



# Aldenham Today

Issue 44 - WINTER 2017

# A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

The start of a new term and a new school year saw 570 pupils in our senior school, the largest number we have ever had. We were especially delighted to welcome girls into Riding's for the first time, which has become a second House for the girls. Girls originally joined Aldenham in 1980 in the Sixth Form and since full co-education the numbers have expanded throughout all year groups. Girls who are boarding will continue to stay attached to Paull's House which is still a girls' House for both boarders and day pupils.

We have also been celebrating that the School has again reached the highest possible outcome following the recent Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection and we have been given the top rating of EXCELLENT. Our success in achieving our aims has been recognised in the last five independent inspections, and we were again judged as compliant in every area of regulation and in terms of educational quality of pupils' achievement and personal development.

This is a very creditable reflection of the work of every member of staff, both teaching and support, the way in which the pupils respond to what is offered for them, and of course the support for the School by the parents. Mr Trevor Barton, our Chair of Governors, declared "It reflects not only the quality of the education provided at Aldenham, but also the spirit and ethos of the School, the dedication and hard work of all the staff, the character and achievements of our pupils and the very positive impression they make."

I look forward to seeing many of you at future school events and sports fixtures. We are anticipating a large turnout at the ISFA national finals on 15 March when our Under 15 football team take on a team from Cheadle Hulme at Burton Albion Football Club (Pirelli Stadium). It would be lovely to see as many supporters there as possible.

**James Fowler**



Headmaster **James Fowler** with one of our oldest Old Aldenhamians, **Geoffrey Prall** at the annual OA Dinner.

# ALDENHAM SCHOOL REMEMBERS



Aldenham marked Armistice Day with a service for the whole school community in the School Chapel when 55 national flags were placed on the altar as a symbol of the internationalism of the school, along with the CCF colours.

In a service which focused not only on the sacrifice of our armed forces but also the importance of peace and unity throughout the world, we were reminded of the 288 former pupils and staff who died in conflicts of the 20th century. Science teacher Mr Al Stewart read a moving poem that he had written specially for the occasion and Revd Green spoke about a past pupil who had died in WW1, within a year of leaving Aldenham aged only 18.



Mr Andy Williams, Senior School Principal, was joined by Senior and Prep School Head Boys and Girls as they laid wreaths alongside religious and community leaders at the Letchmore Heath service on Remembrance Sunday. The School Brass Ensemble led the hymns joined by the London Show Choir as a large number of the local community gathered in the morning sunshine, like many others across the country.

The Aldenham CCF marched from the School to the village behind the rallying sound of the bagpipes before they stood in formation by the war memorial making an important reminder of the significance of the event.



# DRAMA

Audiences were treated to a double bill of Shakespeare for this year's senior production which demonstrated versatile acting skills through the presentation of both a tragedy and a comedy, proving that these great

plays can speak to a contemporary audience. Both productions were set in modern day Mexico during the Day of the Dead Festival. The scaffolding and levels provided intrigue as cast members climbed through, sat on and jumped from this onto the built stage which the audience surrounded on three sides, hinting at the original performing conditions of these plays.

*Romeo and Juliet* started the evening, entralling audiences with the creative use of a large chorus involved throughout in movement sequences and strong ensemble work. There were some stunningly mature performances from the principle actors as well as incredible fight sequences.

*Much Ado About Nothing* followed the interval with some light relief. This delightful piece entertained the audience with lots of comic performances as well as intense scenes. Pupils created some excellent comic characters whilst showing great versatility within the performance.



Romeo and Juliet



Much Ado About Nothing

## LESSONS FROM AUSCHWITZ PROJECT

**Zara Nimmo** and **Emmanuel Omale** have been selected to take part in the Holocaust Educational Trust's ground-breaking *Lessons from Auschwitz* Project. In a hotly-contested essay writing competition our students came out on top of an impressive batch of entrants.

Since 1999, over 34,000 students and teachers have taken part in the *Lessons from Auschwitz* Project. Based on the premise that 'hearing is not like seeing', this four-part course explores the universal lessons of the Holocaust and its relevance for today. The LFA Project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust for young people and to clearly highlight what can happen if prejudice and racism become acceptable.

## INDUCTION OF SCHOOL CHAPLAINS



The Venerable Jonathan Smith, the Archdeacon of St Albans, licensed The Revd Jos Perris as School Chaplain and The Revd Philip Green as Assistant School Chaplain. Revd Perris joined the Aldenham Foundation in September as School Chaplain working across the Senior School, the Prep School and St Hilda's in Bushey. Revd Green had been acting School Chaplain alongside his teaching commitments and his role as Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## CCF BIENNIAL INSPECTION

Aldenham welcomed Col Simon Brown from the Royal Anglians as Inspecting Officer at the Biennial Inspection of the Combined Cadet Force alongside partnership school Queens' in Bushey. This was an especially important day for the Army section who are Royal Anglian infantry cadets, as it was the first time a Royal Anglian had visited Aldenham CCF.



The day was rounded off by a full-scale section attack on Top Field firing blank rounds and smoke grenades in order to assault and clear an enemy position with full 'casevac' simulation at the end - watched by Year 8 students, staff and parents.



Recent leaver James Harmer is spending part of his gap year volunteering with the CCF at Aldenham before he goes to university and a career in the Army. Always passionate about the CCF which he joined in Year 9 James explained "The CCF was my favourite activity at Aldenham and when I heard that I could come back as an instructor and undertake a massive range of courses and qualifications which would also boost my CV massively, I was sold."

## HISTORY & POLITICS STUDENTS IN WASHINGTON DC

Twenty History and Politics students and four members of staff spent a packed few days in Washington DC over half term. Activities included a walking tour of the city's memorials, and visits to the US Capitol and Ford's Theatre, where President Lincoln was assassinated. Students were able to pay their respects to John F. Kennedy by visiting his grave in Arlington Cemetery. Sessions in several of the world's finest museums, including the National Museum of American History and the Air and Space museum, formed part of the itinerary. A visit to Du Pont and Georgetown also added to the total experience giving students a real flavour of DC.

For those who couldn't shake off the jet lag, there was also the unforgettable experience of seeing the sunrise from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial after a pre-dawn run.



## MEDIA STUDIES TRIP TO THE BIG APPLE

A Level Media students travelled to New York to get first-hand experience about the world of Media, Film and TV in one of the world's great nerve centres. Going behind the scenes at NBC's studios they were able to record their own news coverage. A visit to the International Center of Photography and the Museum of Moving Images was a great way to learn more about the history of film and photography and get an insight into how film equipment can be used to make stories come to life. Year 12 student **Hannah Gunn** explained that one of the highlights of the trip was "the visit to One World Observatory where we saw the most spectacular view of New York City from the 104th floor".



# CLASSICS DEPARTMENT VISITS GREECE



Pupils who are studying Classical Civilisation and Latin at GCSE and A Level went on a study trip in Greece to see at first hand a large number of Classical sites, many of which are on the exam specifications. Starting with a visit to the Theatre of Thorikos and then Cape Sounion to see the magnificent Temple of Poseidon on a promontory overlooking the Aegean, they then proceeded to Athens to settle into their hotel.

No trip to Athens is complete without a visit to the famous Acropolis, beginning with the Theatre of Dionysus. They climbed up past the Temple of Athena Nike to the Parthenon Temple itself with its magnificent Doric columns they then went to the Acropolis museum to learn more about the statues and friezes found there.

The group drove through the mountains to visit Olympia, the original site of the Olympic Games. There the pupils tried running the 'stade' (nearly 200m) and the

standing long-jump. They were also fortunate to see the lighting of the Olympic torch for the latest winter games!

On the final day the group visited the ancient city of Corinth and the Isthmus canal before catching the flight back to Heathrow. It was clear that the pupils had enjoyed themselves and benefitted from a great learning experience.



## ESU PUBLIC SPEAKING SUCCESS

The ESU Public Speaking Competition is the largest of its kind in the UK with over 400 teams entering each year. This year's first heat saw two teams from Aldenham compete: **Nicholas Davis, Dhyaan Shah and Alexander Knight** as Team 1, and **James Kennedy, Ellis Charalambous and Alistair Fraser** as Team 2.

After a strong first heat Aldenham Team 2 beat their rivals St Margaret's Bushey, Haberdashers' Boys and St Clement Danes, and gained a place in the regional finals, held on the 31st January.

After another tough final heat at Haberdashers' Boys, they were placed third overall. **James Kennedy** won the prized 'Personality of the Competition' award for his passionate speech on "Should we be selling arms to repressive countries?" for which he received an engraved ESU award.



## ELEVATE EDUCATION

Pupils in Years 9 and 11 participated in a study skills programme delivered by Elevate Education, a multi-award winning organisation that has revolutionised the way study skills are taught around the world. Pupils in Year 9 covered maximising attention and minimising distractions, memory and learning styles, semantic learning techniques and avoiding rote learning through the use of high level techniques. Meanwhile, pupils in Year 11 covered high value exam preparation tasks, how to ensure constant improvement, time allocation during exam preparation and techniques for managing stress and time pressure in exams.



## BUSINESS STUDIES

Dr Pirie, co-creator and president of the Adam Smith Institute, one of the top 10 think tanks in the world outside of the US, spoke to the Aldenham School Business Society on “Problems with Modern Economics” focussing on current policies being suggested by both Labour and Conservative governments. His strong views prompted many excellent questions from the packed

auditorium and he has certainly left us with many more questions to be raised in the coming weeks in class. It was a simulating evening and we are enormously grateful for Dr Pirie’s time.



Another visitor to talk to the Aldenham Business and Economics students was Chris Harrison, a successful network marketer who described the workings of the profession and revealed the size and potential of this lucrative market.

## POLITICS STUDENTS VISIT PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

The School is fortunate to be close enough to London to allow regular visits to the Palace of Westminster. Recently Sixth Form Politics students attended Polecon to hear a range of MPs speak. John Bercow, Ken Clarke, Sir Keir Starmer, Chukka Umuna, Jess Phillips, Jacob Rees-Mogg, Nick Clegg and Anna Soubry spoke and answered questions from students. They also heard from *The Times* diarist Patrick Kidd beforehand in a fantastic day of British politics.



# VISITING SPEAKERS

We have been delighted to welcome several Members of Parliament to speak to our students recently. Labour MP and Shadow Justice Minister Mrs Yasmin Qureshi and our local MP Mr Oliver Dowden (Conservative) explained why they had entered politics and demonstrated why they are absolutely passionate about their work. These were powerful messages for everyone to hear first-hand from those who are at the forefront of politics at Westminster.

Visits like this, along with a careers talk on 'A Career in Local Government' by Mr Bin Afolami, Conservative MP for Hitchin and Harpenden, have given our students more insight into a variety of party political views and may well stir some of them to pursue this career path. We are keen to offer a balanced view and welcome visitors from all political parties.



Oxford University professor Lance Miller spoke to members of Les Philosophes about Einstein's Legacy. Professor Miller covered Einstein's Theory of Relativity and the influence it has had on observational cosmology. He spoke about Dark Matter, Dark Energy, Gravitational Waves and much more. Students asked some fantastic questions showing that Einstein's Legacy is indeed in good hands!

Explorer and writer Charlie Walker made a much anticipated return to Aldenham School when speaking at Les Philosophes. Charlie was regaling the students with the story of his recently completed 5,200 mile trip from the Arctic Circle to Istanbul, charting the Eurasian border. Battling temperatures between -45C and +50C as well as three arrests from KGB style police, he and his partner completed the extraordinary eight-month trip in October. Charlie also gave away a copy of his first book, charting the first half of his 40,000 mile solo journey of discovery around the world. The winner was **Sasha MacDonald** for her thoughts on the Eurasian border's future.



Les Philosophes welcomed *Solutions Not Sides* to discuss and debate the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Amal who is an Israeli and Shazad a Palestinian, explained what it is like to live in the area. As ever, students asked challenging questions and took away a deeper understanding of one of the world's most pressing and complex political issues.



Another visitor, the Bishop of Hertford Michael Beasley spoke to senior students on the relationship between science and religion. Bishop Michael spoke eloquently about his time at Imperial College researching the impact that diseases have on populations, specifically using Eritrea as an example. He also spoke about how he became a man of faith while maintaining a passion and appreciation for science.

Members were in an inquisitive mood and challenged Bishop Michael on everything from whether religion has a place in politics to views on modernisation, religion being a manmade concept and the church's acceptance of women and homosexuals. It was an engaging and enlightening evening and fantastic to see so many interesting questions given such thoughtful answers. Huge thanks to Bishop Michael for his time and honesty.

## EPQ PRESENTATION EVENING

The Extended Project Qualification undertaken by students in Year 13 is worth half an A Level and is highly valued by universities because it encourages the development of independent learning and research skills. Each student presented on the findings of their projects to parents, staff and students at a special celebratory event. Chosen topics were both diverse and fascinating, ranging from water cooling computer processing, a film on dyslexia and a photography exhibition.



Congratulations to our EPQ students who have all gained outstanding grades, six months ahead of their A Level examinations.

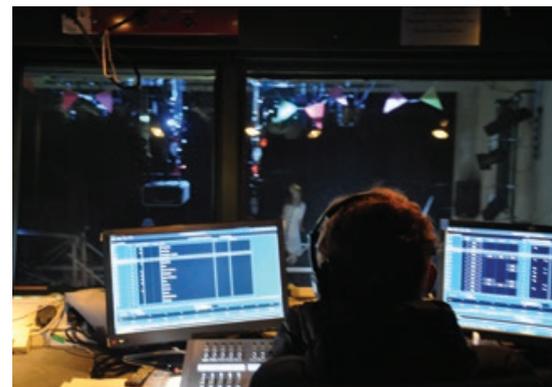
## A HAPPY 95<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

We were delighted that Geoffrey Prall, who was a pupil at Aldenham from 1936 to 1940, chose to celebrate his 95th birthday at the School on the occasion of the Annual Old Aldenhamian Dinner in November. Geoffrey very eloquently shared his memories with the 85 guests present, of a very different environment at Aldenham before and at the start of WW2. Head Girl, **Phoebe Altman**, expressed her amazement when she learnt that Geoffrey said goodbye to his father, who was in the RAF and didn't see him again for more than two years. As the youngest person in attendance it was appropriate that Phoebe should present a gift to such a popular and stalwart member of our community.



## ANNUAL FUND CONTINUES TO GROW

Students will benefit from a variety of new resources that will be bought with donations to the Aldenham Annual Fund 2017/18. The campaign was launched in October 2017 and we were able to buy a new lighting desk in time for the Senior School production in December. A generous gift from an Old Aldenhamian enabled us to purchase an electric organ for the Recital Room, which will be a great asset for students to practise and perform on.



# MUSICAL NOTES

## HOUSE MUSIC



Many congratulations to everyone for a terrific House Music competition enjoyed by 1,200 spectators. Paull's House, winners of the Unison Cup for the 5th consecutive year, was described by the adjudicator Mr David Temple as clear, beautiful and intense with a sweetness of sound and power. The Conductor's Cup also went to Paull's, crediting **Isabel Anderton** with bringing the Paull's Unison together so well. Paull's won no less than four of the categories with Leeman's taking the Ensemble trophy for Rivers Cuomo's *Buddy Holly*.

David Temple's extensive repertoire includes conducting at the Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican, as a guest chorus master with the BBC Symphony Chorus and the London Symphony Chorus. Collaborations with musicians from other genres include Sir Ray Davies and Noel Gallagher, and he has also appeared on the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury and at the



This of course is an event which involves every single student in the Senior School, so it was a treat to hear all of the boys and girls in Martineau's House give a fine performance of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Be Our Guest*. Although not part of the competition, it definitely added to the overall enjoyment of the event.



Proms in the Park. It is therefore high praise indeed when he says that "Aldenham has unbelievable talent".

The variety of performances in the Solo Cup made it difficult to judge; from bagpipes to bouzouki with piano and voice in between. **Sophie Katsiavriades** (Paull's House) grabbed the audience immediately with her emotional rendition of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Think of Me*. Year 10 student Atahan Diamond from Beevor's scored highly on piano for a brilliant evenness of touch and excellent variety of dynamics in Chopin's *Fantasia Impromptu Op.66* gaining him second place.

## INFORMAL CONCERT

An Informal Concert featured mainly solo items from performers ranging from Year 7 to Year 12. Debut performances from students who have been learning for a very short time included **Zehra Kazmi** on clarinet and **Rishi Kavia** on French horn, along with appearances from some of our more seasoned students. As well as instrumental items the voice was well represented by **Jonathan Wilson**, **Emilie Geissmar-Wagstaff** and **Sophie Katsiavriades**, and, as has become customary, we were treated to a high standard of piano playing, from the delicacy of **Eddie Sunman's** Bach to **Atahan Diamond's** dynamic performance of Rachmaninov's mighty prelude in C sharp minor.



# VISITATION OF THE BREWERS' COMPANY

On the day that we welcomed the Master and Warden of the Brewers' Company for their annual visit, it was announced that we would also be having an ISI Inspection that week. Each year since 1597 the Brewers' Company has made a Visitation to check on the School's progress, often taking an inventory of the goods belonging to both the School and the alms-houses at Round Bush.

Thankfully the outcome for both inspections was 'excellent'!



# RIDING'S - NOW A DAY HOUSE FOR GIRLS



The new Riding's girls spent the first day of term familiarising themselves with their surroundings and getting to know each other through a programme of activities. In the evening they were joined by their parents at a reception where they were greeted by their new Housemistress, Miss Jones, and the Headmaster.



# YEAR 12 PSYCHOLOGISTS' COCKTAIL PARTY

As part of the cross-curricular Heroes and Heroines project, Year 12 Psychology students were each allocated a well-known psychologist to research and represent, such as Freud, Bandura or Loftus. In a cocktail party style, the students had a quick carousel or 'speed dating' activity, to find out about each other in their roles.



# SPORT

## FOOTBALL



Having won the County Cup for the past four years, the Aldenham U15 football team have also continued their winning streak by reaching their first ever ISFA final which will be played against Cheadle Hulme on 15 March. We wish them very good luck as they travel to Burton Albion Football Club for what should be an exciting game that they'll all remember for many years to come.



Aldenham travelled to Eton for the semi-finals. An enthusiastic Aldenham side started the game brightly and had a number of chances to take the lead. After a tense wait, Aldenham eventually broke the deadlock when **Charlie Patino** masterfully beat two defenders and squared for **Rayon Atkinson** to finish calmly into the bottom corner. The second half brought excitement from the beginning and Aldenham quickly scored

twice, with two fine individual goals from **Daniel Oyegoke** and **Charlie Patino**. Now leading 3-0 it seemed to the jubilant Aldenham side that a win was guaranteed. But just as it looked to be over, Eton scored two quick goals bringing them firmly back into the game. With only nine minutes left, Aldenham were unrelenting and the final score was 3-2 to Aldenham.

On the way to the finals Aldenham beat Alleyn's School in the quarter finals in a very close encounter which eventually went to a tense penalty shoot-out. Alleyn's defended deep and were awarded a penalty at the end of the first half but a wonderful save from our Goalkeeper **Rico Charalambous** kept the scores level. Aldenham had a goal disallowed in the second half as they pushed for a late winner but Alleyn's managed to keep the game level at 0-0. Excitement was high as Aldenham were the first to score 4 penalties and so progress to the semi-finals with a final score of 4-2. Excellent play everyone, in a very exciting match!



Both the U15 and U13 teams have risen to the challenge and made it through to the semi-finals of the County Cup to be played later in the Spring term.



## RUGBY

**Louis O'Sullivan** has been selected to play in the Herts County Rugby U16 representative squad. Louis, who started playing rugby when he was only five, plays for Chess Valley in Rickmansworth. A chip off the old block, he is following in his father's and uncle's footsteps who both played Munster Schoolboys rugby. He also plays Rugby league for the Hemel Stags and was selected for the North Origin v the South Origin at the end of last season. Although rugby is his first love, Louis started playing football when he arrived at Aldenham which he also enjoys. Well done Louis.



## STUDENT TO REPRESENT GB

Many congratulations to Year 10 Beevor's student **Oliver Strange** who has been called up to fence for the Great Britain U17 men's foil team. Already a member of the U15 England squad Oliver is the youngest member of the GB team. We wish him every success and will follow his fencing career with great interest.



## NETBALL

The Netball season got off to a good start for the 1st VII team when they won all the games on their mini tour to Suffolk. The girls played some outstanding netball to beat Royal Hospital School and Woodbridge School. Captained by **Charlotte Yeabsley** this is an excellent start to the season and certainly sets the bar high.

The team had every reason to celebrate as both Woodbridge and RHS play a high level of netball; their teams include numerous club and junior super league players. Aldenham demonstrated skill and determination as well as high levels of fitness to beat these schools. Player of the match against RHS was **Sasha MacDonald** and against Woodbridge was **Emma Conway**.



## HOCKEY

Congratulations to our girls for their excellent play in the Girls' Indoor Hockey County Championships where they emerged the second best team in the county. The Aldenham U18 team beat Queenswood 3-1, **Debbie Okeowo** and **Emma Conway** the scorers. It was a huge achievement for our team which also included **Rachel Crawley, Hana Hashiba-Charlton, Milly Gall, Sasha MacDonald, Lauryn Edwell** and **Megan Yeabsley**.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**21/22 March**

Dance Show

**28 March**

Spring Concert

**10 June**

OA Day

**15 June**

Prep Schools' Cricket Festival

**16 JUNE**

**OPEN MORNING**

**23 June**

Visitation Day

**29 June**

Eros to Eros Run

**29 June**

ASPA Leavers' Ball

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