



HEADMASTER'S NOTES

Of Pharisees and Sinners

Two similar themes in the last Assemblies of the term, with Ed Drew and the team from Dundonald exposing the Pharisaical boast "Thank God I am not as other men are" which he likened to the creed of many assembly speakers. Our visitors have been noticeably innocent of this, uncannily able to combine a moral story with vivid pictorial accompaniment. So, Rupert Shelley came in with his army kit bag as a way of showing how the weight of the world can be dispensed with through a strong belief. Over the terms, the remarkable string of assistant clergy from Emmanuel have always provided clear and amusing ten minute spots. Catherine Parkes recalled for us the amazing accident which brought Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts into the world. Of the regulars, we must single out Peter Bines and James Paice (speaker at today's Break Up Meeting) and, from a little further back, for a period of five years the always compelling talks by Richard Sewell (now being lured to return for an Assembly next term from Barnes). The picnic had the majority of Wellington taking over Richmond Park on a heavy, but warm day yesterday. Year 2 had some fun time at the beach on Monday at Littlehampton; this morning classrooms echoed to their summer parties.

Take the Strain

All that was missing from the full hand of Sports Day activities was the Llanabba Silver Band, which was a disconcerting feature of Paul Pennyfeather's experience in *Decline and Fall*. Most of the traditional attractions were at full steam, boosted by the presence, thanks to Clownfish, of a number of members of the bouncy castle family. The ice cream van stayed mute until after the Prize Giving and the rain held off until well into the drinks session. Unsurprisingly popular was the tug of war, which seems to bring out unexpected yearnings for physical display from parents and teachers alike. You can understand Galahad and Lancelot fighting to a draw at the Year 8 paintballing convention in Cobham. But the tug of war crews were longer than ever this year, as parents took on parents. Similar badges of courage in the sprint races, for which the Bursar had been in training for months. The relays too embody in minor form the whole basis of the sports, in both its Athenian and modern combination of individual endeavour and the cause of the team. It was only a matter of time before the most eloquent revival of the field gun contest, always the most cheered on moment in the Royal Tournament, was brought back into life by Wellington College. People crave a traditional day out for the sports and Drax last Friday answered the call. In the marquee later, there were good moments to savour, as the heroes of the year were applauded for their feats and the younger members of the school gave a tremendous display of self discipline sitting crossed legged and uniformly silent. One sensibly fell asleep during the speeches.

Call to Arms

Yesterday was advertised as the beginnings of an autumn of upheavals, with teachers striking over pensions reform. Estimates wobbled enormously about the scale and size of the turnout of strikers, with the leftwing press scenting a story in the possibility of private school teachers on the picket lines. Schools can adapt to outside circumstances deftly and well. In the hard set winter of 1963, all the independent schools took up cross country and hare and hounds through the long frozen months and, in the Heath collision with the unions in the 1970s, found ingenious ways of devising a timetable that could morph with the three day week. A winter of discontent like that which immediately preceded Thatcher will not phase most of our schools, although everyone will be sighing if 2012 starts to resemble the bitter antagonisms of police on horseback riding into the striking miners.

Fit for Purpose

A month on and with the Inspection Report suitably pored over, some niggles remain about the true purposes of Ofsted. These documents are carefully scrutinised by experts and amateurs alike and educational columnists like to direct readers to what they conceive as finding the Heart of the School beneath the bland prose. However, there are very difficult areas of blankness. Sport is, beyond checking to see if there are any goalposts and blades of grass, almost a non visited country. Not only the amount of sport that most independent schools see as essential pillars of the overall service they provide, but no calculation of success or failure of how teams do. It is the same with exams into senior schools, where there is really no form of checking for quality. No one makes any attempt to research the place of a school against its competition and only in the feeblest way is a parental response measured. Finances are never discussed and overall management is similarly underplayed. While so much rides on the report, it would be comforting to think inspectors were confident in their ability to look beyond mission statements.

Back to Your Corners

A lone cry against the trend as one MP calls for the return of boxing in schools. Perpetuating the brand comes easily to J.K. Rowling, who now is issuing reams of back material about her characters and her settings. One milestone recently reached was the passing of one million children in English schools speaking English as their second language and this chimes with the advert in last week's Schooltraders from a boarding prep school in Surrey looking for an Assistant Matron with one requisite being "must speak fluent English". One initiative proposed is for our Maths Departments to follow the example set by Shanghai, home of some of the best results worldwide, by insisting that all pupils should study Maths through to the age of 18.

Protection through Life's Storms

Some strong feeling through the Leavers' Service on Wednesday at St. Mark's. Clive Gardner was very apposite with his reflections on the differing suggestive powers of types of sweets and the musical contributions to the afternoon were exquisite, with the Choristers, Ricky Choi and especially Daichi Yoshimura performing superbly. There were good readings too from a group of Year 8 boys in extracts from the Psalms, Evelyn Waugh, Richmal Crompton, Richard Curtis; all in all, a fitting envoi.

Wigs by Clarkson

Between the wars, no theatre programme was ever without this credit for a firm which seemed to hold a monopoly in its department. Winston Churchill usually managed to stay buoyant at the end of his many conferences with the allied leaders from 1940-1945. Through all the ups and downs, the black dog days and the moments of indomitable optimism, he was marvellously served by a close personal team. Allowing for a huge change of scale, we recall how Churchill chirpily repeated this phrase to all his staff as a sign that their efforts for the moment were over and they could take themselves home and relax.

EVENTS
WEEKS 1 & 2
AUTUMN TERM
MONDAY 5th SEPTEMBER
 Year 4 Residential to Sayers Croft departs
 4.15 pm Choristers' Parents' Meeting
TUESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER
 Year 4 Residential to Sayers Croft
 7.00 pm Years 1, 2 & 3 Curriculum Evening
WEDNESDAY 7th SEPTEMBER
 Year 4 Residential to Sayers Croft returns
THURSDAY 8th SEPTEMBER
 7.00 pm Years 6, 7 & 8 Curriculum Evening
TUESDAY 13th SEPTEMBER
 7.00 pm Years 4 & 5 Curriculum Evening
WEDNESDAY 14th SEPTEMBER
 3.00 pm U11 A&B v Twickenham Prep (Away)

MUSICIANS OF THE WEEK
 For Excellence in the Classroom
 Finton Hanks (3L)
 Zayyan Chughtai (4H)
 Kasim Ali (7T)
 Nattie Tong (8C)

CRICKETERS OF THE WEEK
 All the boys in Year 2

WHITE CARD BADGES
 Caspar Paton (7T) Merlin 200
 Andrew Hodgson (8K) Galahad 100
 Jamie Crowfoot (5F) Galahad 75



Antiques Roadshow is coming your way
 Bring your treasures to the Roadshow experts in the grounds of
The All England Lawn Tennis Club Wimbledon
Thursday 25th August 2011
 9.30am to 4.30pm
 Admission FREE to the Roadshow
 Bring your treasures to the experts on the day, but if you have **large pieces of furniture and/or bulky antiques** you can't carry, we may be able to help. Write **now** enclosing a photo if possible and your address and telephone number.
Closing date for letters Tuesday 16th August. Antiques Roadshow, BBC, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS8 2LR
 email: antiques.roadshow@bbc.co.uk
 The BBC Antiques Roadshow is open to everyone, but asks for 14 days notice if you need a sign language interpreter.
 For more information visit our website www.bbc.co.uk/antiquesroadshow
 Fiona Bruce

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING HOURS
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
 8.15 am - 9.00 am
CLOSED WEDNESDAY
willingtonuniformshop@googlemail.com
REOPENING FOR AUTUMN TERM
 Thursday 1st September
 Please anticipate a long queue!

HOUSE POINTS WEEK 10

2 (2) Excalibur	7860
1 (1) Galahad	8479
4 (3) Lancelot	6190
3 (4) Merlin	7465

BABYSITTING
 Old Willingtonian (17) available for babysitting
 Please call Jay Terrafranca
 020 8946 2752
 or text 07885 724103