



aSpire

Newsletter from Bedford School Foundation

News • Projects • Events



From the Head Master

aSpire is now an established medium for communicating with the whole School community, parents, boys, Old Bedfordians, friends of the School and now Past Parents.

I welcome the establishment of the Past Parents Association as an integral part of the Old Bedfordians Club. Sandra and I thoroughly enjoyed the first function in March – a most convivial wine tasting generously sponsored and hosted by Christopher Burr (58-69), a Master of Wine and the Chairman of Uvine Ltd.

This issue leads with an article about the School's flourishing Theatre. It is but one of the many areas where the boys can develop their talents. There are reports on our new projects, as well as news on sporting and cultural successes. We also provide an update on progress with the new Music School and the restoration of the Chapel's interior.

I hope you find reading aSpire both enjoyable and informative.

Dr Philip Evans OBE



Dramatic Impact

Seating up to 250 people, Bedford School Theatre is fast establishing a name for itself as the town's definitive venue for alternative theatre. As well as providing a stage for the highly professional work of our own pupils, we now provide the opportunity to taste a diverse range of national touring productions.

Drama and Theatre Studies at the School have become increasingly popular and the theatre has served as a launch pad for Old Bedfordians such as pub landlord comedian

Al Murray (77-86) who was Head Boy and a keen member of the Dance Band. More recently he discovered a talent for cooking in Gordon Ramsay's 'Hell's Kitchen' and he also returned to the School 2 years ago to dig a test pit within the Prep School garden during a special edition of Time Team. Joel Bygraves (80-91) recently joined Eastenders, playing small time villain Jake Moon. Joel (who goes under the stage name of Beckett) made his debut in a number of productions at the School before going on to star in

the award winning comedy 'The Office' as Dawn's jealous boyfriend.

Over the Summer term, the next generation of Bedford School stars will be on stage for 3 major productions including Blast Off!- Mr Jones Goes to Jupiter - a performance by Prep School boys and girls from the Bedford High Junior School, Twelve Angry Men, a play by Reginald Rose which will be performed by Upper School pupils, and of course, the eagerly anticipated annual House Drama competition.

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Best Band for Bedford Boys

To a sell out audience at the Bedford Corn Exchange on Monday 21st March, students from the Harpur Trust schools wowed the crowds and raised in excess of £3000 for charity at this year's Harpur Talent Competition.

Best Band was awarded to boys from Bedford School, Tom

Coates, Chris Burns, Alex Burt and Max Thomas who performed an outstanding version of the Sugarcult's 'Stuck in America'

Special note must also go to the next generation of crooners, Max Thomas and George Willis who charmed the audience (especially the girls).



THE PREP SCHOOL

memories of a not too distant past

Di Parton, Deputy Head (Pastoral) of the Prep School recalls her first impressions of the Prep School when she joined the staff back in September 1988.

There have been many changes to the Prep School estate over the



years, not least the addition of the Erskine May Hall and the replacement of the old grass field with an astroturf pitch. Other changes have been less obvious but have made their impact nevertheless.

I was appointed Form Teacher for IivP (read as 'one four P'). Back then,

the boys moved through the school from the Iiv's to the Iiii's, Iii's and finally into the Ii's. It took a while to get used to the class names, but it took even longer to understand the school lists: boys who had older brothers used to be referred to by their siblings name! For example,



Peter Smith, younger brother of John Smith, was known as Smith J ii.

Full boarders lived in Farrers (now Phillpotts senior boarding house) and weekly boarders lived in Sussex House (now occupied by the Headmaster and his family). Today, all boarders live together in Eagle House,

a purpose built boarding facility within the Prep School estate.

At the sound of the lunch bell, boys would walk crocodile fashion to the dining halls. The halls were furnished with long tables and heavy wooden benches. The boys stood



in silence and waited for a teacher to say grace. During the first course boys ate in silence. After that conversation was permitted but a teacher would ring a bell if noise levels became unacceptable. After the tables had been cleared (a task allocated to Monitors) the boys

stood behind their benches and grace was said again. Today there is a cafeteria service, the tables are circular, pupils have a varied choice of meals and conversation flows freely.

Over the past 16 years, the Preparatory School has developed



almost beyond recognition. The School retains its sense of tradition but through careful planning it has moved on to being one of the best preparatory schools in the country. I feel proud of the fact that I have not only been here to witness the changes but have been instrumental in some of them.

Chapel Restoration

The ceiling of the Chapel has been in a poor state of repair for some years now. The sanctuary ceiling was restored ten years ago but funds did not permit a major restoration of the nave. Last year was Bill Brown's 90th birthday and, following an approach from Ian Laing (54-65) with an offer of matched funding, the Foundation decided to mark the occasion by raising funds towards a project close to Bill's heart. With a combination of funds from the School, Bedford School Trust and a target of £65,000 for the Foundation, the project was approved by all concerned.

To avoid a clash with the major campaign for the new Music School, only a limited campaign was run and some 60 OBs closely associated with Bill Brown were approached. By the time that the appeal closed six months later in February the target had been exceeded.

The second photograph shows work in progress in April. The Chapel will re-open in September and all those who have so generously donated to the "Bill Brown Fund" will be invited to the service of Founders and Benefactors in the Chapel on Sunday 9th October.



TELETHON

The Foundation will be running a telephone campaign in August to generate support for a variety of exciting projects, including equipment for the new Music School, "Art on the Roof", sporting awards, improvements to the Main Pavilion - and a fund to help young OBs.

The Head Master will be writing to all those who we would like to speak to in order to explain why we are running the campaign and, if you do not wish to be called, how to opt out.

More information about the "Telethon" will appear on the Foundation website in June.

THE NEW MUSIC SCHOOL TAKES SHAPE

"And if the Foundation can raise a little more, we can afford a staircase as well".

Andrew Morris, the Director of Music, inspects work in progress.

FOUNDATION TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR 2004

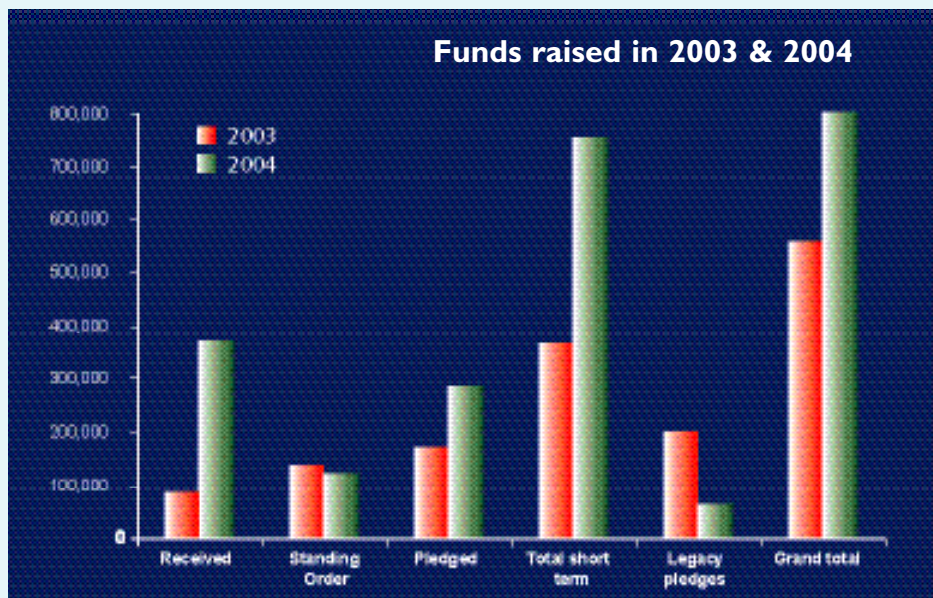
The following was included in the Trustees' report for 2004. A copy of the audited Report and Accounts may be obtained by writing to the Foundation Director at the address shown on the back page:

Fundraising Report

The priority since operations started has been to raise £1 million towards the total cost of £3 million for the new Music School. By the end of 2004 £880,000 had been raised and we have until the end of August 2005 to reach our target. The naming of rooms in the Music School has proved very popular and over a quarter of a million pounds has been raised via this initiative.

2004 the Foundation also launched a public campaign and by the end of the year some £80,000 had been raised by direct mailing to OBs, parents and other interested parties.

Further campaigns totalling £1 million over the next two years have been agreed between the Foundation Trustees and the School Governors since the year end. This includes building projects, sports scholarships and support for the Boat Club. Fundraising for these new projects will start after the present campaign for the Music School is closed later this year.



Although not in our original plans for 2004, we have also raised £56,000 in the year for a project to restore the interior of the School Chapel. Our target is to raise £65,000 out of a total project cost of £275,000. (Note. This target has now been reached). Most of the significant donors are Old Bedfordians with a lasting affection for the School. However, in January

The targets for the Foundation set out by the Governors of Bedford School when it was established were to raise between £2million and £5million in the first five years and up to £10million in the first ten. As the chart shows, we are well up with these targets having raised £1.337million in the twenty-one months to 31st December 2004 that we have been in operation.

MEMORY CORNER-50 Years Ago Today

In 1955 the Revd William Brown became the Head Master of Bedford School; the first, and so far the only, Old Bedfordian to have done so.



Bill was at School from 1921 to 1933 and was Head of School, played for the 1st XV, the 2nd XI and was Captain of Fives. He won a senior scholarship in 1929 and went up to Pembroke College, Cambridge on leaving, having won a major scholarship in Modern Languages.

Bill was a Housemaster at Wellington and Headmaster of King's Ely before his appointment as Head Master of his old School. He remained in post for twenty years during a difficult time in the history of public schools. As the article in the Ousel in November 1975 says, "His experience and background made him especially fitted to deal with the problems of Bedford School during so difficult a period". Last year Bill celebrated his 90th birthday in Norfolk, where he and Betty had gone to live after retiring from Bedford.

Sports News

The first half of 2005 has been a superb time for Bedford's sportsmen past and present...



Simon Pitfield

Simon Pitfield (Upper Sixth) was selected for the England U18 Rugby squad which played in the 4 Nations Championship in March.

Alex Wakely (Fifths) is one of four young cricketers in the UK to win a scholarship to attend the ECB national cricket academy at Loughborough University. Alex became the youngest player last season, at the age of 15, to be selected for the full Bedfordshire Minor County side. He plays club cricket for Ampthill.

Alastair Cook (98-03) was selected for the England A Cricket squad in the UAE and Sri Lanka.

David Callum (97-01) has received his first call up to the Senior Scotland Rugby Squad in recent preparation for the Six Nations Championship. David (22) has had a very good season playing in the back row for Edinburgh in the European Cup and the Celtic League. He has previously captained the Scotland Under 21 team.

Finally, watch out for Will Knight (Fourths) who has all the potential to make it as the next Wimbledon hopeful.

SANDY GRAY Is Elected Deputy Chairman Of the Foundation

Sandy Gray (59-64) was elected as Deputy Chairman at the Foundation's AGM on 5th March 2005. He is seen here (below) talking to Roger Cable (57-63) at the very successful reunion at the School of some 110 OBs who left between 1961 and 1965 last November, which Sandy organised with Tony Joseph (60-64) and Peter Godber (53-63).

Sandy was Head of School, Head of Sandersons and Company Sergeant Major in the Combined Cadet Force. He also rowed for the 2nd VIII and played for the 2nd XV before leaving to go up to Balliol College, Oxford to read Chemistry.

After Oxford, Sandy joined Unilever as a technical trainee and enjoyed a 35 year career in a variety of manufacturing and Research and Development roles which took him, his wife Jane, and their family to Thailand, Portugal, the Netherlands, Brazil, and Germany. During this time their two sons followed Sandy as pupils



Will Knight

at the School and as boarders at Sandersons.

He retired from his post as a VP – Global Supply Chain in 2003, and now spends his time pursuing a wide range of interests.



MEET THE BURSAR



**Colonel Jack Stenhouse
OBE MVO MBA**

When did you join the School?

Two years ago. 'Rejoin' would be more accurate. I am an OB and went right through the School from the Inky as a boarder. I left School in 1967.

Was military life good preparation for being a Bursar?

Yes, bursaring is about school administration in its broadest sense. The financial side of the job is very important but the responsibilities extend much wider to include personnel management, Health & Safety, the School estate, new building projects and Governance matters as well as all other aspects of School life which we take for granted – catering, security, heating and cleaning. Military life prepares you well for handling the myriad of issues.

How long were you in the Army?

28 years – man and boy! It was a most exciting and challenging life and I was very fortunate to have had some unusual opportunities. After Sandhurst I was commissioned into The Gordon Highlanders and served

in various appointments in the Regiment around the world including 4 emergency tours in Northern Ireland. I was appointed Commanding Officer in 1986 when, at the height of the Cold War, the Regiment was roled as a helicopter borne, anti tank battalion based in Germany. I also served on secondment with the Gurkhas in Hong Kong.

How did you end up at Buckingham Palace?

Senior members of the Royal Family appoint equerries to arrange their official engagements. I was appointed by the Prince of Wales and worked closely with HRH and the late Princess for two happy and most rewarding years. It was hugely demanding but a unique experience. I felt greatly privileged to have been able to serve the Crown in this way.

As an OB what particular changes have you noticed?

The changes have been considerable – as you would expect in 40 years! The School estate has developed of course with some dramatic new buildings such as the Erskine May Hall and the new Library. But the culture of the School is also different. It is more enlightened and relaxed. Boys are encouraged to be creative as well as embracing the sporting and physical challenges. Achievement in all fields of School life is equally recognised. The opportunities for boys are endless and most seem to take full advantage of their time at Bedford .It is good to be back!

Choral Society Concert

On Sunday 20th March, the Choral Society presented their much anticipated annual concert involving pupils and staff from Bedford School & Preparatory School, Bedford High and Dame Alice Harpur School. Together they put on a truly memorable performance of J S Bach's

St Matthew Passion. Guest performers included Andrew Yeats - Evangelist, Timothy Jones - Christus, Adrian Finch, (Head of RE Dept) - Pilate, Clare Booth - Soprano, Tom King (93-98) - Counter-Tenor and James Hawkey (Ex Member of Staff) - Tenor.



Centre for GIS

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are specialised forms of information systems capable of assembling, storing, manipulating, and displaying geographically-referenced information in a relational database. Nowadays GIS is everywhere; used by town planners, ecologists, marketers, mining engineers, planners and geographers. For example, GIS might allow emergency planners to easily calculate response times in the event of a natural disaster. GIS technology is an integral component of many university courses but is currently taught in

only 6% of British schools. Geography department staff are looking to establish a Centre for GIS at the School to act as a not-for-profit learning hub bringing together people and information technology to address 'real' issues in society. As well as developing learning activities for student use both within and outside the School, the Centre will also offer a series of training courses for teachers throughout Bedfordshire and beyond. Further information can be found at: www.bedfordschool.org.uk.



Bedford School Library

And Finally...

MORE MUSIC STARS

Our feature on Old Bedfordians who had become successful musicians attracted a considerable amount of interest and "Letters to the Editor". I regret that we omitted at least three talented OB musicians. Undoubtedly there are many more. Do let us know. Frank Muskar (67-69) is an internationally successful and well established British songwriter and producer. He has more than 25 Gold and Platinum records to his credit. Unfortunately we have lost contact

with Frank so please let us know his address if you are in touch with him. Another OB Musician of note is composer Marius deVries (75-81). He has written music and produced the score for a number of films such as Moulin Rouge. Peter Godber (53-63) is a bass soloist and pianist who has performed in London, Italy, China, Russia, Spain and Germany in a wide range of major works. **CHARLES TURNHAM** Charles Turnham (92-03) who is in his second year reading Modern History at Oxford University (Lincoln College) gained a First in his Prelims and has been

made an Exhibitioner of Lincoln College. **CHRISTOPHER BURR (58-69)** Christopher generously sponsored the recent wine tasting for the Past Parents Association and is seen below in characteristic pose.



Library Success in National Design Award

Bedford School Library was awarded a 'Mention' in the National Design Awards by the Civic Trust, at a ceremony in Brighton on 7th April. The Library was felt to have a particular cultural, social and economic benefit for the community and the open plan design much impressed the panel of judges.

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