



# King's Colours

Spring 2009

The termly newsletter of the King's School in Macclesfield

## Head's letter



*I appreciate that it is especially difficult for parents in this financial climate but the good news is that King's is in a strong position and there is always something to celebrate here. A*

*hundred years of girls' education is an achievement of which we can all be proud. The school is in demand with the Foundation totalling over 1500 for the first time ever. We are clearly bucking economic trends and are well equipped to survive any potential storms.*

*We are also updating our structure. Long lived institutions often have ancient codes of practice; for example, we do have a Royal Charter. We are undergoing a process of incorporation to ensure 21st century practices and an application is with Her Majesty the Queen at the moment. This process should be completed by the end of this year.*

*To bring us down to earth, the school is to be inspected again. Inspectors will visit at the start of November. I, for one, am looking forward to being told how we are progressing.*

*May I wish you a Happy New Year.*

*Stephen Coyne*

## TEN BOUND FOR OXBRIDGE

It has been another outstanding year for Oxbridge offers. Pictured below (left to right, in King's new Sixth Form Centre) are this year's successful applicants: Matthew Murray, Alison Smith, Sarah Gales, George Morrissey, Elliot Malkin, Howard Shribman, James Hay, Amy Wilson, Rebecca Sugden and Katherine North.

Between them, they have an impressive mix of achievements and interests. Take the Cambridge seven first: Matthew, who has a place to read Natural Sciences at Gonville and Caius College, is a talented sportsman. Alison (Geography, Queen's) is a classical guitarist who spent last summer exploring Bolivia. Sarah (Natural Sciences, Jesus College) was among the top five in the country in five of her GCSEs and achieved 100% in ten AS modules. George (Medicine, Magdalene) was King's 1st XV rugby captain and has opted to spend a gap year travelling. Howard (Archaeology

and Anthropology, Fitzwilliam) is following in the Oxbridge footsteps of his brother and fellow pupil Matthew. James (Natural Sciences, Downing) is a notable member of the Foundation Choir and Big Band, and Rebecca (French and Spanish, Murray-Edwards), a scholarship pupil with ten A\*s at GCSE, is one of the driving forces behind charity fundraising at King's.

The Oxford-bound three show a similar breadth. School vice-captain Elliot (Mathematics, Pembroke) is a key member of the orienteering squad. Katherine (Mathematics and Philosophy at New College) is a double gold winner in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and the British Mathematical Olympics, and Amy Wilson (Law, Mansfield), another dedicated charity worker, took part in the World Challenge Expedition to Norway.





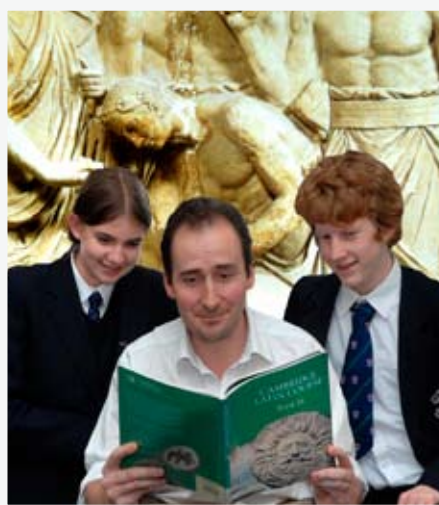
### Chemistry is cool

It may be plummeting in popularity elsewhere in the country, but Chemistry is now the most popular subject in King's Sixth Form. And teachers Dr Jenny Pinkham and Jim Street, along with Senior Science Technician Peter Jackson, want it to remain so. Determined that students should see Chemistry as an exciting and challenging subject with a major impact on British life, they have devised a

new series of lectures, designed to stimulate the parts that normal lessons cannot reach. One lecture features forty chemical demonstrations, a pyrotechnical display that has already intrigued 500 pupils in the Boys' and Girls' Divisions. Now the staff have been asked to stage their scientific show at the Catalyst Museum in Widnes as part of the celebrations for National Chemistry Week.

### Prescribing success

Aspiring medics at King's had the chance to hear advice from the top when they attended a talk by one of Britain's most distinguished doctors. Professor Sir Nicholas Wright, Warden of Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry, was speaking at a specially arranged careers event at the school. Outlining the qualities required and the range of specialisms available, he told students that their biggest challenge as doctors would be to preserve professional values in a climate where they are being continually eroded.



### New Junior Division Head

Mrs Caroline Hulme-McKibbin, Head of the Junior Department of Alderley Edge Girls' School, will succeed Mr Geoffrey Shaw as Principal of the Junior Division from September. She is, of course, no stranger to King's, having been Vice-Principal of the Division before taking up her headship at Alderley Edge. We look forward to working with her again.

### Check!

Strategy and surprise are the tactics used by two Junior Division boys in their successful onslaught on the chess circuit. Dmitri Whitmore (who is also The Times Sudoku U14 champion) won second place in the U11 AJIS Chess Championships, and Daniel Southern was joint winner in the U10 event. Now members of the Cheshire and North Wales team, they are coached by King's chess coach Andrew Ireland.

### The Romans are returning...

... according to Oxford Professor Llewelyn Morgan, one of the nation's leading Latin scholars.

Giving a masterclass at the Girls' Division, the author and critic praised the new generation of teachers and academics who are bringing the subject vividly to life, prompting a major revival of interest in Classics in British schools.

Professor Morgan is pictured with Bridie Thompson, King's Girls' *Custus Rerum* (or, in modern parlance, Lost Property Monitor) and Boys' Division Classics scholar Tom Baston.





### Choral commission

It was a great honour for the school when internationally recognised composer Adam Gorb agreed to write a choral piece for King's Year 5 and 6 choir. Mr Gorb, Head of Composition at the RNCM, set to music 'Everyone sang', a poem by Siegfried Sassoon. The song, beautifully premiered at the Junior Summer Concert, had a second wonderful performance when a choir of Year 6 children was invited to join the Tatton Singers for their Christmas Concert. They delighted the audience – and the composer – at St John's Parish Church in Knutsford.

### Stars, shepherds and songs

There were two Infant Christmas productions this year. Years 1 and 2 presented their nativity story as a play within a play. 'Nearly No Nativity' tells of a school's Christmas production which is almost cancelled when too many characters want the limelight. Deia Penn was a splendidly bossy teacher, and the other children were shepherds, wise men, animals, angels and stars. The Nursery and Reception classes presented 'The Nativity'; both Reception classes acted out the story and the Nursery class played percussion instruments and sang joyfully in the choir.



### All aboard for charity

The Autumn term saw King's pupils fundraising for charity with their customary compassion and industry. The annual fashion show raised £3,300 for Christie's Against Cancer; the Boys' Division chose the RNLI as its nominated charity – and even had the opportunity to sit in a lifeboat on the Rock car park; and the Girls' Division raised £4,000 to equip two new wards at the East Cheshire Hospice with television and DVD sets. The school also participated in the Children in Need Day, Jeans for Genes Day and the Macmillan Coffee Morning. Meanwhile, staff and students have been generously donating items for a record 300 boxes in the Rotarian Shoebox Collection.



### Jack and the Beanstalk

Year 4 children had a chance to show off their dancing, musical and dramatic talents in their updated version of the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. In a very funny script, Victoria Richardson was splendid as the principal boy and Joe Laughton, with an authentic cockney accent as Jack's Mum, sounded as if he'd been born within the sound of Bow Bells.

### Daisy Pulls It Off

*Daisy Pulls It Off* follows the trials and tribulations of Daisy Meredith at boarding school. The play was a resounding success, with a superb cast who 'pulled off' a truly *jubilate* production.

Eleanor Strutt's strong performance of Daisy was well supported by a highly competent cast and astute direction. She managed to combine the vulnerability of a new girl on the block with a grit determination to become a Grangewood girl. Her performance was ably supported by Naomi Gildert as Daisy's well meaning, madcap friend Trixie Martin. Having been inspirationally typecast as Head Girl, Katie Reid delivered her part with remarkable accuracy, complemented by Isabel Wilkinson's equally engaging role as prefect Alice. The part of Sybil, devil turned angel, required a gamut of acting skills and Amy Jacobson rose admirably to the challenge. Becky Hughes' interpretation of Sybil's deadpan companion, Monica, got some of the best laughs of the night, along with Elizabeth Jessop's portrayal of firm but fair headmistress Miss Gibson.

Congratulations to all those involved for a performance that warmed the audience on a cold December night. A truly spiffing show!

Emelia Bell



## Congratulations to:

### Pupils

**Alice Bailey**, on winning two Bronze medals in the English Schools' Swimming Competition.

**Elizabeth Bell**, who has been selected to play for North Derbyshire County Netball Squad.

**Rebecca Craigie**, currently ranked No 1 in the country for U18 female 1,500m running, who has been selected to represent England in a U20 cross-country competition in Northern Spain.

**George Drury**, selected for the North of England U16 Rugby XV.

**Elliot Hanson** on becoming RYA North West Sailor of the Year.

**Robin Laughton**, Emily Robinson and Dmitri Whitmore, who have qualified for the national final of the Primary Maths Challenge.

**Elizabeth Marshall**, who has been accepted into the viola section of the Hallé Youth Orchestra, and **Henry Strutt**, who has gained a place in the National Youth Children's Choir.

**Rowena Moores**, who finished fifth in the North West regional U11 biathlon competition.

**Lauren Rousseau**, on her selection to the Cheshire Lacrosse U14 squad.

**Elliot Sime**, one of the youngest students in the country to complete his ECDL Extra qualification.

Players selected for County Hockey teams: U18/21 **Katherine Baker**; U18 **Sarah Pickering**, **Rebecca Bamford**, **Sophie Fox**; U17 **Hatty Ravenscroft**; U15 **Jae Bowers**, **Maddie Coutts**; U14 **Holly J Smith**, **Rosie Christianson**, **Lara Knowles**; U13 **Alix Davies**.

**U14 Netball Squad**, who have qualified to represent Cheshire in the next round of the National Schools' Competition.

**Year 8 and 9 Girls' Cross Country team**, on winning the Macclesfield and District Competition.

**The eight teams of Trampolinists** who qualified for the North of Britain Final at the end of January, and **Katie Cornish** (Yr 8), **Alex Fray** (Yr 4), **Dan Hinchcliffe** (Yr 7), **Rowena Moores** (Yr 6), and **Emily Robinson** (Yr 6) who also qualified as individuals.

**The six cheerleading teams**, who all came first in the NW Championships.

### Former pupils

**Helen Marten**, who gained the top first in her final exams in Fine Art at Exeter College, Oxford.

### Staff

**Ruth and Gary Crowley** on the birth of baby Hannah.

**Vicky Jackson and her husband** on the birth of Federico (Freddie).

**Zoe and Daniel Taylor** on the birth of their son, James.

## Atlas adventure

Venture 10,000 feet up in the Atlas mountains and you learn to expect the unexpected. For students on the King's Spirit of Adventure trek, this was smashing ice off your tent before you struck camp – or having your face licked by a herd of wild camels.

The trekkers, thirteen girls and seven boys led by Jim Street, began their journey at the ancient Moroccan city of Marrakech. Skirting the Sahara, their four-day, 60km expedition took them to Jebel Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa.

As they walked from village to village, they met Berber children and taught some English. Sleeping outside in the desert, they were unruffled by scorpions, snakes and sandstorms. It was only those camels which took some getting used to...



## Ask someone who knows

With the Boys' Division taking a look at different career possibilities, pupil Michael Barratt came up with the idea of inviting Macclesfield Town FC manager to give a talk. Dreams of multi-million salaries and a glitzy lifestyle were quickly damped as Keith Alexander gave a down-to-earth assessment of the chances of success in the professional sport, whether as a player or a manager. Nevertheless, he admitted his own total love of the game and enjoyed being quizzed by the boys about Macc Town's prospects.



## Riding high

Charlotte Horne and her seven year-old pony Tidesbrook Roger Rabbit (Roger for short) are a winning combination. For the second year running, Charlotte has won a class at the Horse of the Year Show at the NEC in Birmingham, competing with Roger against forty top young riders in the First Ridden Pony Class for 10-years and under.



## Reach for the top

Britain's greatest gymnast, Beth Tweddle, was cheered to the rafters when she spoke to a full assembly at the Girls' Division. Beth, who trains daily with King's athlete Jenni Pinches, gave an inspirational masterclass, stressing the importance of dedication, drive, determination and – most importantly – keeping hold of your dream. The reigning World and European champion on the uneven bars predicted a bright future for Jenni.

# A century of excellence

One hundred years ago, Macclesfield High School for Girls left its old home on Park Green and moved into imposing, brand-new premises at Fence Avenue. The new school was officially opened, with a golden key, on 18th February 1909.

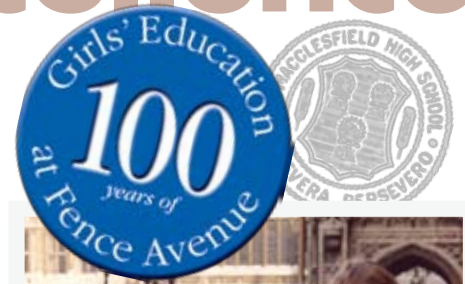
Designed for 250 senior and junior pupils, with thirty in the kindergarten, it cost £14,500 to build. Fees for the seniors were set at £2.2s a term and the headmistress, Miss Elizabeth Windsor, provoked a storm of criticism when she introduced the gymslip as the girls' uniform.

By the end of the First World War, numbers had risen to 300, including fourteen Belgian evacuees. More evacuees, in the form of a school from Stretford, arrived in the Second World War and the classrooms and facilities had to be time-shared. Two members of staff and an upper sixth girl were on duty every night to extinguish any fires caused by incendiary devices.

After the 1944 Education Act, many more girls sat scholarship exams for places at the school. There were plenty of extra-curricular activities, too, including, in the 1950s, making marionettes. In 1977, encouraged by headmistress Miss Footman, a team of four girls won the BBC's 'Top of the Form' competition and were invited to Westminster (see photo top right) to meet the Prime Minister, James Callaghan.

The connection between the High School and the King's School goes back a long way: when the idea of a girls' school in Macclesfield was first raised, back in the 1870s, King's was one of its staunchest supporters. When, sadly, after a decade as a mixed comprehensive, the High School had to close in 1990, King's realised the site's potential as a home for its new Girls' Division. By 1993, the neglected buildings and grounds had been totally revitalised and the Division opened. With Dr Brenda Despontin as its first Principal (pictured right with Headmaster Adrian Silcock), the continuing process of giving girls a first-rate education at Fence Avenue was assured. Now, in 2009, under Mrs Liz Spence, that vital process is set to carry triumphantly on into its second century.

*As part of the celebrations a special Founders' Day ceremony will be held on 13 February with guest speaker Ann Widdecombe. The Girls' Division will also host an Open Afternoon for former pupils on 27 March. An exhibition showing the fascinating history of Macclesfield High School for Girls will be on display at the public library for a fortnight from 9 February.*



# Former Pupils' News

## T S Eliot Poetry Prize

Former pupil Peter Bennet has been shortlisted for the £15,000 T S Eliot Poetry Prize. Peter, nominated for his new collection 'The Glass Swarm', was at King's from 1953-1959, returning for a few years to teach art in the early 1960s. Now based in Northumberland, where the landscape inspires his poetry, he has memories of Macclesfield's 'post-war gloom and smoke, but always-sunlit hills in the not-so-far distance'. And of Headmaster T T Shaw, who 'would emerge, gown flapping in the breeze. He liked to read, in a very carrying voice, the passage from Philippians 4:8 which includes "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ... think on these things". That used to make me think of the dreaded end of term report, usually not good, pure or lovely.'

Peter published his first poem at the age of forty and national recognition came when his collection 'Goblin Lawn' was chosen as a Poetry Book Society Recommendation in 2005.



## Le touch rugby

Former pupil Guy Mason took part in the Over 30s section of the European Touch Rugby Championships in Paris, representing England in all the group games. The squad had previously spent a number of weekends together in Bath and Cambridge in June, preparing for the three-day competition. Guy was awarded three Most Valuable Player Awards and scored a try in every game, finishing up as the competition's top points scorer.

## Former Pupils' Dinner

About 100 Former Pupils were present at the Association's annual dinner in November. Also in November, another thirty Maxonians met for drinks and a brief report from the Head of Foundation at the Institute of Economic Affairs, courtesy of the director John Blundell (1963-70).

## High School Dinner

The Macclesfield High School Former Pupils' Association's Annual Dinner will be held on Wednesday, 29th April 2009 at the Bridge Hotel, Prestbury. Following the meal the Association will be entertained by the well known singer Celia Kite, a former pupil of the High School.

## Former Pupils' Events

15 May	Annual London Dinner 7.30 pm RAF Club, Piccadilly Contact Keith Aikin 01227 456835
29 May	Frank Moore Trophy Macclesfield Golf Club Contact Alan McInnes 01625 428961

## Peter Mathews

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death, at the age of 62, of Peter Mathews, one of King's longest serving and best loved teachers. By the time he retired in 2002, Peter had worked here for 34 years, as a Biology and PE teacher, as Head of Rugby and Head of PSE.



A charismatic and compassionate man, Peter was born in Penrith and was a pupil at St Edward's School in Birmingham, where his father was a physics teacher. He read Physical Education and Biology at Loughborough University before coming to King's in 1967.

As Head of Rugby, Peter did as much as any single individual to elevate King's into one of England's great rugby schools. Later, he also took a lead role in coaching junior cricket, overseeing three school tours to Kenya, Pakistan and South Africa at a time when such tours were still something of a rarity. He had a fine bass voice and sang in the King's School's Choir and the Macclesfield Male Voice Choir.

After retirement, Peter enjoyed tending his eight and half acres at Hordern Farm Pottery where he lived with Anne, his wife of 33 years. He took up ornithology again, as well as dry stone walling and bee keeping, and could often be seen with his dog, Pebbles, at his side.

Dr Stephen Coyne, Head of Foundation, paid this tribute: 'Peter Mathews was that rare schoolmaster, the all-rounder with first class honours who was universally admired by his colleagues and pupils.'

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

23-27 February	Year 10 Work Experience
25-26 February	Songs from the Shows 7.15 pm Cumberland Street Hall
27 February	Sixth Form Spring Ball 7.30 pm Tytherington Club
6 March	Masterchef Bursary Dinner (100 years at Fence Avenue) 7.00 pm Fence Avenue Hall
11 March	Year 10 & 11 Musical Soirée 7.15 pm Cumberland Street Hall
18-20 March	Year 6 Musical Scrooge 7.15 pm Fence Avenue Hall
18-21 March	The Royal Hunt of the Sun 7.30 pm Cumberland Street Hall
24 March	Sixth Form Musical Soirée 7.15 pm Cumberland Street Hall
27 March	Girls' Division 100 Years Celebration Open Afternoon 2.00 pm Fence Avenue
2 April	Term ends for Easter 3.45 pm

## Admissions

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