



The Bridge

NEWS FROM THE SECKFORD FOUNDATION & WOODBRIDGE SCHOOL



Issue 17 • Autumn 2011

Record Exam Results

Headmaster Stephen Cole praised the achievement of the students who received record A Level and GCSE results this year. More than half of the A Level papers were graded A or A, and, most impressively, one in six papers at Woodbridge were awarded A* compared to one in twelve nationally.*

Mr Cole said: "These are yet again record results, even more impressive because they are gained in the prime cut subjects on the A Level menu. Our reputation in mathematics, physics and foreign languages is further enhanced by this year's achievements, which opens doors for our students to the most selecting universities in the kingdom."

At GCSE there were also more A*s than ever before, and nearly three in every five

papers at Woodbridge were graded A* or A. In particular, nine candidates achieved a complete set of ten or more A*s and 61 of the 120 candidates averaged A-grades or above across all their subjects.

"Such superb results are rooted in the excellent relationship between hard-working pupils and exceptional teachers," said Mr Cole.



On A Level results day, talented 18 year old Ying Gu opened his letter to discover he had been awarded five A*s. Ying scooped top grades in maths, further maths, physics, computing and economics. His results actually surpassed the Headmaster, who would also have received A*s in the first four of those subjects had he sat them today. Ying Gu is now studying maths at Imperial College, London.

National Win For Golfing Trio

Three of the School's talented golfers won this year's English School Team Championships at Woodhall Spa, avenging last year's result when the School had to settle for the runner-up spot.

Another talented golfer from the School, Joshua Robertson, has capped an incredible season by winning the 2011 Junior National Skills Challenge at Woodhall Spa.



Monty Scowsill, Thomas Case and Harrison Carter

National Victory For Equestrian Team

After dominating in the regional qualifiers, a team of equestrians from the School rode to victory at the National Schools' Equestrian Championships.



Zara Lye

Nine riders from the School qualified for the National Finals in October, competing against 62 teams and 300 riders.

The intermediate (90cm) team comprising of Harriet Johnson, James Brown, Zara Lye and Alice Croft scooped the National Title in the Intermediate Jumping with Style Championship.

New President For Old Woodbridgian Society

The Old Woodbridgian Society will have a new OW at the helm following Ken Bailey's decision to stand down after eight and a half exceptional years.

Under his watch the Society has come more permanently and easily under the umbrella of the School, and the relationship and understanding is closer now than at any other point in Woodbridge's history. In particular all alumni activity is run from the development office, which can be contacted by emailing: alumni@woodbridge.suffolk.sch.uk



Headmaster Stephen Cole said: "The School should never underestimate the quality of commitment that Ken has brought to what is a voluntary role. He has brilliantly positioned the Society so that its

role is secure, and has expanded activity in many areas including golf. The fact that between 100 and 200 OWs attend the annual dinner is evidence of the effectiveness of his remarkable leadership."

Dr Annie Fitzgerald, whom Ken describes as a "more recent OW", has been elected as President for the next two years. Dr Fitzgerald is a highly regarded local GP and has two children currently at the school.

Plans for the 350th anniversary of the refounding of Woodbridge School in 1662 are now well advanced and will run throughout the 2012/13 academic year. Details will be available on the website but events will include a series of concerts by OWs. A Grand Anniversary Dinner will be hosted jointly by the School and the Society on October 6 and it is hoped as many OWs as possible will attend.

Former Student Completes Epic Sea Adventure

An inspirational OW has spent seven months at sea in order to raise thousands of pounds for the blood cancer charity Anthony Nolan.

Oliver Rofix, who was diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia one year after leaving the School, completed a round trip of the British Isles in a boat he rebuilt, raising money and awareness of the need for bone marrow donors.

Oliver set off on his epic adventure on March 28th, the day after he was given the milestone five-year all-clear from the disease, and completed it seven months to the day. "I bought my boat as a project before I had a bone marrow transplant and, mentally, it got me through the treatment," he said. "Without that goal I'd have struggled to stay alive. I felt I'd been given a second chance and I decided to take the boat around the country and tell my story."

The 26-year-old, who lives in Clopton, set off on his solo journey from London in a Valiant 18 called The Jolly Oly and faced challenging seas



picture courtesy of the East Anglian Daily Times

and weather conditions, but he is delighted to have recruited 35 new donors, as 70% of those in need of a bone marrow transplant rely on the generosity of strangers.

Over the past five years, Oliver has collected more than £20,000 for the charity and credits his former Headmaster Stephen Cole with generating half of that figure following his London Marathon run last year.

Oliver's next challenge is to travel around the British Isles in a RIB in 2013, covering 4,000 miles and visiting all the country's lifeboat stations. "It's never been done before and I

Words Of Praise And Prosperity Celebrate This Year's Speech Day

The success of Woodbridge students and the School's outstanding exam results were celebrated with words of encouragement for the future from a leading Suffolk businessman at this year's Speech Day.



Dr Michael Lynch OBE, the CEO and founder of Autonomy Systems, delivered a compelling message to students to be creative and seize the potential in what he described as an era of "hyper-change" and opportunity.



intend to take other cancer survivors with me on parts of the trip," he said. "I need to raise at least £1,000 every month from January and would be grateful for any support." To sponsor Oliver, please visit www.olivers-travels.co.uk.

Foundation Keeps Woodbridge's Young And Old At Its Heart

Excelling in the delivery of education and care of the young and elderly in the Woodbridge area is at the heart of the Seckford Foundation's commitment to its community.



One area of its work is the provision of grants in the local community which aim to fund young or old individuals in the pursuit of goals they would otherwise be unable to achieve, or to assist in projects and the delivery of services that would benefit young people or the elderly.

Woodbridge RFU Club U12s training with the scrum machine donated by the Foundation.

Profile: Father Peter

Walking eight miles a day to school was routine for Father Peter who grew up in Holland but later made his life in England and became a parish priest.

"I was born in 1927 and as the school was two miles away and we went home for lunch, I and my five siblings all walked those eight miles every day – it was routine so no one thought about it. We were in a small town and life was easy before the War. The German soldiers tried to be friendly at first but that soon changed and life became difficult for the Dutch nation. There were food shortages and it was hard for parents to put a meal on the table for their family.

I joined the Dutch Navy in 1944 at the age of 17 and was in it for about four years, spending most of the time in the Dutch East Indies. When I left the services I took a job with a local district council and then decided to move to England in 1963. I moved because when I came out of the navy I had found it hard to settle again in Holland so thought a move across the North Sea might help.

Over the years I did a number of jobs, initially living in Chichester working in the food industry. I later moved into engineering and while working in it I also studied the subject to degree level and for a few years I worked with Pye in Cambridge.

Around that time it was suggested I go and study for the priesthood which took up the next seven years of my life at colleges in Hertfordshire and Birmingham. My first job in the church was



as a curate in Luton and then a similar role in Northampton and Leighton Buzzard. I became a parish priest in Whittlesey and then in Cambridge before coming to work in Woodbridge, which I did until I retired in 2001.

I have loved my time in Woodbridge with a wonderful congregation and such friendship in this town that I really did gain a lot of fulfilment from working here. When I had a stroke it cut down my activities – I used to do a lot of gardening as that was my hobby and I loved growing flowers, but I could not do it all at my home in Melton. Needing more care, I realised it was time for another move and came to my flat in the Almshouses four years ago.

Everyone is so nice here, with such good company with other residents and such caring staff around all the time. I do have a scooter so I can go up and down to town for my shopping and I go to church every day if I can.

Looking back, which you do at this age, I can honestly say that the best time of my life was being a priest and I was fortunate that my working life provided so much fulfilment every day."

Service Remembers The Founders Of The School



The Right Reverend Nigel Stock, Bishop of Edmundsbury and Ipswich, presided at the Annual Commemoration School service to remember those who founded the School in 1577 and its re-establishment in 1662.

The service included prayers read by six-year-old Queen's House pupil Thomas Liddy, who was word perfect in his delivery in front of the 950 pupils, teachers and governors who attended the service. Head girl Helen Poulter and Abbey pupil Laurie Bertram also read at the service, which is traditionally held every year after Speech Day.

Dementia Sufferers Benefit From Day Centre Care

The Seckford Day Centre welcomes dementia sufferers once a week giving them the chance to enjoy a structured change of scene, which can be a helpful stimulant for those suffering with short-term memory loss.

Visitors can participate in a range of activities depending on their wellbeing on the day, ranging from simply talking and reminiscing with members of staff and other sufferers to more hands-on activities such as supervised baking. This type of care gives family carers a welcome chance to have a breather from what is often round the clock support and care.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Seckford Foundation Day Centre and what it can offer the elderly, please telephone 01394 386520.

Chaos And Comedy Rule At Shakespeare Shows

A little mayhem and mistaken identity created evenings of summer enchantment, when Year 9 students enacted Twelfth Night as their annual Shakespeare performance, one of eight school plays that takes place each year.

The students appeared to have enormous fun with the play, which tells of the adventures of Viola and her twin brother Sebastian when they are separated after a shipwreck. Elaborate disguises, devious tricks and clever wordplay followed to riotous effect.



Great Acclaim For Abbey Play

Pupils from The Abbey performed the hit musical *Bugsy Malone* to great acclaim with the production receiving rave reviews for the quality of acting, dancing and singing. Members of the cast clearly enjoyed playing the role of child gangsters on the streets of New York City in the 1920s.



Journey Through Space And Time To Geneva

The physics annual 'day trip' to CERN, Geneva, stretched its timeframe to the limit lasting 22 hours from start to finish, but gave the participating eleven students a wonderful opportunity to visit one of the world's largest and most respected centres for scientific research.

CERN is the European Organisation for Nuclear Research and its business is fundamental physics, finding out what the universe is made of and how it works using the world's largest and most complex scientific instruments to study the basic constituents of matter.

A chance to see the superconducting magnet factory, ATLAS, and LHC control rooms, proton

injection site and linear acceleratory facility – and finally entry into the 'anti matter factory' – left everyone in awe at the physical science successes achieved via teamwork at Cern.

(Editor's note: Woodbridge School would like to deny any link between the visit and later discovery that the laws of relativity can be broken).



Accolade For Top Chemistry Students



Seven Sixth Form chemistry students won top awards in a national chemistry challenge and two of them were awarded the opportunity to join a residential chemistry camp at Cambridge University during the summer. The competition attracted an entry of 3,100 chemistry students from across the country and was designed to stretch their knowledge at A-level chemistry.

Patrick Stevens, Tom Clarke, Jonathan Keable, Alfie Butt and Robin Hartley all won medal awards for their papers. Pelham Etherington and Andrew Wills achieved the highest grade with special Roentgenium awards, which were presented to them at the House of Commons.

The Roentgenium is the highest accolade attainable in the challenge and is only awarded to the top one per cent of participants, this year just 35 in the UK.



Pelham Gains An insight Into Life At Cambridge

When the summer term ended and most people went off for their holiday, Sixth Form student Pelham Etherington packed his bags ready for a two month stay in Cambridge.

Pelham had been invited to help with a research project at Cambridge University over the summer which provided a great opportunity to use his science knowledge in a laboratory rather than in the classroom.

When he finishes his studies next summer after some ten years at the School, he hopes to be at Cambridge as an undergraduate doing natural sciences. He already has his chemistry A2 completed a year early and will be taking maths, further maths, physics and biology next year.

His other achievements include being a dinghy instructor; doing karate to a high level; singing in the Chamber Choir; playing in several orchestras

including the National Children's Orchestra for five years and being the principal bass for three years; and achieving Grade 8 in piano, guitar and the double bass. He is also a keen scuba diver and is a PADI registered advanced open water diver.

Pelham said: "Open days at university can only provide a glimpse of what life would be like there so having two months and meeting post-graduate students was a great insight for me. Having joined Woodbridge in Year 3 I have been able to enjoy many aspects of the School but what I have enjoyed most is having the opportunity to try so many things – many of which I will be able to enjoy doing at university too."

Distinguished Cellist Opens UK Tour At Woodbridge

Distinguished cellist Martin Skampa opened his three-week concert tour of the UK by giving young cellists and their pianists a master class at the School, prior to performing an evening concert in the Seckford Theatre with his pianist Michal Rezek.

Sixth Form pupil David Yeung with
Martin Skampa



Violinist Simon Woodbridge has been awarded a distinction in the Royal School of Music Diploma. Fewer than 100 musicians are awarded this each year and it is an extraordinarily impressive achievement. The Diploma entitles Simon to use the letters DipABRSM after his name and to wear an academic gown.

To see Simon performing click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzbT7596iQk>

Chess Grandmaster Helps Pupils Plan Their Next Moves

Former English Chess Champion, Grandmaster Stephen Gordon, is holding the position of chess teacher for this academic year.



Charlie Garnham and George Steward from The Abbey enjoying a chess lesson

Mr Gordon won the title in 2007 and is also a four-time British Under-21 Champion. He has represented the England chess team at a senior level on two occasions, most recently in the European Championships in Serbia in 2009.

"My primary aim for the year is to develop the pupils' logical thinking skills," said Mr Gordon, who believes that playing a range of board games as a child helped him achieve success.

"More Than An Evening Of Jazz..."

Talented young musician and A Level student Owen Dawson came up with a novel way to raise money to help fund a replacement for his 100-year-old trombone.

Owen presented an evening of jazz with four fellow musicians at St Mary's Church, Woodbridge, to help raise funds towards the cost of a replacement and raised £660 on the night, but still needs a further £600 before he can buy a new trombone.

The evening was a great success and was described by one member of the audience as being "more than an evening of jazz ... five musicians enjoying themselves playing real jazz, passing the melodies back and forth with the audience as privileged bystanders."



Finn On Target At National Shooting Championships

Joining the CCF at the School gave Finn Hawes the chance to pursue his love for target shooting and become an accomplished shot competing against the country's best in the National Schools' competitions.

Finn's enthusiasm for the sport meant hours of practising on the range in his spare time, initially shooting distances of 25 metres but soon participating in full bore shooting over distances of up to 600 metres.



Now a well-known competitor at the Bisley Shooting School in Surrey, home of the National Rifle Association, Finn has competed in the National Schools' Championships for the past three years and been awarded the School's Shooting Trophy for the best shot in the competition every year.

In 2010 Finn was awarded the Silenta gold medal for being the best U16 shot in the UK. This year Finn won his way through to the champion of champions, competing for the Spencer Mellish, a competition for the best individual shots from the 40 schools competing.

With the Headmaster on hand to offer support, Finn took up position with his 7.62 target rifle and, totally focused on the job in hand, only dropped three points from a maximum score of 50 which left him in third place out of 300 competitors – a fantastic performance and one he hopes to improve on in 2012.

Trio Get National Call-Up To Norway

A trio of talented skiers from the School have been selected for the English Schools Ski Association team (ESSKIA) squad in Scandinavia next February.



Fourteen year old Adam Lillywhite with his sister Alex, 12 (pictured), and Tom Goddard, 15, will complete training in Norway following a successful summer season on the artificial slopes.

Students Rise To The Challenge In Morocco

Twenty three students enjoyed an action-packed trip to Morocco which involved mountain climbing, trekking, spending a week helping local communities and being assessed for their gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.



The group was greeted by soaring temperatures when they stepped off the plane in Marrakech, but undeterred by the heat they set off for the Atlas Mountains where they spent a gruelling four days climbing North Africa's second highest mountain, Mount Mgoun.

The second week was spent living and working with local families, with the boys helping out the Moroccan men with manual tasks whilst the girls assisted with household chores.

Student William Loftus said: "We enjoyed three exhilarating weeks in Morocco experiencing a very different cultural environment which was both humbling and very gratifying. Spending time and gaining the respect of the Moroccan families was extremely rewarding and reaching the summit of Mount Mgoun a real highlight of the trip. It was a lifetime experience and one we won't forget."



Entrance Exam Dates:

11+ Abbey pupils:

Thursday 2 February 2012

11+, 12+, 13+ External candidates:

Friday 3 February 2012

Abbey Entrance:

Saturday 4 February 2012

Queen's House:

Interviews commence Monday 6 February 2012

Forthcoming School Open Days 2012:

The Abbey & Queen's House

Open Morning

Saturday 10 March 9.30am – 12noon

Registered Charity No: 1110964