



ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE

G20 Deputy Heads Conference Wellington College

David Wylde and Anthony Seldon (Master of Wellington College) started the G20 Schools in 2006 as an informal association of secondary schools, the Heads of which would meet once a year to discuss global educational issues. There are about 40 member schools.

The inaugural G20 Deputy Heads Conference, hosted by Wellington College, was somewhat hastily arranged at the beginning of this year and so only 13 schools were represented from Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, India, Jordan, Boston USA, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and our three host UK schools, Wellington College, Eton and Marlborough College.

It was an experiment, and a successful one. We all stayed in the quaint Wellington Hotel in Crowthorne and, because it was such a small group of people, got to know one another very well. All being Deputies, in no time at all, there was a structure, purpose and the makings of a global organisation!

Some of the broad objectives and projects that were distilled from the Conference were:

- to be outward facing, international and unguardedly collaborative
- to strive for common purpose and values within the diversity of schools
- sharing best practice, policies, procedures as well as challenges, such as 'meaningful student governance', 'outstanding pastoral care', 'teacher facilitation and appraisal', etc...
- facilitating teacher exchanges (as well as pupil exchanges)
- creating a 'Window on the World' global cyber classroom for children from our schools based on Harkness principles that would promote liberal enlightenment through a uniquely developed integrated curriculum comprising of philosophy, peace studies, thinking skills, understanding the nature of tolerance and universal love, etc...

We attended the remarkable Sunday Times Festival of Education at Wellington College which profiled approximately 200 speakers and panel discussions on education over two days. It was really extraordinary.

Although many of the issues were unique to the United Kingdom, it was also apparent that the issues facing education are the same at St Andrew's College as they are throughout the world. From the few talks that I attended, the following were some of the debates that were raging:



- **Knowledge-based teaching versus skills-based teaching.**

As we have experienced, there was recently a very fashionable trend to outcomes-based education (OBE) that focussed on skills. It was a reaction to Victorian style 'rote-learning' without any understanding of issues or any understanding of the child at the centre of his learning. The reaction was so extreme that it regarded the content or knowledge-base as arbitrary. I think that the rationale was that there was so much to 'know', so how did you decide on certain discreet bits of knowledge as being more important for all the children to learn, than others? I think that OBE was also a result of the internet and how so much information was available at the touch of a button.

The debate was quite aggressive. Proponents of a Knowledge-based approach to education were adamant that it does not mean that it is not child-centred. And, there were key elements of the various disciplines that **were** more important for children to know, than others. They were also emphatic in their belief that developing long-term memory assists creative and critical thought, and that you cannot teach skills independently of long term memory. A swing back to specific content is exactly what has happened in the UK – the Prime Minister even had to step in and put Winston Churchill back into the History syllabus! And, of course, the debate extended to the nature of 'information' as opposed to the nature of 'knowledge', not to mention the age-old debates about assessment and how one measures the acquisition of knowledge. (What exactly does it mean to 'know' 64,5% of your English, for example? A somewhat bizarre concept if you think too much about it!)

- **The use of technology versus the humanising influence of the teacher-person on the lives of children.** The Open University has revolutionised access to tertiary education for



The sculpture of Copenhagen, Wellington's war horse in the battle of Waterloo

millions of people. You can now get a degree from the world's top universities without leaving your study or interacting with one single other human being. To an extent, this is similar to the rationale behind the 'flipped classroom' where the child is given the lesson through some digital medium such as the Khan Academy, and then uses class time to debate, practice and internalise the concepts. I recently read an article which put forward the view that the aim of the outstanding teacher should be to make him/herself redundant in the classroom. The power of learning must be handed over to the children (the digital natives) so that they can carry this ability to learn, 'know' and understand with them into the rest of their lives.

The reactionaries cautioned that, in its extreme, this would lead to varying degrees of barbarism. They passionately believed that the sustained and long-term relationship and interaction with a teacher is fundamental to how children learn about being a good human being. It is how they learn to be caring and kind. This relationship is the means of children understanding beauty and dignity, and developing a moral compass. This also led onto raging discussions about the importance of a Classical Liberal Education and how the study of the Humanities is being choked by the materialistic expedience of Commercial and Scientific subjects. There was also a very controversial discussion about the importance of children maintaining a sophisticated and nuanced command of language and grammar. Language is power. It was strongly argued that street slang, sms-speak, code-switching and, what was facetiously called "modulation of linguistic register", are disempowering. The canon of literature of 'dead white men' transcends the cultural and political edifice and has a central role to play in maintaining our civilization.

Our visit to the 600 year old Eton College was a profoundly spiritual experience. A federation of 25 Houses, with 50 boys in each. It is still unashamedly Socratic in its teaching while using the best technology and facilities one can imagine. A Gutenberg Bible in its Library. White bowties and tails. A very sophisticated pastoral care structure. It is probably the most famous boys' school in the world and the womb of hundreds of extraordinary men from Nobel Laureates to Prime Ministers. It was like looking at a photograph of one's Great-Great Grandfather. One could recognise aspects of College's features as a direct descendent of the Eton model, and it also gave a clear measure of how much, and in what ways, we have changed from that model. It was quite apparent that Eton knows what it is and how it achieves its results. And it continues, rock-steady, along its course despite the tides of educational fashion that have buffeted the beleaguered UK education system over the past 40 years.

After the conference, I spent two days at Oxford University where Sean Robinson kindly arranged for me to stay in a guest room at St John's College. He gave me the most extraordinary tour of the university. The Bodleian Library was started in 1320 and now has 190km of shelving. On any given day there are 54 000 books checked out and it costs £10,7M to run every year. Walking through the Colleges, each with its own library and Chapel and unique character, was an extraordinary journey through antiquity. Floating through ChristChurch Cathedral; a memorial to John and Charles Wesley on the floor; brass plaques in memory of men who had died from disease and wounds in the South African War on walls; and the face of Edith Liddell as St Catherine of Alexandria in the 1878 Edward Burne-Jones stained glass window in the



The Chapel of St John's College, Oxford



Chapel of Remembrance. (Edith's sister, Alice, was the inspiration for the book 'Alice in Wonderland'.)

In the evening, I had drinks with the College and DSG Oxford scholars (Sean Robinson, Clive Eley, Bronwyn Tarr and David Springer) in the legendary Eagle and Child pub, the haunt of JR Tolkien and CS Lewis. They were members of the 'Inklings', an informal group of Oxford writers in the 1930s and 40s who encouraged the writing of fantasy.

We had a wonderful dinner (at which Sean, Clive, Bronny and David realised that they had all been taught by Mevrouw Jacobs!). And we talked about Grahamstown: my 2002 production of Jesus Christ superstar that Bronwyn had danced in, David's impending trip home to take part in the 75th anniversary of the Pipe Band, Sean's experience of teaching at College last year, and Clive, who had just returned from Eton that day, where the College cricketers had won, talked about his field-side conversation with Andrew la Trobe, whom he had met in 2005 at the 150 Jubilee celebrations.

I remember walking out of the restaurant into the late dusk. It was surreal – the cobbles, ancient stone architecture all covered by a sky stretched tightly overhead of the most indescribable dark blue (maybe a metallic azure?). It is amazing how a sense of place can make one feel so complete, fully alive, content and happy. (It could also have been the rather good wine that we had with our supper.) It is a feeling that one often gets walking on the College campus.

I was then dragged, protesting just a little, for more drinks at the oldest pub in Oxford, The King's Arms. It was founded in 1607 on the site of an Augustinian Priory dating back to 1278, and it also claims to have the highest IQ per square foot. In the early hours of the morning, Clive kindly made us coffee in the Senior Common



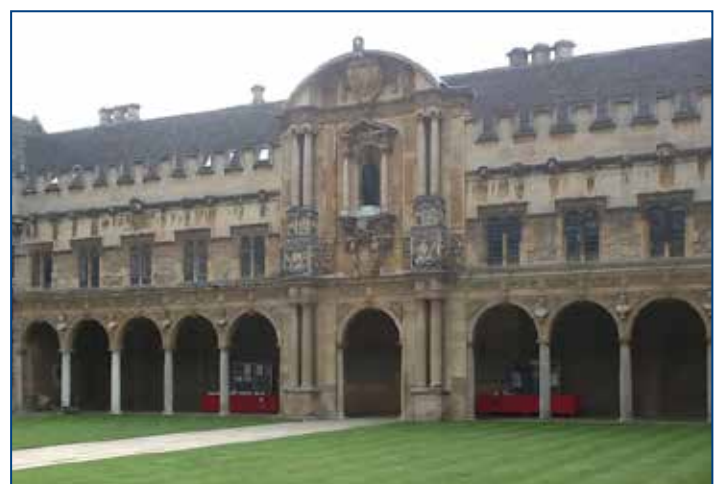
Room of Trinity College, which was a rare and very special privilege. There could not have been a more perfect evening.

What was crystal clear was that these four youngsters were totally comfortable at Oxford – academically, culturally and socially. They completely belonged. And they had earned a reputation for being exceptional researchers who had gained the trust and admiration of their groups and supervisors. I also felt quite at home at Oxford – socially and culturally – I just wish I had worked harder academically at school and university!

How privileged I am to have had this opportunity. Wellington College is a slightly younger school than College and, Marlborough, slightly older. It was like visiting cousins. I am not sure that, as a community, we realise the rather esteemed global company that we keep. And with that comes an awesome responsibility to our heritage.

In a nutshell, what I brought back from the whole experience is the following:

We need to understand College's educational history and genealogy. This is part of its genetic make-up and life-blood, and transcends geographical boundaries because it is about forging the intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical and cultural dimensions of boys in a boarding environment with a very strong sense of belonging, so that they can go out confidently into the world and make their mark, as our Oxford Scholars are doing. And hence, College can have a very clear understanding of what it is and what it must treasure and protect. And it must do this with confidence and faith in its track record, not being distracted by flashy and skittish educational fads. Kenneth Clark summed up his TV series "Civilisation" by saying that it is lack of confidence, more than anything else, that has been the downfall of so many a civilisation.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Maths Olympiad and International Maths Competition

Congratulations to James Godlonton and Teb Schlebusch who have made it into the Senior Top 100 in round 2 of the South African Maths Olympiad, and also to Nicholas Murray, Nicholas Kroon, Kai Mason, Kieran Van Oldenborgh and Zak Schlebusch who are amongst the Top 100 of the Junior Maths Olympiad. They will be taking part in the final round later in the year.

Mr Simon Kroon accompanied Nicholas Murray and Nicholas Kroon, who were selected for one of the South African teams for pupils in Grades 9 or 10, to take part in the International Maths Competition in Bulgaria. They pitted their skills against fellow mathematicians from 30 countries around the globe. An example of how seriously some of the countries take this competition is the Vietnam team. Our boys befriended a 12-year old boy named Duc (pronounced "dook") who explained how they had trained for 6 hours a day for a full month before the competition. They certainly understand the meaning of hard work and from a young age.

The Competition was extremely tough and, as expected, the teams from the Asian countries took top honours. The South Africa teams struggled in the Team Competition but in the Individual Competition Nicholas Kroon was one of two South Africans to receive a Merit Award. This meant that he was ranked roughly in the middle of all the contestants (and did manage to beat a couple of Asians!). Well done to the two Nicks! You have done your school and your country proud!



English Olympiad and "Symbol"

Warm congratulations to Frans van Hoek and to James Holmes for being placed in the Top 50 in the country in the SACEE De Beers English Olympiad out of 7500 candidates countrywide. All Top 50 Candidates are awarded a year's free tuition at Rhodes University. Special congratulations also go to Carmen Nangola and Silvie van Onselen from the DSG who were both placed in the Top 15!

Mr Joe Orsmond put together a bumper edition of the magazine "Symbol" which showcased the poetry and writing of many boys and girls over the past two years. It was a wonderful celebration of creativity and an expression of children's feelings about the human condition, and perceptions about life. An electronic version of "Symbol" is attached for your enjoyment.

Grade 9 Subject Choices for 2014

At the end of the term, your son will be given a report from The Psychological Care Centre with guidance on his subject choice for Grade 10 in 2014. You will also receive a Subject Choice Booklet. I will email a link to you in order for you to do an online subject choice for your son through the College webpage. Please could you complete the subject choice by the first day of the Michaelmas Term in order for us to start working on the timetable.

Matric Exam Entry Form

All Matric parents would have received an email with their son's Matric Entry for his final examinations. Please could you sign it and return it after checking that the details are correct. As yet, we do not have an official date for the release for the Matric Results but, tentatively, it seems that they may be released around 31 December 2013.



International Benchmarking Tests (Grade 9 in 2012)

Timothy Mountford was the top scorer in South Africa in the English IBT last year (100th percentile). This is a singular achievement. Many of our boys did very well and the following table shows only the achievements of the boys who achieved in the top 10% in South Africa.



Grade 9 pupils who wrote the Youth Chinese Test. From left to right: Matthew Straughan, James Kirkpatrick, Nicholas Kroon, Vaughan Powell and Zak Schlebusch. Absent from the photo: Martin Kruger and James Wilson.

ENGLISH	MATHEMATICS
100 th Percentile	95 th to 99 th Percentile
Timothy Mountford	John Baines
95 th to 99 th Percentile	Adam Godlonton
James Alcock	Rahul Gopal
Sean Benson	William Hunting
Myles Brown	Douglas Kerkmann
Jack Brunette	Max Kieser
Max Kieser	Thomas Lane
Thomas Lane	Timothy Mountford
Joe Mwangi	Frank Norval
Nicholas O'Connell	Nicholas O'Connell
James Scott	Uli Ratsibe
James Stoddart	James Scott
Gareth Williams	James Stoddart
90 th to 94 th Percentile	90 th to 94 th Percentile
Luke Alexandre	Myles Brown
Damon Evans	Jack Brunette
Kyle Groenewald	Lawrence Fowle
Matthew Harper	Jayden Pienaar
David Harvey	Martin Simango
Mawande Macozoma	Aidan Stoll
Sebastian Mulders	
Uli Ratsibe	

Mandarin

The Grade 9s do a semester course in Mandarin and they wrote the Youth Chinese Test in May. Congratulations to the following Grade 9s who achieved distinctions for this international test:

Nicholas Kroon	98%
Matthew Straughan	94%
Martin Kruger	94%
James Wilson	93%
James Kirkpatrick	90%
Vaughan Powell	81%
Zak Schlebusch	81%

Cambridge A Level Thinking Skills

We were delighted to receive communication from Cambridge International Examinations that Aaron Graham (Mullins 2012) was awarded a High Achievement Award for gaining the top result in South Africa in the A Level Thinking Skills Examination last year.

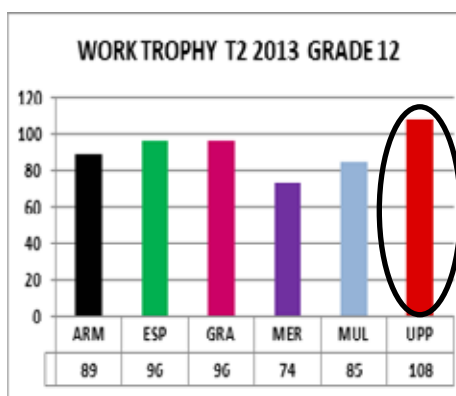
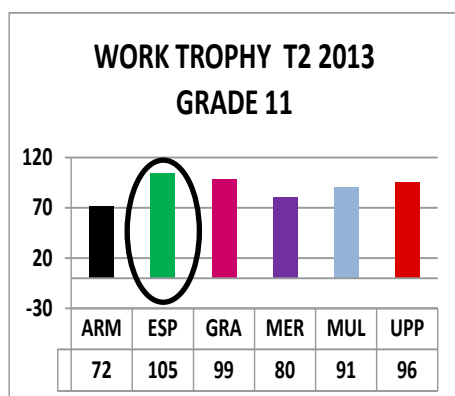
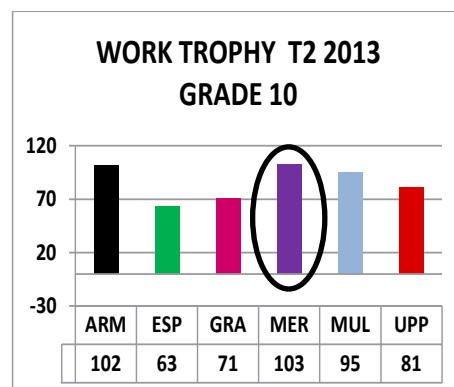
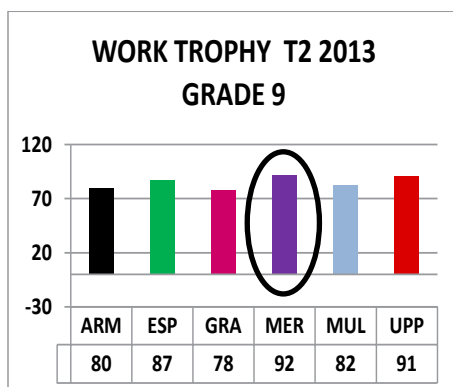
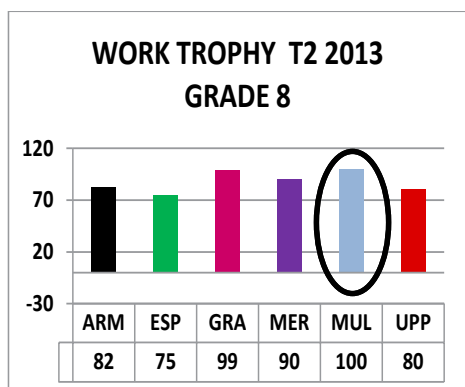
The results of this year's exams will be available on 13 August 2013.

Decimus Term Order Trinity Term 2013

GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
James Ridley	Nicholas Kroon	Timothy Mountford	Nicholas Wilkinson	Frans van Hoek
Francis Christie	Kai Mason	Martin Simango	Jonathan Jayes	James Godlonton
Dillan Sievwright	Zak Schlebusch	Rahul Gopal	Matthew Kroon	Jonathan Gibbs
Christopher Benjamin	James Kirkpatrick	Myles Brown	James Lake	Teb Schlebusch
Thando Mseleku	Dylan Hawkes	James Scott	James Holmes	Beric Allsop
Murray Breetzke	Matthew vd Nest	James Stoddart	Ryan Neil	Dane van Heteren
Wesley Williams	Martin Kruger	Douglas Kerkmann	Simphiwe Zondani	Michael Patterson
Etienne van Jaarsveld	Nicholas Murray	Uli Ratsibe	Benjamin Stijkel	Dylan Ramsay
Luke Hobson	Guto Ocharo	Matthew Shaw	Robert Ball	Yann Souchaud
Alexander Morris	NJ van Jaarsveld	Brandon Starr	Andrew Mills	Brad Hunter

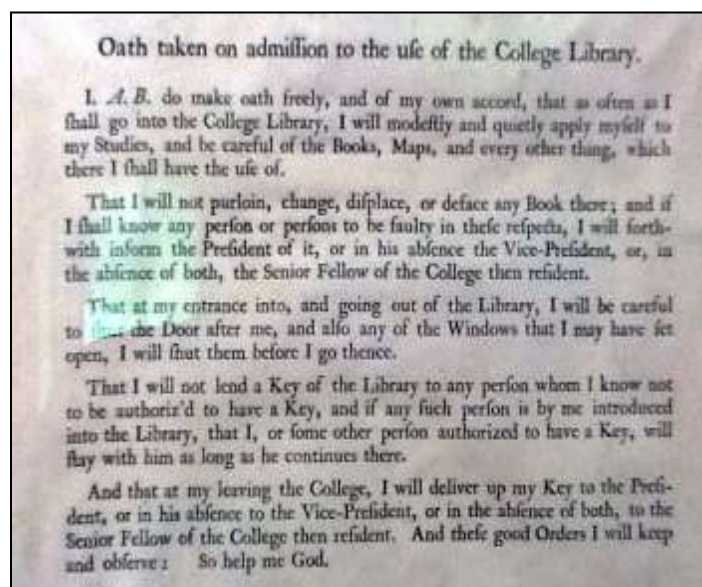
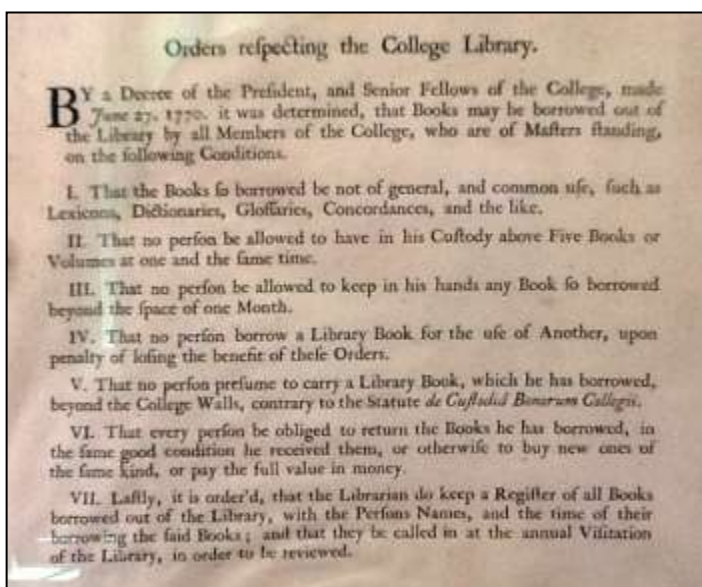
Work Tropies

Congratulations to the following Houses on winning the Work Trophies for Trinity Term, and to Simphiwe Zondani (11U) and Frans van Hoek (12U) on achieving a full house of “R”’s.



A Love of Words

The following photographs are of the “Orders respecting the College Library” and the “Oath taken on admission to the use of the College Library” at St John’s College, Oxford. I just smiled!



Aidan Smith

DEPUTY HEADMASTER: ACADEMICS