



ST AUBYNS OLD PUPILS'

Issue 3 2010/11

NEWSLETTER

A WORD FROM THE HEADMASTER



“ I have greatly enjoyed this year meeting a large number of St Aubyns alumni, especially at the Old Boys' Dinners at White's in London in May and June

organised by Hilary and Julian James. These were attended by around 150 former pupils; the evident camaraderie and the very happy memories of prep school were a pleasure to see but were also no surprise to those who know St Aubyns and the spirit and values which live on in the school. I hope that all will enjoy this update on the academic year past. We extend a warm welcome to any who want to drop in to visit at any time. ”

Simon Hitchings

HEADMASTER

ISI Inspection 2011

We welcomed inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate to St Aubyns in May and June as part of their normal cycle of inspections. The visit was in two phases focusing firstly on regulatory compliance and then on inspecting the whole life of the school.

The report found much to praise at St Aubyns. Here are some of our favourite quotations: 'outstanding pastoral care and an exciting curriculum', 'traditional values of courtesy and good manners with the best of modern technology in lessons', an 'outstanding activity programme', 'the excellent development of pupils' personal qualities', and 'excellent relationships between pupils and with staff'.

As a non-selective school it is very important to us that the inspectors recognised 'an exemplary system of individual learning profiles' and both that we have 'a stimulating academic extension programme', and that we enable 'pupils with additional needs to make exceptional progress'.

All good news and much credit to all of the teaching staff at St Aubyns. There is a link to the report on the home page of the school website.

Academic Highlights

We saw a further rise in the academic performance of the **leaving Year 8s** this year with higher percentages of A and B grades at Common Entrance in every subject. Academic awards were won by Saoirse McGilligan (the top award to Roedean) and Clarissa Philpott (to Eastbourne). Three candidates took Ancient Greek at CE this year, a first for St Aubyns in quite a while. The



French Department's CE results were exceptional with 11 out of 17 pupils gaining an A grade.

Public Speaking and Debating

had a good airing in the Autumn and Spring Terms. A number of informal debates and the Section Debating (a narrow win for Templars) were enjoyed by many pupils. Our first debating match against Lancing Prep was an exciting event and ended with honours even. We again hosted a competition for local schools and came an honourable third out of six schools.

The **Science Department** organised a number of events during the year both out of school and with visitors from the Brighton Science Festival and from



Sussex University, including Jonathan Hare who has had his own BBC television series and was instrumental in the Nobel Prize winning discovery of the Buckminsterfullerene molecule. This also linked with our **Gifted and Talented** programme which benefits pupils from the local state primary schools as well as our own.

Sporting Events

Our **U13 girls** led the way across the sporting year. Over the course of the first two terms the U13 Netball team achieved seven wins and a draw in twelve matches and a massive 184 goals in total. In the summer the same group of girls won five of their eight rounders matches.



For the boys the football season saw a Colts A team win all their matches bar one, conceding only five goals in ten matches while scoring 36. The 1st XI had a good record of

eight wins and three losses. The rugby season was relatively weak, although Mr Rowland's Under 9 mini Rugby team achieved a fine record for the season with five wins and two draws in their nine games. On the cricket fields the Colts had the best season – five wins and four losses could so easily have been even better.



The opening partnership of 132 between Dylan Gifford and Leo Wilson was a memorable highlight. We think this is a record at Under 11 level for St Aubyns – but



please let us know if you think otherwise!

The second year of the **Rottingdean Schools' Athletics** meeting was another successful occasion. St Aubyns welcomed pupils from the two local primary schools for a morning of track and field events. Five of our girls and eight boys qualified this year for the county athletics meetings at Crawley and Hurst respectively.

Performing Arts



The calendar of the Music, Drama and Dance departments has been extremely busy with well-established and new events. Productions, concerts and shows are the end point of many rehearsals, individual and group lessons and hours of practice.

The new **Section Singing Competition**

was huge

fun and very inventively approached. Each section had prepared a set song and a Christmas song of their choice. Miss Behdad and Mr Hitchings judged the competition awarding up to 10 marks for Volume, Musicality and Entertainment for each song. The sections showed great ingenuity with costumes, props, make-up, choreography and soloist musicians accompanying the songs. Templars were worthy winners with a marvellous choreography by two Year 7 girls.

The **Chapel Choir** were as busy as ever with several outings at Christmas including singing at a lunch reception at the Grand Hotel as part of Mushtaq Ahmed's testimonial year with Sussex County Cricket Club. Their involvement in the excellent Rottingdean Spring

Music Festival and evensong at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle were again highlights. Some of our gifted instrumentalists won the String Ensemble trophy at the Brighton Springboard Music Festival.



The efforts of Miss Spink's Drama Department's many productions throughout the year reached their pinnacle in the ambitious, beautiful and very high-quality **A Midsummer Night's Dream**.

To hear prep school children declaiming the Shakespearean text with such understanding and feel was very moving. The St Aubyns stage was transformed for two hours into a magical place.



As well as the excellence achieved it is important to recognise the inclusive approach maintained in the

performing arts. Throughout the year every Pre-Prep pupil, all of Year 3 and 4, and all fifty-three of those in Year 5 to 8 who auditioned for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* have been in a school drama production, not to mention those who preferred to work backstage or as part of the technical crew. All children in the Pre-Prep and in Years 3 and 4 have sung in performances, nearly 30 have sung in the Chapel Choir, 91 children have instrumental or singing lessons in school and many of these have performed at some stage this year.

SPORTS DAY 2011

We were privileged to welcome Mr John Barclay, DL, former President of MCC, to Sports Day at the start of July to give the address at our Service of Thanksgiving and to give away prizes at school.



Mr Barclay's address was scintillatingly memorable advising the children to adopt PASTA as a way of life – Preparation, Attitude, Strategy, Teamwork, and Awareness of others and of God's presence. This was advice for all to ponder on and especially for those who were about to move on from St Aubyns to the larger world of their senior schools.

The Headmaster had much to celebrate in his end of year speech. In addition to the academic awards mentioned earlier, there were also two Music awards (to Brighton College and to Eastbourne), three Drama awards (to Brighton College, Roedean and St Bede's), two Art awards (to Brighton College and to Roedean) and one all-round award (a Millennium Scholarship to Brighton College based on academic, dramatic and sporting talent).



Our Year 8 pupils have now moved on to nine different schools – 8 to St Bede's, 5 to Roedean, 3 to Brighton College, 2 to Lancing and 1 to each of Eastbourne, Lewes Old Grammar School, Lord Wandsworth College, Stanbridge Earls and Worth.

We also said farewell to some of the teaching staff – to Mrs Davenport and Mrs Marrache from the Learning Plus Department, with reflection also on Mrs McChrystal and Mr Greet (see back page) who moved on earlier in the year.

In the afternoon the athletic sports followed with Crusaders victorious overall.

Distinguished Visitors

Visiting speakers are a feature of the enrichment of the curriculum that St Aubyns children enjoy. They give an insight into places and issues beyond the children's immediate environment and provide a forum for discussion and debate.

Sir Ferrers Vyvan (St Aubyns 1968-73)



On Tuesday 19th April Years 6 to 8 enjoyed a talk from St Aubyns Old Boy Sir Ferrers Vyvan. He inherited from his parents an estate in Cornwall called Trelowarren (in

the family since the 1400s) which he has turned into a model of sustainable development. Sir Ferrers is also a Trustee of Kew Gardens and is actively involved in the Millennium Seed Bank project at Wakehurst Place.

His talk ranged from the pranks that he performed as a boarder at St Aubyns through the concepts of sustainability, self-sufficiency and embedded energy to the remarkable collection of tens of millions of seeds at Wakehurst which represent 10% of the world's plant species. This was Sir Ferrers' first visit to St Aubyns since 1973 and he sensed the many continuities of ethos and tradition and was grateful for the welcome he received.

Simon Kirby, MP



As part of the Year 8 Leavers' Programme we were visited by local MP for Brighton Kemptown and St Aubyns parent, Simon Kirby. Mr Kirby spoke about the role of an MP and took questions from the pupils. He then led the group in

a debate on the theme of overseas aid, presenting the arguments for and against maintaining the current national spend in this area. The debate aroused some strong feeling on either side and led to further questions and discussion. We were all grateful to Mr Kirby for giving an hour of his time out of a busy constituency schedule.

Charitable Fundraising

The broadening of children's horizons and the reminder of the many privileges which we enjoy but which others less fortunate do not has been central as ever to life at St Aubyns this year. The many charitable fundraising events have given an important expression to this idea.

The non-uniform days in October with the usual stalls during an extended

breaktime raised nearly £700 for *Denim for Diabetes*. A new feature in the Autumn Term was our participation in the Mustard Seed 'Love in a Box'. More than 50 children filled a shoe box with suitable Christmas gifts for a boy or girl of a chosen age which were then transported to Eastern Europe to be distributed to children in impoverished conditions there.

The main charity for the year was the Teenage Cancer Trust. The Christmas carol service collections, the February

non-uniform day and the sponsored walk in April were all directed towards this excellent charity with a particular aim of assisting their work in providing specialist facilities in hospitals in the south-east of



England. In all more than £2500 was raised through St Aubyns' efforts.

In the Summer Term a group of Year 7 pupils took it upon themselves to organise a disco to raise money for Christian Aid whose work they had been studying with Mr Walker in Global Eye lessons. This event was planned and executed by the pupils with little input from the teachers and was a tribute to the initiative as well as the compassion of the children.



Keep up to date

So that we can keep in touch with you, please let us know by post or email if your contact details change. If you'd like to follow the school's activities throughout the year log on to our website.

St Aubyns School, Rottingdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 7JN.
Tel: 01273 302170 Email: office@staubyns-school.org.uk
www.staubynsschoolbrighton.co.uk

Shaun Greet

Mr Greet finished a remarkable teaching career at St Aubyns at the end of the Spring Term and around 120 former and current pupils, parents and colleagues gathered in March to thank him and to wish him well. He joined the school as Head of Games and PE in 1980 during the headship of Julian James and took over as Deputy Head in 1986. He had to step down from direct involvement in games and PE in 2006 but added to his portfolio the teaching of RE and the Global Eye curriculum for Years 7 and 8 which he himself developed. He has returned to Cornwall where most of his wider family lives and where he will now settle helping to run an art gallery with Madhu McChrystal.



An Invitation

Each year we hold two carol services at the end of the Autumn Term. This year we would like to extend a warm invitation to all former St Aubyns pupils and their families to join us on Thursday 8th December at St Margaret's Church in Rottingdean at 6.00pm and for mulled wine and mince pies afterwards. Please contact the school office as shown opposite if you will be attending.

His devotion to St Aubyns, the only school at which he has held a full-time post, as he saw it move through the great changes from being a boys' boarding school to a co-educational mainly day school, and the painstaking efficiency with which he carried out all of his responsibilities have been remarkable. Most of all he will be remembered for his good humour, and his unfailing dedication to the children in his care. To many former pupils and colleagues St Aubyns was and always will be Shaun Greet. I owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for the manner in which he helped me and Caroline to settle here quickly. His impact on the school is an enduring one.