

King's Colours

Spring 2005

The Termly Newsletter of the King's School in Macclesfield

Head's letter

Hello and a Happy New Year to all readers as we start off another exciting term at King's. The admissions season is the main focus of interest at this time of year and we continue to have great demand for places in all age ranges. In particular, King's Juniors and Infants have never been so popular: the opposite of the demographic trend for this age group. It is no coincidence that the numbers in the whole Foundation now exceed 1450—a school record.



There is much going on in education these days and considerable debate about the future of A Levels in the light of the Tomlinson Report. Wherever you stand on this, do be assured that we will inform you of any changes and prepare your children for them to the best of our ability. Any such initiative is unlikely to come to fruition for quite a while yet and there are other proposals in the pipeline.

One of these is PQA, which involves application to university after A Levels have been taken (post qualification). This has not received much coverage in the press but detailed proposals are already being discussed. It would involve a slight restructuring of the school year in the Upper Sixth and a complete overhaul of the UCAS system. This could come into play in only a few years time, although the detail of the present suggestions being examined by schools is considered to be unworkable. As always, nothing stands still in education but we will keep you informed of any changes.

I hope that you have a most enjoyable 2005.

Stephen Coyne

SOUNDS ELECTRIC

King's is well used to musical triumphs but this one is a bit different. It has nothing to do with the Music Department! Entirely on their own initiative, members of rock band LiC entered a national internet competition—and won. Their album 'Home Truths' (named in honour of the late John Peel) beat entries from over 100 school bands across the country.

LiC was born three years ago when King's students Matt Boyd, Tom Hill, Richard Mayers, Will Soutter and Jamie Wesley got together to use the music facilities here to create their own particular brand of melodic rock. Matt has now left the school but is still a leading light in the group.

Even before the competition, organised by the Times Educational Supplement and music software company dbass, LiC had a range of fans across Cheshire. Now it looks as though that fan base will spread fast: when the boys collected their award at the BETT Show, the UK's top showcase for educational technology at Olympia, journalists were

queuing up to buy signed CDs. Hopes are high that a recording contract will follow. Meanwhile, the band returned to Macclesfield armed with prizes—a new pc laptop, a licence worth £2000 to use dbass software and some fine recording software.

To crown it all, TES journalists were so impressed by the boys' enterprise that they have devoted a special feature article to the band.



Building the future

A squad of budding engineers from the Boys' and Girls' Divisions took up the gauntlet of the First Lego League's 'Disability Challenge'. From September to competition day in November, they worked on designing and building a robot that could (on a playing mat) carry out such tasks as serving dinner, opening gates and climbing stairs.



Competition day was great fun. The King's team battled through the rounds, winning the quarter-final and the semi-final before losing out in the final as their robot ran out of steam (oh for those extra batteries!) As well as the runner's up award, Mr. Nichols brought home the Outstanding Teacher trophy.

Snails, frogs, honey!

These are just a few memories of the annual Junior Division trip to France at the start of October. The holiday was packed with highlights ranging from visits to a war cemetery and a bee museum to buying food and drink in a local café. This is often the first visit to France for many of the children.



From Bach to boogie

Hundreds of pupils of all ages took to the stage at the end of the Autumn term to sing, blow, strike, bow, shake, hum – and even pluck a harpsichord. Events ranged from the Choral and Ensemble Concert, an evening of high quality set-pieces from all three senior Divisions, to a magical modern reworking of *Cinderella* in the Junior Division pantomime. Other highlights included the choir's stunning singing during the carol services in Macclesfield and at Chester Cathedral, and in the Saturday evening concert at the Heritage Centre with the Northern Chamber Orchestra. Many styles were represented, from Bach to boogie and back again.

A time for giving

When You Wish Upon A Star is a Stockport-based charity which aims to make dreams come true for seriously ill children. Since September, King's pupils have been working hard to support it, raising over £1200 in just one term. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 packed shoppers' bags in Sainsbury's and pupils in Years 9–11 organised a variety of events, including the popular game, Teachers Like These.

Other charities to receive large donations from all Divisions were Jeans for Genes and Children in Need. Pupils also responded generously to the annual

Infant voices

'How can they top that next year?' That was the awed response to the Infants' Christmas concert. Weeks of joyously practising songs and dances (as any unwary visitor to the Infant Department could testify) bore fruit on the day. Everything in Alison Lea's specially written musical came triumphantly together: lines were word-perfect, songs in harmony and dances co-ordinated—an enchanting start to Christmas.



shoe box appeal, contributing over 350 boxes to The Samaritan's Purse, while the Music Department also gave all collections from the Christmas services to When You Wish Upon A Star.

Fund raising at King's is always hectic and innovative and pupils' desire to make a difference and help is most heartening. Recent efforts have, of course, been concentrated on the Tsunami Disaster Appeal. Collections and cake sales have raised over £1000 to assist a school in Sri Lanka.



Charity chic

It's become an annual fixture in the social calendar: King's fashion show for Christies Against Cancer. This autumn, as always, Sixth Formers modelled the latest and best in fashion (courtesy of Annie's, Bank, Bestman, Birdcage, Burtons, Marks & Spencer, Scandinavian Boardriders and Storm)—but this time there was an added dimension. Students also turned their talents to transforming charity shop clothing (courtesy of Scope, Cancer Research UK, Oxfam and the Home Farm Trust) into next year's must-buys. In all, over £2,500 was raised for Christies.



The ups and downs of outdoor pursuits

In Physics we all learn that what goes up has to come down. This also seems to apply to the activities of the King's Outdoor Pursuits Club.

The first up of the term involved the pitching of tents and the ascent of Lakeland mountains. This was followed by a rapid series of ups and downs as we bobbed about in sea kayaks and rafts (which we built ourselves) in the Menai Straits. Some of the staff managed to get even lower in the water as we were, ever so thoughtfully, half drowned by our students.

Our lowest point, and darkest hour, came in November as we retreated underground to squeeze our way through the cave systems of Yorkshire. In the build-up to Christmas, a problem-solving venture in the Peaks ensured that we all ended term on a high.

Due to its ups and downs, Outdoor Pursuits at King's has been elevated to further heights of popularity and will continue to conquer higher summits—but from time to time drop into the murky depths—for a long while to come.

John Fitzgerald



Filling that GAP

High winds, gales and floods greeted King's new Gap year recruits—a sobering contrast to the 35°C temperatures they left behind them in Australia. As you'd expect, all three are sports-crazy. Suzie Crossland, who comes from Immanuel College on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, enjoys netball and soccer, gymnastics, dance and swimming. For James Smith, from Melbourne, the focus is on hockey, rugby, skiing and scuba diving, while Ben van Weel, from Christ Church Grammar School in Perth, is passionate about cricket and hockey and drama.



Emulating Kelly

Inspired by Olympic heroine Kelly Holmes, Year 6 athletes have won the Association of Junior Independent Schools' North-West Cross Country Championships. The girls braved blustery conditions on a gruelling course in Blackburn to race against top schools from across the region. With over 120 competitors taking part, the secret to King's success was outstanding teamwork and excellent grouping. Pictured from left to right are: Katie Powell, Megan Bailey, Lara Knowles, Hattie Lasman, Bethany Tallents and Maddie Coutts.



Cheshire cupholders

In the Cheshire Cup final against Birkenhead School, King's Under 16 boys' hockey team quickly settled into a possession and passing game. Goals from Lyam Hollis, Alex Garlick,

Scott Mason and Adam Farran ensured a comfortable 4-0 victory and King's became Cheshire champions.



Talent-spotted

Girls' Division hockey players clearly made an impression on the County's team of talent scouts: no fewer than eight have been selected to wear the Wheatheaf and play for Cheshire teams. Pictured from left to right are Rebecca Bamford, Hannah Burns, Heather Shribman, Sarah Broadbent, Emma Wood, Helen Mills, Katherine Baker and Rachel Burgess. They will play at Under 16, Under 15 and Under 14 levels.

It's a girls' game

Ever since it was established seven years ago by Ian Wilson, former Head of Sixth Form, girls' rugby at King's has been attracting more and more interest. Over 30 girls take part, coached by Paul Halewood, and the squad is now preparing for one of the major national youth festivals at Rosslyn Park this spring. The recent King's Girls' Rugby Festival proved a great success, with young rugby players from across the county coming to the Derby Fields for a highly competitive and entertaining afternoon.



MEET KING'S BEST FRIENDS

At King's we are fortunate to have two Parent Associations working on behalf of the school—Friends of King's (FoK), which is primarily concerned with organising events for the senior Divisions, and Friends of King's Juniors and Infants (FoKJI), working mainly with the younger classes.

Over the past twelve months, FoK have successfully organised the annual Christmas Fair, the Beaujolais Evening, Autumn and Spring Luncheons and are soon to be advertising their latest event, a 70s themed Disco Night to be held at the school in March. Watch out for the invitations for what should be a fantastic step back in time to the 'Golden Era of Rock and Pop'.

Similarly, FoKJI have entertained the Juniors and Infants with an in-house Cinema Evening, Infant Fun Night, Junior Quiz Night—with our resident Quizmaster Mr Geoff Shaw—and a highly successful Designer Fashion Show. February 4th also sees the 'Red Party Night of the Year' event at the Tytherington Club, which will allow the parents to entertain themselves for once!

Both committees are also involved in

supporting the numerous school functions throughout the year, providing refreshments for events such as school plays, the Sixth Form charity fashion show and the varied musical productions.

Whilst the main reason for any event we organise is to have fun and socialise, we do generate extra funds for the school and these are used in a variety of ways, including the purchase of the Infants' play train (pictured) and donations to the drama group and sailing club, to name but a few.

The two committees work closely together to arrange and organise events that help support and promote the activities of the school. If you have any ideas for future events or would like to help in any way, then please contact us via the school offices.

*John Heywood
Chair of FoKJI*



Past, present and future

Former pupils from all over the world turned out in force for the KSFPA's annual dinner at Adlington Hall Hunting Lodge. Joining Dr Stephen Coyne as guests of honour were former headmasters Adrian Silcock (1987 to 2000) and Alan Cooper (1966 to 1987). Another special guest was Mrs Penelope Shaw, widow of T T Shaw who reigned over the school for 33 years. In fact, King's has had only four headmasters in the past 71 years, a fact that continues to unite many former pupils. As Dr Coyne drily remarked, 'One can only hope that the tradition of longevity continues.'

This year's T T Shaw awards were presented to Reesha Sodha, school captain, academic and musician, David Kennerley, straight A* GCSE student, Johnny Lee, captain of rugby for two consecutive years, and Emma French, academic, sportswoman and musician.

The Association is growing dramatically. Chairman Jonathan Spencer-Pickup points out, 'The annual dinner is just one of many events on our calendar, which is published on both our website kingsmac.co.uk and the school's newsletter.'



Teachers only

Having organised many enjoyable trips to Italy for King's pupils in the past ten years, Head of Classics Mike Houghton thought it might be a good idea to arrange a similar holiday just for staff. A party of 44 staff and partners therefore set out during the October half-term to spend five days visiting Rome, Assisi, Florence, San Gimignano and Siena. It proved an eventful time, with birthdays, wedding anniversaries and even one engagement to celebrate. Planning is already underway for the next staff trip to Lake Garda and Venice. Watch this space!

Former Pupils' Association

Former Pupils: Dates for diaries

12 March	Spring Dinner Dance Adlington Hall
13 May	London Dinner RAF Club, Piccadilly
19 May	Golf Day Wilmslow Golf Club
Friday 8 July	Former Pupils' Cricket Front Field, Cumberland Street

Please contact Jonathan Spencer Pickup on 01625 260010 for further information. He would be delighted to hear from former pupils who would like to join the Former Pupils' Committee which meets three times a year. The next committee meeting is on Tuesday 7 June 2005 in the Front Field pavillion.

Dates for your diary

8-10 February	<i>Under Milk Wood</i> 7.30 pm Fence Avenue Hall
14-18 February	Half-term holiday
21-25 February	Year 10 Work Experience
24 February	Musical Soiree (solos & ensemble) 7.30 pm Cumberland Street Hall
24 Feb-3 March	French Exchange Students at King's
3 March	Celebrity Piano Recital Richard Meyrick 7.30 pm Cumberland Street Hall
5 March	Mayor of Congleton's Charity Concert: Big Band 7.30 pm Daneside Theatre
8 March	Macclesfield Music Festival 7.00 pm Macclesfield Leisure Centre
8-12 March	<i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> 7.30 pm Cumberland Street Hall
10-18 March	Memmingen Exchange Students at King's
11 March	Comic Relief Non-Uniform Day
12 March	KSMFPA Dinner Dance 7.30 pm Adlington Hunting Lodge
14-16 March	Associated Board Instrumental Practical Examinations
16-18 March	<i>Wind in the Willows</i> , Year 6 Musical 7.15 pm Fence Avenue Hall
18 March	Friends of King's 70s Night 7.30 pm Cumberland Street Hall
24 March	Junior School Easter Service 11.00 am St Paul's Church Senior Divisions' Founders' Day Services St Michael's Parish Church Term ends at lunchtime

Admissions

For information about admissions to all Divisions, please contact the Admissions Office on 01625 260000 or email: mail@kingsmac.co.uk