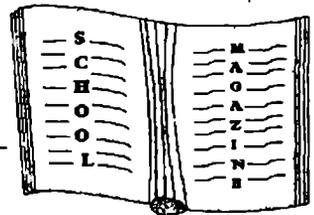
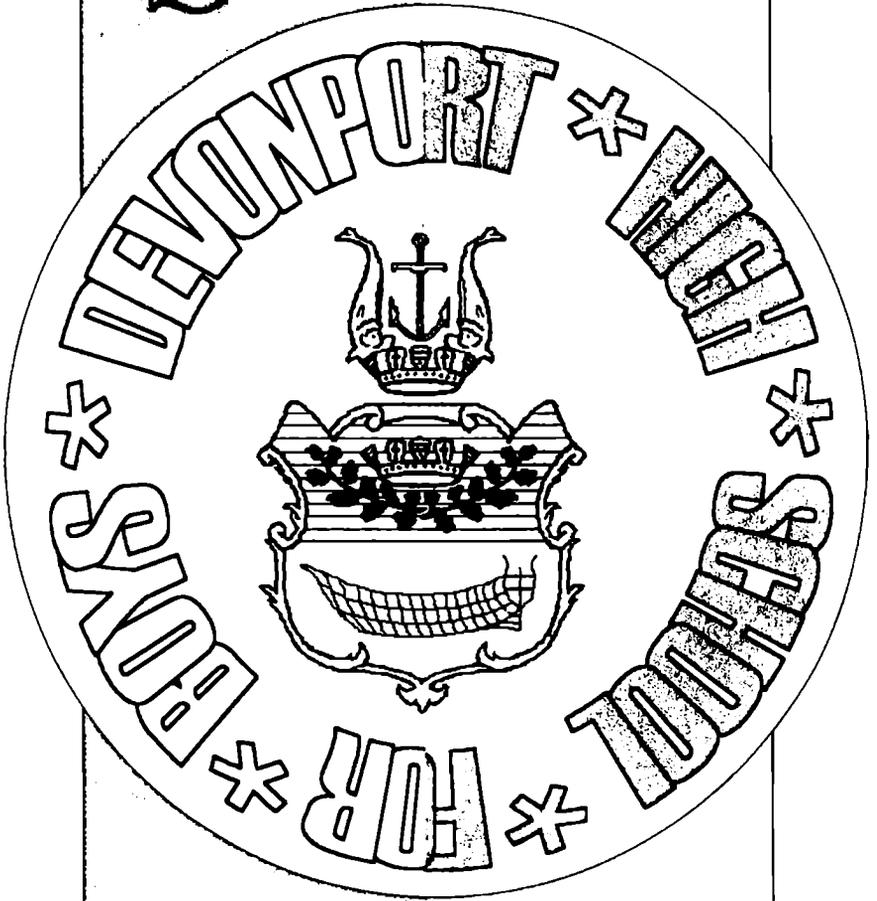


School Magazine



1997

DEVONPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS
SCHOOL MAGAZINE

Autumn 1997

Number 150



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EDITORIAL

Editorial staff

Jonathan Baggs Chris Monk Rob Preece Gary Robb

It give us great pleasure to present this document to all those interested in the progress of Devonport High School for Boys. Our aim as editors is to encapsulate the School and provide this information to all people interested in viewing this snapshot. Although commissioned by the School and the Old Boys Association, all the news is reported from the pupils' perspective, and we hope that it is interesting and informative.

Many people have been involved in the reinstatement of The School Magazine, an edition of which has not been created for nine years. We would like to thank all those who contributed to this publication: special thanks go to Dr. Nic Pettit and Mrs. Pam Shaw from within the school and to Mr. Peter Fielding from the Old Boys Association, all of whom pointed us towards a destination, which we, with their help, hopefully managed to reach whilst utilising our own navigation skills.

We wish our luck to the pupils who will be responsible for the publication of The School Magazine in subsequent years and hope that this tradition continues for many years into the future.

"Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past."
T.S.Eliot

Our HMS Devonport has managed to continue through the sea and remains a leader whilst being passionately remembered by all who sailed in her. The sea represents the tough world of education, the Staff are the navigators, the Prefects the steersmen and the Pupils are the crew - there are no passengers or stowaways. The framework and function remains the same but the crew, some elements of their internal organisation and the technology at their disposal have evolved. Much has changed since the latest message from current to previous crew members and thus we hope this document can be used to inform and enable past and future crew to draw parallels and note differences between the Devonport High School for Boys of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Into the second century

The Headmaster's Perspective

Mr. Peck retired in '93 after serving the school as Headmaster for over eighteen years, eighteen challenging years that saw the school expand and maintain its excellent reputation in the area. With just three Plymouth grammar schools surviving the wave of re-organisation in the eighties the school became more regional, drawing in boys from Plymouth, West Devon and SE Cornwall - some travelling more than thirty miles to school each day. Mr. Peck led the school through the change from O-levels to GCSE's, the introduction of the National Curriculum and the expansion of the school into all six blocks of the old military hospital. The '93 exam results set records. We are reminded of Mr. Peck's visionary leadership as 300+ boys per year benefit from visiting the residential centre in Uzel that he worked so hard to establish in the early 90's.

I considered my self privileged to become the eighth headmaster of this fine school. On arrival my priorities were to maintain the high standards and to work with the governors, staff, boys and their parents to take the school through to the third millennium. The first challenge, early in '94, was our first Inspection done under the then new OFSTED framework - an inspection which resulted in an excellent report. Since then we have been concentrated on developing our curriculum and improving the efficiency of resource management and especially meeting the needs our able pupils.

It was a great pleasure to organise a series of events to celebrate the school's centenary in '96. The highlight of the year was in July when we welcomed over 300 old boys back to the school and enjoyed a day in which we were able to celebrate the school's achievements through reminiscence and the fine concert and comparative service in the Pavilions. I was especially pleased that a Phoenix Old Boys Club emerged from the ashes and it has been rewarding to work with the new committee to establish an active club that is now endeavouring to meet the needs of its members. This magazine is illustrative of their approach, a magazine that has been edited by a hard-working and talented group of sixth formers to provide a range of articles that they hope are of interest to their cosmopolitan readers.

In '95 the parents voted in favour of the school becoming Grant Maintained. Over the past two years the governors have enjoyed the immediacy of having direct control of the admissions policy of the school and the opportunity to allocate 100% of the school's funding to the school's own priorities such as teaching resources

and extra staff to maintain the pupil teacher ratio, investment in IT, staff training and more money spent on the premises.

As school roll approaches 1,000 demand for places at the school continues to rise - with local parents looking as far ahead as the 11+ in September 2006! We currently employ over 100 people, including 60 teachers, and have received a number of National awards in recognition of our achievements, awards such as the Schools Curriculum Award, presented by The Princess Royal in '97, and the Healthy Schools Award, DHSB being one of the first schools in the SW to receive the STAR accolade. Our exam results continue to set new records year on year - results that are validated in our excellent scores in the National "Value Added" analysis.

We are rightly proud of the boys academic achievement but it is the wide range of other achievements that best demonstrate the real ethos of the school - giving boys, no matter what their means or background, the opportunity to succeed - achievements that range from playing football for England to being invited to join the cast in the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of The Merry Wives of Windsor. Our sporting teams continue to play competitively and to be highly regarded in local and regional leagues. Our artists are acknowledged in local exhibitions and the Friday Choir is regularly invited to sing on civic occasions - a choir that has been on TV! The catalogue of success that fills the speech day programme each year is a credit to everyone at the school.

One our high priorities is our Community Sports Hall, a huge project that has gone forward with the support of our local Plymouth City Councillors. The school Centenary Appeal has been very successful and the Governors have been able to contribute more than £75,000 to the project. We now look forward to the outcome of our bid to the Lottery Sports Fund for the 90% support that we need to complete the project. Over the next year we are preparing to navigate the school through the uncharted waters of the new Education Act and establish a working relationship with Unitary Plymouth's new Education Authority. We look forward to the comments of our second OFSTED Inspection which is scheduled for '98.

I continue to aim high, and with the help of the dedicated staff, committed governors, supportive parents, interested old boys and generous community our talented pupils will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The school is ready for 2001.

N M Pettit

DHSOB Association

Chairman

Alan Porter

Membership Secretary

Dennis Rowe

Contact Address

DHSB, Paradise Road, Stoke, Plymouth PL1

SQP

It has been eighteen months since the re-formation of the Plymouth branch, since then progress has been steady rather than spectacular.

Last July we held our AGM at the school when some 30 Old Boys approved our new Constitution. The volunteer committee, formed at the Centenary Celebrations and who had been 'acting' for twelve months, were confirmed in their offices. The AGM was followed by a cricket match between the school XI and a combined Old Boys and Masters side, unfortunately the combined side lost by a narrow margin. The evening was concluded by a disappointingly attended social gathering at the Mount Wise Officer's Club.

Out next gathering will be at the New Continental Hotel Lounge Bar on Sunday 28 December at 7.30 pm. Please come along and bring your partners and have an enjoyable evening out.

A separate sheet is included with this magazine indicating our future programme. It would be of great assistance to your committee if you could return the completed acknowledgement slip, together with any deposits requested, as soon as possible. Returns for the 28 December are requested by/before 18 December '97.

Members may not realise that this is the first issue of the School Magazine for 10 years. It has been produced by members of the school sixth form with a guiding input from the Headmaster and the Old Boys' Committee. Subscribing members to the Association will be pleased to know the monies subscribed by them were directly influential in the magazine's production. With increasing subscription membership to the Association the production of the School Magazine will become a regular annual project. Our subscription remains at £5.00 per annum, payable in July. A bankers order would be gratefully accepted. All subscribers will receive a copy of the Magazine, together with a copy of the social events being run by the Association.

DHSO Association **(Bath & Bristol Branch)**

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It is some time since we had the opportunity to include notes in the School Magazine and much water has flown under the bridge since the last occasion. For many years - since the demise of the London branch - this branch kept the name Old Boys Association alive, so it is with some relief and a great degree of pleasure that we welcome the efforts of the Headmaster and Alan Porter in resurrecting the parent association. Our early inclination was to close the branch when the parent body was once again on its feet, but there was strong support to keep going, so despite our ageing membership we are continuing with our social events and, of course, our close contact with the school.

The branch was set up on 29th October '60, after Murray Widdicombe was directed by a formidable retired master and Old Boy - Tex Austin - to do something about it. Those of you old enough to remember Tex Austin and Murray Widdicombe (now our president) will realise that the former would have had to be formidable to direct the latter to do anything! However our president has always been a very strong supporter of the school and in particular the Old Boys Association and was happy to oblige.

In the early days we had a very strong membership comprising of mainly civil servants employed in the old "Admiralty" and Naval Officers who had been posted to Bath. When the university opened in Bath we did attract a small number of under graduates but this dropped off many years ago and we are now an association of very old boys who enjoy meeting up at a restaurant for a meal on two occasions in the year and to throw a skittle on another occasion. One of our meals is the annual dinner which takes place in the spring - next year on 23rd May - when the Headmaster very kindly travels up from Plymouth and gives us an up to date review of what is going on at the school.

We would be pleased to hear of any 'Old Boys' in the area who would like to join up with us and would be delighted if this included some younger ones!! As the Secretary will be away for a few months over the winter please contact the Treasurer on Bath 317381.

In September we were sorry to learn of the death of Don Worden, one of our staunchest supporters and a regular attendee at all our functions, Don was the Chairman of the branch between '82 and '85. He attended the school between '31 and '36 when he joined the "Admiralty" in which he served at home and abroad until his retirement in '80. He is survived by his wife Rita.

President - J.M. Widdecombe Esq. CB., OBH...

Morocco 98

On the 9th of July '98, a team of fourteen pupils and two staff from Devonport High will embark on a three week expedition to the North African country of Morocco. The expedition is being organised and led by World Challenge, a company which organises many school expeditions to all part of the world.

A presentation to pupils and parents by representatives of World Challenge launched the project in the Autumn term of '96. This is the first project of its kind at the school and thus Morocco had been chosen as the best country for the expedition: it is the cheapest destination where the participants are sufficiently far away from home and able to gain from an expedition.

The primary aim of the expedition is educational: From climbing in the freezing High Atlas Mountains, to bartering in Marrakesh and trekking in the heat of the Sahara desert, the three weeks will be a challenge for all participants. The expedition promises to be physically challenging and calls for development in self-reliance, self-confidence, leadership qualities and teamwork in all those participating. The group will experience at first hand the cultural contrasts of Morocco and the United Kingdom and have the rare opportunity to take part in projects that will benefit the local communities.

World Challenge's mission statement is as follows: "World Challenge is an 18 month scheme to enable teams of students to create, fund , plan and lead a challenging expedition from their schools, incorporating project-based and adventurous objectives, to remote parts of the developing world with professional back-up".

Members of the team have been training for the expedition. The first organised training activity was organised during August, when eight members of the team conducted a mini-expedition with Dr. Pettit. We walked along the Two Moors Way, from Drewsteignton to Ivybridge, and managed a total of 60km over two days. Also, five members recently went to the Brecon Beacons to train along side pupils on their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Expedition.

The official training for our expedition is being run by World Challenge on 13th - 15th December. We have been promised that this two and a half day Expedition Training Course, which is taking place in and around Tavistock, will be challenging and enjoyable. It has been designed to prepare all the team members for July '98 by giving a basic introduction in expedition skills. These include leadership training, packing a rucksack, health and hygiene, cooking, river crossings and camping skills. It will try arduous conditions under the appointments of leader, navigator and accountant. Also, it gives all members the opportunity to meet and question the World Challenge staff on any aspect of the expedition.

However, the cost of such a rare opportunity is substantial: each individual requires a total of at least £1500 to cover all the expedition, training and equipment expenses. Fund-raising by individuals has commenced and now group fund-raising has started and will be continuing both within the school and within the area: this term we have arranged and completed a 36 mile sponsored cycle ride from Bodmin to Padstow and back, organised a sixth form four-a-side football tournament and are holding a school mufti day for the expedition. We will also be looking for sponsorship from local companies and anticipate that it will result in increased exposure, both at school events and in the local media, for the companies concerned. With only eight months until our expedition starts, our fund-raising campaign is being stepped so that more money can be used to alleviate the expedition costs to the parents of the team members.

Jonathan Baggs

Engineering Success

It is a well-known fact that numbers entering the field of engineering have fallen significantly in recent times; universities are having difficulty in finding sufficient students for their courses, despite a growing demand for well-qualified chartered engineers. Unless more young people can be encouraged to choose an engineering course, it is inevitable that significant and hugely damaging repercussions will be felt within all areas of British industry, science and technological development.

The 'Engineering Education Scheme' was established in '83 and is gradually encouraging more and more students to consider embarking on a career in engineering. The scheme aims not only to provide an insight into the breadth of opportunity available, but also to dispel the entirely unjustified myth that an engineer is a man in greasy overalls, wielding a spanner and blowtorch. It demonstrates the range of opportunities available for able students of both sexes - from the design of microchips to the Channel Tunnel, it promotes the increasingly challenging and diverse role that the 21st Century engineer will play.

Devonport High School has again selected a team of four Lower-Sixth students for participation in the scheme. Ben Skinner, Bruce De Groote, Simon Hopkins and Russell Middleton will be working with GEC Plessey, manufacturer of electronic semi-conductors, in preparing a solution to a genuine problem with which the company is faced: the design of a visual demonstration model for the abilities of its computer chips. Although the project is still in its early stages, there are already ambitious plans for the production of an 'intelligent' vehicle, code-named the 'IMP (Intelligent Mobile Processing) Demonstrator', with the ability to avoid obstacles, balance on a see-saw and respond to certain stimuli. With the help of an experienced Plessey engineer, they will have the opportunity to learn some mechanics, electronics and computer programming before the project's completion in May.

With the prospect of a residential workshop at Plymouth University in January, and possible graduation to a further fortnight at different University, the scheme offers an all-encompassing insight into the challenging world of the engineer. Meanwhile, with the IMP Demonstrator well on its way, the school anticipates the whirring of tiny cogs any day now.

Russell Middleton

A FOREIGNER'S VIEW!

By Matthias Horesky, a German boy who is spending a year in the school

When I came to Britain at the beginning of September I did not know anything about British schools apart from the fact that the pupils must wear a uniform, which seems unusual to me. In Germany there are no schools where a uniform is compulsory. That is why it was a completely new experience to wear a black blazer, trousers, shoes, a special tie and a white shirt for the whole day.

I am very impressed by the school. Every teacher cares about how I am getting along, what I need for school and what I have to know. On my first day a group of pupils showed me around the magnificent school buildings, which was nice. This is a contrast to German schools, where the teachers only care about the student's academic achievements and not the pupil as a human being. Only examination performances count in Germany. But that is not to suggest that the DHS boys do not aim for high standards in terms of behaviour and results. On the contrary, DHS is a very strict school and could be compared to a private school. I believe it is important to strike a happy balance between work and play. Most British people appear to be able to do this. ~~I suppose that is why I have made so many friends in the short time I have been here.~~

What also surprised me was the way in which the pupils strongly identified themselves with the school and the way in which they stick together. This is not so apparent in Germany. Perhaps this is due to the absence of a school uniform.

I came to England to improve my English because I believe it is very important for my future.

English is very much "the language of business". I also hope to spend a year in a British university. I am studying English literature, economics, general studies and history. Unfortunately, I am only able to spend one year here and therefore I cannot sit the full A-level examinations. But the experience I will take with me cannot be replaced. So I hope I can go on learning more and more about the British language, culture and people. The school has shown me that there are a lot of advantages and good opportunities in the UK education system.

PROPOSED SPORTS HALL: Fact List

It will take nine months to build after the money has been granted by the Sports Council.

It has been held back because the Council requires more information regarding the development plans for each sport, for example, how it is going to be introduced to beginners.

The school is currently working on generating this information with the aid of the Sports Council representatives, who have been particularly helpful and committed.

The Sports Council requires this information because the demand for funds has increased greatly, therefore they need to ensure that our project is a success.

The plans for a larger sports centre were rejected in '95.

The plans for a smaller sports hall were accepted the following year. These plans are currently being worked on so that they meet the new requirements set by the Sports Council.

The project will lead to the construction of a multi sports hall, which will include facilities for basketball, badminton, five-a-side football, volleyball and climbing.

There will be four courts.

There will be disabled access and a refreshments area with a viewing window.

One of the school's priorities is to develop outdoor activities. The climbing wall ties in with school trips and expeditions such as those to Morocco and Kenya, and, on a smaller scale, to Brecon Beacon.

It will be built in the quadrangle to the East and Edgcombe fields, near to E-block.

The school has a large number of successful sportsmen who have represented county, regions and even the nation. This has been achieved with fairly old facilities. Investment has been low due to the lack of funds.

The sports hall will allow us to coach and prepare already successful sportsmen to achieve further excellence.

The hall has been designed in a style to complement the Georgian buildings of the school, with a stone finish and a pitched roof. This has been of particular concern to English Heritage. Unfortunately this has increased the costs by a staggering 300% to £1 428 651. To put this sum into perspective, the school budget for '97 was £2.2 million.

The school has raised £73,000, which in itself is an astonishing sum. This will be increased by the addition of a government grant.

Dean Briffa

Devonport High goes to France

One of the factors which influenced me in my decision to join Devonport High School for Boys back in September '92, was that it had recently opened a study centre in the small village of Uzel in Brittany. This is the story of how this came about and the opportunities that it provides for today's pupils.

History

The dilapidated building which was to become the French centre had been owned by an elderly lady, who on her death, had bequeathed her house to the village with an express that it be used for educational purposes. By chance, the previous headmaster, Mr. Gavin Peck, was on holiday in that area at the time and was fortunate enough to hear about the house. He had already been looking for a place for the school to use as a study centre and was lucky enough to find one here. The mayor of the village had to charge for the house in accordance with French law, and so the school bought the house for the sum of one franc - about ten pence.

Renovation

The new owners found the property to be in a state of absolute disrepair, with the wooden stairs rotted and the garage collapsing. It took many months and a great deal of money, from both the school and the PTA, to make it possible for thirty young boys and staff to stay there.

Opening

In May '92, a group of year eight pupils went to the centre accompanied by Mr. Gavin Peck, Mr. Ron Faulkner (one of the deputy headmasters) and Mrs. Pierpoint (a French teacher, now Head of Modern Languages) to officially open the centre. At this time the following plaque, commemorating the event, was attached:

**LYCÉE DE GARÇONS DE DEVONPORT
CENTRE D'ÉTUDES INTERNATIONAL
INAUGURÉ PAR MONSIEUR JEAN LE POTTIER
MAIRE D'UZEL
LE 21 MAI '92**

Today

Each year since the opening, various forms from the school have made a number of trips to the centre. Each journey lasts just under a week and is usually made between March and July. All year 7 forms go and pupils in years 9 and 11 are also given the opportunity.

The activities that take place there not only aid the boys in their understanding of the French Language, but also, especially for those in the first year at the school, help them to gain valuable experience of living together outside the classroom. As well as learning French, they can do such diverse activities as orienteering, canoeing, horse-riding or looking at archaeology of the nearby town of Quintin. Visits are also made to the Mont St. Michael, near St. Malo (which is much more impressive than England's St. Michael's Mount).

In the sixth-form, those who take A-level French use the centre to spend time in the local school and to have discussion groups led by visitors. There is also the chance for those studying FLAW (Foreign Languages At Work), which is based around the study of French in the workplace, to gain valuable work experience in businesses in the surrounding area.

Trips are, however, not just run for the French department, as Geography and Media Studies groups have also gone there, to do field trips and filming respectively. As well as this, trips have been made by the combined grammar schools' Friday Choir, and The Big Band, to perform concerts both in Uzel and the surrounding area. When the school is not using the centre in term time it is occasionally rented out to local Plymouth schools, and the families of staff and pupils can use it in the holiday periods.

Accommodation

There are three dormitories for the boys, which contain bunk-beds duvets and pillows, so that only sheets and pillow cases need to be brought. There are also two bedrooms for staff. An evening meal and breakfast are provided by a local lady, who is employed as a cook/caretaker. These meals are mostly French (but not frogs' legs or snails!). Since most of the days are spent visiting other areas, packed lunches are usually provided. Additional facilities include a dining room, lounge (with television and computers), a table-tennis room and several showers. Outside, there is a large grassy area, which can be used for football, and a *boules* pitch.

Location

Uzel can be found about ninety minutes drive from the port in Roscoff, in the centre of the Côtes d'Armor *département*. The area is a very agricultural one, the nearest town being Loudéac, about eight miles away. The nearest major city is St. Brieuc which is on the coast of North Brittany, about eighteen miles away. Nearby towns include Quintin, Mûr-de-Bretagne and Moncontour.

Dominic Smith

School Productions

The School prides itself on the quality and consistency of the plays and musicals that are performed every year. They play a key role in the public image that the school gives, both to those closely associated with the school and those with no connection whatsoever to DHS. The doors are thrown open and everyone is welcome to come and see the high standard of music and drama that is on offer.

Every year there is one main school production shown during late March. This is usually a popular West End show because these can bring out both the musical and dramatic capabilities our ever-changing cast can offer, as well as bringing in the largest audiences. In the past the School has produced such hits as *South Pacific*, *Chess*, last year's very popular *Gyps and Dolls* and our most successful show to date, the breathtaking *Sweeney Todd*. Our production for March '98 is another one of Sondheim's masterpieces; *Into the Woods*, we hope to have another smashing success this time around.

All year groups are invited to participate in our productions and the School is always delighted when new talent is found to replace the old when the inevitable

happens. We also welcome the support of those from Plymouth High School and Devonport High School for Girls and that support is happily given and vital to our regular success. Though the cast for productions comes chiefly from our Friday Choir, those not involved still stand an equal chance of getting a part if they show that they possess sufficient talent.

Also there is a huge contribution made by those behind the scenes of every production. On a strictly limited budget, they create staggering effects that make our shows the finest amateur productions possible. After the departures of Chris Eden, Nick Bradbeer, Mark Jones and Mr. Gibson, our regular backstage crew has been forced into a reshuffle. However, we are confident that the new partnership of Mr. Adams and Neil Martin will be just as successful.

The school is also very privileged to possess an exceptionally talented orchestra section that often provides an extra dimension to all our productions. Their success is partly due to the excellent guidance of Mr. Trefor Farrow, the Head of Music for the school. He tunes up the voices for the cast as well as often working at the Theatre Royal for many of their productions. The work he does alongside Mr. Paul Phipps ensures that the standard of music in our productions meets the standard of drama, expertly directed by Mr. Clive Burrows.

The cast has been chosen for Into the Woods and rehearsals are already well underway. This is also the case for Dracula Spectacular. If you would like to purchase tickets for these or any future productions, contact the school on (01752) 208787, and, as always, the school can guarantee that you will have as much fun seeing our productions as we will have had making it possible.

Matthew Jones

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

“Young people growing up in this modern complicated world have many difficulties to face, and opportunities for personal achievement are often limited. At the same time, parents, teachers, voluntary organisation leaders and employers, who recognise their responsibilities towards young people, also have their problems.”

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

How to get Involved in School

Currently the school offers pupils the opportunity to participate in the Bronze and Gold Award Schemes, both schemes are headed in school by Mr. D. Adams. The Bronze scheme is usually launched in year 10 (4th year), and many pupils endeavour to complete it within the year. As a rule we have a relatively good response to the scheme with 20+ pupils partaking in the Bronze Scheme per year. The Gold Scheme, however, does not receive such a large response with approximately 14 lower sixth form pupils participating each year, however this is probably due to the substantial commitment, on the students part, required to complete this award, and it is unusual for students to complete the award prior to leaving the school after 'A' levels .

The Scheme in Brief

The Award Scheme is open to young people of ages 14-25 and has been developed to encourage and stimulate their enthusiasms and energies by presenting a challenging programme of activities. The scheme is designed to develop those qualities of maturity and responsibility which will aid students throughout their lives. The Award is not competitive, and individuals are assessed on their own level of ability and progress. The award consists of four areas (five for the Gold Award) these are:-

Service	Expeditions
Skills	Physical Recreation
A Residential Course (Gold only)	

All of these activities are completed during the students leisure time.

Service

For the service section pupils are encouraged to dedicate some of their leisure time (period of time dependant on the level of award undertaken) to aiding others in the community in some method. The types of service undertaken by pupils at DHS are extremely varied and include:-

Aiding in the running of cub scout groups	Conservation with the Dartmoor National Park rangers
Voluntary work at local hospitals	First Aid courses
Voluntary work at HM Naval Base Museum	Attending Police or Fire Brigade courses and subsequently giving some service
Caring for animals	Life saving or surf-life saving

The aim behind this section is to increase a young persons interest in some activity and to encourage them to socialise with a wide range of different people.

Expeditions

The expedition section for the Award is usually completed on Dartmoor, the expeditions do not demand a substantial walking distance (a mere 15miles for Bronze and 50miles for the Gold), however distance is irrelevant in the award. The challenging factor of the award is the amount of time spent on the moor with your team (2 days for Bronze and 4 for Gold), from this it is obviously important to arranging training expeditions which are effectively used for team bonding. The main aims of the expedition are to increase the students ability to:-

- Work as part of a team
- Be self-reliant within the team
- Navigate, give first-aid (if necessary) and successfully camp

Also to show their:-

- Self-determination and resilience in challenging situations
- Responsibility for their self and their team (leadership)
- Awareness and enjoyment of the environment

Skill

In this section individuals have to develop a skill over an extended period of time. Their choices are made from a diverse selection of non-physical activities, for example:-

Playing a musical instrument	Cookery
Aircraft recognition	Young Enterprise

The students must find a skilled person to oversee and guide them in their particular interest and in doing so make connections with community groups and clubs.

Physical Recreation

This encourages the students top keep fit and discover new abilities whilst having fun. The assessment focuses on commitment and individual improvement, the activities do not have to be competitive. Again the choice of activity is made from a diverse list. DHS pupils have taken up many activities including:-

Badminton	Archery
Octopush	Croquet
Rock Climbing	Fitness Classes
Rugby	Football

For most of the students this involves joining local clubs within the community in order to receive the necessary coaching.

For Bronze participants these four sections have to be completed to obtain the award, but the Gold Award has one extra section, the residential project.

Residential Project

The residential project is intended to broaden students experiences by involvement with others on a residential project. It also aims to introduce students to some form of useful enterprise with others who they do not know. The Residential Project should give students the opportunity to:-

- Experience an unfamiliar environment
- Build new relationships and show concern for others
- Work as part of a team towards shared goals
- Accept responsibility for each other
- Develop communication skills
- Show initiative
- Enjoy living and working with each others

~~To do this the student is required to undertake a shared activity, either voluntary service or training, in a residential setting away from home and in an unfamiliar environment. Students may require briefing or training prior to or during the residential period so that they are able to contribute fully to the activity and derive full benefit from their experience. Some of the activities which DHS pupils can partake in are:-~~

- Conservation work (Acorn Camps, National Trust etc.)
- Service to others (Holiday camps for disadvantaged children, community construction projects etc.)
- Activity-based (Creative Courses, Outward Bound etc.)
- Personal training (Coaching and Instructional Courses etc.)

In my view the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is an extremely worthwhile activity which aids in the social and moral development of students, the award is designed to encourage teamwork and is well recognised by industry and other prospective employers. Participating in the scheme shows people that you are prepared to partake in extra-curricular activities in order to help yourself, the scheme also teaches you many invaluable skills such as:-

- Navigational Skills

- Leadership Skills
- Camping Skills
- Walking Skills

Of course many other skills are learnt in during the award, and many of these are derived from the individuals selection of activities in which (s)he desires to take part in.

Some of the above information has been carefully extracted from:-
Duke of Edinburgh's Award Handbook, Third Edition (Sterling Press, '94)

Nick Fisher

Friday Choir

The "Friday Choir" was set up some years ago, with the purpose of allowing pupils to sing "serious choral music". It contained mainly A-level students but soon increased in numbers.

At first, the choir sang beautiful but reasonably straightforward music, such as Schubert's *Mass in G* and Faure's *Requiem*. However, it soon became clear that the choir was capable of even greater feats and with the first performance of Rutter's *Gloria* it showed itself capable of remarkable performances. More challenging works were presented by Mr. Trefor Farrow, the leader, who realised that the harder he pushed the choir, the better it reacted. Soon, we found ourselves Handel's *Messiah*, Rutter's *Requiem* and Britten's strange *Rejoice In The Lamb*.

For member of the Friday Choir it is not only a challenging musical activity, but a focal point of social life. It gives a chance for members of the single-sex-schools to become acquainted with each other. Many beautiful friendships have been formed between singing some of the great choral works.

European travel is an integral part of the choir's yearly activities. Trips have been made to Holland, Germany, Uzel and more recently Ireland. The choir has been invited been invited back wherever it has been. Ireland is a favourite with present members - two trips have already been made, and a third is planned for this year.

The visits to Ireland were two of the most pleasant trips I have taken part in. The choir bonded as a unit and achieved some excellent performances. In St. Finbar's

Cathedral, in Cork, we gave the best performance in which I have ever taken part. Having sung the responses in a traditional Anglican Mass, we went on to perform Rutter's *Requiem*, Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* and Rutter's *Gloria*. We all knew that our previous concert had only been only average and we were all anxious to make this one better. The satisfaction we gained from a superlative achievement ensured that we all had a very merry evening.

On our first trip to Ireland, soon after we arrived on the 'Emerald Isle', we ran over an unfortunate dog and were delayed for four hours because the hapless animal broke the radiator and a replacement had to be found (a replacement coach that is, not a replacement dog). The new coach did not have a toilet, much to the consternation of a certain Miss Kate Tomlin, whose groans and lamb impressions both moved and amused the whole choir.

This year, we visited Limerick and Cork. On the way to Limerick, we stopped at Tipperary, where choir members left various articles, thus forcing us to carry a three-hour round-trip a few days later, in which communal good-will was pushed. However, we all stayed friends and a few days later, as we sat on the top of a tower in a castle in Limerick, we gave an impromptu concert, which carried over the city far and wide.

Five years ago, a quartet was set up composed of senior members of the choir, which later became known as "FISH", for "Friends In Sublime Harmony". All the original members have now left, but FISH still flourishes, having just won prizes and critical acclaim at the Plymouth Music and Drama Festival.

It would be impossible to write about the choir without mentioning its inspirational leader, Trefor Farrow, and his trusty lieutenant Paul Phipps. Trefor works very hard and manages to tolerate all the goings-on in the choir while still producing excellent results. Paul Phipps is one of the most reliable pianists ever to have lived and helps to bring order to Sir Trefford's chaotic practices.

This year the choir, flourishing as ever with over fifty members, including the very welcome addition of girls from St Dunstan's and, of course, a myriad of girls from Plymouth High and DHSG, is once again learning Faure's *Requiem* and the challenging *Magnificat* by Rutter. Future prospects look bright, with a huge amount of Trebles set to stay with the choir throughout their time at this school, gradually filling the Tenor and Bass sections as they grow older. A "Messiah for All" is to take place in March, where singers from outside the choir will be invited to join in.

All past and present members of the choir will surely agree that singing has given them some of the most enjoyable and satisfying moments to be had.

Daniel Burrows

Water Polo Success

Barry Johns and John Northcote have consistently represented their region at water polo over the last twelve months, enjoying tremendous success.

In '96, the pair were invited to the Under 16 Devon Trials where they each gained a place in the starting line-up. In the Western Counties Tournament, Devon were runaway winners recording victories against Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset and a particularly strong team from Gloucestershire.

Later that season both students, currently studying for 'A' Levels at the school, were considered at the Under 16 West of England Trials where Johns was selected to represent the region in the National Championships in Sheffield. At these championships, Johns was a regular member of the starting line-up and helped the squad to the gold medal against strong opposition from all over the country.

This year, the pair have again shown good form and were present at the Under 18 Devon Trials where Johns was included in the final squad and invited to train with the team. Competing with many older players, however, meant that he was not selected to play.

Recently, Johns and Northcote joined the West of England Under 20 squad at Millfield School to train. This suggests that they will both figure prominently in the region's plans over the next three years.

Already this term, Johns and Northcote have joined twins Peter and Ally McNeill to form one of the three school teams which competed in the Western Counties Swimming Championships at Millfield School. Their narrow defeat to the hosts and another swimming school, Kelly College, is enough to secure qualification for the National Championships where the prize is the chance to compete in China against teams from around the world.

Robert Preece

The following articles have been taken from previous school magazines spanning the last ninety-three years.

93 Years Ago...

The Gun Trials of a 'Man-O'-War'

The vessel on which the trials were to take place is a sister ship to the *Essex*, and had only recently been built at Glasgow, she had come down for her gunnery and steam trials. She possesses two masts and three funnels, the former not fitted with fighting tops but have a search light in their place. Her armament consisted of four 12-inch guns mounted in casements, and several smaller ones, including some 4.7 inch Maxims.

We went aboard she cast off her moorings and headed for the open sea under steam. Before firing began I was given a piece of cotton wool to lessen the shock of the explosion when the guns were fired; I put it in my back pocket. The first gun fired, a Maxim, quite close to me, but it did not cause me any inconvenience. The noise was not continuous, but more resembled a cough. The bullets made a line of foam a little distance from the side. Suddenly, right under my feet, a great flash of flame shot out from the vessel's side followed by a deafening roar made me completely oblivious to the subsequent proceedings for some seconds; when I recovered I stuffed the cotton-wool into my ears for all it was worth, and made tracks to the other side of the ship as fast as I could. Just in time, too, for I had already reached it when a second explosion took place which caused the deck to quiver and tremble under me. This time, however, being prepared I was not so alarmed as before. By the time the next one was fired I had quite recovered and was able to exercise a more intelligent interest. After the explosion the shot went screaming through the air until it either on reaching the surface or made one grand splash before disappearing. When the latter happened a huge column of water would rise to something like thirty feet, and as the ship was some distance away it was probably much more. As they were going to fire the turret guns in the bows next, I went accordingly forward. There was some delay at first, so I went into the Conning Tower. All around inside were little square boxes, knobs and telephones, which enabled anyone inside to have communication with any other part of the ship. They were labelled in such names as Searchlights, Terminals, Submerged Torpedo Tube, Telephone to Engine Room, and many others. There was also apparatus by which the Captain could see how fast the ship was going, and handles for stopping her, etc. In a battle a man in the Conning Tower could control the whole ship from stem to stern without moving more than a couple of paces. The enormous thickness of the steel which enclosed it, rendered safe, even from the heaviest missiles; the entrance was also protected by a steel partition about a foot thick. While examining the apparatus firing commenced outside; the noise was terrific, for two guns fired simultaneously. Luckily I was prepared for something

out of the common, as I was told to watch out for my hat, a straw one, or it would be blown off my head by the force of the explosion. The first time round was at the lowest elevation, and the shots both struck the water at the same time, about twenty yards from the side of the ship, making a huge splash, but although so close the rise of water was not half so great as when a long distance off. The second time the muzzels were parallel to the deck but I could not see where the shot went. The third time they were at extreme elevation, I think I heard one of the officers say that the range was 12, 000 yards, at any rate the missile went clean out of sight. After this they tested how quickly the guns could be fired, they managed to fire about six times in 25 minutes. The noise was terrific. I held on to a rail all the time and gripped as hard as I could, even then I did not feel as safe as I should have wished. When the firing ceased I was perfectly deaf for some minutes. At the same time I was not going to funk the stern guns, so when the firing squad doubled out I followed them. I was told to get to the opposite side from which the guns were being fired, so when I saw them pointing starboard I promptly went to port. To my horror, however, they began to swing around my way, so I went over to the other side as fast as I could, but no sooner had I got there the wretched things swung round again, causing me to rush back. Of course I did not actually run, but at the same time I went as fast as I could without appearing to be in a hurry. While these guns were being fired, two or three men remained on top of the turret and calmly took notes all the time. If I had gone on top I am certain I should not have taken any notes, only looked round for a soft place to fall on in case of accident.

The two guns were the last to be fired, and after I had endured two and a half minutes torture the order was given to clear up, and our bows were heading for Plymouth Sound. Whilst we were steaming along I was taken into the fore turret. There was about as much room inside as the conning tower, but what space there was, was occupied. By the side of each gun there was an electric ammunition hoist, which supplied the guns with a continuous supply of ammunition from the magazine. The guns were raised and lowered by hydrolic power; this was also the power for turning the turret. I was not able to describe the method of working of the mechanism.

After seeing the turret I went below, where luncheon was served, and as I had not eaten anything since 8a.m. I did full justice to the meal. By the time I was on the deck again we were almost at the breakwater. As we rounded the breakwater lighthouse the large and powerful S.S. *Brittania* passed under our stern. What a contrast! With one of smallest guns we could have blown her into fragments in less than five minutes. Two or three minutes afterwards we dropped anchor, and thus ends my first experience of a gun trial aboard a man-of-war. G. E. ELLIS '04

68 Years Ago...

THE JOYS (?) OF RUGGER

We feel it our duty to expose a School evil, inhuman and diabolical in form.

At School, a youth who passes his time under the title of House Captain, approaches one, with an apologetic smile and says, in a self-conscious manner, "Do you mind playing Rugger for the House next Wednesday?" The answer to this question immediately springs to the lips of the victim, "I would with pleasure, but I've never played before." "Oh, that's quite all right," he replies, "You do as everyone else does, and you'll be all right." He is delightfully vague, but makes his assertions with such apparent wisdom that you finally give your consent to be known to all and sundry as "Forward" on the day heretofore mentioned.

The next task is to endeavour to get some idea of the game by approaching some authority on the subject, who says "Ah!" and without hesitation launches forth into "Knock-on," "Reverse pass," "Selling a dummy" and such terms; the nett [sic] result of which is to make you even more hazy than ever on the topic.

The great day arrives. Dreams of an English Rugger cap (or of a Hospital) flash across the mind as you gambol on the field, arrayed in a borrowed shirt. (It is also customary to wear shorts, boots and socks. Useless articles, no doubt, but one must bow to fashion). A gentleman sees you whilst yet far away, and casts an object at you with evident intention of assassination. He is baffled however, by your side-stepping, and the mass hurtles past you on its dangerous errand. Someone pursues the offending piece of cowhide, and returns it, while the gentleman who first cast it approaches you, in a series of leaps, hurling epithets about in more languages than the Tower of Babel ever knew; and from this selection you find that he is informing you that you should have caught the ball. "So that is the ball!" The rest of his lecture is unheard. Knowledge, like the team later on, springs up on you. That wonderfully hideous oblate spheroid of revolution is a ball!

A whistle toots in the distance and everyone troops on to a piece of field, crossed by numerous lines; flags are dotted here and there, and at each end is erected some sort of gallows. Those must be the- Phweep! Another whistle. Some vicious person has kicked the ball at you. You pick it up and look at it. The House Captain's words ring in your ears, "Do as everyone else does." Whilst thus brooding over the oblate spheroid a voice screams "Pass!" another "Kick!!" and yet another "Run!!!" But before you can bring any of these excellent moves into operation, roughly a hundred people have cast themselves upon you, and leaving

the ball to its own devices, you subside beneath the kicking, scrambling, shouting and panting mass of humanity. After pounding you to a jelly they all depart in search of the ball, which by this time has wandered elsewhere. The whistle blows again, "scrum down" someone shouts, and several people bend forward and butt one another. Someone bellows at you to get down, so you oblige by placing yourself in a practically horizontal position behind the heaving crowd. The ball is projected among the threshing legs. "Heel it!" Apparently "Heel it" means the player in front of you has to kick your shins as hard as possible.

With alarming promptitude the scrum ceases to exist, the players leap into the air, the unwary ones precipitate on the ground while all the others dance on them with joy. A figure is seen careering along the field with the ball. Having gone some short distance, he falls down, for some absurd reason, and both teams fall on top of him. The gentleman in charge of the whistle puts in some good work, but with little, or no effect, since everyone continues to shout "Try" or "save" at one another. Slowly they sort themselves out. "Try" says the whistler. We don't know what to try, but some are cheering and some are moaning. Some one kicks the ball over the gallows. "Five points" they scream with joy.

The scramble continues till at last the ball, in some mysterious manner, and misguided moment comes to the spot where you stand. With the cry of "Five points" remaining as a fixed image on your retina or to all intents and purposes, it was the same look upon your face as was upon Napoleon's when he died at Trafalgar, or elsewhere, you cast it with force over the scaffold. A shrill whistle, a babble of sound, and the voice of your captain, smites your offended ears.

Owing to the things the captain said, only a very blurred picture is left of the rest of the fight - sorry, game- and at last the final whistle blows, you leave the field, with the conviction that your spine is broken, and various limbs are dotted around the arena.

W.A.C, J.E.S, C.E.S, - April '29

43 Years Ago...

School Notes

Blocks D and E are now complete, and we are in possession. Their light walls, painted in delicate pastel shades, their pleasing and efficient lighting, including the strip lights over the blackboards in Block D, the boards themselves, and the adequate and unobtrusive display panels on the walls make an almost unbelievable contrast with the dingy conditions under which we have striven for so long.

Now we can realise how large our hall is, and it needs to be that the whole School may be seated in reasonable comfort. The electroleers (sic) are not only pleasing to the eye, but ensure an even distribution of ample light. It was the old gymnasium; and the floor, surfaced, waxed and polished is keeping with the dignity of its surroundings. When the new stage is completed we shall have a hall worthy of the School and equipped for meetings and any plays we may desire to present.

The administrative suite, far removed from form rooms and centres of activity, are admirably planned on the ground floor of E Block, with easy access from the road and with telephone communication with Block D and ultimately C Block. This is essential, in the premises that cover so much ground, to avoid a disproportionate expenditure of valuable time in making contact with the Headmaster, his secretary, or the Senior Master.

In Block D structural alterations have extended the laboratories to meet the needs of junior and senior students; New benches and fittings are in harmony with the pleasing schemes of decoration and the needs of various departments. The woodwork room and a very necessary timber store would supply the demands of the most exacting instructor; the block floor eliminates much unavoidable noise, and the equipment, including a lathe and electrically driven saw will mean that more time spent with the boys because of the speedier preparation of materials.

'54.

18 Years Ago...

THE UPPER SCHOOL

This year the Upper School has been run relatively smoothly with no great problems arising. Members of the Middle Sixth form wrote, produced and performed a successful review called 'IT'. They also planned and executed a successful kidnapping of Mr. Lawless and the School Captain, Karl Wernham, in the interests of Whitleigh independence.

The Lower sixth form activities week was successful and greatly appreciated by all those who participated.

Finally, the Upper School would like to thank Mr. Attewell for his hard work and spiritual guidance. M.Cornelius

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Here in the Middle School one is constantly reminded by the staff of the approaching 'O' Levels and of the necessity of consistent hard work. Perhaps the hardest part of the pre-'O' Level education to accept is the volume of homework. In my experience, once an exercise is started it presents little hardship, and that actually bringing oneself to begin the work is the most difficult task. In other respects the Middle school differs little from the lower years. There is, however, consolation in the exclusion of the personally disagreeable subjects.

Furthermore, the pocket calculator can be removed from its hiding place under the desk and used in full view of the teacher; and also one feels less persecuted by the upper years.

To conclude, we all reach the Middle School eventually, whether we like it or not - and it is up to the individual to make the best of it.

A.R.

THE LOWER SCHOOL

As always this has been a busy year for members of the Junior School. Boys from the first three years have taken part in and, in a number of instances, excelled at a wide range of activities.

Sport has taken a prominent place and it is good to note that both winter and summer sports teams have maintained the high standard of school sporting activities. Other activities have been well supported, particularly those involving musicians. The various concerts and the opera 'Smike' have given a large number an opportunity to display their talents.

Societies and clubs have also flourished during the year, and a number of new ideas have emerged from the enterprising First Year.

There seems to be a genuine feeling of co-operation and participation in the present Lower School, not only made obvious by the support of productions like 'Smike' but also in the willingness of a number of forms to contribute to the Friday morning Junior Assembly. Programmes for this occasion have ranged from Mr. Burton's Four Strong Winds through 1N's nearly Magic Show to 3W's Celebrity Squares.

It is hoped that the present enthusiasm which, without doubt, contributes to the main task of academic achievement can be maintained.

T. FARROW

'79

9 Years Ago...

A. Laurillard & P. Tysoe discuss the introduction of the GCSE examination system in '88.

One of the most interesting developments this year has seen in education the completion of the first two year GCSE courses. I invited a couple of pupils to give their views:

The GCSE exam and all its trappings has become another four letter unmentionable in the already wide repertoire on Middle School students everywhere.

Hailed by the Government, the Right Honourable Kenneth Baker in particular, as the ultimate examination system, GCSE was designed to replace the "outmoded 'O'-level and to cater for the "full range of academic ability present in the country's children".

The idea was commendable, as it is a well known fact that a high powered 'O' level course benefited only the top ten to fifteen per cent of students, whilst others were reduced to CSE examinations and many often end up with no qualifications whatsoever.

Unfortunately, the envisaged slick, well-oiled machine failed to materialise and, whatever the reason was; it is the pupils who must suffer added pressures, the waffle and mistakes that all of us sitting the June '88 exams have experienced.

The worst of all GCSE's shortcomings has to be the examinations themselves. Throughout the last eighteen months we have been subjected to a whole range of different modes of testing, from data questions to structured essays. After all this, we sit down in the exam room and, lo and behold, are asked to count how many flies are drawn on the sheet opposite (MEG Biology 2, Q. 11). There were a hundred. Granted, it was only worth two marks, but is it any wonder that the pupils have such a low opinion of the examinations?

A word that has been inextricably linked with GCSE is "coursework". Is it a good thing? Or just a hindrance?

Geography is a subject in which coursework has provide an amusing diversion throughout the two years. The various expeditions to Dartmoor provided pupils of the fourth form an excellent opportunity to enjoy the fresh air and the scenery; whilst one Wednesday morning, in the Spring Term of the fourth year, Plymouth was invaded by thousands of uniformed geography students from a multitude of schools, most of them taking pedestrian surveys from outside the Wimpy.

Happy memories of juvenile delinquency faded when it was announced a few days AFTER all the coursework was completed that instead of the suspected twenty percent, the actual figure for coursework contribution to the final mark was in fact, wait for it, FIFTY percent.

The idea of including coursework in the syllabus was promoted by the Department of Education as a method of "continuous assessment", suggesting images of Orwellian society - Big Brother is watching YOU!

This time it did not even work in theory, The administrative difficulties experienced by teachers must have been huge and we ended up with concentrated blocks of assessments "to get it out of the way".

It must be said, however, that practical assessment has its benefits but under the present system these are small. The courses are still very much exam-orientated, with eighty per cent of the major science courses exam-based.

All considered, GCSE has very few good points at all. It ensures that every pupil sitting an exam is awarded a grade and that nobody "fails", but this is farcical as even the lower 'O' level passes are not accepted by most employers and universities, One possible advantage of GCSE is that it should motivate less able pupils to try, whilst under the old system they would have been justified in saying "blow this for a game of soldiers" and abandoning all hope.

GCSE has been praised for the greater emphasis placed upon the practical and environmental aspects of the subject. It is the areas with this emphasis that have been the most entertaining of all. In any cases they are so amazingly simple that a large proportion of the marks can be attained from general knowledge alone. One classic example of this could be found in the MEG Physics (paper 1), the multiple choice. The first question portrayed five thermometers with differing levels of mercury in each. The question required the examinee to decide which of the thermometers' readings was variant.

Being the first year to take the new GCSEs in England, we were bound to suffer all the mistakes that are inevitable in any major new system, but the catalogue of errors we have endured has been inexcusable and the author of this article, for one, will remember the GCSEs with nothing but contempt.

'88

Old Boy Whitehouse Returns For The Raiders

Old Boy Richard Whitehouse, who left the school in '91 (a year into his 'A' Level studies), has recently completed a three-year degree course in an American university where the cost of his studies was met by the institution's sports department. While studying psychology, he also played in the college basketball team which trained at least once a day. Whitehouse was one of a number of students from around the world recruited by American universities for their sporting abilities.

Earlier this year, Whitehouse returned to tell the school's Sixth Form students of his experiences across the Atlantic and how he adapted to the American culture and lifestyle. His talk on the American educational system and teaching methods was found to be very useful. He provided a particularly interesting insight into the far superior sports facilities and the general attitude towards sport in the U.S.A.

After achieving his degree, Whitehouse continued his involvement with basketball by joining the Plymouth Rotolok Raiders where he is an integral member of the team. The Raiders are currently flying high in the National League Division One, their only defeat coming against the Richmond Cougars in October. Last year, the Raiders finished second in the table, behind Ware Rebels, but won the National Championship play-offs when they defeated the Rebels in a tense final at the Wembley Arena. In January, they were narrowly defeated by Oxford Devils in the National Trophy Final. It is hoped that the arrival of Whitehouse and American Daniel Okonkwo will help the Plymouth team to repeat that achievement this season and also collect the National Trophy, a competition that they have never won - despite three appearances in the final.

Robert Preece

SIXTH FORM COUNCIL

Edward Attewell, as many may recall, has been a senior member of staff for the past thirty-four years. For a lengthy stretch of years Ted Attewell has been head of the Sixth-Form, and it is evident, merely by acknowledging the successive waves of excellent A-level results, that his approach to Sixth-Form organisation was an effective one. However, although not leaving the school entirely, Mr. Attewell chose the previous school year to be his last as head of the Upper School.

This position holds great responsibility, as it is essential to remember that at this stage it is very important to help produce well-rounded individuals to go on into employment or further education. The new holder of this position recognises this, as did his predecessor. But although Mr. John Starkie aims for the same high goals as Mr. Attewell, he wishes to achieve the same goals somewhat differently.

After teaching for a period in London, John Starkie moved to Devon and began teaching and began teaching in the school's neighbour, Stoke Dameral, for three years. After close involvement with the Sixth Form groups in both schools, he believed he had the capability to become a Sixth Form head and so made the transition and applied for the position at the School. Perhaps the most refreshing aspect of John Starkie is his tremendous ambition and drive. It was this virtue, coupled with his eagerness to become Sixth Form head, that brought him to this establishment.

The aim of John Starkie is, quite simply, to create a community. This body will not only involve the Sixth Formers but also Sixth Form tutors and teachers. He believes that in too many schools there is an "us-and-them" situation, where teachers and pupils do not work together toward the common goal; namely the academic achievements of the student. John Starkie is of the opinion that by generating an "us-and-us" culture a much more positive environment is created, and this is beneficial to all parties.

In order for this objective to be accomplished the pupils and, to a great extent, the tutors too must become actively involved. The most prominent method being used to aid the fulfilment of this aim is the organisation of a Sixth Form Council. This will provide the pupils with a mouthpiece through which they can voice their views. This process is extremely straightforward. A form representative and vice

representative are elected by each of the nine middle and lower Sixth Form classes. These delegates attend a fortnightly council session in which each is given the opportunity to express the feelings of their constituent form groups. By raising and discussing the relevant topics, John Starkie is able to gather the appropriate information in order to make decisions or suggestions to Dr. Nic Pettit, the headmaster, or to the pastoral committee. This allows students and tutors to make an active, positive contribution to the environment in which they work and installs the belief that they can make a change.

Although some may remain sceptical of this new, more democratic system and remain in support of the old regime, it is encouraging to know that John Starkie helped maintain a council in his former school. In that instance it was, in actual fact, a whole school council. This might seem unworkable when applied to a whole spectrum of individuals, abilities and interests, but a commendable level of maturity was attained, engendering fairly successful achievements. It might be concluded that in this establishment where ages, interests and abilities are more similar than those in the whole of Stoke Damerall, a council could achieve a great deal.

Perhaps the only worry regarding this transition from a more disciplined, more teacher-influenced environment to a more democratic system, is the level of the ambitions of the students involved. There is the danger that they may present unreasonable ideas and/or demands; the upshot being that this would lead to an ineffective council. However, following two months of steady progress John Starkie remains confident that the council's suggestions will continue to be beneficial. He and other members of staff will be able to regulate some of the more outrageous suggestions, allowing only productive and reasonable demands and ideas to be discussed. This means that the students will help each other develop, rather than having such developments forced upon them by others. This level of regulation, however, has not yet been required, which is very promising. One hopes that this will lead to the growth and maintenance of strong links between staff and students, thus creating a strong community.

Eamonn Bownes

School Supports Judo Champion

Judo champion Sam Phillips of 12B has praised the school's attitude towards sport.

Sam is just one of the pupils who have achieved regional success in their sport. A member of the Devon and West of England judo squads, he is often chosen to participate in high-profile tournaments which require a long journey on a Friday night in order to compete the following day. On each occasion, he has been granted leave of absence.

He said, "I think it is fair to say that I would not have many of my best medals were it not for the school's understanding attitude."

Earlier this month, Sam competed in the National Championships in Crystal Palace and the schools' affiliation with the British Schools' Judo Association (BSJA) has enabled him to compete in many other tournaments.

Richard Whites

Promotions abound at school ATC Squadron

Congratulations are in order to three of our sixth-formers who attend '7 (Devonport) Squadron of the Air Training Corps. Scott Exley of year 13 has been promoted to Flight-Sergeant, and Liam Steele of 12E and Henry Wilkinson of 12A have both been promoted to Sergeants. Anyone wishing to join the squadron should attend at 6.30pm on Friday evenings, at the Squadron HQ by the school canteen.

An Interview With Jon Ball

Jon Ball of year 13 is one of a number of boys who will be leaving the school for higher education next year. Jon, who lives in Millbrook, Cornwall, is studying five 'A'-levels: physics, chemistry, mathematics, further mathematics and general studies. He has recently applied to read Physics at Keble College, Oxford. "I enjoy physics because it's challenging and interesting," he explains. "It asks many questions as to how the forces in the universe work and interact. Like maths, it involves a lot of problem-solving involving reasoning and logical thought."

He would like eventually to attain a doctorate in the subject and go on to carry out research. "I'd like to play a part in the invention of something which would

improve our lives, although I'm not exactly sure what that would be at the moment!" Jon particularly admires the eminent Albert Einstein. "He changed the way in which we view the universe and used a lot of seemingly abstract ideas. I'd like to achieve just a fraction of what he did."

Jon is involved in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and the Ten Tors. In his spare time Jon enjoys playing tennis, running, painting, and playing the guitar. "My favourite guitarists are Ty Tabor [a member of US band King's X] and Jimi Hendrix," he says. In the future Jon would like to travel a lot. "I don't want to stay in this country for the rest of my life," he explains. "I think it's important that you broaden your horizons."

Jon says that he will miss his friends when he leaves, but says he is looking forward to university and the increased freedom it brings. "It'll be quite strange to no longer follow the school regime. But I've really enjoyed my school years and I'm sure I'll look back on them fondly."

Interview by Chris Monk

Obituary **John Starks**

Born in Devonport on April 29, '17, John Frederick Starks attended Devonport High School for Boys but left at the age of 15 to find a job to support his family. He won a cadetship in Naval Construction in '36 and spent the Second World War working on the 'S' and 'U' class submarines which cut the supply lines of Rommel's Afrikakorps. In '45 John joined the staff of Admiral (Submarines) as a Constructor Commander at the age of 28 - a remarkable achievement.

Between '51 and '55 Starks worked in Washington on nuclear submarine design, accompanied by his wife and two sons. Returning to Britain in '55 he worked on new submarines and the County class destroyers, the first of which was HMS *Devonshire*. His next step was to work on Britain's first nuclear-powered submarine, HMS *Dreadnought*, which was Starks' favourite of all the ships he had worked on.

In '60 he left the Admiralty and joined John Brown & Co. Shipbuilders at Clydebank as a technical director, following a long association with the firm. Here he took part in the work on the luxury liner *QE2*. Soon shipbuilding became less viable in the face of air travel and Starks moved to Vosper Thornycroft in

Southampton, supervising work on Brazilian frigates. After spending five years in Rio de Janeiro he returned home in '77 for twenty years' happy retirement in his native Devon at Teignmouth, where he died on October 17 this year. His wife and sons survive him.

The editorial team wishes to thank the following people for their much appreciated assistance in the production of this magazine:

Support and guidance - **Dr. Pettit, Mrs. Shaw**
Old Boys' liaison - **Peter Fielding**

Cover competition organiser - **Mrs. Pishneshin**
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