



Aldenhams Today



ISSUE 21 SUMMER 2006

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER



Since arriving at Aldenham in the summer I have been delighted to learn so much about the life and work of our very busy school. Rarely can it be that a small school makes so much of its excellent facilities to ensure that children are fully developed in all aspects of their life. Some of the comments of praise about the school and its work from parents would be enough to make my predecessor and some of our current staff blush.

I very much look forward to continuing this excellent work at the School and know that there are very firm foundations upon which to build. The GCSE and A Level results in the summer were some of the best ever with the largest Yr 11 group in Aldenham's history gaining high grades in abundance – 19 of the boys gained 5 or more A*/A grades – a commendable achievement. I was particularly delighted, as the husband of a doctor, to note that three of our Upper Sixth students gained A grades in all their A Levels and will be going to medical school this autumn.

It is encouraging to note that co-education is becoming with each passing year the reality of life at Aldenham and it is especially pleasing that this year there are 18 girls in the Lower Sixth form of the school – a record for us. In a year's time we will of course also be welcoming the first boys and girls who began the Preparatory School three years ago into the Senior School, which will be a momentous event.

I very much look forward to meeting many of you in due course and hope that this newsletter will keep you informed of many of our successes. I can be sure of one thing however – any school which has pupils taking part in an undefeated cricket tour of the Caribbean whilst others are trekking in the Atlas Mountains is certainly not standing still.

James Fowler



Left – Sixth Form pupils, including A Level Classics, students in the Stadium in Delphi. Right – In the Olympic Stadium in Olympia.

CLASSICS/THEOLOGY TRIP TO GREECE

In Easter 2006, the Classics and Theology departments combined forces once more to embark on another epic trip to the ancient world. Following successful trips to Italy and Turkey in recent years, this year they went to Greece. A small but enthusiastic group of Sixth Form boys and girls sampled the delights of Greek culture, modern and ancient, Christian and pagan. They visited the Byzantine Monastery of Ossiou Loukas as well as all the major sites of classical Greece: Corinth, Mycenae, wall-city Tiryns, Nafplion, Bassae, Delphi, Sounion and, of course, Athens and the incomparable Parthenon whose best sculptures remain, controversially and unforgivably, resident in the British Museum. We remain in search of new old worlds to conquer (though not to plunder) next Easter. Watch this space!



SWEET CHARITY JUST KEEPS ROLLING ALONG

Charitable giving continues to be an aspect of Aldenham life. This summer various groups made the effort to make a difference, from the runners of the Eros race to those who brought in sponsorship money for the Chaplain's night on the tiles (sleeping on a church roof in Camden to raise money with OA Fr Malcolm Hunter) for whom the collections in Chapel on Visitation Day and OA Day raised £850. In Martineau's, Toby Varian organised a Beautiful Baby competition in which participants had to guess which of the wonderful photographs on display corresponded to their (by now rather more careworn) teachers. Chris Coulton's (Kennedy's) sale of home cooked pizza was also a tremendous money-spinner which, limited to once in a while, poses no threat to the School's healthy eating policy.

Left – Charity Committee Member **Katherine Fennell** presents a cheque for £250 to representatives of the Cancer Research organisation at a special assembly.



All the hard work put in by the members of ASPA resulted in a truly memorable Ball at the end of term.

HAVING A BALL

Turning a car park into a fairground and a cricket field into a top restaurant is a good trick if you can do it, and it was achieved with enormous skill by ASPA, whose Herculean efforts in preparation for this summer's Ball paid off wonderful dividends in a truly memorable end of term celebration. Attended by parents, members of the sixth form, staff and their guests, it was a fitting farewell to Richard and Karin Harman before their move to Uppingham. It also provided an opportunity for sixth formers to relax with some of their teachers as they began the long wait for A Level results. The evening began with a champagne reception; the meal itself was enlivened by a first-class magician who could produce more lemons and limes from an apparently empty cup than you could shake a bottle of gin at. Outside, the dodgem cars provided an opportunity for a style of driving not normally encountered on Aldenham Road. Inside the marquee, a flutter in the charity casino and an opportunity to dance into the small hours of the morning brought the celebrations to a fitting conclusion.



HSBC DAY

The second annual HSBC Day to be held at Aldenham attracted 60 boys and girls from Aldenham and 30 girls from the Princess Helena College, along with 30 HSBC Graduate Trainers. Organised by B2E (Business to Education), the day's programme was to encourage the development of teamwork skills and help to identify individual strengths and presentation skills. Tasks included working on a Millennium bridge design and re-marketing a game of marbles.



HMS ALBION

Left to Right – **Marcus Halman, Tim Roden, Charles Parry, Greg Copley** and **Jasper Gruenwald** had the opportunity to experience life aboard one of Her Majesty's prime war ships, HMS Albion, during a cruise from Liverpool to Plymouth.

GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP

The Year 7 Geography fieldtrip to the River Ver involved taking river measurements at different points of the river for use back in the classroom, and a 10km sponsored walk along the river to raise money for the Send a Cow Charity.





From left to right – Beevor's House Tug of War team walked away with the Senior cup; Past Headmaster Mr Richard Harman and Chairman of Governors Mr John Wells pictured with Guest Speaker Professor Dame Carol Black, President of the Royal College of Physicians at the School's annual Visitation Day and **Laura Coyne** as 'Mrs Drudge' in the Drama Festival in School House Gardens.



VISITATION DAY 2006

More than anything, Vis Day needs fine weather and this year we got it. The day began, as always, in Chapel, where the preacher was Karin Harman. In an emotional and powerful homily she recalled the solemn moment when she left the United States as a young graduate, her mother's advice 'Whatever you do, don't fall in love with an Englishman!' ringing fruitlessly in her ears. After Chapel the School's governors, guests, parents, staff and pupils celebrated the successes of the academic year in the annual prize-giving ceremony in the specially-carpeted Sports Hall. Richard Harman spoke of his time here as a rather wonderful parachute jump (yes, it's always downhill after Aldenham), while the Chairman spoke with his usual brevity and clarity of the future as well as the past. The prizes were distributed by Professor Dame Carol Black, President of the Royal College of Physicians, who spoke of the need to be adaptable in a life which could involve a person's undertaking many different careers and responsibilities. The School Captain, **Alex Brown**, thanked the guest speaker and recalled his own happy memories as he leaves Aldenham, initially for a Gap year in the Southern Hemisphere, followed by a degree course in History and Archaeology at Exeter. After all those speeches it was mercifully time for lunch. The House awnings were welcome havens of cooling drinks which were taken to the accompanying whisper of leather on boundary rope: the school 1st XI defeated the OAs convincingly. The afternoon's entertainment included many exhibitions, displays and competitions, amongst them drama in a baking-hot School House Garden.



Current and past School Captains joined the final School Assembly to say farewell to Mr Richard Harman and his family. From left to right – John Boothby, **Robert Lee**, Sunil Thanki, Mr Harman, Danny Sharpe and Alex Brown.

FAREWELL TO RICHARD HARMAN

The final assembly of the year is always a highly-charged affair, as the 'pack of unruly hounds' is anxious to slip the leash and make off at high speed. This year, however, there was the important matter of saying a proper farewell to our Headmaster of six years, Richard Harman. The Deputy Head, Mrs Dorothy MacGinty, celebrated Mr Harman's time among us, illustrated by a series of photographs. Most of the School Captains whom he had appointed came back to share in their recollections of working under Mr Harman's direction. 'It's just like being on *This is your Life!*' he remarked. The pupils presented him with a water colour of The Albert Hall by Alex Rennie, the artist who had painted the portrait of Mr Harman hanging in the School dining hall. Unusually, the proceedings ended with a song from the Headmaster. At an ASPA quiz he had confidently declared that if he got a certain question wrong he'd sing a song in chapel. Thus it was that he entertained a delighted school with a highly creditable rendition of Fagin's *I'm reviewing the situation*. It was the first time he had sung a solo in public.



Dr Charlotte Fowler, Dr Karin Voth-Harman and Mrs Patricia Tidmarsh – from St Martin's Prep School in Northwood – attended a Reception for Prep School Heads to say farewell to Mr Richard Harman and to meet the new Headmaster Mr James Fowler.



The final highlight of the year was the House Drama Competition, themed around Classical Greek myths, where every House delighted the audience and made it a tough job for the judges from the National Youth Theatre. Kennedy's production of *Orpheus and Eurydice* was declared Best Show and **Oliver Stanton** was awarded Best Actor. **Charlie MacGinty** and **Ben Robbins** won the Best Director award for McGill's.

DRAMA

Theatre has been very active at Aldenham this year. Following on from *Oliver!* there have been productions of *The Long and the Short and the Tall*, *Ernie's Incredible 'Illucinations'*, *Bouncers*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *The Weir and Wrecked* performed by students for students, parents and friends to watch. Numerous theatre trips have been undertaken to the West End and workshops in lighting, make-up, costume and theatre history delivered by leading practitioners in their respective fields. We were also pleased to host Icon Theatre with their production of *The Odyssey*.



ON A MUSICAL NOTE

It has been a very busy and successful year in music once again. Throughout the year there have also been 3 Music Competitions, 2 Pupils' Concerts, over 15 lunchtime recitals, nearly 150 recordings produced for GCSE and A Level exams, 3 sets of Associated Board exams, Rock School drums exams, over 180 individual music lessons a week, 4 choral Evensongs, as well as the regular lunchtime and activity rehearsals! Students have also taken part in various events in the community.

This year's Spring Concert was held in the Chapel and, based on *The Five Mystical Songs* by Vaughan Williams, displayed Aldenham at its best. The whole School gave a particularly moving rendition of 'You'll never walk alone', producing an amazing sound with nearly 500 voices, a symphony orchestra and full organ – quite memorable! There were some fine solo performances from senior musicians including **Alex Allen** (violin), **Simon Frais** (French horn), **Chris Griffiths** (clarinet), **Ed Newbery** (baritone) and **Janina Klingler** (piano), who later went on to win the piano section of the U18 Watford Festival of Music, Speech and Drama.

Left – The concert included considerable baritone solos sung by **Ed Newbery**.



Left – **Cameron Grant** (bass), **David Cooke** (drums) and **Steven Ellis** (guitar/vocals) of *Textbook Chemistry* perform one of their original punk compositions to an enthusiastic crowd. Above – Technology teacher Miss Sarah Nicholl and **Ben Tovey** raise the rafters with their heavy rock.

ROCK ON

On Thursday May 18th, a number of Aldenham's budding rock stars performed in a Charity Concert, which was staged for Oxfam's East African Food Crisis Appeal. The bands ranged in style from punk to metal and the event ended with a performance by the band *Via Satellite*, which is comprised of teachers, past and present. The evening was a huge success and raised £250 for Oxfam's appeal.



SING ON

Aubrey Allegretti (left) was one of 250 youngsters who sang at the Queen's 80th birthday Promenade concert at the Royal Albert Hall in July. Aubrey has also been singing with the New London Children's Choir at the Almeida Theatre in Islington and at the Flowers Art Gallery in Shoreditch. Aubrey's busy schedule in the last few months has included attending the NLCC summer school at Wellington College, and singing Berlioz's *Te Deum* with the Bushey Festival Choir and Orchestra, conducted by John Wyatt and he even managed to fit in eight open-air performances of William Wycherley's Restoration comedy *The Country Wife*, in Garden Suburb Theatre's production!



OAs

January 2006 saw the introduction of Aldenham.net, an OA networking initiative, which meets quarterly in central London. Any OAs, particularly those living and working in London, are welcome to attend. Two meetings have been held already and a third is planned for Thursday 21st September on the Tattershall Castle, Kings Reach, Victoria Embankment, London, SW1A 2HR. Contact the Development and OA Office or look at the OA website if you would like more details.

OA Day this year was packed with activity. As well as the traditional OA Day, the day included a Gaudy Reunion for OAs attending the School in the 1980s. The Centenary of Paull's House was also celebrated on OA Day and many OAs of all ages revisited the School for the occasion. Two Regional Lunches are planned for the autumn in Wales and the South East so keep your eye on the post and *Aldenhamiana* for details.

Above – 1980s OAs Nicholas Moss and Richard Caslon revisit McGill's

MATHS CHALLENGE

Chris Field was awarded a Gold Certificate and Best in School having gained 96% in the recent UK Junior Mathematical Challenge. Congratulations also to **Adam Bloom** who achieved Silver and **Lawrence Armitage-Brain, Hendrik van Vuuren** and **Tamoor Azam** who were given Bronze certificates.

GIRLS RECEIVE BEER MONEY FOR THE FIRST TIME!

History was made at Aldenham School this year when girls received 'Beer Money' for the first time at the annual Beer Money Ceremony held at Brewers' Hall in the City of London. The tradition of Aldenham pupils receiving Beer Money goes back many years, recalling the ancient links between the School and the Worshipful Company of Brewers, and Year 9 girls were able to take part this year for the first time. According to the terms of the will of Master Brewer and founder of the School, Richard Platt, the Brewers' Company supported pupils in money and kind. In 1597 when the School was founded, it was much safer to drink beer as the water was foul and dangerous to drink. **Yasmine Ruzgar** gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the pupils, highlighting the significance of this occasion as a reminder of the historical links with the Brewers' Company.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

For their community service, a number of the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award pupils worked as classroom assistants in St John's and Fair Field Schools, both in Radlett. Several Sixth Formers have also been teaching German and Latin to small groups of pupils at Fair Field.

Above – Year 9 Bronze DoE pupils work hard on making new flower beds at St John's Infants' School



WORLD CHALLENGE 2006

A group of 16 Year 9 and 10 students were happy to have reached the peak of Jebel Toubkal, the highest mountain in North Africa. At nearly three times the height of Ben Nevis this was one of the many challenges for the students taking part in the second expedition to Morocco in recent years. Staff were impressed with the drive and determination of the boys and the sense of accomplishment was justifiably immense.



ART

Year 7 students decorated their own silk ties to create bright and lively colourful designs, which they were allowed to wear to school for one day to show them off.



ACTIVITY WEEKEND

The annual Year 8 pupils' end of year activity weekend in Georgeham, North Devon is the last opportunity for boys and girls to spend time together as members of Martineau's House before they move up into the senior houses. This year the pupils enjoyed glorious weather conditions and threw themselves into surfing, kayaking, mountain biking, climbing and abseiling. The only disappointment was watching England go out of the World Cup on penalties, again! Otherwise it was a memorable weekend for everyone.

Left – **Joanna Ramsay** enjoyed all the activities on offer during the weekend, especially the surfing. The abseiling was a huge achievement for Joanna who managed to overcome her fear of heights. Well done Joanna! Right – Pupils ride the waves at Croyde Bay.

CHESS CHAMPIONS AT ALDENHAM

Seven boys and girls from Aldenham enjoyed success at the UK Chess Challenge Megafinal held in Stevenage. The winners included the Under 18 and Under 17 Girls' Suprema, the Under 17 and Under 16 Boys' Runners-up, an Under 13 and Under 11 Boys' qualifier who were able to go forward to the next stage of the competition, the Gigafinal.

This year the UK Chess Challenge attracted 74,000 children from 2,200 schools and approximately 8,000 children took part in the 36 regional Megafinals. 21 boys and girls from Aldenham entered the Hertfordshire Megafinal.



BOARDING

A boarders life is certainly a busy one! Summer boarding activities have ranged from Murder Mystery evenings (as in the one at Kennedy's House, pictured above) to Soft Ball and BBQ on Top Field and a Sunday outing to Thorpe Park.



SPORT



To the great delight of the staff and pupils, cricket legend Henry Olonga's visit to the School included coaching the 1st XI.



Boys relax between games.



The U14A team. From Left to Right – **Kishan Teli**, **Ross Bratt**, **Henry Ripper**, **Boback Khodadoost**, **Elliott Blatt**, **Oliver Young**, **Joe Gritt**, **Sajon Shah**, **Wills Collier** and **Scott Gerrard**. Missing are **Matt Stear** (Captain) and **James Moore**.

CRICKET

Congratulations to the U14A Cricket team who beat off fierce opposition to win the Hertfordshire Schools' County Cricket Cup and qualify for next year's National Schools' Cricket Competition. In the final Bishops Stortford High School were bowled out for 79 and we won by one wicket. **Sajon Shah** was 42 not out and **Matt Stear** 27 not out.

The U15As won all but one of their matches during the season including the annual four-team Cricket Festival for the second year running, beating Kings Chester, Liverpool College and Isle of Man's King William College. This season the School boasted County players at every age group level – **Joshua Alibhai** (Captain of Middlesex U12s), **Toby Bayley** (Herts U13s), **Matt Stear** (Middlesex U14s), **Daniel Ben-Ari** (Herts U15s), **Tom Pettet** (Herts U16s) and **Rob Stone** (Herts U17s). At U18 level **Manish Karani** and **Andre Sharma** also played at County level.



CRICKET FESTIVAL

In the annual Cricket Festival (left) St Martin's defeated Aldenham and Davenies beat Arnold House in the semi finals before St Martin's overcame last year's winners Davenies in the final to take the cup for 2006.



ST LUCIA 2006 CRICKET TOUR

In the fifth cricket tour undertaken in recent years, the 1st XI visited St Lucia for a series of matches played over ten days, winning four out of their five games, the fifth one being rained off. Congratulations to them.

Top – Mr Butterworth, Mr Irish and Mr Milton in the Grandstand (!) at Moshi Cricket Club. Above – The Aldenham team walking out at Beausejour, the Test Ground where England will play in the 2007 World Cup.



ATHLETICS

In the Hertfordshire Athletics League our athletes proved yet again that they can punch above their weight with some fine performances in both the U16 and U14 age groups. Out of the 40+ schools which enter the league we finished 19th in our league in the younger age group. This is inside the top 20 target we set ourselves. The older boys (with a larger number to pick from) finished 10th which was even better after the relatively poor start to the season. All the boys should be pleased with their contributions and the future continues to look bright for Aldenham Athletics.

SAILING

Joshua Oommen and **Andrew Wyatt** represented the School at the National Schools' Sailing Championships hosted by Itchenor Sailing Club, coming 20th in strong competition and often difficult sailing conditions. Sailing is a strong sport with teams entering regional regattas and team racing matches against other schools. There is an up and coming group of younger sailors who have learnt to sail at the School.



DANCE

Boys and girls worked exceptionally hard on their performances to reach a high standard at this year's Dance production, which was a huge success.

Pupils benefited from another dance experience when the London Lindy Hop Dance Company came in to put on a work shop. An inaugural Dance Festival, which included pupils taking part from four other schools, proved to be very popular with parents, staff and pupils who are looking forward to next year's event.

Above – pictured at the Dance Festival. From left to right – Mrs Gall, **India Loddy**, Mrs MacGinty, Mrs Layton and **Jonathan Oommen**.



SPORTS DAY

Although Sports Day was on one of the hottest days in the Summer, the competitors and officials coped tremendously with the heat to create a superb day of competition and excellence. Individual success in Martineau's went to **Reece Bennison** who won the Victor Ludorum for his 100m, 200m and High Jump performances. In the Juniors, **Sajan Shah** and **Aramide Oladipo** put in great efforts but the Victor Ludorum went to **Yuki Yoshimura** for his 100m, 200m and Long Jump. In the Middle age group **Matthew Flynn** and **Toby Bryan** both won all of their events but the Victor Ludorum was won by **James Massing** who matched this feat as well as breaking a Sports Day record. The seniors produced some excellent performances and the Victor Ludorum went to **Jerome Scott-Blount** for his sprinting and triple jumping. Jerome also anchored the Paul's relay team to victory but the Senior House Cup was won by Beevor's house with many of their athletes contributing a large number of points to their incredible total of 230.



Above – **James Massing** displays an assortment of the numerous awards he won at this year's Sports Day; the Victor Ludorum, the Kelly Cup and trophies for the 100m, 200m, Long Jump – where he set a new School record of a fantastic 6.06m, and the Relay team which was won by Riding's House, top right – the victorious Paull's Senior Relay Team. Bottom right – **India Loddy** received the Victrix Ludorum. She won Gold overall in the Year 9 and Sixth Form Girls' events at Sports Day



FIVES

The School again hosted the Abbey Tournament, and entered 30 boys (15 pairs) for the various levels of the National Championships held at Eton College – the highest total for some years. We said a sad farewell to the Master i/c, Mr Gooderick, who retired at the end of the year and will be succeeded by Mr Barrett who is already learning fast about the sport and is committed to maintaining this tradition at Aldenham.

HOCKEY

Hockey at Aldenham continues its run of successes and teams at all levels have played with great enthusiasm. The 1st XI record of winning all but one of their matches makes it a most impressive season and the addition this year of **Christoph Ruppmann** was a great boost to the team. **David Cook** and **James Massing** also play for the East of England U16s, **Robert Lee** and **Iain Fraser's** team (the Herts U17s) finished 3rd in the Nationals, **Richard Ripper** and **Ed Seaman** (Middlesex U16s), **Marcus Helman**, **Henry Ripper**, **Ross Bratt**, **Elliot Blatt** and **Wills Collier** (Herts U14s) and **Louis Hallett** (Herts U12s).

PREPARATORY SCHOOL



As ever it has been extremely busy in the Preparatory School; the Spring Concerts had both a musical and a dramatic feel to them this year with the introduction of some poetry recitals. The theme was 'Seasons' and the event was rounded off with a whole school rendition of *Bring me Sunshine*. Mrs Jo Scott, drama teacher 'extra-ordinaire', entered 10 of the children into the Watford Festival of Music and Drama and they all gained 'merits' or 'special merits', which is an impressive achievement as the standard is very high.

HERE THEY ARE, MUD AND ALL!

Right – The Year 5 children enjoyed three days on a residential trip to Hindleap Warren, Sussex for an outward bound course to develop their leadership skills, ready for positions of responsibility in Year 6.





SPORTS DAY

At the Nursery Sports Day the parents were eager to show their prowess at running and all received a sticker! Both the Pre-Prep and Prep Sports days enjoyed sunny weather and were excellent occasions.

Above – Here are the Year 5's at the start of the 800m race.

Below – Meanwhile, the parents are seen here cheering **Eleanor Scouler** (Year 2) on, over the mini-hurdles.



HMS ALDENHAM

Saturday 10th June was the date for this year's annual 'Dad's Day' at Aldenham with the Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep all taking part. Over 30 children were looked after by the Nursery staff whilst their dads painted, hammered, drilled, constructed, planted and organised a fantastic barbeque. At the end of an extremely productive day the dads left clutching an England glass and a card made by their child. The children were very pleased that their dads had spent time making their school environment more attractive and adding some more exciting play equipment.





CUP FEVER

All of the children and staff came in wearing red and white or their country's shirt on World Cup Fever Day, and made a donation to charity.

NURSERY

The Nursery presented their first Summer Concert. The children and staff worked hard to learn the songs, poems and actions and to make the necessary props, for the themes Insects and Holidays, reflecting the topics covered in class this term. The highlight of the concert was the Aldenham version of Amarillo – Is this the way to Aldenham Prep School?

In the last week of term all members of the Nursery visited Willows Farm Village and the Pre-Prep went to Gulliver's Land in Milton Keynes.

GOODBYE We said farewell to Mrs Thorburn.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2006


OPEN AFTERNOON – 7TH OCTOBER

Prep Schools' 5-a-Side Football Tournament – 8th October

OA Dinner at the RAF Club, Piccadilly – 17th November

School Play – 30th November, 1st and 2nd December

Carol Service at St Albans Abbey – 7th December at 7.00 pm



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