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CONTIO LATINA

Freddie Williams, *Moretons*, Speech Room,
23 November

Beheld by the glorious Muses of Speech Room, Freddie Williams, *Moretons*, delivered the Contio to a wide audience of boys, beaks, Governors and the Head Master. In an eloquent symphony of Latin and Greek, Williams excellently encapsulated the School's spirit, values and achievements. With verses from Virgil and words from Churchill, he left everyone inspired, reflective and ready for Harry Watts.



First extolling the virtues of self-discipline, kindness and fellowship, Williams drew upon his experiences at Harrow, commended the Harrovian ethos, and acknowledged the resilience of our School community. Throughout his speech, he highlighted the many successes of Harrow boys who had overcome adversity, particularly his Ukrainian friends who have thrived in their new home. But he also emphasised the importance of small, consistent efforts, whether making one's bed in the morning or wider efforts which have contributed to sustainability on the Hill – all of these are steps towards greater achievement through the School's unity.

He also called for action against climate change and reflected upon global political challenges, urging all the boys, beaks and Governors in Speech Room to uphold fairness, humility and courage. He particularly indulged in Harrow's storied traditions and achievements, from victories at Lord's and Twickenham to academic and cultural successes including the recent Rattigan

Society play *The Madness of George III*, celebrating the collective effort of boys and beaks in shaping a vibrant life here on the Hill.

In a poignant moment, Williams also paid tribute to his late brother George, whose memory inspired his work with the Bereavement Support Group. His reflections on loss and support exemplified the compassion that defines Harrovian fellowship. The Contio concluded with a challenge for all to embrace the opportunities offered by the School, to lead with integrity, and to leave a lasting legacy. Echoing Churchill's famous words, he reminded his audience that success is born of perseverance and courage.

The Contio, both heartfelt and sincere, joins the annals of Harrow's proud tradition, leaving a legacy of inspiration for future Contionators.

EVERY THING IN ITS RIGHT PLACE

*An exhibition of oil paintings by Laurence Hedges,
Pasmore Gallery, 19 November*

On the frigid afternoon of Tuesday 19 November, LWH, Director of Art and matters aesthetical, staged the first public viewing of his exciting new exhibition 'Everything in its right place'. The evening itself was very pleasant. Champagne poured from bottle to glass, like water bouncing off stones in a freshwater stream, and a polite sort of middle-class laughter bubbled boundlessly like water through a brook. It was clear from the opening of ceremonies at 6pm that everyone had chosen to wear their strangest, most eccentric regalia: purple scarves, cravats and tweed jackets choked the room. Additionally, the famous honey-mustard sausages were passed around on a platter, being followed by a quick-moving greedy gaggle of sticky-fingered boys, barging exhibitionists out of the way as they bounded, their eyes fixed on said delicacy.

Many beaks were present at the event, similarly dressed, including CMC, JESB and MMA, as well as many Harrovians, parents and members of the public at large, creating a cosmopolitan atmosphere: art uniting all groups in discussion.

The work itself was very interesting and most definitely divisive. After walking up the bustling stairwell, you were greeted with two exhibition spaces: the gallery, which overlooks the workshop space on the left, and a small, enclosed room on the right with more intimate pieces, the latter of which is where we shall begin our tour. The room contained pieces with larger forms that dominated the canvas, and a greater emphasis on colour. On the furthest wall, a triptych entitled 'Journey's end', with a unified palate of warm, saturated pinks, reds and blues throughout, presenting an abstract scene or domestic environment, which to me seemed like a series of paintings so reminiscent of Munch's Room paintings. Another interesting piece was 'Matease', an expression of a spiralling movement with green, orange and blue forms with a cadmium or lemon-yellow backdrop. The piece had an interesting rhythm, as the abstract forms, be they human or not, seem to recede into an abyss, demarcated by the smaller forms within a sort of eye-shape. Spooky, I think is the expression; positively.



The juicy bit of the exhibition was housed in the gallery section of the Pasmore Gallery. Here, there were an odd 40 pieces, with both similar and contrasting themes and compositions put in juxtaposition, making the whole things feel like a whirlpool or feverish trip into LWH's mind: an interesting curatorial choice, which I didn't particularly mind. The first pieces on one's left were a quadrant of related pieces. From the discussion I had, I think that these were the most divisive pieces. Each consists of hundreds of thousands of different forms, each in different shades or sometimes colours, dancing around the page. They were quite unique, almost like a nuanced response to the work of Jackson Pollock. I personally quite liked the piece in the bottom left; 'Veil', which consisted of blue, brown and red forms merging into an overpowering yellow background of uniformity. The piece in the top left and right, 'Drop Dead' in particular, did inspire an interesting debate about whether the use of colour and shade in such closeness and aggression was merely overpowering, or whether the sensation of discomfort was actually what made a good piece of art.

To the right of this was a piece entitled 'Quite the carry on', a yellow and brown explosion on blue backdrop. With the clash between the brown and blue, it seemed to me as though the yellow was almost leaking off the canvas in an ooze. Use of lacquer following the blue brush strokes at the top, left a burnt effect which was apparent when light bounced off the canvas at a certain angle. The piece seemed closely related to one on the other side of the gallery entitled 'A forest', with a clear allusion to a tree within the piece.

One of my favourite pieces was 'Johnny painter', which was tucked away in the corner of the gallery. The piece appears as a blue background, that had been scraped away revealing a hidden rainbow of colours underneath. The use of desaturated Prussian blues over the top created an interesting illumination

effect, like a sort of midnight moon colour. The shade reminded me of that of Magritte's 'Empire of light' from a distance and is probably why it drew me to look at it. I think it provided a nice contrast to the rest of the pieces, which were extremely loud and virile.



To the right of the entrance, on and around the partition wall, there were smaller more intimate pieces, which is where LWH seemed to show the most diversity in his work, I feel. Some pieces, like 'Sermon' and 'Feast' came across like Kandinsky impressions, with a greater emphasis on form and uniformity of colour, whilst 'Circle', 'Poseur' and others of the 10x0 series fell into a sort of conceptual abstraction, verging on the absurdist. 'Sons of a silent age' also suggested this kind of surrealist-cum-Goyan approach to expressing an artistic message, which I found quite interesting. I really enjoyed this part of the exhibition, as, especially upon being introduced to a new body of an artist's works, I think it's really valuable to see many varied and small conceptual paintings in series, to get a good grasp of the inspiration and aspirations of any artist. The miniscule 6x6 series was also really nice, with an emphasis on an absorbent ivory black. 'Canopy' was actually one of my favourite works in the collection, with all the colours working in a lovely harmony.



So, overall, the exhibition was an interesting experience. Not only was it an in look into LWH's mind, but also a chance to see quite genuine artistic innovations. Admittedly, not all of the pieces were too my taste., but, for such a diverse exhibition, this is inevitable. However, as I have expressed, there were some really wonderful pieces here as well, that played with form and colour in a unique and exciting way. LWH has absolutely shown his strength in the realm of abstract painting and has toyed in this exhibition with quite advanced emotional themes. If you're interested in seeing the exhibition, which I would thoroughly recommend, it's still hanging in the Pasmore Gallery: do take a look!

ROAR AND RESILIENCE

A film by Viren Bhaika, Lyon's

On Wednesday 6 November, the foyer of Lyon's buzzed with energy as boys rushed from prep and beaks hurriedly navigated the chilly evening air. It was the premiere of a documentary titled *Roar and Resilience*, presented under the auspice of WMAL and masterfully directed by Viren Bhaika, *Lyon's*. This 30-minute film delves into the pressing issue of human-tiger conflict in India, focusing on the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. Blending humour and poignancy, the documentary alternated between laugh-inducing scenes and thought-provoking moments, as tragedies from a land far away were brought close to our hearts.



The documentary opens with vibrant footage of the reserve's breathtaking wildlife – bears, gaurs and, of course, the majestic Royal Bengal tiger. The film highlights the success of the 2023 Project Tiger initiative, which increased India's tiger population from 1,127 in 1972 to 3,682 in 2024. Tadoba's recovery has been particularly remarkable, with its tiger population growing six-fold between 2010 and 2023. Although this achievement is worthy of celebration, between the boundaries of human civilisation and the jungle lies an insidious conflict. The film reveals startling data from the Maharashtra Forest Department: annual human fatalities caused by wildlife in Tadoba have risen from 32 to 51, with tigers responsible for 90% of these incidents. The documentary then cuts to powerful but ominous footage of the destruction caused by the tiger. A quote from a local NGO leader resonates deeply: "The day a tiger kills a villager, we witness the eruption. However, we do not witness the build-up of lava before it." If the problem is not solved, it is not surprising that the people who are the most affected take the law into their own hands and deal with the tiger as they please. Therefore, we must get to the root of this problem and the root of this conflict before it escalates out of proportion.

The documentary goes on to explore the paradoxical reverence and fear surrounding tigers. It shows us that local villages have great respect for the tiger and, in some cases, even worship them as forms of deities. If so, how has the tiger-human conflict become so serious? The reserve consists of a 625km-square core area surrounded by a 1100km-square buffer zone. However, only 91 tigers live in the core and buffer zone, whereas 160 tigers, a large majority, live outside these areas alongside villagers. The crackdown on poaching as well as the conservation efforts have resulted in an increase in the total population. Yet, since tigers need 25km-square for habitat, competition is extremely fierce. The victorious tigers are allowed to remain inside the core and buffer zone, whereas the defeated are forced to wander out into the human world. There the tigers have a more lavish lifestyle as, instead of having to stalk and hunt prey, they are presented with the simpler option of cattle. With a steady supply of food, the tiger population in the human-inhabited areas has increased dramatically; whereas before only 50% of tiger cubs would reach adulthood, this figure has unsurprisingly increased to 100%. While more tigers push into civilization, civilization also pushes back.

Because of Tadoba's richness in minerals such as iron ore, limestone and copper, there is a significant mining industry which

exploits this. Of course, with factories come railways, canals, roads and various man-made structures, which fragment and separate the jungle, blocking out any natural migration routes that the tigers might have taken, and essentially trapping them in areas settled by humans. We were then shown interviews with various influential conservationists, starting with Subbiah Nallamuthu who is a renowned wildlife filmmaker. He described how the tigers have no other option because they're surviving in the middle of "mining mafias, hotel mafias and tourism mafias". Mr Nallamuthu expressed his concern further, saying how he believes that it has "all gone out of control". Moreover, conservationist Hans Dalal describes how some people have lived in those forests for centuries alongside the tigers. He now thinks development has now reached a level where people have forgotten how to coexist, and that "greed has taken over need". We must remember, the documentary tells us, while corporations reap profits from Tadoba, local communities bear the brunt of the conflict.

The documentary reached a new segment in which we were shown heartwarming footage of the hustle and bustle of local village life, as villagers go back and forth with food and goods, and children play carelessly on the street. However, this peace and tranquillity is disrupted by the grim realities of tiger attacks. One villager, Mr Kambadi, recounts the tragic loss of his mother, killed while working in the fields. His desperation is shared by a farmer, Mr Kamdi, who tells us that previously they were able to leave their fields late in the evening and go back for work early in the morning. Now, because of the threat of the tigers, they are forced to work with extreme caution and anxiety, always uncertain if they will return home. Here, a delightful surprise for the audience, was the cameo appearance of NSK, Harrow's Head of Biology and Conservation, during his visit to Tadoba in April 2023 (courtesy of the Bhaika family? – Eds)

The documentary's latter half shifts focus on solutions and how we can mitigate, prevent and resolve the human-tiger conflict. We were introduced to activist Bandu Dhotre, founder of Eco-Pro, an NGO group dedicated to relieving and helping minimise conflict. In 2009, his peaceful hunger strike along with eight other activists successfully deactivated plans for a coal mine in Tadoba, demonstrating how direct and courageous action can make a difference. Local conservation agencies also employ innovative methods, such as deploying 500–600 cameras daily to track tiger movements. By identifying individual tigers through their unique stripe patterns, preventive measures can be implemented to reduce fatalities. Indeed, responsible tourism emerges as another solution, offering villagers jobs such as guides and drivers so that they don't have to go into the fields and the forests to risk their lives, drastically reducing their exposure to danger.

It is now evident that solving the human-tiger conflict is not just about preserving endangered species, but about fostering a way for humans and animals to live together and coexist peacefully. Tadoba is at the frontline of solving human and animal conflicts, but it also a cautionary tale for other parts of the world where situations such as this are becoming more common and more serious. Thus, we must find the delicate balance between human civilisation and wildlife, as well as progress and coexistence. Although the risk of human-animal conflicts can never be zero, we can do our best to minimise it to a tolerable level.

As the documentary ended, the room erupted in thunderous applause. The audience had been taken on a unique journey, enlightening ideas previously unexplored now seemed familiar. A celebratory feast of traditional Indian delicacies was served, more than enough to satisfy all 160 boys and 12 beaks. With stomachs full of food and the soul full of knowledge, the evening drifted away in pleasant conversation as we lingered on the aftertaste of the documentary's profound impact.

Special thanks to KAF, NJM AND PSL for helping to organise the event.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE TRIP TO KAZAKHSTAN

19–26 October

Over half-term, a group of Harrovians from the Shell, Remove, Fifth Form and Lower Sixth, accompanied by KAF and OS, went on a cultural and language adventure to Kazakhstan's capital city, Astana. Our main goal for this trip were to learn more about the truly fascinating history and culture of Kazakhstan, briefly introduced to us by HE Magzhan Ilyassov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the UK, during his visit to Harrow School earlier this year, to improve our command of Russian (both Kazakh and Russian are widely spoken in the country) and to establish a more permanent language and cultural exchange program with Nurorda School-Lyceum, our partner school in Kazakhstan.



The journey began at Heathrow with a two-hour flight to Warsaw. With the connecting flight to Astana scheduled for 11pm, the group had to stay in the airport for seven hours before boarding a six-hour flight to Astana, landing in the city at around 8am on Sunday. Upon our arrival, we were greeted by two friendly teachers from Nurorda School-Lyceum, one dressed in traditional Kazakh attire for the occasion. Despite being pretty tired after our 20-hour journey, we were not allowed by KAF to have even the shortest nap (adjusting to the local time zone was her justification). Instead, our first day was filled with sightseeing and exploring the city, and learning about the country.

Kazakhstan is a rapidly developing country with significant reserves of oil, natural gas and almost every element from the periodic table. The country's first president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, pushed for economic growth and modernisation of the country, and building and expanding Astana and other major cities. While driving to our hostel, we learnt how the city was split into an old and new part by the Ishim River. The group visited the Baiterek, the emblematic monument and observation tower. The view from the top was amazing! Next, after a walk along Nurzhol Boulevard, we visited the largest mosque in Central Asia and one of the largest in the world, the Astana Grand Mosque. The group also got a tour of the Expo Centre in Astana, the largest spherical building in the world, which hosts the Nur Alem Future Energy Museum, showing promising alternative energy sources and providing fun interactive activities for the visitors. At the end of the day, we returned to Nurorda School-Lyceum, where we were greeted by the local pupils and taken for a tour of the campus, followed by a fun quiz completed in mixed teams.

On Monday, we spent the first half of the day with our hosts, attending language lessons and other activities. After overcoming the initial linguistic shock with the help of KAF and our hosts, we were delighted to find there was a serving of Russian-style pancakes with delicious, sweet cottage cheese waiting for us

as a reward. An interactive masterclass was then given to the group about traditional Russian music and musical instruments. Up next was a nerve-wracking presentation in Russian about Harrow School in front of Nurorda's student and teacher body in the school's weekly assembly. Up until that moment, we all thought (wishful thinking?!) that it was just one of KAF's regular jokes... Five boys from different years each delivered a paragraph of the presentation off by heart in the best Russian that we could master. We spoke about aspects of our life at Harrow, the School's history and a few fun facts too. At the end of the presentation, the entire group sang the first verse of 'Forty Years On'. A dinner at an authentic Kazakh restaurant was next, a well-deserved reward after surviving our first day of lessons, presentations, singing and whatnot. Some of the local cuisine was rather exotic for the boys, but even the fussiest eaters tried a wide variety of dishes (KAF does not take 'No' for an answer...) and really enjoyed them. While indulging in the tasty food, we watched a performance that was put on by professional Kazakh musicians, who played the dombra and other traditional instruments. The day finished with a football tournament with mixed teams from both Harrow and Nurorda schools, followed by KAF's trip in an ambulance to the A&E of a local hospital with one of our casualties in the middle of the night.

On Tuesday, the group was delighted to participate in a morning masterclass in dombra playing. After that, we gathered in the school library to play a game based on Russian literature with a few of local pupils. Right after the game, we were excited to hear that after lunch we would be meeting Ms Kathy Leach, His Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan, and a group of her colleagues from the embassy. We found the talk to be both engaging and entertaining, and learnt a lot about the embassy's operations and plans for future co-operation between the two countries. A linguist herself, Ms Leach encouraged us to study languages, explaining how her degree in Russian and French from Cambridge shaped her diplomatic career. The day finished with a traditional Kazakh dinner followed by a film night organised by one of the Nurorda teachers in a truly professional fashion. The 2008 movie 'Tulpan' followed the life of a Kazakh sailor who had just finished his compulsory military service in the USSR's navy and his struggles returning to the traditional nomadic Kazakh life of his family.



Wednesday started with a cooking masterclass in which we learnt how to make blini, or pancakes, and syrniki, traditional Russian thick pancakes with sweet cottage cheese. Then we attended a comprehensive talk about Kazakh culture and traditions, which also involved trying on some traditional national costumes. In the afternoon, accompanied by a group of Nurorda's pupils, the group ventured outside Astana to visit ALZHIR, one of the former Soviet corrective labour camps on the territory of Kazakhstan for the 'wives of traitors to the motherland'. The camp was used throughout the Soviet era and was one of the few of its kind, as it took the wives, children and mothers of the men convicted of betraying their Soviet motherland. Following the sober but very educational trip, instead of going to a restaurant for dinner, the group was

divided into two smaller groups and we had dinner with the Kazakh pupils' families in their homes, a truly heartwarming experience and the best proof one could have of the proverbial Kazakh hospitality. Both families were very friendly and accommodating, which fitted with everything we had seen so far in Kazakhstan, and the food was great and consisted of several traditional dishes, including horse meat and a particular type of Kazakh dumplings, followed by the desserts which were too many to count and all equally delicious.



Then came Thursday, which started with a normal meeting time at 9am, and as soon as we arrived at Nurorda and had breakfast in the school canteen, we listened to presentations delivered by our hosts and devoted to their favourite books. Later, after a quick lunch, we went to the National Museum of Kazakhstan, where we learnt many things about the culture of Kazakhstan and how the nomads in the steppe lived. From there we went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, where we learnt about Kazakhstan's relationship with other nations and participated in a game of guessing the origin of various diplomatic gifts received by the Ministry from visiting politicians and diplomats. In the evening, another cooking masterclass awaited us back at Nurorda, or, more precisely, its sister school Spectrum, during which we learnt how to make Kazakh doughballs also known as *baursaks*, one of our favourite local snacks.

On Friday, our last full day in Astana and Kazakhstan's Day of the Republic, we started the day with a visit to the studios of one of the main TV channels in Kazakhstan, Khabar TV, where, in the company of Nurorda's pupils, we explored the studios, spoke with journalists and where Ludi Czarnowski, *Newlands*, Aidan Lee, *The Head Master's*, and KAF bravely gave a live interview on the morning show of Kazakhstan's news. Then, after a longish bus ride to the outskirts of Astana, we reached a traditional Kazakh entertainment complex, where we had lunch in a traditional yurt (a nomadic house), went to a horse show, watched a game of Kokpar, a goat-picking game somewhat similar to a mix of rugby and polo, and played games with our hosts like archery and going on stand-up swings. We then had a quick visit to a shopping mall with our hosts and next had to say farewell to them and thank them for their incredible hospitality and looking after our group for the entire week while attending lessons and sitting exams.

Saturday started with a 6am wake up and a short drive to the airport, which concluded our amazing one-week stay in Astana. Seventeen or so hours later, we landed safely at Heathrow, exhausted but with a real sense of achievement and many unforgettable memories.

The hospitality we received from the beginning of our trip was overwhelming, and we are extremely grateful to all the staff and pupils from Nurorda School-Lyceum for looking after us so well. Our special thanks go Dr. Selman Şimşek, Principal of Nurorda School-Lyceum, for facilitating our visit and to Mr Serzhan Zhurmagambetov, Head of University Counselling Department at Nurorda School-Lyceum, who led the team of colleagues tasked with organising our visit and looking after us, and Mr Aidar Alimbekov, who organised countless activities

for us throughout our stay. We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to HE Mr Magzhan Illyasov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the UK, and all his colleagues for their help with finding such an amazing partner for this exchange programme, as well as to Ms Kathy Leach, Ambassador of the UK to Kazakhstan, and her colleagues for the invitation to their residence and the insightful talk. Last but not least, we are also immensely grateful to KAF and OS for giving up their holiday to travel with us to Astana and for looking after us throughout the week, not to mention all of KAF's time and effort invested into this trip in the months running up to it.

METRO

A SNOWY EXTRAVAGANZA

Who could believe it! In one single night, the Hill was magically transformed into a winter wonderland for us all to enjoy. Every boy must have woken up all aflutter with excitement as the snow gently furnished the Hill with its frigid, soft goodness. One boy was so excited that he sleepily walked out of the front of the House in naught but his undercrackers and a dressing gown – just so he could experience this miracle from above.

For another boy, this was not such a joyous occasion. Morning Callover (not Bill, you imbeciles) was done and they were just heading to breakfast when he was pelted in the back of the head with a freshly scooped snowball. A microsnowball fight then ensued, in which the newly pelted boy threatened to throw a snowball in retaliation, but before the boy could even get his hands on some snow, he was pelted several more times until a cry of "Surrender!" was heard. Less of a fight, more of an attack, if you ask me.

For JRP, along with all of the School golfers, the snow was devastating news. Bright and early at 8.40am, JRP informed the School that the "Golf Course [was] closed today." I'm sure this news was terrible for all the golfers who wanted to play golf that day in the lovely one-degree temperature outside. As for the rest of the School, *eccer* was tentatively set to continue, much to the dismay of some of the Shells in my House, who were looking forward to a lovely afternoon off.

Unfortunately for all, the snow was not to stay: as we wasted away inside "revising", the snow began to melt and by break all that was left was some soggy grass and the freezing temperature. We can only hope that we can be graced by such an event once more this year, lest we have another "Grey Christmas".



(Above: SMK's snowy garden and his sleeping bees)

AN EDITORIAL LAMENT

by Nick Arnison, Moretons

'Tis a paltry thing, an Harrovian Editor to be.
 I might have been a scholar, sportsman or secretary.
 But, alas, a meagre Editor I am, subservient to the gods of InCopy.
 The spinning wheel 'tis also a saddening sight to see,
 For 'twould happier a fest, jollier a consummation be,
 To wrestle a bear in underwear, than an Harrovian Editor to be.

CHRISTMAS
FROM THE ARCHIVES

Having devolved into an apparently yearly event, From The Archives used to be a weekly instalment wherein we would examine articles from editions past. For this edition, I've gone back to Dec 8th, 1954 (Vol LXVIII, No. 12), when The Harrovian was still The Harrovian, rather than Harrow Notes, The Portico, or any of the other versions of this esteemed paper that have existed in the past. As we look back at a Christmas past, we see the writer discuss the ever-present impact of Christmas. This edition, as it often is these days, is a rather busy one, so I have kept my introduction (relatively) brief. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Christmas all the Year

Christmas is an all-year-round affair for some. When the festivities are over, when every balloon has been pricked and every cracker pulled, the people who make balloons and crackers and streamers and tinsel and all the other necessities of Christmas have to begin building up their stock for the next year. They never forget Christmas because, if there were not such a time of celebration, they would all be short of a job. Another person whose whole existence is devoted to Christmas is the turkey who grows and waxes through the year from a chick in January to the sizzling centrepiece of the table in December. Likewise other people who provide for jollity and fun at Christmas: the Christmas-tree grower grows trees all the year, the Father-Christmas-costume maker makes Father Christmas costumes all the year: as for Santa himself, he's just frantically making money to pay for his children's Christmas presents.

We, the laymen not engaged on any efforts towards the Yuletide festivities, are still perhaps suffering the ill-effects of last Christmas in the form of gifts which can be described only as white elephants. Every time I bark my shin on the ridiculously ornate hat-stand in our hall, I swear to chop it into firewood at the first opportunity; but there is always the threat of a visit from Aunt Belinda, the munificent donor of this home-made booby-trap. One of our most frequent pastimes between Christmases is deciding what to do with last year's crop of unusables: the pipe-racks (nobody smokes a pipe), the knitted gloves for coal (we use gas) and of course a selection of diaries. Most of these bits of bric-a-brac inevitably devolve on me: "This would look so nice in your room at school, dear," I am told: and so the rest of the year is spent surrounded by drawers full of diaries of assorted vintages, piles of picture calendars portraying peaceful country scenes and many a glass ornament of extraordinary ugliness. Notwithstanding this, we are probably all looking forward to Christmas all the year and laying our plans. Aunt Belinda must be frustrated in her efforts to present us with any more massive Victorian pieces of furniture: we must also revenge ourselves on that acquaintance who gave us an unexpected gift last year when it was too late to give one in return: perhaps we are subtly dropping hints to the suitable relations which may bear fruit on Christmas Day.

There may be some of us who manage to keep alive during the dull term only by the thought of the feasting and jollifications of Christmastide.

And so, on Christmas Day, all the work of the balloon-makers, the tree-growers and the cooks comes to culmination in bangs, squeals of joy, and also perhaps a little indigestion. Christmas comes but once a year, but it does not come unprepared.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

1st place: John Duan, The Head Master's

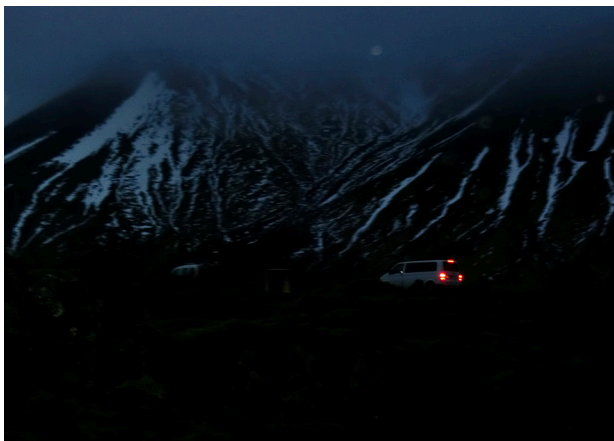
Before I talk about this photo, I did not know it was going to snow the day after we published the competition, and Duan's submission was among many that seized this opportunity to take photos. I love this photo for the feeling it gives me – waking up in a cosy, warm room to the surprise of snow, in November. This photo captures the lights in the scene well, with the lights on the tree, the car and streetlamps giving the cold scene some warmth and colour. I loved the contrast between the warm inside the room and the cold outside, as well as the lighting. The snow is captured very clearly and makes for a very dreamy scene. The iron bars do affect the scene a bit, but that's unavoidable as the School must prevent us from falling out. Well done for this very atmospheric photo.



2nd place: Ron Liu, Elmfields

To me, Liu's photo is very cinematic. A dark scene with a lone car driving through, snowy mountains in the background, and a misty fog. I love the vibe of it, the emphasis on the solitude of the car, and the cold dark winter scene suits the theme perfectly. The blue tone of this time of day works very well in contrast to the red lights on the car, bringing out the subject and attracting the viewer's eye. One improvement I would make is to crop the image a bit more, as there is too much blank space on the bottom (even 16:9 if you want it to be even more cinematic).

But otherwise, another wonderful atmospheric photo and well deserved first podium finish.



3rd place: Pierre Vibert, The Park

This photo captures the landscape beautifully. The natural gradient of tone on the mountain from the dark rocks and trees to the snowy peak, as well as the contrast from the highlights reflected off the snow and the blueish shadows are beautiful. The composition works well, with the highest point in the middle and the dark terrain leading up to it, dragging the viewer's eye upward towards the peaks. The only thing I would improve is to crop out the bit of snow on the bottom right, and to straighten the image, as it is currently a bit slanted to the left. But otherwise, a great image and I hope to see Vibert submit more, as this is his first submission.



WAYWARD WATTS

Truly terrible answers from boys on this year's Harry Watts General Knowledge Quiz

What did the leader of the Conservative Party, Kemi Badenoch, say she became at the age of 16, when she worked at McDonald's?

Fat

Which composer was born in Venice in 1768 and wrote a group of concertos known as The Four Seasons?

Leonardo DiCaprio

How many terms had the setter of this quiz (ADT) already served at Harrow School when the current Autumn term began in September?

270

What is the name of the Hindu festival of lights which symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance?

Elephant

Which sport uses a shuttlecock and derives its name from a large country house in Gloucestershire?

Shooting

Meaning 'the boy' in Spanish, what climatic phenomenon is caused by variation in winds and sea temperatures over the Pacific Ocean?

El chico

What Argentinian/Uruguayan dance style is also a carbonated soft drink and the twentieth letter of the NATO phonetic alphabet?

Fanta

What kind of breakfast sandwich might I be eating if I put Barium, Cobalt and Nitrogen in it?

Vegetarian

Who was the first Roman emperor?

Romanus Sum

Who commented in a conversation with Elon Musk on X that rising sea levels would create more oceanfront property?

Greta Thunberg

Which of the twelve disciples of Jesus betrayed him?

Satan

A History of Harrow School, 1324-1991, published by Oxford University Press in 2000, was written by which OH and former Head of History?

Mr Land

Which movie, starring Cillian Murphy in the title role, was victorious in the Best Film category at the BAFTA awards in February?

Peppa Pig

Who wrote the seventeenth-century epic poem 'Paradise Lost'?

LeBron James





“THE NEXT VERSE”
Harrow Christmas Song Contest

Jingle Bells

Jingle bells, double smells,
 And all the boys will jeer!
 Boater hats and Harrow chats,
 Create lots of festive cheer!

Send up's near, the trials are here,
 And we will probably fail!
 But exeat's in sight, we'll be alright,
 As long as we study at night!
Siddharth Shah, Bradbys

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night
 Morning bell, wakes them right,
 Off to bill they go, Still half asleep,
 Down to speech room, ready,
 Churchill songs are coming,
 Churchill songs are coming.
Max Werner, The Head Master's

Deck the Halls

All the houses warm and glowing,
 Fa la la la la, la la la la,
 But the Wi-Fi's still not going,
 Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Renzo Young, The Knoll

All I Want for Christmas, by Mariah Carey

I don't want a lot for Christmas
 Just No Prep or Lengthy Double
 I don't really care about it
 But it causes me trouble
 For being 12 seconds late
 To my Mathematics Class
 I just want a hat I adore
 Not this massive house of straw



I just want my phone for more
 I sleep enough I am sure
 Make my wish come true
 All I want For Christmas is Modern School
Arjun Agrawal, Lyon's

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the new boy solos ring,
 Christmas House Songs happening,
 Rugby finished and Trials done,
 Glee's and Twelves and House Scenes won,
 Joyful as we raise a glass,
 Half a year of teaching passed,
 Boaters bashed and shirts untucked,
 Skews and Send Ups for conduct,
 Hark! A term here knows no bounds,
 Stet, Fortuna, Domus sounds.
EMH

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

God rest ye merry Harrow men
 Let nothing ye dismay,
 For trials are done and over now
 And Advent's on its way,
 And now there's no more rainy fixtures
 Ruining your day,
 Oh tidings of comfort and joy,
 Comfort and joy,
 Oh tidings of comfort and joy.
Rex Wickham, The Head Master's

God rest ye merry Harrow boys,
 but wash before you eat,
 The scent of rugby sweat and mud is far from smelling sweet.
 Your banter might amuse you,
 but it's really quite cliché,
 Endless questions and cheeky grins—I face them all day,
 Endless questions and cheeky grins.
MMA

Carol of the Bells

Hush all house bells,
 no boy now dwells,
 atop the Hill,
 oh what a thrill.
 No more, no more, no more, no more marking,
 No more, no more, no more, no more marking.

Chalk and board pen,
 no need for them,
 masters return
 to jolly homes.
 Ding ding... dong!
ERC

Twelve Days of Christmas

On the thirteenth day of Christmas my Harrow gave to me:
 Thirteen Boarding Houses,
 Twelve without Gayton,
 Eleven in the first team
 Ten G C S Es,
 Nine in reality,
 Eight-teen when we leave,
 Seven days a week and,
 Six days of learning, Five years here!
 Four Harrow Values,
 Three meals daily,
 Two terms to go
 and the one and only field of Sunley!
GLC

Jingle Bells

Trudging through the snow,
On the way too Chemistry,
Thinking of the sun,
Not so joyfully,
Then it's one more skew
Not from SMK
But when you get a send up,
All Your mates will shout hooray!

Early Bells,
Then late bells,
Then it's Friday,
Oh what fun it is to run onto Latin the next day, Hey,
Early bells,
Then late bells,
Now it's Saturday,
But just think of all the fun when it goes to the next day.

Michael Herrat, Lyon's

Jingle Bells

From Chemistry Schools
To Geography
We walk miles with no cars
We're working tirelessly
Bells ring in the house,
Making spirits low
What fun it will be to wake up
At Seven tomorrow
Oh wake-up bells, wake-up bells
How I hate the sound,
O what fun it is to wake
to the screeching of a hound
Oh Wake-up bells, Wake-up bells
They probably wake the dead
"I'm the Ghost of Christmas past"
Was the last phrase I heard said.
Lee Brogan-Shaw, The Knoll

**O little town of Bethlehem**

O little town of upon the Hill,
How still we see you lie,
When boys and beaks pretend to sleep,
The matrons walk past by.
Yet on the High Street there is a boy,
Who's meant to be in bed,
But with no one there in great despair,
He goes back home instead.
Michael Herrat, Lyon's

A Beak's perspective

(To the tune of 'Deck The Halls')
Latin prep needs an extension,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Has not learnt the third declension,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Still not done, there's no retention,
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
Time to face a fourth detention,
Ha ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha.

Our Removes are being silly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Skipping Chapel willy nilly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Late for lessons, they're in trouble:
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
Time to give some Christmas double,
Ha ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha.

Send-ups – far too few to mention,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Skews abound, with growing tension,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Arguments and strong dissension:
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
On the brink of full suspension
Ha ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha.

Endless whinging: room's too chilly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Ducker's Long and far too hilly.
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Has not shaved, there's 2 days' stubble:
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Custos thrice will burst their bubble,
Ha ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha.

Greener grass begs my attention;
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Need a change, a new dimension –
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
I make clear a bold intention:
Fa la la, la la la, la la la.
Time to leave and claim my pension,
Ha ha ha ha ha, ha ha ha ha.

GHW

Winter Wonderland

Morning bells, they are ringing,
In the chapel, boys not singing,
Harrow hat in one hand,
We greet Mr Land,
Marching on in Harrow-on-the-Hill.
In Bill Yard, Custos is resting,
Failed a test, boys protesting,
"I don't want a skew!"
"Then double will do."
Working hard on Harrow-on-the-Hill.

Chorus

Dinner then call-over in the evenings,
Never really working during prep,
Beak asks if we're working, we think, "no man!"
Then panic when our work is overdue.
Harrow boys, always busy,
'Round the hill, moving quickly,
Even when things get tough,
We fight for send ups,
Winning here on Harrow-on-the-Hill!
Wesley Leong, The Knoll

Exam Season*(To the tune of 'O Little Town of Bethlehem')*

O little town of Harrow on the Hill
 What does this Christmas bring?
 Above, below, the windows glow -
 Exams are in full swing.
 When comes the dawn, you stir and yawn,
 The whole town it awakes,
 The hopes and joys of all the boys might rest upon retakes.
 GHW

God rest ye merry Gentlemen

Oh god, another beak gave me a 100 lines today!
 I know I might have kicked a Shell,
 But he had it com'n his way!
 It doesn't matter anyway:
 I'll say "I was just stressed"

O-oh Double is easy to-o dodge,
 To-o-o dodge
 When you guilt trip beaks,
 It's e-easy to dodge

When I got double fo-or dodging speech room one fine day,
 I sa-aid to my housemaster that I could not be blamed,
 For crocodiles, although quite rare, do sometimes things delay.

O-oh crocodiles stole my hat too,
 Yes that will do!
 O-oh crocodiles stole my hat too!
 Nick Arnison, *Moretons*

Winners and High Commended

The Editors would like to award 1st Prize to Mr White (GHW) for his meticulously written and perfectly scanned verses in 'A Beak's Perspective'. By way of a prize, he has been given a copy of *Winning Words: Inspiring Poems for Everyday Life*. The Editors would also like to commend in particular Rex Wickham, *The Head Master's*, and Mrs Cook (ERC) for their excellent verses. Well done to everyone who entered the competition!

LOVE ACTUALLY*Review by Henry Barker, The Park*

Trials are over and the term is close to an end. Everybody is thinking about to watch over their break. Today I will recommend my Christmas true love, *Love Actually*, which is my personal favourite Christmas film. I've watched it every single Christmas since 2018, and these are the reasons why I think the film is perfect, with my personal anecdotes sprinkled throughout.

First of all, I would like to fanboy over the phenomenal all-star both on screen and behind the scenes. This includes Hugh Grant, Emma Thompson, Keira Knightley, Rowan Atkinson, Colin Firth, Liam Neeson and Kris Marshall to just name a few. And of course, the brilliant writer and director Richard Curtis (*Rendalls 1970?*) to whom I can attribute the most impact of anyone on my romantic life. I grew up on *Blackadder* and then was introduced to *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Notting Hill* and *About Time*. This man shaped how I both view and make humour of the world, and I would not want it any other way. And, in my opinion, *Love Actually* is his magnum opus.

This film is the *Avengers: Endgame* equivalent for rom-com fans, which effortlessly threads multiple hysterically funny interconnected stories into each other. All the characters subtly or overtly impact each other's lives, which really enhances the story to another level as well as making it seemed glued down in reality. The ensemble cast also allows the film to flourish with standout performers. Whether it is Rowan Atkinson's flawless portrayal of a brilliantly theatrical store attendant, or Hugh Grant's iconic dance moves through 10 Downing Street, this film will stick in your mind for years to come.



Without spoiling anything, I would like to quickly discuss my two favourite plotlines, which encapsulate everything I love about the film. The first is what I believe to be the sweetest and most 'rom-comy' story, which is centred around Colin Firth. This story shows romantic comedies at their best, delightfully awkward and heartachingly sweet. Making any sourpuss around Christmas time lighten up with its well-thought-out romance. The other is, in my opinion, by far the most outlandish and hilarious. It involves Kris Marshall deciding British girls are too stuck up and so he travels to America. I the first pub he goes into, three rather attractive American women are completely infatuated with his British accent and mannerisms, inviting him to stay at their house. When I first watched this, I was howling with laughter and 12-year-old me had only one thing to say to my parents: "I want to move to America!" (a sentiment that still holds to this very day).

These two plotlines perfectly show the balance the film strikes between heartfelt romance and its more comedic elements. This balance is maintained throughout the film, which leads to moments where at one moment you are dying of laughter to the next where the inner romantic within you boils to the top and shouts at the TV to tell the characters what to do as you are so passionately invested.

Finally, I want to highlight an underrated part of the film. The fact that it covers love in all forms. Of course, you have the standard boy-meets-girl story, but you also watch a marriage falling apart because of a lustful sort of love, a story centred on how love is intrinsically connected with grief, familial love, forbidden love, and young, innocent love. This is what makes this film rank above all others for me. It is a timeless classic that any age can enjoy (as long as you skip through the Martin Freeman bits), and each time you rewatch it there's a possibility that different stories will resonate with you as you grow older. I hope you all have a lovely Christmas.

P.S. My favourite rewatch was with an American family who were so shocked at the Martin Freeman scenes that their reaction was funnier than the scene itself, as well as their overall reaction to how Curtis portrayed Americans in the film – which isn't positive to say the least.

OPINION

GAFFE AND GOWN

Quips from Around the Hill

“Sir, I don’t want Extra Time for this Trial, it is just a waste of time.”

“Why are you playing on your mobile in the library? Because the reception in here is exceptional, Sir.”

“The only Chemistry I understood during the Trial was the one between my paper and the boy’s who was sitting beside me.”

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters to the Editors

Dear Sirs,

I much enjoy receiving regular copies of *The Harrovian*. As a former beak of 39 years’ service, though now long retired, I retain a close interest in the School. Therefore I write to correct an extraordinary error in the report of Churchill Songs on 14 November.

George Hamilton-Gordon, 4th Earl of Aberdeen was not “Harrow’s first prime minister”. He was preceded by The Hon. Spencer Perceval, 1809-1812; Viscount Goderich, 1827-1828; and Sir Robert Peel Bt, 1834 and 1841-6.

I believe that a correction and apology need to be published.

Yours faithfully,

MR ROSS BECKETT (JRB)
HARROW BEAK, 1966-2004

DEAR SIRs,

I enjoyed the snow last week. I didn’t enjoy the cold. I still am not enjoying the cold, and I predict I will not be enjoying the cold next week either. If only there was some remedy for this terrible cold – but unfortunately there is not so I will have to sit here and freeze to death as I write this article in my customary shorts and t-shirt.

I do enjoy the Christmas tree in Bill Yard though, and it is successfully de-wonkified after last years wonky-tree-gate which caused great upset amongst the three people who noticed (those three being me, myself, and I). Although I have to ask, do those lights come pre-installed on the tree – is this some new form of genetic modification? Or does some poor soul have to clamber all the way to the top of the tree to place the lights by hand?

I must also say that the Vaughan has been outdoing itself in its decorations so far this year. Their display for *The Madness of King George* was spectacular, and their Christmas tree is as quaint and festive as ever – along with the rest of their decorations. Even the SCH – for all its renovations – has managed to maintain some of its festive cheer with some decorations crammed in among the construction white walls (I can’t wait to see how the Christmas lunch runs!).

Since I’m here and talking about the various Christmas decorations around the School, I do also have to commend Arjun Kular, *Elmfield*, and his splendid Christmas decorations in his room, complete with tinsel and baubles – it truly does look absolutely spectacular. Indeed, the decorations around Elmfield look wonderful – although this year more than ever it is quite obvious that we get the Shells to decorate; some members of the House felt compelled to redecorate the disaster that the Shells called our “Christmas Tree” – I mean they literally just threw the tinsel and lights at it for heaven’s sake.

All in all, it is looking to be a wonderful Christmas this year at Harrow – although we will only be able to celebrate for a week while at the School, it certainly looks to be a week worth celebrating.

Have a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,
ARJUN KULAR, *ELMFIELD*

CHESS PUZZLE

The final puzzle of this term features former world champion Garry Kasparov against Armenian Elmar Magerramov in a 1982 game played in the USSR.

White to play and win in three moves – there are three separate continuations; see if you can find them all. Email your solution to JPBH for your last chance to enter the termly competition. Last week’s answer: **1.Rh8+ Bxh8 2.Nh7#**



Interested in chess? Come along to Chess Club, 4.30–6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in MS5. All abilities welcome!

SPORTS

RUGBY

School of Hard Knocks

The School of Hard Knocks is a charity that uses rugby as a means of intervention, coaching and mentoring to help at-risk children avoid permanent exclusion and make the best of their educational experience. They have a presence in schools across the UK and, courtesy of our Shaftesbury Enterprise scheme, their strong relationship with Harrow began seven years ago with one Harrow side playing a mixed Under-14/Under-15 SOHK school side. Since then, the partnership has grown into Harrow hosting the SOHK Annual Southern Schools Festival with ten schools and over 200 boys between 13 and 15 coming to Harrow to play their first games.



Harrow sides are still involved, with our mighty Yearlings D and Junior Colts C playing some fast and furious rugby. The SOHK sides are raw but full of potential, size, speed and power in equal measure – even if their rugby knowledge is mature than that of the Harrovians. The games were all played in superb spirit and Harrow senior rugby players assisted and coached SOHK school sides. This year was made even more special by the arrival of the Investec Zebra: a large, life-like zebra statue and mascot of the festival's sponsor. Afterwards, all the boys were treated to a superb match tea and left Harrow with happy rugby memories.

FIVES

*The School v Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet,
Won 2-1, 21 November*

Charlie Allday, *Moretons*, and Olly Filo, *The Park*, at First Pair, battled hard in the first set against tricky opponents, but they showed resilience and trusted each other and went on to win that set and then dominate to win 3-0.

A good win also for Freddie Emery, *Moretons*, and Michael Samuelson, *The Head Master's*, at Third Pair. 12-2, 12-2, 12-2 sealed the win for the top pairs.

There were also some notable matches further down the pairs, where all boys enjoyed their battles on a cold afternoon. It was great to see boys who have just started this term doing well. Ved Patel, *The Knoll*, Neharen Inpan, *Bradlys*, Edward Churchill, *The Grove*, and Rishaan Khanna, *The Park*, in particular.

FOOTBALL

*Junior Colts A v Lingfield College Boys Under-15D,
Lost 0-3, ISFA Round 2*

A tough result to take after a positive start to the game. Cheng Ku, *Bradlys*, and Shiden Goitom, *West Acre*, fought hard all game, and Joshua Nwaokolo, *Newlands*, was a constant threat up top.

SQUASH

*Yearlings A v Epsom College, Won, National Cup
Round 1, 18 November*

The Yearlings squash team won comprehensively in the first round of the National Schools Cup. Drawn against the ever-present threat of Epsom College, as well as a strong junior side in KCS Wimbledon, they played brilliantly to beat those teams 5-0. Their play and attitude throughout the afternoon did both them and Harrow great credit.

BADMINTON

The School v Charterhouse, 21 November

1st, Away v Charterhouse, Lost 3-5

The boys performed exceptionally well in a tightly contested match, which nearly ended in a draw, but our team ultimately lost 3-5. Special mention goes to Oscar Bi, *Druries*, for making his debut in the arena this year.

FENCING

The School v Abingdon School, Won, 21 November

In a match against Abingdon School, there were very close Epee matches, with Abingdon just coming out on top. However, Harrow comprehensively won the Foil encounters. The overall result was 171:143 to Harrow.

Excellent performances from Sinan Basak, *Elmfield*, Edward Shek, *Druries*, and Ben Wang, *West Acre*.

*This is the last edition of
The Harrovian for this term*

Ways to contact *The Harrovian*

Articles, opinions and letters are always appreciated.

Email the Master-in-Charge smk@harrowschool.org.uk

Read the latest issues of The Harrovian online at harrowschool.org.uk/Harroviaan