



WINCHESTER  
COLLEGE

From the Headmaster: T R Hands BA AKC DPhil FKC

27 March 2020

Dear Parents

The end of term newsletter is on this occasion sent to you in three parts. Part I is the usual report on the term: it is intended to be read by parents and their sons. Part II is an academic guide to the current situation, for the same audience. It represents a great deal of planning done over a short period of time by Dr Thomas and his team. We are all grateful to them. Part III is a pastoral section, principally for boys, and offering pastoral and other advice.

This term has been (like Winchester College XVs, won 42-25 by OTH) a term of two unequal halves—exceptionally unequal. Part I of this letter seeks to do justice to the many pupil achievements, sometimes frustrated, of a sadly truncated term, before turning in Part II to looming circumstances at the time of writing

### I: Academic

**Science Olympiads.** Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded at the end of the first round. At the end of the second round, a shortlist of around 20 candidates is chosen, from whom between four and six eventually form the national team. An asterisk in the list below indicates selection for that distinguished shortlist.

**British Mathematical Olympiad**, Sean Jaffe\* secured a gold medal. Carson White and Reuel Armstrong won Silver Medals. In addition, Sean, Reuel, Max Wong and Rtvik Patel came 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 1,200 schools in the Senior Mathematical Challenge.



**British Biology Olympiad** Win Coll pupils were awarded 8 gold, 4 silver, and 1 bronze. William Leung\* and Ben Fawcett\* progress to the final 16.

**British Chemistry Olympiad.** Pupils won 11 gold medals, 12 silver and 6 bronze. Two pupils, Max Wong and Rtvik Patel qualified for round two, with Rtvik obtaining the top UK mark out of 9187 competitors.

**British Physics, and British Astronomy & Astrophysics, Olympiads.** Planting with trigonometrical precision two new feathers in the remaining sides of his isoscelean cap, Max Wong won Gold Medals both in Round 2 of the British Physics Olympiad\* and the Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad. Not far behind, in either achievement or (one imagines) headgear, Oliver Goodall won a Silver Medal in Round 2 of the Physics Olympiad and a Bronze Medal in Astronomy and Astrophysics.

Not wishing to be omitted from the map, Geographer Sam Barwood has been selected to be one of four members of the team for the **International iGEO**, whilst in the **UK Linguistics Olympiad**, Peter Brealey\* has won a gold medal. I don't remember a longer roll of honour. Congratulations to them and to their teachers.

Mr Hurley emailed me yesterday from seven days of self isolation in Twyford, Wikipedia apparently his chief companion: "Isaac Newton left Cambridge in 1665 after the University closed its doors as a precaution against the spread of the Great Plague of London. Whilst at home in Lincolnshire he formulated his theories on calculus, optics and the laws of gravitation. He returned to Cambridge as a fellow of Trinity in 1667." So set to it, talented and prize winning scientific gentlemen above; and wherever your orchards are, may there be some special providence in the fall of some local apple.

**New Entrance Procedures.** We believe we have the recipe right: by way of confirmation, several schools are now in imitation. There has been a successful series of invitations to prep school Heads of Department, with explanation of the changes in our procedures, the chance to experience a Div session, and an opportunity to see relevant parts of the school's Collections. Likewise **Occasions for New Parents and Prospective Parents** display a jovial spring in their new found stride, and some dapper answers from Sen Co Prae Vijay Pathak in response to some testing questions – most usually, how do you feel you are getting to get to know girls. Vijay strongly hopes he might be a diplomat later in life: it remains unclear from his adroit impromptu answers whether his romantic aspirations are yet equally well formed. This suggests that major success in his future career is assured.

Existing parents, not just prospective parents, report that they would like to hear what happens in Div. So on the day of Winchester Match (DV) dons will imitate in a series of classes and lectures what visiting academics provide in Studium. We expect it to be booked out, unless the working title **Pseudium** should prove a deterrent.

## II. Other Prizes

**Recitation and Debating.** Charles Wainwright-Jones was the winner of the **Queen's Silver Medal for Latin Speech**; Christopher Myers was the *proxime accessit*, and Tristan Gauthier earned an honourable mention. In Debating, Brian Chan and Mansour Al Faisal reached the Bronze Final at **LSE Schools**, and Luca Lombardo and Rayaan Anjarwalla reached the finals of the **International Oxford Schools** competition. Alexander Prvulovich and Mohan Li were some of the youngest competitors to reach the finals of the **International Cambridge Schools** competition, Mohan having been second-highest-scoring speaker at the regional round.

**Battery Farming?** William Du was awarded 5th place for his electric vehicle charging point in the government backed competition **Eco Innovators**. In the relaunched **Taylor-Young Ingenuity Challenge**, creative solutions were required to transport an egg across an obstacle course. Phil's hatched the most successful plan: a motorised pulley system ensuring accurate delivery of product, unscotched.

**Bookswinners.** These are usually applauded in public at the end of term. A list may be found [here](#).

## III: Oxbridge and UCAS

To date 113 candidates have received all their decisions and 24 unconditional offer have been made. No member of the top year is without an offer. Outside Oxbridge, Durham was the most popular university closely followed by Bristol and UCL. It was, as I reported to the Governing Body, a disappointing

Oxbridge year, albeit with a tally of 25 places. Every independent school reported its worst year for a considerable period, for reasons the media have made abundantly clear. In these transitional times, can Winchester gain a larger share of a diminishing market? We believe so, and an extensive range of measures is in place, including the Extended Project Qualification, which will allow the current third year to undertake their own piece of academic research next year. Further detail of the expanded university provision follows in Part II of this letter.

#### IV: The Arts

The **Kenneth Clark Prize**. Divs in VI Book 1 and 2 elected a single representative to be judged in the semi-finals. Six then progressed to the Final, in which Professor Anthony Geraghty of the University of York judged a range of presentations from a medieval Chinese landscape to a 70s Hockney portrait. Felix Beddow won the gold medal for his sensitive analysis of Sutherland's *Portrait of Winston Churchill*, with Jiaqi Cao taking silver, and Louis Christie bronze.



On 5 March, Winchester College's *Annunciation* (1727), by the French artist Francois Lemoyne, was the subject of an ingenious Whodunnit lecture by Mark Byford, the former Deputy Director General of the BBC. A chance encounter with the painting, which belongs to the College but is currently on loan to the National Gallery, started Mark on a European journey. Curious as to why an eighteenth-century headmaster of Winchester College had bought this most dramatic of Annunciations as a central altarpiece for Chapel, Mr Byford set out to find out, using all the skills of a lifetime of investigative journalism. Mark's conclusions, and his account of what the Annunciation means to a range of different people today, led to a fascinating evening, with Lemoyne's picture projected on to New Hall's old chapel panelling, exactly its original position.

**Du Boulay Accession.** Mr Anthony Du Boulay, OW, is a distinguished and most engaging expert on Chinese porcelain. He has now generously given a further thirty pieces from his collection to be displayed in Treasury.

**Staff Show.** In early March, Art School hosted a Staff Show. We took it for granted that Mr Bruzon could paint, Mr Forsyth print, and Mr Lewthwaite pot. But we none of us knew the Head Porter worked in oil, the Head Cleaner in fabric, and our Communications Officer, College Matron, housemasters, housemasters' children, a physics don's spouse, the Second Master and many others worked with such expertise in any other medium you care to mention. But nothing, Mr Bruzon perhaps lamented, from that philistine Headman – nothing, that is, but his gratitude, for a show that was heart warming, illuminating, and many other things, all in generous measure. Curator Mr Bruzon has gathered some examples [here](#).

**Music.** The Chapel Choir recorded a Christmas disc in Merton College Oxford for three days before term began, taking Cecilia McDowall's *A Winter's Night* as its title. The disc with Onyx Brass for the Signum Label will be released in September. The choir also toured to Riga and Tallinn in Leave-out,

performing three concerts to packed churches, and singing to the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. The Qs were also booked by Raymond Gubbay to provide the Childrens' Chorus in *Carmina Burana* in Symphony Hall, Birmingham on the Saturday before term ended.

To celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Beethoven, six of our cellists performed his complete works for cello over one weekend: a rare feat. Alas I missed the A Capella Concert (Voces, St. Michael's Choir, Voc Soc and Cantores Episcopi) but Jane tells me that educationally it was the best thing she has yet heard at Winchester. The same source enthused also over the visiting recital of internationally renowned pianist Angela Hewitt, as gracious as she was virtuosic, I understand. My own highlight of the term would be the performance by Sansara under Mr Ben Cunningham, of the St John Passion BWV 245 with OW [James Gilchrist](#) as Evangelist. James is widely acclaimed as the finest modern exponent of this role, and memorably showed us why.

An die Musik

Du holde Kunst, in wieviel grauen Stunden,  
Wo mich des Lebens wilder Kreis umstrickt,  
Hast du mein Herz zu warmer Lieb entzunden,  
Hast mich in eine bessre Welt entrückt!

To Music

Beloved art, in how many a bleak hour,  
when I am enmeshed in life's tumultuous round,  
have you kindled my heart to the warmth of love,  
and borne me away to a better world!

Serendipitously James sang Schubert's setting of these words by the composer's friend Franz von Schober at the thanksgiving service last year for former Director of Music Julian Smith. You can find the performance 49 minutes into this [link](#).

**Drama.** The plot of the Toye's house play, *Maurice Dancing*, involved a physics teaching middle-manager, adept at a clipboard, knowledgeable about helicopters, and keen on outdoor pursuits. Following on from Toye's irresistible *Ello Ello* two years ago, this seemed like *Ello Again* - not so much a house play as house meta theatre, with a close comparator to the current Toye's housemaster in the leading role. It was hugely enjoyable and snappily done, the essence of house drama. 45 minutes can rarely have passed more quickly.

Matthew Given and Arthur Ritchie gave excellent performances, outstandingly supported by Daniel Wong backstage, in Dr Webster's production of *Dr Faustus*. The concept was radical (all the actors on stage all the time, including for costume changes; and two large swings to give Health and Safety a purgatorial sense of judgement in the balance). This, along with live music (composed by Adrian Tsui, Ben Salwey and Chris Brain) made for a compelling and memorable evening.



In the **Junior Drama Festival** at the end of last term, Cook's came 1<sup>st</sup> with *The Good Place*; Toye's 2<sup>nd</sup> with *The Landlady*; and Furley's 3<sup>rd</sup> with *All's Well That Ends As You Like It*. May the latter title prove an omen.

## V: Sport

Our **new Director of Sport**, Mr Mark Burley, has been getting to know – and indeed relish – his new environment and its manifold sporting offers. He enjoyed **XVs**, he told me tactfully, and especially the skills of Messrs Axtell and Byers Jnr. Toye's retained the **Mid Xs** whilst Hopper's retained **Sen XI's and Sen VI's**. A huge XV's trophy, **Pearl Pot**, commemorating Mrs Pearl Romans, is now awarded to the winners of what other schools might call a contest, though recognised here as ritualised magic. The hush as Dr Romans and his daughter Grace made the presentation will long be remembered. This was **Mr McKinnon's** last experience of our annual ritualised magic after 27 years of involvement. NIPM started this involvement with OTH in 1993, losing both games. In 1994 with that laggard the current Headmaster of Eton on canvas, they won both fixtures, the first OTH double since the 1950s, and then enjoyed their best run under NIPM with 12 years undefeated in VI's. Mr McKinnon once attracted the nickname Wetty, an essential gloss for full enjoyment of the anthem composed in his honour by Messrs Giddings and Mercer, viewable [here](#).

This term offers Wykehamists the opportunity to gain esteem in what other schools would regard as minor sports, but alas opportunities were truncated. Fencer **Kassian Meier** was undefeated in school fixtures: he is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Germany in his age group, and will represent his country at the European Championships in Croatia. At the West of England **Fives** tournament Shiloh Wu won the singles title and then, partnered by Marcus Cloke Browne, the Doubles title also. Henry Nichols and Bertie Vallat won the Public Schools **Real Tennis** U14 National Doubles, quite an achievement given that we have no court – no, not even when **KP** is completed (the temporary facility is wonderful and progress on the main new building is good). Sebastian Hamsher achieved his **Shodan** (1<sup>st</sup> Black Belt) with an exceptional grading, whilst at the HMC Schools **Judo** Competition golds were won by Felix Townend, Max Lee and Michael Pan, with the school finishing second overall.

**Oarsmen** in all age groups won at least one regatta event this term. Louis Christie qualified for further rounds of GB trials before high water brought the winter season to a close. The cancellation of the Schools' Head removed the opportunity to gauge the progress of the crews but the boys need to stay fit in the hope that the NSR takes place at the end of May. **Hockey**, playable on Astro, is on the increase. For the first time the school has fielded 5 teams, with a high uptake in JP allowing a 'B' team. Almost all fixtures have been competitive, with the U15s proving the most successful year group. Caspar Hall has been in good scoring form for both U15s and the 1<sup>st</sup> XI with 11 goals in 11 games. Mario Gianni Garcia, Chris Batten and Will Cresswell have also been training for their counties. The **Chess** team has qualified for the National Schools finals next term, placing them in the top 16 school teams in the UK.

**Father Time**. Although specialist batsmen are supposed to be adept against the bouncing ball, Mr Paul Gover, subjecting himself to a pre tour warmup, mistook a high velocity medicine ball for an innocuous slamball and acquired concussion as a consequence. Cometh the hour, cometh the man, in this case Mr Callum Barnes, our head of Design Technology (adept in problem solving) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (therefore keen on helmets). Under Table Mountain and his tutelage, the touring party never looked back. In Cape Town was OW patron and benefactor, Mr John Sanders, a member of the most successful Lord's XI on record (handy to have the Nawaub of Pataudi at No 3 bat), who reported "they looked like a well drilled, purposeful squad and they certainly deserved the result they got today when thrashing Bishops." Wilf la Fontaine Jackson scored a promising century.

## VI: CCF, Community Service, and Communities

**Biennial Review**. Rear Admiral Jonathan Warrender, Flag Officer Sea Training, has filed his report. "I had a very enjoyable day at Winchester College, hosted exceptionally well. The CCF is very well supported. A great deal of imagination goes into the training. The older boys are empowered to teach

many of the lessons, offering extra leadership development. The contingent was impressive and well valued within the school culture. A very successful CCF and inspection.”

**Mallory Challenge** This summer the CCF will return to the Lake District for their fourth visit. In completing the demanding routes, they plan to raise much-needed funds for the local branch of SSAFA. For more information, visit their fundraising page [here](#).



**Community Service.** The indefatigable Mrs Talks writes: “With 18,000 hours of service, our VI Book 1 has given unstintingly to College Outreach over three productive years. The CS Entertainers, with memorable contributions from Izaak Hayward, Ali Jivraj and Jeyoung Lee has compliments on a weekly basis, ‘my heart is overflowing ... thank you so much’. CS Jazz, with its entertaining master of ceremonies and drummer, Freddie Krone, has enthralled hundreds of local pupils. James Osborne has been a staunch contributor to ‘Music and Dementia.’ The top years have won admiration and affection throughout the city, whether serving meals on the wards, hedge laying on Magdalen Hill, or working at the Night Shelter. Nasir Ibrahim won praise at Shepherds Down School, Sebastian Longman’s regional dialects at Blue Apple brought tears of laughter and Oliver Goodall made an outstanding contribution to Maths Outreach. Travis Chan, Head of Community Service will leave a significant void; a young man of remarkable drive, and never fazed by challenges. His Deputies, Romarho Ibru and John Julius Schwabach gave wholehearted contributions to the Blue Apple production of *The Railway Children*.”



Schools Outreach has continued unabated. Swollen rivers did little to dampen enthusiasm for the Primary Schools Chalk Streams Projects: over 250 local pupils from a number of schools enjoyed wildlife walks and fieldwork in the College Nature Reserve. The Primary Schools Maths and Science Programme acquired devoted fans, and Secondary Schools Maths Clubs attracted a record number of 72 pupils. Our ‘fantastic’ Primary Schools Day brought a highly entertaining tour by Mr Rattray, artwork in Cloister, geological insight, time in the Treasury, physical exertion at Boat Club, memorable lunches and CCF exercises, ably led by Toby Blunden.

The school hosted a training session for local organisations intending to take part in Heritage Open Days, of which the College is the chief sponsor. The Treasury was literally overrun for Family Fun Day: overall numbers of visitors have doubled.

### VII: People

Mr Frank O'Callaghan, Works Clerk, leaves us after 35 years at the College. Social farewells have had to be curtailed but will not be withheld for an employee of such longstanding. Phil's Chef Mario O'Campo and his wife Luzon, who works in College and at Witham, have their first grandchild in intensive care in the Philippines. Phil's matron Claire Buckland has been fundraising for them, and your generosity on the JustGiving page <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/babymateo> will be greatly appreciated.

In the General Election OWs Rishi Sunak, Marcus Fysh, Alex Chalk and John Whittingdale were all elected. One of them has since come to something of the prominence predicted in these columns.

### VIII: Future Dates, DV

The Parents' Summer Drinks Party takes place at the Guildhall, Winchester on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 6-8.30pm. Parents might also like to know about the Friends of Winchester College and the varied programme of events on offer. Further information can be found [here](#).

### IX: The Future

All is beautiful at Winchester as I write, but eerily so. The roads are silent, the grass grows; the daffodils, the tulips, the grape hyacinth and the rare fritillaries effortlessly express their intrinsic beauty, blushing largely unseen on the early spring air.

There is not a hint of what lies round the corner, not least around the corner of our astonishingly serene buildings, erected in 1382 to launch a new form of education in the wake of the unprecedented global catastrophe of the Black Death. Out of that pestilence, historian George Holmes argued, came the flowering of the Renaissance.

Next term will begin, whether in Winchester or remotely, at 9.15pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April. Short Roll dates will be available on the website from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March. The rest of this newsletter concentrates undeterred on the bleak short term picture.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

*Twisty Hand*

