struggle to regain a firm sense of personal identity and integrity were formidably moving. If his rustic burr reminded one more of Ambridge than Salem this merely brought the drama closer to home.

Richard Mattison's Danforth was the embodiment of a man eager to judge and bursting, on being confronted with the stubborn intractability of convicted citizens refusing to confess to imaginary crimes, hinted at comic energies barely kept in check. This was not, however, damaging to a play which consistently illustrates the point that purely tragic experience is unavailable in a recognisably modern world of distinctly intermittent moral grandeur.

A key figure set against Danforth's judicial certainty is Reverend Hale whose initial complacency in his own erudite credentials was subtly implied in a mature performance by Daniel Riste. The conflict in Hale between a natural kindness and a professional pride in the witch-finding technique which would 'rip and tear' a suspect is intriguing, and the breaking down of his certainty into ashamed collapse is one of the play's more interesting character developments. Particularly memorable were his tense exchanges with Proctor.

Another remarkably mature performance came from Rebecca Baron in her portrayal of Abigail's replacement in Proctor's household, Mary Warren. Her trivial triumph 'tricked out in a little brief authority' as 'an official of the court'

graphically illustrates the topsy-turvy world initiated by the ready and credulous acceptance of the girls' sweeping accusations of 'invisible crime'.

The irony of 'abigails' (housemaids) becoming mistresses is fully exploited by Miller who is always alive to the potential of nomenclature; thus we have, in Nicola Miller's spirited rendition, a peculiarly merciless 'Mercy Lewis' ('Have you tried beating her?'), a spiritually queasy 'Hale' and so on.

A genuine New Englander, Sarah Darby, played Rebecca Nurse - a touchstone of integrity in the play. She gave a fine study of virtuous clarity of mind in a convincingly bent and broken old woman's body. Her kindly and serious interest in Proctor's moral welfare and her disapproval of his lapse in moral courage were especially telling. Gareth Roberts did a good job too in the role of her husband, Francis.

Perhaps insufficiently aged in appearance, but otherwise effective as 'the most comical hero in the history', was Alex Rodgers' Giles Corey - 'Aye, it were a fearsome man, Giles Corey!'

Tituba, the Barbadian slave, sought out by the girls, onl, ultimately to be abandoned by them, in a sense represents the tendency of the play as a whole in that her apparently exotic 'otherness' readily deconstructs into essentially mundane fears and desires. Erica McInnis' performance was bold and strikingly successful.

The Cory-Walcott pig-feud and the sordid land squabble of Nurse, Proctor and Putnam lie behind the 'religious' denunciations. Hadley Alexander managed Putnam's self-righteous hypocrisy very well while his wife Anne (Anna Ross) seemed constantly trembling upon the point of some gaffe-blowing disclosure.

Sexual jealousy lies behind the accusations levelled at Proctor's wife, Elizabeth (Sophie Larkin) - an accusation turning, like Othello's handkerchief, upon a 'trifle light as air' - the 'poppet' struck, voodoo-fashion, with pins. Elizabeth, in an early scene of family friction, is bitterly conscious of her personal rectitude - a 'justice' which, according to Proctor, would 'freeze beer'. Sophie Larkin was able beautifully to modulate this frigidity towards becoming an emblem of suffering repentance at the end of the play when, imprisoned and grimly weary, she refuses, unlike many Salem folk, to judge and condemn.

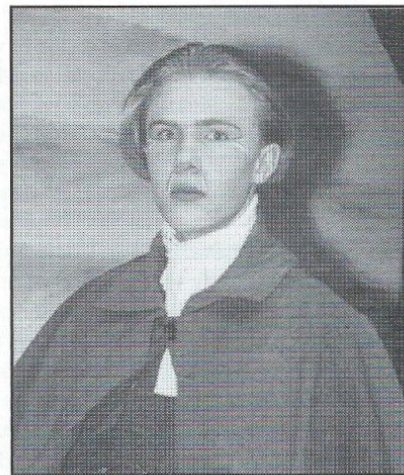
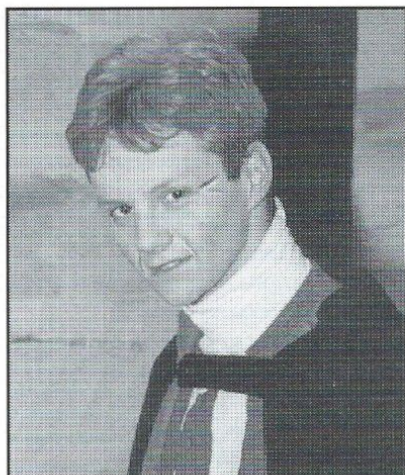
The mark of this production was strength in depth. Michelle Cowan and Sarah Bancroft swelled the 'monstrous regiment' of schoolgirls with great credit. Nicholas Owen gave us a vigorous Cheever rather repulsively punctilious in rehearsing damning evidence and Richard Pimblott a less eager Herrick, embarrassed to be charged with similar duties. Manish Das' conscientious Hathorne pleasingly offset the Podsnappery of Danforth and Laura Owen's Sarah Good provided a fine foil for Tituba in prison.

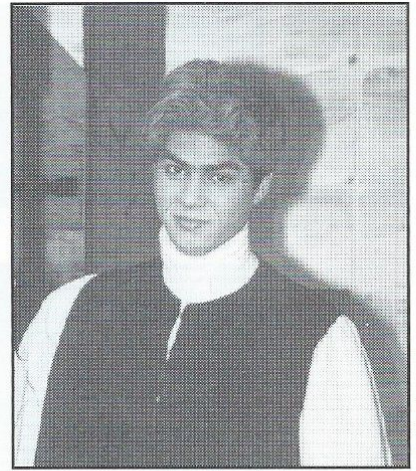
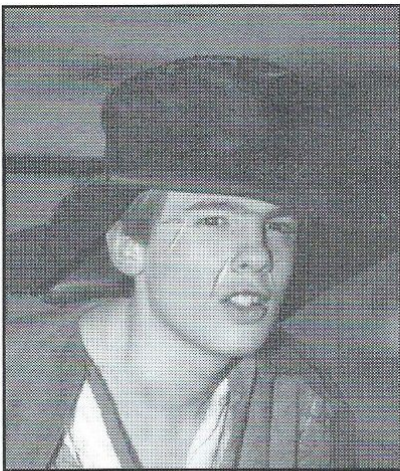
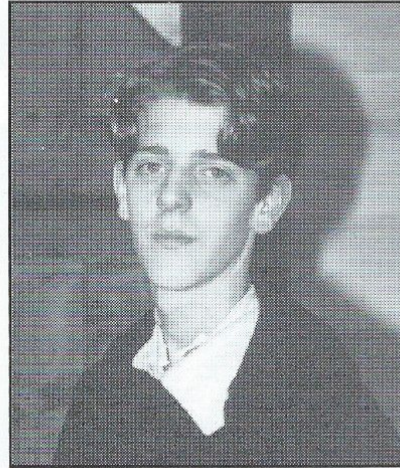
A glance at the programme is enough to show that a play, of course, is not only its actors and producers. It is a communal event which demands, during its months of production, the formation of a little community within the larger community of the School. To all directly involved high praise is due and we can all take pleasure in the paradox that this play about a community spoiled demonstrated the health of our own.

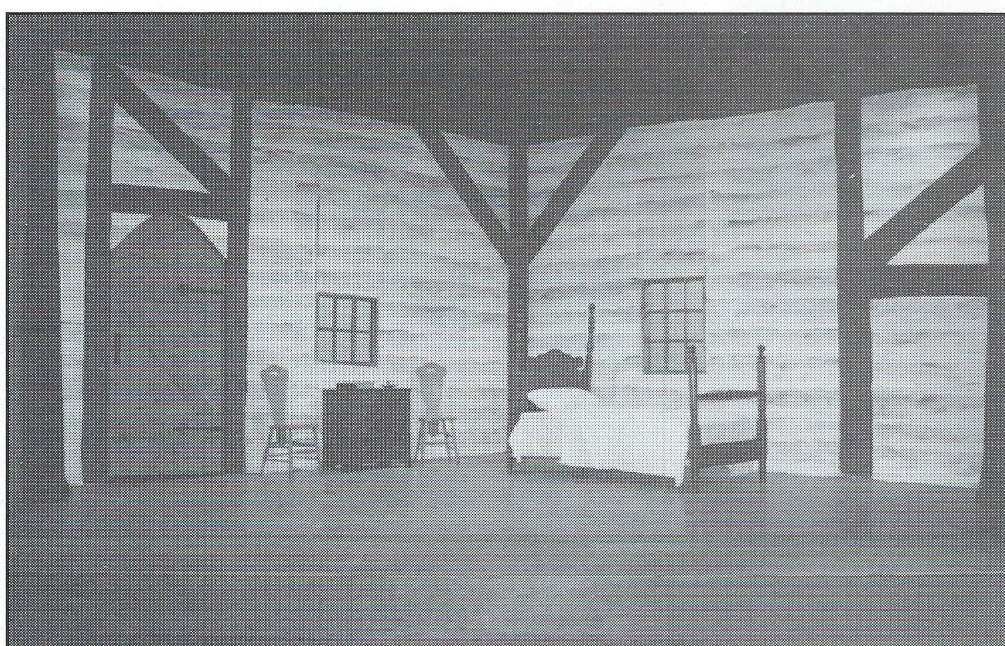
Alistair Watson.

"The Crucible" Backstage Helpers

Lighting and Sound: Dr. Barker; R. Gee; S. Ogier; S. Spencer. Stage Staff: Mr. Hofton; M. Wilson; D. Guthrie; J. Bond; V. Clarke; C. Reichl; J. Greenhowe; T. Howard; M. Maunder; S. Ward; J. Colclough; K. Arran; K. Brown. Properties: Mr. Fisher. Music: J. Lazarus. Dance Choreographer: Mrs. Briggs. Costumes: Mrs. Treweek; J. Gordon-Nesbitt. Make-up: Mr. Turner, Dr. Keable and Girls. Backstage Co-ordinator: C. Lewis. Promoter: Miss Priddle. Tickets and Front of House: Mr. Callaghan and Prefects. Programme and Posters: J. Flannigan; B. Stephenson; R. Gee. Refreshments: Dalton House.







The V-shaped "Crucible" set, "interestingly leading the eye to the heart of the stage".
(All Photos: J. H. Thomson)

“TOAD OF TOAD HALL”

“Never a name to go down to fame
Compared with that of ‘Toad’!”

Those who saw Miss De Vince’s sparkling production of A.A. Milne’s classic adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s “Wind in the Willows” last October might well have been tempted to make this superlative claim, not for the central character’s heroic qualities (far from it!), but for the sheer exuberance, commitment and sincerity of this year’s Junior School Play.

Sarah Cochrane as Toad was appropriately swaggering and larger than life, intelligently showing the vulnerability behind the mask of “élan” and self-confidence, and she especially relished the trance-like absorption in her “crazes” and the deliberately pre-adolescent defiance of authority, whether it was with Badger or in the court room. In the ‘tunnel’ scene she was just like a naughty pupil seeing “how far she could go” with Badger (played, of course, by a real teacher, Miss De Vince herself.). Needless to say, she drew here on previous observation of others, not on first-hand experience. She also showed herself to be a trooper in coping with on-stage problems. Confronted with an anachronistic bottle after Rat had fetched her a corkscrew, she exclaimed, “Oh silly me, it’s a screw top.” This was one of the best ad libs for years.

Simon Waind as Rat had a difficult task since his is in many ways the least rewarding of the four main roles - the “straight man” between Old Badger, who of course completely eclipses him in common sense and wisdom, the sentimental, timid Mole, and of course the untameable Toad. He brought out well Ratty’s deepest quality, real concern for his friends, which of course turns out to be his Achilles heel in the scene where he is supposed to be guarding Toad. His warmth of heart and bluff bonhomie in the “Christmas at Mole End” scene were blended in just the right proportions, and he enjoyed his humorous moments such as his extensive catalogue of items in the “trifle of lunch” on the river bank.

Jennie Green as the shy and tender-hearted Mole, always seeking reassurance from Rat and Badger, but at times lively, had to avoid the danger of cloying over-sentimentality; in Kenneth Grahame’s day, for good or ill, such characters were more popular with young people than nowadays. As one would expect from a modern healthy First Year, Jennie’s style was always fresh and buoyant, from the opening crisis of conscience about the spring cleaning right through to her taking the initiative in joining Toad’s trendy dance at the end. Jennie, like all the cast but perhaps the most strikingly, remembered every actor’s first rule about delivery - to speak slowly in order to be heard. Audiences hate a gabbler, and Jennie’s measured pace enabled her to show Mole’s inner feelings throughout the play.

Miss De Vince herself played Badger, the first teacher since 1979 to tread the boards alone among a crowd of young pupils, and, as far as I know, the first ever producer to do so at W.H.G.S. She gave a fine, intelligent performance. After her Miss Prism in 1988, she must be careful not to become type-cast in playing people more than twice her age.

There were some delightful cameo roles. Lara El-Jazairi as the Judge in the Court Scene managed well the mixture of mock pomposity and bland incomprehension. Matthew Kay was the perfect caricature of the gormless English “bobby” and Aaron Greenall “ushd” with all the straight-faced dignity of such roles from Gilbert and Sullivan’s “Trial by Jury” onwards. Aaron doubled as the front end (and therefore the voice) of the pantomime horse, Alfred, in the caravan scene - his cynical resignation to not being listened to when he talked good sense was well caught.



The cast of “Toad of Toad Hall”.
(Photo: J. H. Thomson)

In the prison scene Geraldine Brook positively glowed as the genial country lass Phoebe who engineers Toad's escape. Her aunt, the down-to-earth, middle-aged washerwoman who changes clothes with Toad in exchange for cash payment, was a lovely cameo role by Caroline Shaw; she was almost inviting the audience to share the joke as she quietly de-bunked Toad's arrogance - "Not a bit like me. Not good looking enough", and her opening "Is this the one?" was not only stolid (as required by the stage direction) but also laconic.

Finally the chorus of Wild Wooders came across vividly as a destructive and spiteful rabble, hell-bent on destroying Toad and revelling in their take-over of his home. It is essential that they convey this feeling of genuine evil, because it shows Toad up at the end as a man more sinned against than sinning, a lovable rogue by the side of the dastardly weasels, ferrets and stoats. In the final scene they were whipped up into a frenzy of gloating Schadenfreude by their cruel, swaggering leaders Carys Edwards and Katrina McKay with their ironic toast to "absent friends". But when they had learned their lesson, all was forgiven at the end as they jived and "grooved off" with the rest of the cast before returning to take their curtain call to tumultuous and prolonged applause. The Wild Wooders were played by James Beswick, Rachel Westbrook, Samantha Johnson, Preyesh Vara, Benjamin Kent, Richard Longworth, Stephen Flood, Robert Poll, Rachael Lee, Gillian Alderson and James Lancaster.

As in any successful production, the backroom boys and girls worked with dedication and skill. They are listed below. One feature deserves to be highlighted, the construction of an attractive and serviceable "gaily-painted" caravan for the Alfred scene.

Congratulations to all concerned with a sparkling, and above all, happy production, but especially of course to Miss De Vince ably assisted by Miss Priddle, who also put in many hours of hard work. At the final curtain call the penultimate line of play sums up the producer's reception on the set.

"There was welcoming to Badger, when she joined the merry throng."

G.J. Turner

Producer: Miss J. De Vince;
 Assistant Producer: Miss S. Priddle;
 Stage Manager: Daniel Guthrie;
 Assistant Stage Manager: Jayne Bond;
 Stage Staff under Mr. Hofton: Jamie Flannigan, Mike Wilson, Robert Seddon, James Silver, Alexander Xidacis, Nicholas Davenport, Michael Dodd, Craig Leasor;
 Make-Up/Costumes: Dr. Keable, Lucy Pepall, Kate Williams, Jacqueline de Freitas, Asha de Silva, Soraya Khan;
 Properties: Mr. Turner, Frances Edwards;
 Sound/Lighting: Dr. Barker, Sam Spencer, Robert Gee, Simon Ogier;
 Music: Colin Peter Harris,
 Refreshments: Tarik Rashid, Nicholas Bell, Khurram Dar, Philip Holt, Amy Crilly, Maame Ankrah.



Badger warns Ratty, Mole and Toad how to retake Toad Hall by stealth.
 (Photo: J. H. Thomson)

HOUSE PLAYS

ADJUDICATORS' REPORT

The 1992 House Play Competition presented a curious contrast between the two nights. The Wednesday night had a genuine "buzz" about it, with a good audience and an interesting selection of plays put over with some style; the Thursday night seemed flat, with a thin audience and too much extraneous noise to create the right atmosphere. How far this affected the performances it is impossible to say. Nevertheless on both nights there were some excellent moments, both of comedy and of high drama, and all six productions showed careful planning, effective use of the stage and a high level of team work. The six plays covered a very wide range of dramatic genres, and this made our task all the more difficult, especially in judging the minor places. After due deliberation we arrived at the following order:

1. Heywood - "Absent Friends".
2. Gaskell - "Lady Audley's Secret".
3. Byrom - "A Message for Madame".
4. = Dalton - "The Winslow Boy"
5. = Whitworth - "Queer Street"
6. Fraser - "The Ugly Duckling".

We nominated Andrew Babicki of Heywood for the best actor award, and Philippa Whittle of Gaskell for the best actress, with a special commendation for Leanne Basso for her portrayal of Marge in "Absent Friends".

A great deal of care had been taken over the costumes this year, and this, together with the usual impeccable work of the stage staff, lighting crews, make-up artists and programme designers, contributed to a very successful competition. As always, we felt privileged to be part of one of the most enjoyable events in the School year.

Mr. & Mrs. Lowe

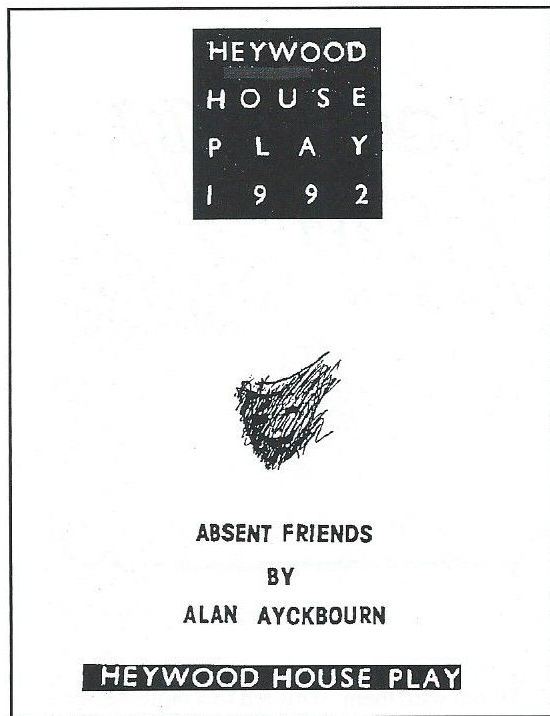
HEYWOOD HOUSE

The 1992 House Play Competition had an excellent start with Heywood's production of an act from Alan Ayckbourn's play "Absent Friends". This was an ambitious choice, as Ayckbourn always poses problems - the superficial

dialogue is never quite as harmless as it seems, tensions in personal relationships unexpectedly develop, and light-hearted comedy can quite suddenly turn very black indeed. This production was well aware of all the problems and, on the whole, tackled them successfully. The social class involved was immediately pinpointed by the costumes of Diana (Nicola Miller) and the monosyllabic Evelyn (Louise Borg); it was a pity that Nicola took her opening speeches far too quickly and quietly, as much valuable "background" information failed to come across. Opening lines are always vitally important, especially while the audience is adjusting to the peculiar acoustics of the New Hall, so it becomes a real test of nerve, voice and timing in those first few minutes of any production. Fortunately Nicola settled down very quickly, and as the act proceeded, more than held her own.

One hates to use the expression "tarty" to describe any Hulmeian, but it sprang to mind immediately one took in Evelyn's silver blouse, short skirt and length of leg - a view that was reinforced by her singular lack of interest in her baby in the pram beside her! The pace quickened with the arrival of Marge, a part to which Leanne Basso brought some effective movement and good sense of "business", especially with her new shoes. It was a pity she rushed her first phone conversation with her accident-prone husband - one or two good lines were nearly thrown away. In the conversation between the three women one could sense a sharpening of knives, but the superficial suburban calm was broken with the arrival of Diana's husband, Paul, played with forceful energy by a track-suited Andrew Babicki. This was a bravura

performance, dangerously close at times to going over the top, but it had the effect of putting the women on their mettle so that the whole action speeded up. Babicki blustered and bullied to good effect, although he didn't help himself by adopting a curiously uneven accent! It was at this point that Nicola Miller came into her own and there was real venom in the exchanges between husband and wife. In the same way, the dialogue between Marge and Evelyn took on a much more vitriolic bite, before the arrival of Evelyn's restlessly "wet" husband, John (played by Gareth Roberts); he made an excellent contrast to the overpowering Paul, especially in his reactions to the mere mention of death, but perhaps he could have made even more of his agitated restlessness.



By this time, the party is complete apart from the "absent friend", Colin, in whose honour the tea party is being held; while they wait, more depths of matrimonial discord are plumbed, disturbing memories of past years surface, and tension increases, relieved by a delightfully agitated phone call between Marge and her bed-ridden husband. This was team acting of a very high order, with several conversations going on simultaneously. It was, perhaps, the social tension that led to an attack of amnesia as far as Christian names were concerned - even Paul had difficulty in remembering his wife's name!

The arrival of Colin, played with a quiet confidence by Richard Pimblott, causes acute embarrassment as his old friends try to skirt round the tragic death by drowning of his fiancée; verbal bricks are dropped (Marge's "Don't drown it" in reply to an offer of a drink); Diana's laboured words of sympathy add to the tension; John desperately tries to talk business to Paul. But it is Colin himself who causes most havoc with his quiet acceptance of his fiancée's death and his acknowledgment of the "happiness" which his assembled friends enjoy. Pimblott's handling and timing of his big speech at the end of the act was very effective and perhaps the greatest tribute to the success of a very competent production was the desire to know what would happen in the subsequent acts. Although one or two of Ayckbourn's sharpest lines were blurred or thrown away, every member of the cast showed a genuine feel for the character, while the producers, Simon Morgan and Sandy Bhogal, managed to create the authentic Ayckbourn ambivalence, where things are never quite as they seem.

BYROM HOUSE

Byrom's production of "A Message for Madame" by Dr. C. Vites was a movingly sensitive treatment of themes such as bitterness, hatred and forgiveness; it could so easily have slipped into mawkish sentimentality and the fact that it kept its hold on the audience is a tribute to the sincerity of the acting and the real "feel" for the character shown by the cast.

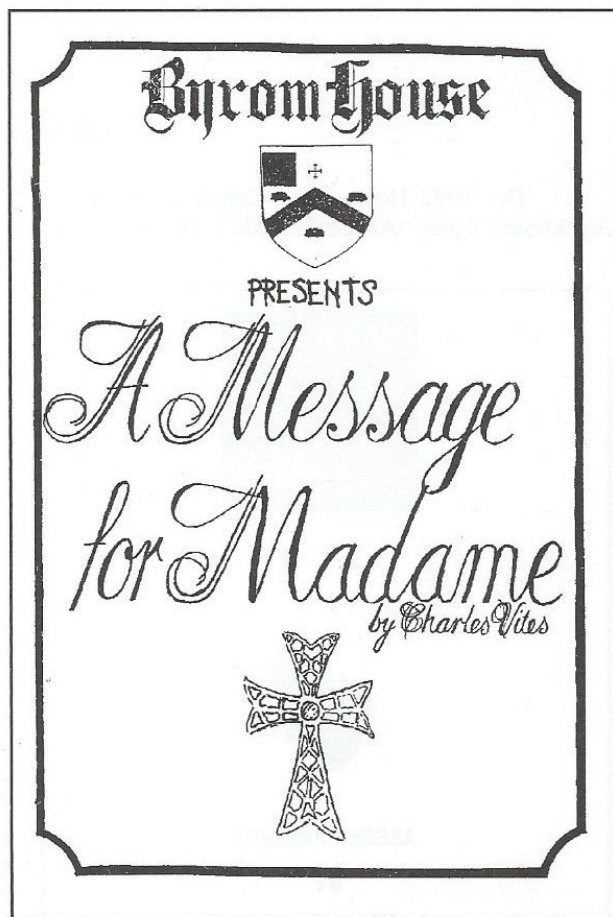
The atmosphere of the Café Desbois was well-conveyed by the white chairs and tables on the apron stage and the well-stocked bar behind (a pity about the café sign - something bolder would have helped). Jacques, played by Jamie Flannigan, studiously ignored the audience as he hobbled about setting up the chairs at the start of another day; his opening lines revealed a thick, but perfectly intelligible, French accent, while his well-padded chest and convincing limp suggested the World War I veteran had a true pride in his exploits at the battle of Verdun.

If Michelle Cowan was not physically "formidable" as Marie Desbois, she quickly established the bitterness of the character with her sharpness of tongue and effective use of gesture; once again, her use of accent was well controlled, without any of the absurdities of "Allô, Allô". Her attitude to The Boy (Alex Rodgers) when he makes his diffident appearance is at first brusque and then positively hostile when he admits to being a German; this contrasted neatly with the much more friendly tone of Jacques. Rodgers conveyed the sense of nervousness and insecurity very well - he was quiet but always audible, and reacted convincingly to Marie's account of the fate of her own son.

Light relief was introduced with the arrival of two American tourists, suitably attired for a day's energetic sight-seeing; Alison Soper as Mais was splendidly disenchanted with her swollen feet, her blisters and her exhausting tour of "that Louver"; she skilfully maintained her American whine against all the enthusiastic culture-vulturing of her husband Phil (Morgan Parry). Perhaps Parry could have injected a little more contrast here - he was always perfectly believable, but might have risked a touch of over-exaggeration to suggest the American Abroad in all his enthusiasm. The Desbois reacted differently to their American customers - Marie was offended by their parade of wealth, while Jacques, returning with some remarkably un-French bread, was delighted to relive his memories of Verdun with them. This led to a violent outburst as Marie told the Americans of the fates of other members of her family - this was very well put across in spite of some rather awkward "bunching" on the apron stage - but she exploded with fury when she saw Phil taking a photograph of her son's memorial. Her account of his death and of her husband's in action was genuinely moving, and Michelle Cowan brought out the sorrow, the bitterness and the contempt very convincingly.

The return of The Boy with the message for Madame and the accompanying cross brought the play to a quiet but satisfying end. Sentimentality was avoided as Madame Desbois took The Boy to her own son's room in a final gesture of reconciliation.

The "Production Team" under Jamie Flannigan is to be congratulated on a very successful effort.



GASKELL HOUSE

Victorian melodrama, whether the genuine article or a parody, requires special qualities from its actors - a keen ear for tone and "pace", a degree of over-acting that should never go over the top, and the ability to deliver some dreadful lines with a straight face! On all these counts Gaskell's production of "Lady Audley's Secret" scored well, with some splendid costumes and effective use of the stage (complete with all important well!). It was good to see a cast of twelve in a House

Play, and although several of the parts were little more than "walk-ons" as servants or humble villagers, they all gave excellent support with the right degree of dignity or deference.

The play opened with the appearance of the shifty-looking Luke, played by James Brocklehurst, and his wife Phoebe (Bernie McCurrie); both spoke clearly and prepared us for the very effective entrance of the Audley household complete with attendant servants. Lady Audley, played with great style by Philippa Whittle, was well-contrasted with her step-daughter Alicia whose hostility to her stepmother was nicely portrayed by Claire Reichl. James Harding, as the elderly Sir Michael, gave a delightful cameo performance, the epitome of the fine old English gentleman, dispensing largesse to the assembled peasantry in convincing style.

The plot thickened with the arrival of Robert Audley (Phillip Tilston) and George Talboys (Ibrahim Anwar), both of whom coped well with the "background" dialogue establishing the unfortunate demise of Mrs. Talboys some time previously. Tilston had a good, clear voice and held the stage well, Anwar steadily improved once he'd overcome an early attack of "the sways" and his recognition of Lady Audley's portrait was well done.

The return of Lady Audley was the cue for a very effective soliloquy in which her villainy and her anxiety about the possible effects the return of Robert Audley might have on her fortunes were well brought out. Philippa showed an excellent control of pace, moved well and made splendid use of gesture - even more so when her first husband reappeared, threatening to denounce her as

a bigamist. By this time Anwar was in good voice, and was beginning to find the real tone of melodrama. The significance of the well now became apparent, and George Talboy's disappearance was slick and seemingly effective!

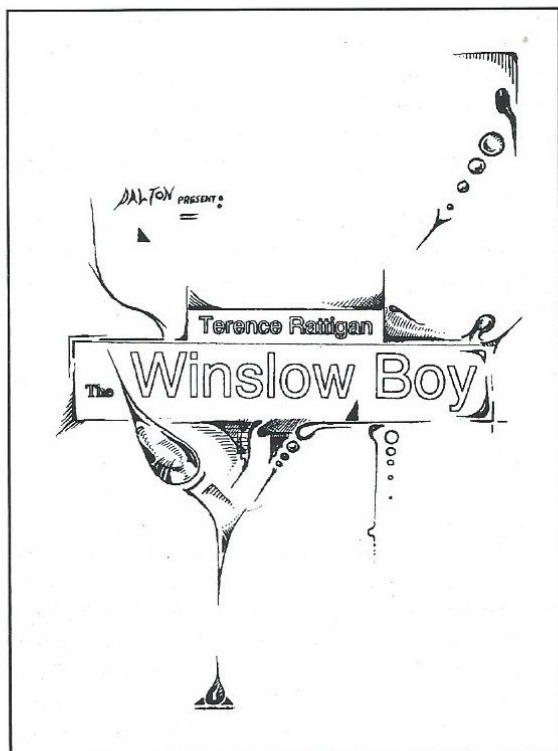
The reappearance of the convincingly sleazy Luke, who had witnessed Talboy's descent, posed a new threat to Lady Audley; time passed; romance between Robert Audley and Alicia was in the air - a well-matched couple, with Alicia showing a nice line in foot-stamping and flouncing; but the mystery of George Talboy's disappearance was still unsolved. And so the play moved peacefully towards its close, with only arson, blackmail, attempted murder, natural death, madness and suicide to fill the final moments. All this was taken at a spanking pace, with Phoebe coming into her own as an instrument of good who would not be silenced. The resurrection of George Talboys, thanks to the intervention of the not-entirely evil Luke, was thoroughly in keeping with the spirit of a play in which the audience's disbelief was willingly suspended in the sheer delight of a splendid team effort. It is only fitting that the contributions of Sara Atkins, Stephen Neary, Juliet Gordon-Nesbitt, Yvonne Schofield and Paula Grant in their comparatively minor roles should be acknowledged - they also serve who only wait (and receive their guineas!).

DALTON HOUSE

Dalton's choice of an act from Terence Rattigan's "The Winslow Boy" was ambitious and adventurous. In the course of the act, three areas have to be explored and developed - the "period" background and social standing of the Winslow family; the different attitudes of the individual members of the family towards young Ronnie's expulsion from the Royal Naval College for theft; and the confrontation between Ronnie himself and the distinguished barrister who eventually takes his case.

Appropriate furniture and an old-fashioned horn gramophone helped to establish the period, as did the dress worn by Catherine Winslow (played by Amanda Jones) when she interrupted the "studies" of her brother Dickie (Rashad Al-Safar). It was a pity that both tended to gabble their opening speeches - even the reading from the evening newspaper was difficult to follow. Once nerves had settled down, both improved steadily - but those opening moments are all important for catching the audience's interest; it didn't make it easier when they danced (very sedately!) and talked against the music, but one gathered that Dickie's faith in his brother's cause was wavering, while Catherine remained staunchly loyal to her opinions.

John Howarth made an impressive-looking Arthur Winslow, presenting a dignified figure in spite of his stick and his ailing health. His interview with Dickie about his son's university prospects was genuinely moving, for he showed a



proper concern and regret in taking a decision that so obviously hurt his son. It is always difficult for an actor to convey a wide range of emotions when he is chair-bound, but it was a pity that as the act proceeded Howarth did not give freer rein to anger and sarcasm, especially at the end of his interview with the "Daily News" reporter, played by Justine Goldman. Hers was an unrewarding part in that she mainly acted as a means for Arthur to recap on details of the progress of Ronnie's case - but there is sufficient material in the script for hackles to be raised (e.g. the reference to "this little case", and her much keener interest in the curtain material) and too often such opportunities were missed. Indeed, this central section of the act fell decidedly flat. Alison Battrick looked the part as Arthur's wife Grace, but was somewhat wooden in her movements; when she should have been a silent but absorbed spectator, she allowed her attention to wander. Even Catherine's conversation with her father lacked real bite - more movement and gesture would have helped to convey her loyalty to him and her deep-seated prejudice against Sir Robert Morton; Catherine is surely in the fore-front of Women's Liberation, and the part called for more fire.

The arrival of Sir Robert Morton (played by Anthony Baron) accompanied by the solicitor Desmond (Rakesh Patel) immediately raised the dramatic temperature, with Morton's icy formality contrasting well with Catherine's open hostility. The various members of the family assembled and the stage was set for Sir Robert's questioning of Ronnie (played by Jon Flatman). We had already seen a glimpse of a youthfully excited Ronnie on his

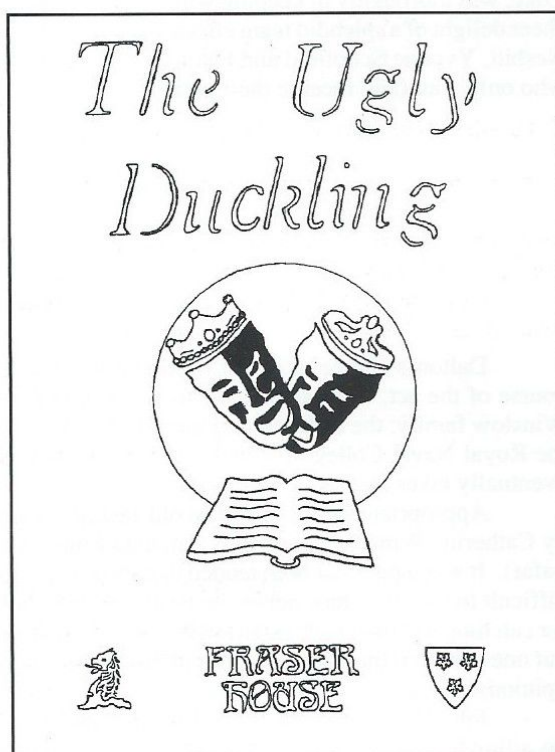
home-coming from school; now we saw him formally dressed, facing up to the skilful questioning of an apparently cold-blooded barrister. This was the most impressive part of the production; Flatman was convincing in the clarity of his statements and the vehemence of his denials, and he showed a good command of variations in tone and pace, while refusing to buckle under shrewd and increasingly hostile interrogation. Throughout this Sir Robert sat motionless, sideways on to the audience, so that he had to rely almost entirely on voice rather than on facial expression and gesture. It was when Ronnie was apparently on the point of crumbling under the merciless barrage of "I suggests" and when his family were on their feet in horror and anger at the treatment meted out to him, that Sir Robert, still cold and unemotional, declared "The boy is plainly innocent".

This was a praiseworthy attempt at a difficult play; it had its moments of success, but failed to maintain a consistent level. The minor roles were well taken by Michelle Swift and Richard Strudwick, while Oliver Garside, as the producer, deserves congratulations on a good effort.

FRASER HOUSE

"If only" - one of the saddest phrases in the language and one that must have come to the minds of the cast and producers of Fraser's play, "The Ugly Duckling", by A.A. Milne. If only they had all learnt their parts, if only they had managed a few more rehearsals, they could have been on to a winner. The play itself is slight and inconsequential - an airy-fairy story involving the successful marriage of the hideous Princess Camilla to Prince Simon - but it has several plum parts, especially for the king, while the verbal and "business" humour should have guaranteed a genuine response from the audience. As it was, too much of the laughter derived from the spectacle of a cast groping for "prompts" and desperately ad-libbing, and so much of the talent and effort that had gone into the production was wasted.

There were compensations, however. Allan Bulwich as the King bravely overcame the pain and difficulty of a broken foot; he coped very well with some of his more convoluted sentences and was always audible, even when not quite certain of his next words! Matt Maunder made a very dignified Chancellor, resplendent in frock-coat, and was not afraid to slow his speeches down as he sought for the right and proper word, especially when speaking of the Princess's lack of beauty. Rebecca Baron had a truly regal appearance as the Queen and spoke clearly, but too easily slipped out of character on occasion. Jayne Bond, as the Princess Camilla, began quietly, but improved steadily - her "heart-to-heart" talk with her father had some excellent moments,



with good reactions on both sides. But it was Heather Stephenson as the Princess's maid, Dulcibella, who caught the eye with a range of gestures and expressions that fully justified her description as "beautiful but dumb" (her "Cool!" was music to the ears!). Her scene with the King had some splendid moments, but needed greater pace and confidence.

The scene between the Princess, disguised as Dulcibella and Prince Simon, disguised as his servant Carlo, was well handled; as the Prince, Sébastien Martineau began rather quietly but once he got into his stride he displayed the right style of royal smoothness to impress a proper princess. The Princess herself more than held her own in the romantic exchanges which skilfully avoided an excess of sopiness!

The court reassembled for the "marriage" ceremony, with Carlo, played by Edward Buckley, standing in for the real prince, and Dulcibella for the Princess. In true fairy tale style, the play ended in romantic happiness all around, with all confusions resolved - at least, most of the confusions; one felt that some members of the cast were still trying to find their bearings! It simply proved that even the most light-hearted farce is a very serious business for those who try to put it across, requiring just as much discipline and dedication as high tragedy.

WHITWORTH HOUSE

Whitworth solved one of the perennial problems of the House Play Competition by choosing a comparatively undemanding play ("Queer Street" by J.D. Kelly) with a small cast of six and by presenting it in a thoroughly competent way. Did it show a certain lack of self-confidence by outlining the bare bones of the plot in their programme? If so, they were over-modest, for every phrase of the plot was clearly defined during the course of the production. True, it took a few moments for the ear to adjust to the cockney accent of Daniel Riste as the burglarious Bill Hart, but he clearly relished the rôle and was given good support by Laura Owen as his wife Liza whose costume suggested the 30's setting. Their

matrimonial harmony was swiftly established, tinged with anxieties about the nature of Bill's "work" and the loss of his accomplice's cap while out on a job the previous night. Tension was heightened with the entrance of daughter Edith, well played with youthful verve by Sarah Bancroft, and the shocking news was broken to Bill of his daughter's engagement - to a policeman! The reactions here were well conveyed, especially in the incredulous "Love a policeman? Blimey!" from Bill.

The arrival of Edith's fiancé, Albert, created a splendid atmosphere of suspicion, embarrassment, fear and constraint. Nick Owen was well suited to the part, with a good stage presence and a command of effective movements and gestures. Bill's increasingly bumbling attempts at explaining the mysteries of his (supposed) profession as a plumber, Albert's interest in the crested silver-ware on the tea-table, Liza's and Edith's desperate attempts to cover up any damaging indiscretions - all was carried off at a good pace, culminating in Albert's resounding denunciation of burglars as "low-down parasites...scum....sewer rats".

This was followed immediately by the arrival of Bill's accomplice, Joe Smart, bearing the plans for the next "job". Richard Smith looked and sounded the part, and reacted with suitable horror as Bill hastened to introduce him to "Edith's fiancé" with the assurance that "a policeman in the 'ome will go a long way towards brightening things up". There followed some good comic business as Bill and Joe explained to Albert the markings on the plans. Joe's anxieties about his missing cap increased as he spotted a plain-clothes detective (Perry Warren, suitably be-macked) enter to arrest

Albert for burglary; Joe automatically raised his wrists for the expected handcuffs. The play ended with Bill's shocked condemnation of the departing Albert - "The blinkin' 'ypocrite".

If the play was slight, the production had pace and polish; costume and props were effective, and although at times positioning and movement were a little awkward, the cast showed commendable confidence.

Chris & Jean Lowe

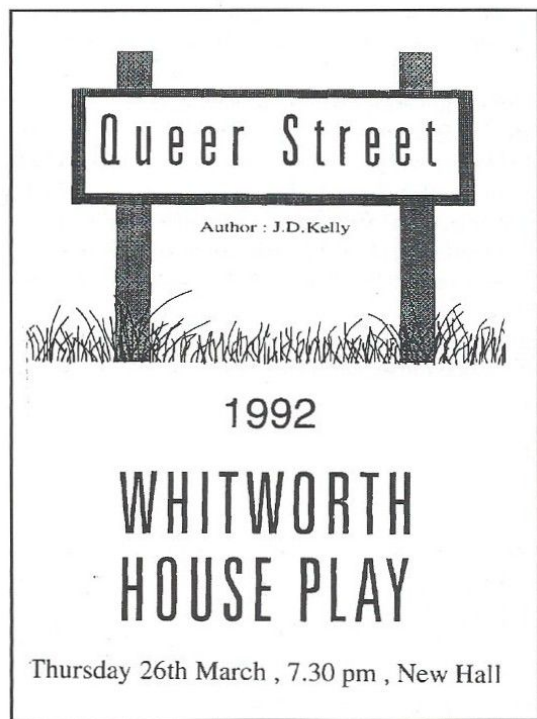
House Drama Festival. Sound and Lighting Team for all Six Houses: Dr. Barker; Robert Gee; Simon Ogier; Rachel Leich-Devlin; Sam Spencer. Thanks to Rachel for stepping in at the eleventh hour.

G.J. Turner

DRAMA "BACK ROOM BOYS AND GIRLS"

Every School production depends on Mr. Hofton's Stage Staff, Dr. Barker's Sound and Lighting Team, and the Costume and Make-up Team, now building up into a large and keen group with an enormous and unstinting regular commitment from Dr. Keable, to whom I owe a great personal debt of gratitude backstage. Any pupils interested in any of these involvements next year are encouraged to see the appropriate teacher in charge.

G.J. Turner



MUSIC

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Music teachers have a hard lot in life; firstly, because of people's fallacious ideas of what music teachers are like ("they're terribly staid and only interested in classical music"), secondly, because of most people's experience of class music lessons ("it's all learning when Beethoven was born and playing screeching recorders"), thirdly, the 'soft' image that music has ("Let's face it, you have to be a wimp to be in the choir") and fourthly that, unlike maths, or science, it is not considered to be a proper academic subject by most parents and pupils. Do you recognise yourself in any of these responses?

Children have a very pragmatic view of education - it is there as a means to get you good qualifications and then get a job. Few students see education as developing the whole person. Most children work at their algebra, not because they can see its immediate usefulness (I sometimes ask myself if it has one!) but because the subject is considered important. One readily accepts the importance of basic mathematics in everyday life. On the other hand, with music, children cannot see its 'usefulness' since a qualification in the subject is unlikely to get them a job. This attitude to arts subjects in general is all too common and to a certain extent is a reflection of the society we live in. The music teacher, therefore, has firstly to try and break down these misconceptions before he can really begin to educate and influence his or her pupils. It is against this daunting background that the music teacher must start his missionary work!

It was always been my philosophy that music in schools must primarily be enjoyable and this can only be achieved if it is taught from a practical standpoint. My main aim is to encourage as many pupils as possible to be actively involved in music making whether this be in a pop group, playing the recorder, or in a jazz group. It is only through composing, performing or active listening that one gains understanding and thereby, satisfaction and enjoyment. This 'hands on' approach is especially important in the classroom in order to win over the reluctant pupil and to this end, it was my first priority last September to buy keyboards and percussion instruments. Of course, the best way to train pupils in music is by singing. Sadly, most children come to Hulme's with little or no experience of singing and wrongly, the School population holds the activity in very low esteem - try listening to Senior School hymn singing in morning assemblies! Again, education is required to overcome these prejudices.

Throughout the year I have tried to arrange as many possible concerts and venues for pupils to perform and listen to live music. Amongst other activities, pupils have performed in main school concerts, informal recitals, provided cocktail music for the Old Hulmeians' Dinner and sung carols at the Waverley Old People's Home as well as playing for morning assemblies. The first forms have listened to a Bolivian pan pipe group and a Jazz/Rock group as well as having the opportunity to play a wide variety of orchestral instruments on music morning. Next year I hope to provide even more opportunities for pupils to perform with visits to local music festivals, year concerts and possibly a trip abroad next Summer.

I have very much enjoyed my first year at William Hulme's. It has been very rewarding and I have found both staff and pupils supportive and willing to get involved. I hope that over the next few years we will see more pupils than ever taking up instruments and thereby the orchestras and groups will expand and achieve even higher standards. Musical skills once acquired are carried for life and, even if you don't play an instrument, a good music education will affect the way you listen and react to music. Like Martin Luther King, 'I have a dream' that one day music will be heard in every corner of the School and those who are not directly involved in making the music will respect those who are and appreciate the power and value of music itself. When this is achieved, music will truly be at the heart of School life.

"It is in learning music that many youthful hearts learn to love."

P. Dewhurst

THE INFORMAL RECITALS

Once during each term this year the Music Department presented, in the Upper Hall, a programme of short instrumental pieces. The purpose of such a recital is threefold: apart from the simple pleasure of listening to the music, it is an opportunity for beginners at playing instruments to play to a small and naturally sympathetic audience, consisting largely of their parents and friends, and finally it is a pleasant social event at which like-minded parents have the opportunity to meet and chat with each other and also both the full time and the increasing number of peripatetic music teachers who teach their children music in School. The forbiddingly large number of chairs in the Upper Hall is significantly reduced to the smaller proportions of the informal audience and also arranged in a wide semi-circle, rather than maintaining the formality of serried ranks, and refreshments are made available for the listeners both during the performance and in the interval and post-recital period.

There was not the slightest doubt about the success of this year's three recitals, all of which contained a wide variety of music played with great care, skill and masses of natural charm, this last element coming over so well in the informal setting. Players were evidently working very hard indeed, not just to produce the right notes but also to 'survive' in the exposed situation of public performance. This pressure produced some wonderful moments: on one occasion a piece just refused to get beyond the first hesitant notes, and it went on refusing until after several attempts a long silence seemed to be suggesting failure a quiet voice from the audience: "Come on, give it one more try" and the piece goes through with complete success. On another a similar sequence of false starts finds the player looking more and more puzzled to the point of distraction: Mr. Dewhurst slips quietly to the front and a whispered conversation takes place. Again the piece comes quite right at the next attempt. Our genial Director's comment, "My fees are very reasonable!" and the audience's warm good humour express exactly the mutual support and pleasure which these evenings brought.

We must be very grateful to Mr. Dewhurst and his Music Department staff for presenting these evenings which have shown very intimately what a healthy state music is in amongst the School's young players, and we must also express our thanks and admiration to all those who played, some at two or even all three recitals. The players we heard were pianists

Andrew Chance (4A), Mark Craig (4B), Guy Brocklehurst (2D), Louise Ives (2D), Sahara Dixon (2A), Sally Burton (1B), Geeta Rampal (3Y), Leanne Connor (1C) and Martyn Jones (3Y); clarinettists Geoffrey Barraclough (4X), who also played recorder, Sara Khoshnavizadeh (2C), Debbi Mosley (3L), Victoria Fleming (2D), Claire Mattison (1D), Neville Clemetson (4B), Timothy Edwards (1B), Catherine Zoeflig (2B), Jolyon Guy (2B), David Hancock (1B) and Jonathan Gordon (2B); flautists Sarah Porter (4Y), Rachel Westbrook (2A), Laura Smith (1D), Dalia Daud (4Y), Helen Ralston (3L) and Sahara Dixon (2A); guitarists Gillian Alderson (1A), Matthew Whyatt (1D), Christopher Longsdon (2D) and Marc Cohen (1A); and Dawn Sing (1D) and Manish Prasad (1D) (keyboard), John Daniels (1C) and Paul Murphy (1D) (saxophone), Nicky Arthur (1A) (cornet), Sam Sallon (1A) (trumpet), Robert Poll (1A) (trombone), Richard Strudwick (3Y) (tuba) and John Cunningham (3L) (euphonium).

C.P. Langford

CHRISTMAS 1991

This year there were three main differences in our musical celebration of Christmas. On Wednesday, December 4th, we had our usual annual lunchtime service of carols and readings at St. Ann's Church, except that the balance, firmness and dynamics of the performance reached new heights. This was thanks to a new surge of enthusiasm - and numbers - in the choir, but especially to the advent (no liturgical pun intended!) of Mr. Dewhurst. Secondly, we revived for the first time in almost a decade the Festival of the Nine Lessons and Carols, not this time at School, but at St. Werburgh's Church, Chorlton, repeating and enlarging the St. Ann's repertoire. There was a rich blend of the old and the new, the sparkling "Up! good Christen folk" and "Masters in this hall" contrasting with the mystical "Gabriel's Message" and John Rutter's "modern" but meltingly beautiful "Nativity Carol". Most ambitious of all was H.C. Stewart's vigorously syncopated "On this day earth shall ring". The walls of St. Werburgh's certainly rang with the song our choristers sang! There were some splendid treble/soprano descants too, though the full effect of the final verse of "Hark! the herald angels sing!" was lost because the writer of this review, who as crucifer led the procession out, didn't wait for the end of the hymn before walking through the West Door, followed faithfully, like the Pied Piper before him, by his trusting fellow-choristers!

The School Orchestra was also there to give added depth and brilliance to many of the carols; the logistic problems of squeezing everyone in the East end of the chancel were somehow overcome! Two individuals deserve special mention. Richard Longworth delivered the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City" unaccompanied, right at the start of the service "from cold", clearly, with beautiful expressive purity, and without dropping pitch - the organ came in for verse two on exactly the right note! And Elisabeth Keable gave a very pleasing solo organ voluntary, which was listened to more attentively and appreciatively than is often the case in churches.

A pupil's eye-view of the Service follows below:

"It was raining heavily on the evening of Wednesday, 18th December. The Choir arrived at St. Werburgh's Church for a carol service. We gathered in a fairly small room next to the Church and had a short rehearsal. We felt quite nervous, not knowing who would be in the congregation. After that we scurried to the back of the church through a narrow, wooden door. Because we were so quiet no-one had noticed that we were there behind some yellow curtains.

The service had already started. There was silence for a short while. From the distance a soloist (Richard Longworth) sang verse one from the carol "Once in Royal David's City". While we sang verses two and three we marched slowly and cautiously through the middle of the congregation and up a few steps to the altar. Each pair bowed to the cross in the middle of the Church and sat down in their seats. During the service nine pupils and teachers beautifully read the nine lessons from the Bible. When we were singing, some of us noticed that the priest who was sitting by himself seemed to be enjoying our singing very much.

As we sang our last carol, 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing', we marched triumphantly out of church. The congregation joined in but they didn't drown our sound. We had looked forward to singing the descant but unfortunately when we finally got to it most of us were outside in the rain already. We all enjoyed the carol singing because it was full of life. It was a pity that our descant singing sounded weak to those inside but it sounded excellent outside!"

Richard Chamberlain 1D

The third major difference from previous years in the W.H.G.S musical Christmas was the "Christmas Celebration" in the Upper Hall, a wider concept that just the "Christmas W.C.H.", with more secular Christmas readings than before and, for the first time, as well as the usual choral carols, exclusively seasonal instrumental pieces from the String, Clarinet and (at two age levels) Recorder groups (Miss Barlow revealed her hitherto modestly concealed musical talent here!), and from the entire Orchestra a total of five seasonal items. The Choir, in addition to many of its St. Ann's/St. Werburgh's numbers, brought off the more secular Rutter arrangement of "The Twelve Days of Christmas", the most tortuously complex carol I have sung in or heard in seventeen years here! The crisp acoustic of the Upper Hall gave a different atmosphere to all the carols from the diffuse mysticism of the sound in St. Werburgh's. A catalogue of titles will give no suggestion, either of the high musical standards maintained throughout the evening, or of the sheer happiness and sense of being musically and spiritually nourished with which we all left the Hall. This was what the Head Master has rightly called the "Dewhurst magic" at its most magical - Mr. Dewhurst, Mr. Goodwin and all the other music teachers involved deserve the highest praise, but so above all do all our pupils taking part, who so enjoyed giving pleasure to themselves and to their audiences.

A pupil's eye-view of the evening follows below.

G.J. Turner

"Our 'Christmas Celebration' was a lively performance and enjoyed by all who attended and took part. The Upper Hall bustled with excitement and there were murmurs from every direction.

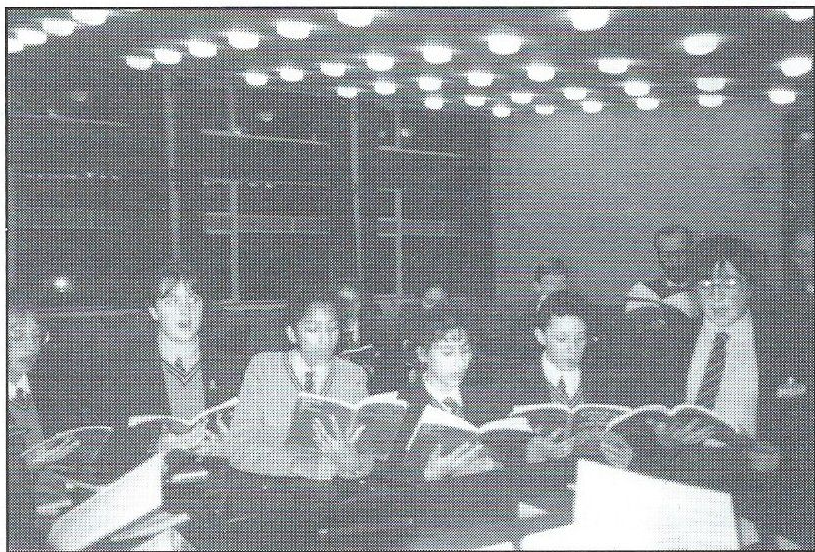
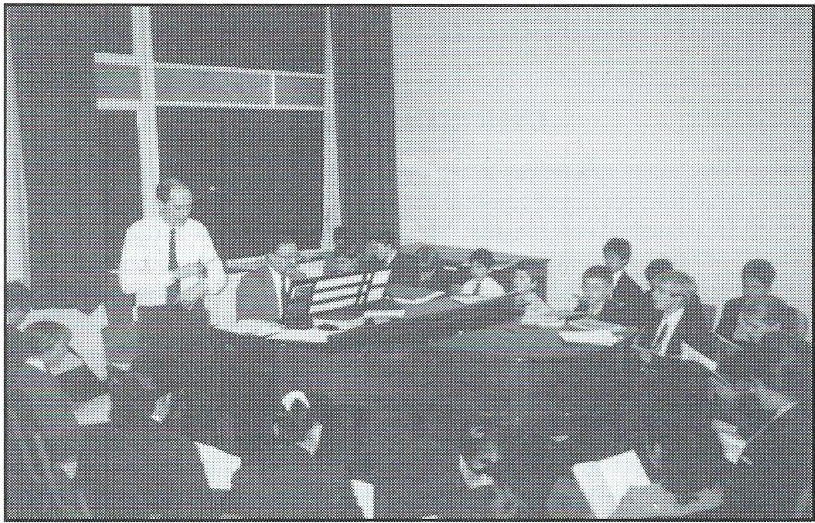
After the orchestra had walked on and tuned up, the music began with Mr. Goodwin conducting the band and Mr. Dewhurst leading the choir to raise the roof. There were smiles on the faces of the audience, some were humming, some were tapping their feet.

There was a variety of instrumental pieces from the string group, the clarinet group, the recorder group, the full orchestra and of course the senior recorder group.

There were a number of readings on the theme of Christmas, some funny, others intended to make us think.

An enjoyable interval was had by all with coffee and mince pies for the adults, sweets and fizzy drinks for the young people. With more music and reading after the break, the farewell piece played by the orchestra, Slade's No. 1 hit "Merry Christmas Everybody," sent everybody home in a festive mood."

Robert Poll 1A



(Photos: G. J. Turner)

CHRISTMAS REHEARSALS

THE MARCH CONCERT

Thursday, 12th March, 1992 was a particularly special day in my musical experience at W.H.G.S. It was the first time I have seen the New Hall packed to capacity for a School Concert. It was full years ago, it is true, for the King's Singers, and for Chris Barber's Jazz Band, and other famous guests, but even these did not create the tingle of anticipation before this concert. I was lucky enough to be in one of Mr. Dewhurst's rehearsals earlier in the day, and the atmosphere there was electric, and it remained so right until I left the hall at the end of a very packed concert, packed, that is, not just with so many performers and audience as to severely stretch the resources of Mr. Blight and his team of willing helpers who served refreshments in the interval, but packed also with musical treats.

The first half of the concert was framed by contributions from the full orchestra and the choir. As the orchestra assembled it was evident already that we were to be treated to something special. They played from the floor of the hall in front of the stage, and a full sound and a confident attack was in evidence from the first note from the 16 strings, 22 woodwind, 8 brass and percussion, directed by Mr. Goodwin. Familiar tunes were to the fore, and the Sousa medley which began the concert and the blaze of the Star Wars music which brought the first half to a close were especially successful. We have all felt the need to listen to young orchestras with our fingers crossed, but this was never the case on this evening, and even the occasional sheet of music wafted to the floor by the breeze from the open emergency exit was dealt with without a loss of confidence or poise. The choir, though fifty strong, was at a huge disadvantage from its position set well back on the stage. They were at their best in the relaxed whimsy of "Chim Chim Cher-ee" and the laid back rhythms of "When I'm Sixty-Four," but a closer judgement was made impossibly by the acoustic which was clearly discouraging them as well as frustrating the audience. In the songs which had been chosen for them, especially "Penny Lane" and "Eleanor Rigby," the subtlety is entirely in the words, which must be clearly heard and digested, but the over-complex arrangements - surely such songs lose their original power if re-arranged - and the muffled sound precluded much enjoyment here.

Between these major groups we heard three well-varied smaller groups and a duet. A junior recorder group with guitar accompaniment played three pleasantly perky pieces with a lovely variety of tone and rhythm. A small string orchestra, always the hardest section to develop in a young orchestra, then played two short pieces with style and confidence, with an especially enjoyable Intrada reminiscent of much English string music of the Capriol Suite genre. A "first" for School concerts followed, as a jazz group of flute, clarinets, drums, euphonium, piano and guitar played and improvised coolly in modern style with the audience encouraged to applaud the soloists during the playing in true jazz club style: a great atmosphere was generated here, and it was an encouraging sign of the increasing part jazz and improvisation are having in School music. The duet for piano by Mark Kelly and Michael Clark was a lively excerpt from Moszkowski's Spanish Dances, and this enjoyable piece marked the swansong of Michael Clark who has contributed regular solos to School concerts for seven years.

The concert's other "first" came after the interval and took up the whole of the second half. To bring in an entire year group, 120 pupils, irrespective of musical skill, and, having rehearsed them all, a tremendous undertaking in itself, to put them together to sing as one massive group to a large audience, would be regarded by most as an impossible, almost lunatic, undertaking. But this is what Mr. Dewhurst had done, and how! From before the first note, 120 immaculately dressed boys and girls, eyes riveted on the conductor, made it clear that this was going to be quite an experience. And so it proved. "Way, way back, many centuries ago....." hit us like a tidal wave of sound, and Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat was under way. The marvellous swinging tunes and the delightfully clever rhymes were produced with a fantastic degree of success considering that this was our entire first year performing all together, "a walking work of art" like Joseph, or at least a fabulous expression of teamwork and enthusiasm by the first form and of faith and dedication by the conductor. The loud, rhythmic numbers were obvious successes, but there was also a clarity and sweetness of tone in the more reflective songs, not easily achieved when one is persuading a group of red-blooded Hulmeians to do Jason Donovan's Greatest Hits!

"Give me my coloured coat, my amazing coloured coat." There are few activities as multi-faceted as music, and anything which introduces a youngster to music in any way opens the door to a lifetime of fun at least, and possibly total absorption: hopefully this lovely performance, indeed the whole lovely occasion will have created many 'new' musicians in the year group and given them an incentive to go on in their own direction ... "Any dream will do".

"May I return to the beginning". This was indeed a very special musical occasion, marked by wide involvement, variety, originality and sheer daring. As we left the New Hall, a retired lady and gentleman whose experience of School performances must surely be unrivalled, said to me with real feeling, "I hope you enjoyed that. We did" and I can assure the performers that this is the ultimate accolade. As far as present School Music goes, we clearly have "the writing on the wall". Where do we go from here? What will next year bring? "The world and I, we are still waiting....." Confidently!

C.P. Langford

HOUSE MUSIC COMPETITION

For the last two or three years the House Music Competition has not always been a highlight of the School year. This has been due to several factors; poor preparation, clashes with other activities and general apathy have all combined to erode the esteem of the competition in the eyes of participants and listeners alike.

Obviously these problems have not gone unnoticed and with the help of House Masters a more positive approach was adopted this year, which happily resulted in a much higher standard of performance and presentation.

As in previous years marks were awarded for individual and group performances, but this year marks were also available for overall impression (content and balance of programme, announcement of items etc) and for the design and layout of the programme: in fact these marks proved to be decisive in the final placings.

There were several performances of an extremely high standard that deserve special mention: Michael Clark's organ and piano solos, Rachel Sykes playing Sicilienne and Allegro by Grovlez - a really tricky bassoon piece, Simon Ogier and Jonathan Greenhowe showing their experience in renditions of Eglar and Mozart respectively.

Although there were not as many group items as we would have liked, the Fraser quartet, the Gaskell string quartet along with Juliet Gordon-Nesbitt and friends (singing her own composition) all gained high marks. The adjudicator this year was Mr. Colin Edmundson, Director of Music, Bolton School Boys' Division. Mr. Edmundson's enthusiastic and ebullient manner was certainly well received and his summation of items, whilst at times very witty, also contained some sound advice for the performers.

So overall a most enjoyable day which hopefully augurs well for the future of this competition.

RESULTS

HOUSE	PERFORMANCE (100)	OVERALL IMPRESSION (35)	PROGRAMME (15)	TOTAL (150)
BYROM	86	30	2	118
DALTON	83	29	5	117
WHITWORTH	83	28	6	117
GASKELL	83	29	4	116
FRASER	83	30	3	116
HEYWOOD	83	27	1	111
				P.W. Goodwin

JUNIOR SCHOOL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mr. Dewhurst is firmly of the opinion that children of all levels of ability and experience should be encouraged to take part in performances and have the benefit of constructive criticism from an independent professional musician. He believes the emphasis should be on taking part and enjoyment rather than 'winning'. As a result of Mr. Dewhurst's thinking, there were several changes to the Junior School Competition this year, the main ones being to change the title from 'Competition' to 'Festival' and to alter the way in which performances were adjudicated and marked. 'Credits' were gained for your form for taking part and not just on how well you played. The adjudicator, Mr. Graham Ellis (Director of Music, Birkenhead School) wrote a report of each of the performances including comments on how to improve the performance; these reports were handed out at the end of each class. Some performances were singled out for a Commendation, in which case these people received a certificate and extra credits for their form. As a result of these changes there were more entries than in previous years and Mr. Dewhurst hopes the event will grow to include nearly all Junior School members in the future.

In the percussion and woodwind class there were several very good pieces which gained merit awards. The performers who eventually gained merits were Laura Smith playing her flute, Catherine Zoeftig and Sarah Cochrane playing clarinets and Geraldine Brook playing her saxophone. However, I thought everyone who played an instrument in this class played very well. The pieces played varied a lot in style from "Morning has broken" to the "Pink Panther" which meant that every piece was different and none became boring.

After the woodwind and percussion class came the piano/keyboard class in which there were ten entrants. The standard ranged from beginners to advanced but all people played well and there was a great variety in the style of pieces from classical to pop. Mika Tong played an arrangement of "The Swan" by Saint Saens particularly well and Sally Burton played some foot tapping jazz very confidently.

The next entrants were the brass and string classes which had only eight entries between them. All the entrants played well and some commendation awards were given.

The final class of the day was the ensemble class in which there were four ensembles - two each from classes 2A and 2C. From 2A there were two duets played by Sarah Cochrane and Geraldine Brook on their clarinets and Sahara Dixon and Rachel Westbrook on their flutes. Asha de Silva and Rachel Goodwin from 2C then played two short piano duets and finally a group of five girls (Asha de Silva, Karen Williams, Rachel Goodwin, Sara Khoshneviszadeh and Jackie De Freitas) played "Spring" from the Four Seasons suite by Vivaldi. This was excellently played and was the only performance in the class to win a merit.

The standard of playing through the day was very high and I would like to thank Mr. Ellis for coming to comment on our playing and Mr. Dewhurst for arranging the event. Well done to 2A who had the most marks at the end of the day and so won the event.

Sarah Cochrane 2A

SUMMER CONCERT

At the beginning of the Midsummer term Mr. Dewhurst founded the William Hulme's Choral Society, open to pupils, staff, Old Hulmeians, parents, friends of the School and indeed to all "hominibus bonae voluntatis" ("people of good will") as we were to sing in our very first offering, Vivaldi's famous "Gloria" in D. Rehearsals were held every Tuesday evening in the New Hall, and the performance formed the second half the Summer Concert, held on Tuesday, 30th June. The response was excellent, some seventy voices, including all four categories mentioned in Verse 12 of Psalm 148 and a really solid contingent of altos and tenors to make the harmony really glorious (no pun intended!). Impressively, many pupils, even Second Years, chose to attend the Tuesday nights as well as their own "top line" School lunchtime practices, and it was a delight to see them mingle naturally with the adults over our "half-time" coffee. This "esprit de corps" is what joining in the performing arts is all about, just as much as in Sport.

On the "night" the "Gloria" was enhanced by two professional soloists, Jennifer Westwood and Julie Mitchell, and by the "Hulmeian Baroque Ensemble", Leader Julia Parsons, Continuo Harpsichord Peter Collier. Eight of the twelve sections are choruses, and the choir generated a firm but, when appropriate, well-differentiated wall of sound, from the jaunty "notes inégales" of the "Domine Fili Unigenite" to the quiet soothing calm of "Et in terra pax". It was an outstanding and a memorable performance. A sense of occasion was added by the evening dress worn by the Choir (DJs for the men, long black skirts and white blouses for the ladies).

But there was never any question of our appropriately smart appearance turning into stuffy formality. On the contrary, the whole evening was felt by all to be joyful and buoyant; in a word, everyone had fun in their music-making. This was even more true of the first half of the Concert than of the second. This consisted of orchestral and ensemble items, mostly in the jazz, blues or even rock idiom. Mr. Goodwin conducted the Orchestra in five numbers ranging from the Beatles to Ragtime, via that watershed piece of twentieth century pop music, "Rock around the Clock". Dalia Daud, Sarah Porter, Rebecca Hossain and Laura Smith (Flute Quartet) gave us a lovely arrangement of Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer"; Sally Burton, Geeta Rampal and Louise Ives played a Piano Trio (Gautier's "The Secret") with authority and obvious enjoyment; Paul Murphy and John Daniels set our feet (silently!) tapping with their Saxophone Duet "Corumba" by Wastall; and in complete contrast Mika Tong, already a very sensitive pianist despite his extreme youth, played a keyboard arrangement of Saint-Saens' meltingly poignant "Swan" from "The Carnival of the Animals".

Two instrumental groups completed this first half of the concert. The Jazz Group under Mr. A. Wilson played two of his own arrangements - "Summertime Blues" and "Tequila". The audience was invited to join in the word "Tequila" - "parlando", of course, or rather with a full-throated shout that made it sound as if everyone were under the influence of this very beverage! Mr. Wilson had his soloists stand and sit by turns as the music flowed on, an informal touch like the 1930's jazz bands. Mr. C. Martin's Recorder Group gave two swinging items, "A Touch of Vulgarity" and "Twelfth Street Rag", proving that the recorder's repertoire is by no means confined to the baroque drawing room or to the Primary School classroom!

In Assembly the morning after this Concert, the Head Master called the whole evening a "revelation". So it was, the crowning glory of a brilliant year's "Dewhurst Magic" and a fine tribute, not only to Mr. Dewhurst himself, but also to Messrs. Goodwin, Martin and Wilson, to all the other visiting music teachers involved, and of course to the School's musicians themselves.

G.J. Turner

MICHAEL CLARK

The Music Department would like to pay a special tribute to Michael Clark, whose excellent keyboard playing (Grade 8 in Organ and Keyboard) has been put at the School's disposal for many years now, particularly in Assembly but also in many performances at our musical events. His piano teacher is Alan Ward, an accomplished Old Hulmeian musician, and his organ teacher is the distinguished Dr. Herbert Winterbottom, one of our visiting music teachers who has very strong links with us. Michael's music-making has brought great credit both to himself and to the School, and we wish him well as he leaves us to read Classics at Balliol College, Oxford. He would no doubt endorse the Latin tag "*Musica magnorum est solamen*", ("*Music is a comfort to the great*"), though his natural modesty would lead him, wrongly, to disclaim its reference to himself!

P. Dewhurst



Michael Clark at the School Organ.

CHARITIES WEEK : 28TH FEBRUARY - 8TH MARCH, 1992

The chosen charity this year had particularly close links with many members of the School. The 'Friends of Rosie' is a research fund for Children's Cancer inspired by the courage and spirit of Rosie Larkin, sister of our own Sophie. Rosie died of incurable cancer at the age of five.

Dr. Richard Stevens and Dr. Pat Morris-Jones, both members of the Medical Committee, came to speak to the School about the work which they hoped to fund and how we may all benefit in the future should any of our children ever require treatment.

This year's Charities Magazine was again a great success due largely to the many advertisers who supported us so generously. Sanjay Hira was the principal mover in this area and £1500 was received through his efforts.

The Walk was a great success and blessed with fine weather. Special thanks must go to Finglands for their assistance with the necessary transport.

The various activities were well supported, in particular Soak-a-Prefect and Push-a-Teacher in the Pool, and enjoyed by all. All the Prefect - Staff matches were fiercely contested with the Hockey and Football ending in amicable draws.

The Prefects' Charity Cup was awarded to 2A, but thanks must go to all pupils for their efforts.

I should like to express my sincere thanks for the co-operation of the Head Master and so many members of staff in helping to make the week a resounding success.

Finally, my thanks go particularly to all my fellow Prefects who worked so hard and so well to achieve our target of £10,000, an excellent effort for a most deserving charity.

Jonathan Greenhowe (U6A5)

Hulmeian involvement with "Friends of Rosie" has not been confined to Charities Week. The now annual Christmas Junior Disco, organised mainly by Mr. Sharp, raised £125, and next term the School Choir is to sing in the "Friends of Rosie" Appeal at Manchester Cathedral on Thursday, December 10th.

Readers may remember that Rosie's story, and the "Friends of Rosie" Charity, were the subject earlier this year of a television programme in the series "Close Up North" on BBC 2.

For anyone wishing to find out more about "Friends of Rosie" the address is:- "Friends of Rosie", Children's Cancer Research Fund, Langham House, 9 Langham Road, Bowden, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 2HT. Tel: 061-941 3579.

Editor



The Charities Week cheque for the "The Friends of Rosie" (£10,000) is presented to Rosie's mother, Elizabeth Larkin, and to Dr. Richard Stevens of the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.

(Photo: J. H. Thomson)