



WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

From the Headmaster: T R Hands BA AKC DPhil FKC

13th December 2019

Dear Parents

I: Facilities

Cameron Bespolka Outdoor Classroom. This wonderful new learning area has been created in memory of former pupil, Cameron Bespolka. From an early age, Cameron was passionate about the world around him and his family is keen to ensure that outdoor learning remains an important element of a Winchester education. This project, originally the brainchild of Mr Chris Good and his landscape committee, has been entirely funded by the generosity of donors. Small wonder that the school was awarded 'the most beautiful setting' prize in the *The Week's* Independent Schools' Guide. Do go to see this new facility, hidden away down by the Itchen. Pictures and more information are available [here](#).

[Kingsgate Park Development.](#) Good progress is being made in terms of both building and finance. We will move into the temporary Sports Centre over Christmas. It is larger than its predecessor, to the surprise and delight of many, and disruption to school routine has been minimal. The Development Office has been working hard at securing donations to reach their target. The Warden and the Director of Development have visited Hong Kong, and I have been to the West Coast of the USA. Thank you to everyone who has generously supported the project so far.

II: Communications

Thanks to the efforts of Director of Communications, Mrs Jenny Michalczuk, and her assistant Mrs Sarah Songhurst, who has been holding the baby (as it were) whilst Mrs Michalczuk has been on maternity leave, the school is now much more forward-looking in its digital communications. There are regular news items on the new website, which has itself won several awards. It is usual for new websites to see a fall in visitors after their launch: the Win Coll website has proved the reverse. Internally, all employees have started this term to receive a weekly newsletter, called *Winchester Waffle* in imitation of a phrase coined by Field Marshal Lord Wavell OW. There is a different guest editor every week. Parents are welcome to survey a representative example of this new production (in this case edited by Dr Nick Townson), as attached.

III: Academic

Pre-U and A-Level. Heads of Department have decided unanimously that, following the decision to phase out the Pre-U, all departments will move to teaching the new linear A-Level. The decision will first affect boys starting VIBk2 in September 2020. Heads of Department will next select exam boards. The school has decided simultaneously to introduce the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) alongside Div. The EPQ enables boys to explore their curricular and cross-curricular interests, and develop research skills. It was introduced in 2006, and is used by many leading schools as well as drawing the approbation of selecting universities.

Academic Awards. Cosmo Summerfield received the highest mark nationally in **Pre-U Economics**, whilst Richard Danylyuk, who is now at Cambridge reading Natural Sciences, won a gold medal in the **International Chemistry Olympiad**, an astonishing achievement. He was the top-performing member of the UK team. Mr MacKinnon won a *Spectator* competition for submitting a poem that begins 'By Waterloo Station I sat down and ...' You can find his poem [here](#). Relishing the challenge, Mr Douglas asked his Div to write a '30-line poem in the style of Alexander Pope, using rhyming couplets and iambic pentameter'. Tim Kashirin received a **Headmaster's Commendation** for his resultant piece 'On God'.

In the **Senior Team Maths Challenge**, the Win Coll team (Reuel Armstrong, Max Wong, Sean Jaffe and Rtvik Patel) won their regional heat, and progress to the national final in February. 126 boys sat the **Senior Mathematical Challenge** at the end of November, with 19 qualifying for the British Mathematical Olympiad. Results are awaited.

Publications. Drs Cullerne and French, ably assisted by 4th Year pupil Dexter Poon and Barton Peveril student Alfie Baxter, have produced a paper on the epidemiology of Eyam, which will be published by the Institute of Physics. Dr Galliver's book, *Ampleforth College*, has at last been published by Gracewing, and was launched at a small party for members of our Roman Catholic community. Mr Rich announced the publication of his second Russian textbook. It includes pithy invitations, such as 'Come to Luton', in addition to a question frequently asked by Wykehamists this term, 'Excuse me, where is the gym?'

Applications to University. Parents of boys in VIBk2 will receive today information on the timeline for university applications, and on two new events next term. Parents of V Bk boys may likewise expect a letter in January about the Post-GCSE period, including new opportunities for work experience.

Scholarly Visitors. Professor Eunan O'Halpin of Trinity College Dublin, biographer of OW Sir Warren Fisher, came to research his next book, concerning Afghanistan and OW Sir Olaf Caroe. He also alerted us to two OWs of very different Irish significances, the young Alfred Curzon King, killed in 1918 returning to school on the RMS Leinster, and Percival Lea Wilson, whose assassination by the IRA led to the discovery of an unknown Caravaggio. Seventy alumni of St Catherine's College Oxford came in search of their first Head of House, George William Kitchin, Dean of Winchester, and a Headmaster of Twyford School. His brother-in-law was OW Arthur Cardew, a university friend of Oscar Wilde, and father to a daughter named Cicely. Wilde, who was writing *The Importance of Being Earnest* at the time, sent a letter for her christening, explaining that the name would be given to 'the best girl he had ever written about and he hoped that she would turn out just as well'.

IV: Prizes and Awards

Headmaster's Commendas. Sessions took place this morning for the whole school in which we celebrate school (as opposed to House) achievements. Some of these are listed below.

Recita. The Junior Competition was won by Michael Cheung, with Niccolo Buccellati second, and William Goltz third. In the Senior Competition, the Queen's Medal went to Luca Lombardo. No one – save the reader himself – was surprised to see Kai Marshall in second place, with Oscar Vogel third. This year's **JP Sonnet Recita** competition was of an exceptionally high standard. Alex Harker won first place with Rupert Brooke's 'The Soldier', pipping Fausto Sassen Bles into second place and Friedrich von Moltke into third, after a lengthy steward's enquiry. Junior and Senior Recita are open to parents: do come.

Rayaan Anjarwalla, Luca Lombardo and Oliver Roberts won the first round of the **ESU Schools' Mace Debating** Competition. William Thomson has progressed to the National Finals of the Junior **Cranmer Awards**. At the Stowe **Philosothon** Win Coll was, for the second year running, the overall winner out of 14 schools, pipping to the post Eton and St Paul's Boys. Tom Elliott, Gabriel Gentile and Toby Blunden won best delegate awards at the **Oxford Global Model UN Conference**, involving 1,000 participants from three continents, whilst Aston Wade won Best Position paper. This was the best overall performance by any participating school. Nine cadets from the Royal Marines section came 2nd in the **Sir Steuart Pringle Trophy**, winning trophies for the leadership and first aid stands. Mr Szwajkowski and Mr Williams instructed the boys superbly.

V: Sport

Ball Sports

Goalkeeper Joseph Oluwabusola represented Nigeria at the **Soccer** U17 World Cup on their way to the quarter-finals. Joseph, one journal reported, 'had covered himself in glory with three big saves'. Seven of 20 teams had winning seasons, with Mr MacKinnon's 5th XI leading the way. The school's Golden Boot goes to Caspar Hall for 19 goals in 15 games: four of these were in the third round of the ISFA cup against Eton, a remarkable game which the team lost 5-6. Mr McMaster hangs up his boots after 30 seasons of running football teams. He has given so many fond memories to generations of Wykehamist players, and has encouraged them to work hard, look after the football, and play for each other. We thank him for his outstanding service.

A successful year for the **Squash** teams culminated in victory at the Surrey Sports Park Invitation Tournament for the second year running, with victories over King's Canterbury, Sevenoaks, Wellington and Marlborough. Winchester came 2nd in the National Schools' **Croquet** Competition – the winning team, Farlingaye, all wore their England shirts. Aston Wade reached the semi-final of the junior competition. Win Coll won its 50th National Schools' title in **Fives** when Dominic Percival and Sebastian Fraser came from a set down to win the final of the Schools' Winchester tournament against favourites Alleyn's. Ollie Dickman reached the last 16 of the Boys Open Amateur **Golf** Championship. He is 4th in the country in his age group, 9th in the country in the England Boys Order of Merit, has a world men's ranking of 4,800, and represents England at U18 level.

In **Cricket**, OW Jonathan Figy was selected for the full UAE squad to play against Scotland and USA, and will be going to South Africa in the New Year to play in the U19 World Cup. Wilf La Fontaine Jackson and Alex Claisse have secured winter places with Hampshire; ditto, Chris Batten and Henry Nichols for Oxfordshire. There has been county selection also for **Hockey** players Will Cresswell, Mario Gianni Garcia, Caspar Hall (Hampshire), and Chris Batten (Oxfordshire).

Water Sports

The oarsmen have made increasing use of informal matches against the University of Southampton, and now look forward to training in France in January, whilst Louis Christie is through to the 3rd round of the GB **Rowing** trials. The **Sailing** team have ended their season on a high, coming 2nd (and top school) in the RYA Eric Twiname Youth Team Racing Championships. The Junior **Swimming** team defeated Wellington 81-62, with Michael Yan, Khalid Elsheikh, Alex Ling and Taiga Kawada-Williams all winning their races.

Fencing, Martial Arts, Shooting and Chess

Kassian Meier won the Heidenheim International **Fencing** Tournament in Germany. He is a member of the German cadet U17 squad, and is working towards qualifying for the Euro and World Cups. The Win Coll team won at home and away against Eton; and Mr Routledge, our fencing coach, won the Hampshire Senior Foil Competition. There have been 72 gradings this term in **Martial Arts**, and Oscar Brant, Louis Greig and Damian Cheung all became 1st Dan Black Belt Level in MACS (Martial Arts Combat System). At Bisley, the Winchester A team came 2nd out of seven **Clay Pigeon Shooting** teams, with Oliver Walsh being the top Win Coll individual, coming 4th out of 28 boys. The Win Coll **Chess** teams have qualified for the regional stages of the National Schools' Competition.

SOCS Co-curricular has now been introduced to complement SOCS Sport. This software system provides an overview of the range of activities on offer, and allows boys to coordinate their choices. And, in due course, SOCS will allow a boy (and his parents) to view his weekly commitments and sporting fixtures.

VI: The Arts

Large chunks of cake were on offer in the interval of *The Merchant of Venice*, free of charge for all, though scant reward for Shylock (the excellent Carson White), who very movingly missed out on his preferred delicacy. The all-male cast and the setting in College Hall provided an interesting authenticity and made considerable dramatic sense. The irrepressible Mr Baddeley spoke interestingly about the production at our early morning Chapel services – and the Chaplain took flesh as his Christmas Cathedral theme. A special mention for thespian Niall Tainton, whose authoritative rendition of the Doge preceded his excellent direction of Cook's House Play, *Murder is Easy*. The **Junior Drama Festival** takes place as I write.

Where does one begin with **Win Coll Music**? Invidiously, perhaps, I would pick out both the wonderful playing of Christopher Myers and the gutsy support of the string section in **Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No3**, and in a close second place the multiple performances by **Cantores**. These included a splendid set for the 10th anniversary dinner of the College Patrons held in the Wallace Collection in London. I wasn't quite sure that the lyrics were ideal at every moment for an audience which included exclusively boarders from the spartan regime of yesteryear. As 'Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child' was swiftly followed by 'Look Down that Lonesome Road all by Yourself', life-time partners looked on sympathetically, and dons speculated that, given the generosity of so many patrons over so many years, the experience cannot have been all bad.

The theme of this year's **Drew Jug Competition** was 'Playing the Game', with each House tasked with making a creative response inspired by competition, rivalry and game play. There were some delightful entries, and the adjudicator (the Director of Art from Harrow) picked out Kenny's eccentric chess-piece construction site, and Toye's three-screen video slot machine sculpture for particular praise. The prize was finally awarded to the Chawker's entry – a 4ft by 4ft painting of our royal family playing the roles of Queen, King and Jack. Inspired by both Gerhard Richter and Paul Cezanne, the addition of self-portraits on playing cards by each member of the House meant this was a worthy winner.

VII: Outreach

Heritage Open Days. Considerably in excess of 2,000 people visited the College over the Heritage weekend, including, as usual, many who had not visited the school before. One feedback form read 'It gives such a good impression of the College. It used to be closed and now it seems to be much more open'. Speakers during the festival included Professor Mark Bailey, TV journalist Alastair Stewart, and Professor Simon Keynes from Trinity College, Cambridge, who gave a talk about 'A Tale of Two Royal Charters' (the Drayton and New Minster Charters), and remarked that the occasion was the first time ever that he had lectured about an Anglo-Saxon charter whilst having it literally in the room.

Autumn Turns to Indian Summer. The 200th anniversary of the composition in Winchester of Keats's ode 'To Autumn' provided a veritable spring of visitors following in the poet's footsteps, as *The Times* noted. Professor Sir Jonathan Bate gave a wonderful lecture in New Hall; Dr Foster's scholarly exhibition in Treasury included an original death mask, and the BBC's *Countryfile* advertised the College's curation of the water meadows and the Headmaster's faulty memory for Keats. In the **Keats Essay Prize Competition** Alistair Brown and Reuel Armstrong came in 1st and 2nd place.

Community Service. Mrs Talks remains indefatigable in direction: ever larger numbers of boys and dons rally to the cause, with Barney Clutterbuck this term winning Mrs Talks's special praise for his work at the RHC Hospital. Mr Tarney has set up a Music and Dementia group, and the *Hampshire Chronicle* poured praise on the mathematical initiatives in primary schools by Mrs Zampeta, Mr Rowland and Oliver Goodall. The Mayor came to inspect; and, imitating her colour scheme, Mrs Talks and a host of volunteers undertook the Santa Fun Run in aid of Naomi House. The route passes many a Win Coll front door, yet not a chimney pot was troubled.

VIII: Farewells

A34 Traffic. 'Nobody has ever written English prose which can be compared with that of a tiresome footling little Anglican parson who afterwards became a prince of the only true church', wrote James Joyce of John Henry Newman. Mr Leigh reminds me that, had Newman's father had his way, the young John Henry would have been educated at Winchester, but the boy declared himself averse to sport. Now in the footsteps of John Henry goes our own **Dr Simon Thorn**, who is to become Assistant Vicar of the University Church in Oxford, and preach there from the lofty pulpit formerly occupied by Wesley, Keble and Newman. Dr Thorn has been a Winchester man and boy: he is intensely loyal to the school and its traditions, has worked tirelessly in their preservation, and supported them in all their variety. A highly qualified biologist, he has contributed to CCF, sailing, and much else. We wish him well as he now takes to some fairly intimidating steps.

To Oxford also has gone **Dr Sarah Harden**, to take up a new role in the Faculty of Classics, where she will have a role in outreach and in the instruction of those without prior experience of classical languages. A

scholar of a high order, a vigorous director of drama, and an articulate and entertaining member of the Common Room, she has more than made her mark and we wish her well in what is certain to prove an exciting future. **Mr Patrick Herring**, formerly Housemaster of Toye's, steps down as Deputy Head (Academic). He has decided to remain in Oxford where he has been on sabbatical leave since Leave-out, and to take up a post in the Modern Languages Department at St Edward's School beginning in January. We wish him well, and thank him for all he has done here.

The former Senior Chaplain, the **Reverend Canon Dr Paul Burt**, returned to assist the Chaplaincy team this term. Paul has been the Director of the Mission to Seafarers in Dubai since leaving the College. His offices, liturgical and pastoral, have been invaluable in keeping the Chapel ship-shape.

Mr Giles Munn finishes this term his energetic tenure as Director of Sport. This is a demanding job with many a devil in a multiplicity of details, yet Mr Munn has (as it were) dropped never a ball. We thank him most warmly for all he has done. He will be replaced by **Mr Mark Burley**, formerly a lecturer in Sports Studies at the University of Wales, and currently Director of Sport at Canford, where he has established their new Sports Centre. He represented Wales at soccer as a teenager, and has worked closely with AFC Bournemouth.

Arthur Lyhne-Gold, being Returning Officer for the constituency of Winchester College, duly announced the votes of the pre-hustings election poll. The colour-coding was perhaps more surprising than other aspects of the electoral landscape. Labour, in eponymous gold, ended on 9.3%, the Green Party, in purple, on the same amount, the Brexit Party, rather confusingly in green, at 10%, the Lib Dems at 29.3%, and the Tories on 36.7%. The mock election itself took place last week, giving 40% of the school-wide vote to the Conservative and Unionist Party, 27% to the Liberal Democrats, 12% to the Green Party, 10% to Labour, and 4% to the Brexit Party. We will see what happens today.

IX: Reminders

A second warning that, following the change in the date of the bank holiday, the **2020 May Exeat** will now start at 1.05pm on Friday 1st May, and end at 9.15pm on Sunday 3rd May. Parents' Evening for VI Book 2 will now take place on 3rd May, and the school will be marking the 75th anniversary of VE Day on Friday 8th May. Short Roll dates for next term will be available on the website from Monday 16th December.

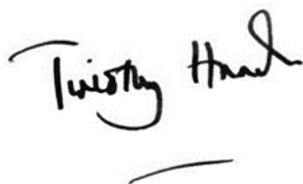
Bicycles. Parents and boys are reminded that we ask them to be responsible for the safety and roadworthiness of their bicycles. This includes working lights, as well as brakes etc. Duty dons are carrying out double the number of spot checks, and the importance of boys wearing helmets when cycling does not need to be stressed.

A Merry Little Christmas. There have been splendid Advent carols, Cathedral carols, and Mince Pie [concerts](#). Many thanks to Mr White, Mr Ionascu, the Chapel Choir, and all the readers and servers. For those whose thirst is not slaked, on Thursday 19th December, at 7.30pm, there will be an evening of festive music and seasonal readings in Chapel in aid of Trinity Winchester, a local charity addressing the effects of homelessness and vulnerability. The Ex Collegio Singers (recent Win Coll music scholars and professionals from the Music Department) will be performing. Tickets are available [here](#), and mince pies and mulled wine will be served in College afterwards.

May I wish all parents, all pupils, and all colleagues the happiest of holidays. In the New Year, the school opens on Monday 13th January, and boys should return by 9.15pm.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



Twisting Hand