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# SPOTLIGHTS



## IB: THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTERNATIONAL-MINDEDNESS

### *An Interview with Dr Monique Seefried, Chair of IB Governors*



To mark the 30th anniversary of the introduction of the IB at Sevenoaks School, the school invited the Chair of the IB Board of Governors, Dr Monique Seefried, to address pupils and parents on Founder's Day.

A day before the big event, I got the chance to have tea with her in Mrs Ricks' office and talk about her personal vision of the IB. During our conversation Dr Seefried revealed her passion for the 'international-mindedness' of IB Diploma students and her dedication to the IB philosophy.

Her motivation to become involved with IB governing was threefold. Firstly, she has been involved in teaching for 30 years. Secondly, her international background, (she was born in Tunisia, grew up in Austria, France and Italy and has lived in Germany and the United States) has stressed to her the importance of internationalism. Lastly, as the parent of IB Diploma students she has learned to appreciate that there is more to the IB than an exam taken after two years of study. For her the IB is a philosophy.

As an IB governor more versed in education, she had to rely on some of her colleagues for their expertise on legal and fiscal matters. The board oversees the integrity and the assessment of the IB, and this informs its strategic plan for the future of the Diploma. As Chair, she doesn't examine any one specific area in detail, but keeps tabs on every aspect of the IB related to education, strategy and fundraising. The most enjoyable aspect of her job is the time she spends in dialogue with students and teachers from schools around the world when she visits them in order to ensure they are fulfilling IB requirements.

Choosing six subjects in the IB, rather than three or four for A-levels, suggests that the Diploma is particularly designed for the brilliant all-rounder.

However, Dr Seefried says that the IB does not expect students to be passionate about all of their six subjects. All it asks is that students apply and engage themselves to some extent even in those subjects that they would love to drop. Standard Level courses are designed in such a way that anyone without a particular interest in the subject can succeed. This is to 'show young people that they can always make it. Six subjects simply offer a broader education'.

There is little doubt that IB Higher Levels are comparable in depth and level to their A-level equivalents. However it is the extra components such as the Extended Essay, CAS hours and Theory of Knowledge that set the IB candidate apart from the crowd. These are also the reasons, says Dr Seefried, why universities prefer IB students: breadth of knowledge, international-mindedness and critical thinking skills are all developed as part of an IB education. However, so far no statistics have yet been collated about the performance of IB students at university level. Dr Seefried also regrets that the IB itself has not had the chance yet to investigate what sort of careers IB students embark upon in later life.

In response to potential charges of grade inflation, Dr Seefried responds that a consistent standard is maintained through a body of over 3000 examiners and a heterogeneous student body. Indeed, she claims that over the past few years the worldwide average pass rate has actually decreased. Dr Seefried reassured me that the IB pays great attention to plagiarism, using web-based anti-plagiarism programs to dissuade a blind adherence to 'copying and pasting'. Without wanting to encourage it, she nevertheless sees internet research as a positive advance, and argues that manipulation of the source material shows that the student has reflected upon and identified with it.

Dr Seefried remarks that there is a cultural issue at stake here: to ask students to think on their own requires that teachers be trained to accept answers that are not merely regurgitated from teachers' notes.

The IB is currently working on improving and expanding its primary and middle school programmes. Additionally, as university is not always a viable possibility for everyone in the world, the IB is also developing a vocational certificate, where students take, during this pilot stage, courses in tourism and trade. This 'career-related certificate' will include the study of one language and an ethics course 'in order to make people aware of other cultures in a global economy'.

In her vision, the IB Diploma is far more than just a two-year course – it is a set of values as much as a philosophy – Dr Seefried has one main target during her tenure as chair. She plans to have as many students as possible benefit from an IB education regardless of their personal circumstances, and wants 'to evoke the desire in students to do the best they can'.

*Carola Horn (Y11)*

## FOUNDER'S DAY

*Founder's Day this year celebrated the 40th anniversary of the IB and marked the school's own 30th anniversary delivering the Diploma programme.*

In her keynote address guest speaker Monique Seefried, Chair of the Board of Governors for the IB, recalled the birth of an organisation inspired by a need to promote peace and international understanding following two world wars, and now dedicated to educating young people. From its modest roots, the IB has enjoyed rapid growth and evolved into a global education system with a series of programmes serving students from pre-school to pre-university age.

Dr Seefried hailed Sevenoaks as a pioneer and flagship IB school, an 'example of a quality academic and human education...where students feel part of a much larger world'. Sevenoaks pupils, she said, enjoy a kinship with 630,000 IB students in around 2400 schools in 128 countries. She stressed the values and purpose of education, which allows students to be givers as well as leaders, with a strong sense of duty and service as well as the 'power to think, the will to act and the courage to persevere'.

The Observance, with its international flavour and multi-faith messages, and the prize-giving that attended the speech, together with the wide variety of displays and activities laid on by pupils and staff, from art and design to music, drama and sport, provided a vivid illustration of her message: that the advancement of knowledge is our highest calling and that all our pupils should learn to share their humanity, and strive to be engaged and enlightened citizens of the world.

*Right: School Captain  
Chukwumbudike Aghaji  
reading at Founder's Day.*



*Chris Greenhalgh*

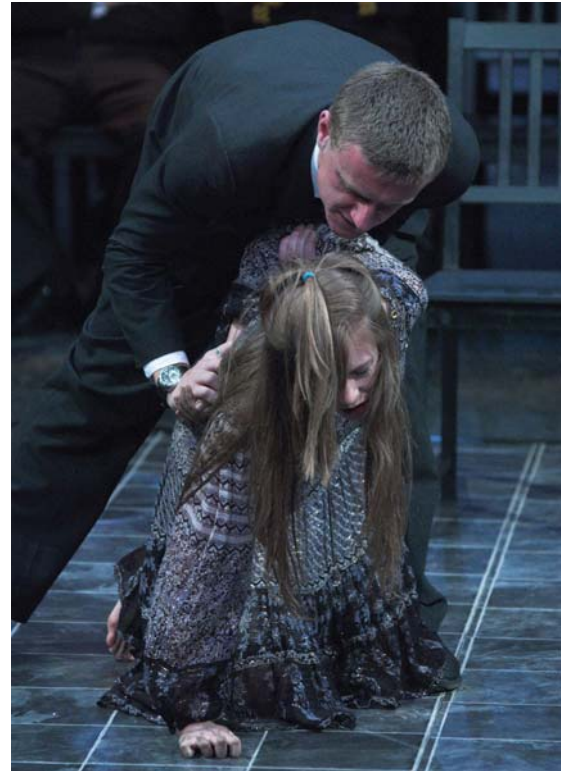
## OEDIPUS AND ANTIGONE DRAMA TOUR TO GERMANY

*'With its impressive main performers, incisive direction and well rehearsed cast, Sevenoaks School Theatre Company again confirmed the excellent reputation it has enjoyed for many years.'* – *Ibbenbürener Volkszeitung*

In October 2007 a group of more than 50 students from Year 8 to the Upper Sixth took productions of *Oedipus* and *Antigone* on tour in Germany over half term. This was the tenth such tour for the Sevenoaks School Theatre Company: based once again at the Goethe-Gymnasium in Ibbenbüren, the students enjoyed a unique dramatic, social and educational experience.

Both plays were performed in three very different spaces: the empty assembly hall in Steinfürt; a small studio theatre (up four steep flights of stairs) in Tecklenburg; and the vast and fully equipped auditorium in Ibbenbüren. Each theatre brought its own challenges and most of the days were spent sorting costumes, rigging lights, searching for fuse boxes and restaging the plays in time for the afternoon and evening performances. For the student actors, this is the essence of a touring production: the different spaces, the different audiences, the different experience from the usual run in the Sackville Theatre. The actors adapted with astonishing ease and professionalism to these demands, and it was particularly rewarding to see the cast and crew busily working after each performance to return the props, costumes and equipment to the van ready for the next day's travel.

For all involved, the tour brought much more than just the warm appreciation of the audiences. The Ibbenbüren families hosted the Sevenoaks students with extraordinary generosity: old friendships from past language exchanges were joyfully revived and many new friendships were formed. The teachers also enjoyed this hospitality, and the camaraderie of the two groups of staff (especially on one memorable evening in a Greek restaurant)



was testament to the invaluable and intimate ties between our two schools.

The Drama tour is consistently a very special experience. All participants share a common purpose which provides a clear focus and structure to each day, and the success of the performances is a measure of the talent and maturity of all the students involved. We are enormously grateful to our hosts and are already looking forward to the next tour in October 2009.

*Jim Grant, Peter Kino and Andy Waldron*

## CLIMBING WALL

*After much anticipation, the new climbing wall in the Sennocke Centre was officially opened in January this year.*



It was made possible by a superb effort on behalf of the Parents' Association as well as help from the Sevenoaks School Foundation.

Since climbing began on the wall, we have been inundated with pupils wanting to have a go. Clubs have attracted large numbers, the inclusion of climbing as a sports option has been over-subscribed, and cadets, boarders, athletes, swimmers, academic staff and support staff have all had sessions on the wall.

The facility comprises four walls, one of them overhanging and one of them a competition standard leading wall; two towers, three abseil platforms, a high ropes course and crack, arête and macro features, not to mention the viewing windows which form part of the climbs!

Many of the climbers have come on dramatically in standard. The Upper Sixth witnessed high level competition between Josh Roche, Oliver Kim and Matt Hearle (who even managed to dispatch the fiendish routes we set!) and Lower Sixth top names to look out for include Hank Ford, Robbie Penman and Shane Wickramasuriya, with Rosemary Brazel leading the ladies' talent.

The Middle and Junior School Clubs have also been active and many young rock athletes are showing good potential. We look forward to another year of pushing up the standards and introducing more people to the sport.

*Paul Bassett*

## CHRISTINA BASSADONE – OS OLYMPIC SAILOR

*Christina Bassadone with Saskia Clarke at the 2008 Olympics*



### *The first time Bruce Hebbert met Christina Bassadone (OS 2001) he knew she would be a star.*

He recognised this determined young sportswoman had all the attributes to make it to the top.

She started sailing as a seven-year-old at Itchenor Sailing Club, Chichester, in a Mirror Dinghy. She immediately fell in love with the water and it wasn't long before she started to race. Since then she has risen through the ranks, developing her natural talent for racing along the way.

Christina joined Sevenoaks because of our reputation for excellence in sailing. Bruce Hebbert comments, 'I could tell straight away that she was an extremely focussed and very talented person. She was totally single-minded and you certainly didn't want to have an argument with her – it was never going to be terribly productive.'

Her international breakthrough came while at Sevenoaks when, with Helen Mayhew, she won the 420 Ladies World Championships.

This year she travelled to Beijing to take part in her second Olympic Games and with a realistic chance of a medal. Though the preliminary matches did not go to plan, she and her team mate Saskia Clarke went into the medal race aware that mathematically it was possible to win the bronze. They were looking strong in the first quarter of the race, but the breeze did not blow in their favour for the second beat, and their fourth place finish in the race was not good enough to leapfrog some of their closer rivals. They ended up sixth overall. But knowing Christina's fighting spirit, we feel sure she will be aiming for London in 2012.

## HAMBURG EXCHANGE



*Early Tuesday morning – we are arriving at Sevenoaks School, the oldest secular school in England! It is still empty, but it does not take long to fill with hundreds of students in uniforms and with books in their hands.*

Without our exchange partners we would get lost within a few minutes as the campus is huge! There is not just one building as we have back in Germany: here we have one building for every subject.

When we enter the buildings there is nothing more to say than 'Wow!'. A computer and projector in every corner and other useful equipment on every shelf. But not only is the equipment different from our school, the teaching is as well. There are no more than ten pupils per class sat listening to the teacher in the comfortable classrooms. When

someone has to say something, he just shouts it into the class. Questions and answers are often accompanied by giggles, the atmosphere is rather relaxed and so is the relationship between teacher and pupil. Still, the pupils work very hard and achieve great marks.

The bell rings: it is lunch time. Hundreds of green and blue uniforms are streaming into the lunch hall. Today's menu: tortellini with tomato sauce, beef and risotto, grilled sardines with garlic en croute and for dessert marshmallow and coconut flapjack. Also available are sandwiches, salad and fruits. After everyone has finished there is still enough time to sit in the immense park nearby, have a quick look in the library, glance at the newspaper or browse the internet.

To give balance to the hard school day, everyone has sports afterwards. That leads us to the very modern sports hall. You can play tennis, basketball and cricket. You can dance, swim or go to a very well equipped fitness centre. But not all the sports take place in the sports hall. To sail, play hockey, golf or to ride horses students go to various places outside school.

But even afterwards, activities in school are not yet finished. In this final week of term, there is a spectacular play in the school-owned theatre, and a special concert in the music hall with extraordinary singing and playing of instruments.

That is how a normal day ends at Sevenoaks School, one of the oldest IB Schools in the world. The international students, who come from all over the world, go to one of the many and beautiful boarding houses and the day pupils go back home.

All in all you can clearly see how different Sevenoaks School is from our Helene-Lange-Gymnasium in Germany and it was a great experience to get to know such an amazing school system.

*Isabella Leyh*

*Helene-Lange-Gymnasium, Hamburg, Germany*

*Above: Isabella Leyh*

## YEAR 7 BOULOGNE TRIP



*Almost all of Year 7 and a few staff met at the hair-raising time of 6am on a drizzling Saturday 21 June for the day trip to Boulogne.*

After an uneventful and remarkably efficient crossing on Eurotunnel, we arrived at the Boulogne market, where pupils had to buy provisions for a picnic lunch using the French they had learned during the year. Many went straight to the sweets tent – moving even more quickly than the staff heading for the nearest café – and bought kilos of strangely coloured treats, none of which looked either fresh or natural. A few honourable and more intrepid pupils did venture to the cheese and meat stalls, while innocent staff had tripe sausage thrust upon them by the native French teachers.

After a relaxed picnic lunch on the grassy heights of its fortifications (no one seemed to know the

word for a knoll), pupils entered the old town and followed a trail of questions and clues set by their teachers in French around the streets leading them to the cathedral with its dank, gloomy and apparently scary crypt, complete with bones, rubble and dark niches. Most pupils fled to spend their excess funds on pink berets, plastic gold-coloured bling and ice cream, at least employing an impressively eclectic knowledge of vocabulary to do so. There had been a civic wedding taking place in the town hall that afternoon: as we left, our pupils indulged in a noisy send-off for the bride and groom, which was gleefully returned in a cacophony of French horns as the wedding entourage drove off.

The journey back was again remarkably efficient and we arrived at school an hour early. The pupils enjoyed their quick visit to France and their teachers were pleased with their behaviour and attitude.

*Phil de May*

## YEAR 9 BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

*Between 15 and 17 February, Miss Webb and other members of the History department led a group of 36 Sennockians to some of the most powerful and evocative locations of the Western Front.*

*Right: Thousands of names on the walls of Thiepval Memorial.*

*Below: The Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge.*

*Bottom: Gordon Highlanders' cemetery at Mametz.*



Many pupils study World War One in Year 9, but nothing can prepare you for the atmosphere of walking in the footsteps of where so many young men died between 1914 and 1918.

Our tour began at Vimy, a beautifully preserved shrine to the Canadians who fell taking this heavily defended ridge in April 1917. Students were able to walk through the remains of trenches that were dug more than 90 years ago, following the line of advance up to the stark and powerful memorial that looks down over the city of Lens.

From there we moved on the Somme valley, with its gently rolling hillsides, which once echoed to the horrific sounds of the greatest battles of European history.

Saturday 1 July 1916 was the darkest day in British military history, as an army composed mainly of volunteers faced the realities of a heavily dug-in enemy, and the horrors of machine guns and barbed wire. Within the enormity of this horror – 60,000 casualties on the first day of the attack – individual stories stand out.

The second day brought us to Ypres, a phoenix risen from the ashes. This remarkable medieval city was meticulously rebuilt in the 1920s from a series of photographs hurriedly taken during the war by a monuments officer who rightly feared the worst. That evening we witnessed the moving



ceremony of the last post, performed every day at the Menin Gate since the end of World War One, amidst a large crowd comprised of other schools, and soldiers from the British and Belgian armies.

The focus of our final day helped us to understand different cultures of commemoration. Tyne Cot and Langemarck together hold more than 60,000 British, Commonwealth and German graves. Amid the bright sunshine we walked quietly among the headstones, each member of the group leaving a cross and poppy by one of the graves. It was only fitting that our final stop was also that of many British soldiers – Colonel John McCrae's dressing station by the Ypres canal, where amid the wounded that he struggled to save, he wrote, 'In Flanders fields the poppies blow...'

*Alastair Dunn*

# *A year in the travels of the Russian department*

Things in Russia rarely turn out as expected: at every juncture, expectations are confounded and exceeded in often unforeseen ways. It remains a key aim of the department to make the country as accessible to our Russianists as possible, to help them not only to enjoy the western facades of Moscow and St Petersburg, but also to allow them to discover traces of the 'real' Russia, beneath the shiny neo-capitalist surface of this re-emerging superpower.

We ran two trips in 2008 – an exchange to Moscow and St Petersburg in February for Y10 and L6 beginners, and for our six L6 post-GCSE Russianists, an Easter project working with children in schools and orphanages in the small, remote town of Shilovo – population 16,000 and located five hours outside Moscow.

Moscow highlights included: the brightly coloured onion domes of St Basil's and ice-skating on Red Square; a guided tour of the Kremlin and its many cathedrals and state buildings; an evening performance of *La Sylphide* at the renowned Bolshoi Ballet; bartering at a snow-drenched market followed by warm hospitality in a traditional restaurant. From there we travelled to St Petersburg, the beautiful 'Venice of the North' – a humid night away by sleeper train. We visited the breathtaking Hermitage Museum and the Bronze Horseman overlooking the Neva River in the shadow of St Isaac's Cathedral. Retracing the footsteps of the literary heroes of Dostoevsky and Gogol, we walked along Nevsky Prospekt, beside the labyrinthine canals that split the city into its 101 islands.

Inspired by PROMO, we tailor-made our L6 Easter trip with Love Russia, a UK-based charity. They have links with Shilovo, funding a local orphanage, Raduga (meaning 'rainbow'). Our pupils were totally immersed in provincial life for a fortnight: living in host families; teaching English in schools and visiting orphanages. Memories of



unexpected moments still linger: the first toothless grin of Viktor, our gas-powered minibus driver, who greeted us at 3am as we emerged bleary-eyed from our flight; learning to play *lapta*, a Slavic sporting hybrid of rounders and baseball, with rules indecipherable even to the locals; bathing in the icy waters of the local holy spring; traditional dancing and party games hosted by a local youth group. Some things only become clear from a distance, like the poignancy of the sad parting smile of Irochka, the youngest girl in the orphanage aged just six years old. Within weeks of our visit, she would be moved to a strange new orphanage, away from her friends and the people she had come to love and trust at Raduga. (This occurred on the orders of the Russian state, after her parents had finally lost their parental rights.)

I was extremely proud of all our pupils who undertook the project, and my thanks go to Jim Edie and Alex Cooke at Love Russia, and Elena Kelly, who accompanied me on the February exchange. We will return to the orphanages of Shilovo in 2010 when our younger pupils who attended the February exchange described above will be ready to see a bit more of 'real' Russia for themselves.

*Jon Drury*

## LOWER SIXTH ROME TRIP

*Very early on Friday 23 May, 27 eager pupils and three staff set out on the annual Lower Sixth trip to Rome. Despite the early start, all were keen to see the famous historic centre of Rome and so we wandered there as soon as we arrived.*



Having absorbed the atmosphere, we all returned to the hotel for a hearty meal before heading to the renowned Trevi Fountain for an evening stroll.

The following day, we took a coach out to the Etruscan cities of Tarquinia and Cerveteri, where the pupils enjoyed exploring the tombs. They were especially thrilled when Dr Frank-Gemmill jumped out from a dark corner, scaring them all ever so slightly! Having spent a fair amount of time on the coach, several of the girls were particularly delighted with the evening's entertainment at the Spanish Steps due to the large number of very glamorous shops.



Day three was one of the highlights of the trip: Ostia Antica, the port of Rome, is very well preserved, but is also much less visited by the general public despite containing a forum, a theatre, sets of baths, several temples and some wonderful mosaics. On our return to Rome itself, we spent some time looking through the wonderful range of statues, wall paintings and coins on display in the National Museum. The day was completed with an evening in the famous Piazza Navona, watching the wide (and odd!) range of street performers and sellers whilst enjoying at least one ice cream.

Although much of the morning of the fourth day was spent walking to bus stops, everyone maintained their enthusiasm and we were enthralled by the atmospheric maze of tunnels that make up the catacombs, Christian subterranean burial grounds. However the climax of the trip was reached that afternoon, when we reached the Colosseum. The scale of the building can only really be grasped from within and all pupils felt overwhelmed as we walked through the entrance towards the arena floor itself.

The fifth day of the trip was jam-packed with famous historical sites: starting at the immense Baths of Caracalla, we walked back via the Palatine Hill (overlooking the Circus Maximus from the Imperial Palace) to the Roman Forum. Despite a busy road running next to it, once inside the forum it is possible to slip back in time and fully imagine how it must have looked 2000 years ago, with its variety of temples, triumphal arches and the Senate House itself. Having spent some time perusing the exhibits in the Capitoline Museum, we made our way to the Pantheon, the most well preserved Roman temple in the world, which held the record for the largest domed concrete span until 1958! Once everyone had admired the engineering excellence of the Romans, we gathered outside on the steps to continue reading our trip book where we were met by Mrs Ricks, whose holiday we had unfortunately gatecrashed.

On the last full day in Rome, we set off early to reach the Vatican before the hordes, and walked straight in! As the Vatican Museum was incredibly quiet we managed to reach St Peter's Square ahead of schedule, where we were surprised to see the Pope addressing a huge crowd of pilgrims. Having listened to him for an hour while we queued to enter the basilica, we all felt suitably pious and blessed. On our return to the hotel, we visited two crucial monuments of Augustus' rule, his mausoleum and the Ara Pacis Augustae.

After a very successful trip, I must congratulate the pupils on their impressive enthusiasm and impeccable behaviour. Most importantly, I must offer a huge thank you to Dr Sharp and Dr Frank-Gemmill for all their help.

*Sarah Bushby*

## OS IN THE US



Old Sennockian Teddy Nicholson (2007) recently spent six months working for Barack Obama in the US Presidential primary elections. From knocking on doors to tracking the opposition rallies and eventually rising to Field Organiser, Teddy had a fascinating insight into the way US politics works, and ended his campaigning in June 2008, exhausted but elated.

Meanwhile, at the start of summer term, Latifah Hamzah and Russell Martin were faced with the enviable dilemma of accepting places at Yale or taking up equally attractive packages from other universities: in the case of Russell, this was the prestigious Morehead-Cain scholarship on offer from the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) which is worth more than \$140,000 over four years. In Latifah's case, Princeton and MIT (and in the UK, Cambridge) were all keen to have her! In the end Russell opted for UNC (Chapel Hill) while Latifah settled on MIT.



*Russell Martin and  
Latifah Hamzah*

Other candidates from this year's cohort of US and Canadian applicants were similarly successful in gaining places at highly selective US and Canadian institutions such as Columbia, Brown, Duke, Georgetown, Berkeley, Williams, U Penn, McGill and Toronto. Applicants to the US are required to show a far broader range of all-round ability than is required by British universities and there can be little doubt that the IB and all the extra-curricular opportunities on offer at Sevenoaks place them in a strong position when they choose to apply 'Stateside'.

Max Dunhill, another 2008 leaver, had a successful internship to the House of Senate and went on to a two-month internship with Senator Harry Reid, for the State of Nevada, on Capitol Hill in Washington DC.

*Arabella Stuart*

## WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED 'DESIGN TECHNOLOGY'?

### *Imagine a world with no designers!*



*Year 11 student Alberico de Nardis di Prata won sixth place in the international PTC Global CAD (computer-aided design) competition with his design for a 'build your own guitar kit'. Alberico was the only student to manufacture his final drawing – all the other entries were concept designs.*

Without electronics experts, carpenters, structural engineers, fashion designers, architects and many more professions, where would we be?

Just start at the point where you wake up in the morning in an ergonomically designed bed, on a comfy and hard-wearing mattress, covered in a warm duvet, the alarm clock gently buzzing in your ear as you hit the snooze button.

The air outside of the cocoon is warmed by your central heating system while the hot water bubbles away in the loft, ready and waiting to refresh you for your hard day ahead. The snooze timer ticks away for ten minutes while the dustmen empty your bins with ease, the postman cycles past and the paper boy slides the weekly rag through the perfectly sized letter box in your double-glazed front door. Then you get up and have a cup of tea, not thinking about the weeks of planning, research, testing and trialling that went into creating the tea bag or the teaspoon.

The truth is we take a lot of things for granted. Of course we know that Maths and English are important, and Languages and Science will obviously come in useful in later life, PE keeps us fit and teaches us about nutrition and healthy living, but the perception of Design Technology is a difficult one to fathom. It is still seen by some as the 'CDT' classes that are very much a thing of the past.

Naturally, we still teach the traditional skills such as woodworking and metalworking, and we continue to teach students about standardised components and nuts and bolts, but with every technological advancement the subject evolves one step further.

The notion of a Design teacher standing at the front of a classroom teaching an IB set about the equilibrium position of a particle on an energy separation curve (having just marked an internal investigation based on the atomic structure of materials), is not what the average parent, colleague or student would expect.

The realisation is dawning that hand tools are slowly becoming a thing of the past as technological advances enable us simply to 'draw' our three-dimensional object in the comfort of a classroom before letting a computer-aided manufacture (CAM) machine complete the realisation of the product.

The skill set of the teacher is also on a rapidly changing, steep learning curve; itself a thrilling and exciting journey. With CNC lasers, routers, lathes and more recently a 3D printer, the possibilities are becoming endless, allowing the students to manufacture products of the highest standard for both GCSE and IB coursework.

In Year 11, Alberico de Nardis di Prata was among the top six student designers awarded prizes this year in the PTC Global Computer-Aided Design competition, whilst Abigail Carruthers and Joanna Stanyard secured Arkwright Scholarships. Andrew Holliday (also Y11) manufactured an extremely professional interactive display unit for the reception area of Claridge House, while Matthew Hearle (U6) designed and manufactured a more traditional piece of furniture, but gave it the added twist of an integral fish tank.

The students are certainly rising to the challenge of the subject and as numbers increase and the department grows, more processes and production techniques are added to an already vibrant facility.

The department is set to open its doors to local schools in September when we launch the Schools CNC (Computer Numerical Control) Hub, whereby staff and students from Design departments across the southern counties can email their files to Sevenoaks for manufacture on our machines. To some this will be a lifeline, as a single machine can cost in excess of £17,000.

As always the doors to the department are open for any parent, student or colleague who would like a guided tour – the buildings may be quaint but the work being done inside is inspirational.

*Graeme Lawrie*

## HOCKEY TEAM ENJOYS NATIONAL SUCCESS



*A tough day's play on the water-based pitch at St George's College in Weybridge saw the School's U16(A) Hockey Team take on some of the best U16 players in the country at the annual U16 National Hockey Finals.*

Winning the East Regional Tournament gave Sevenoaks the chance to compete against the other top four school teams to decide who would be this year's prestigious National Champions.

In a round-robin competition Sevenoaks started somewhat in an ambitious manner against Millfield, opting for individual skill over teamwork which inevitably resulted in a 4-0 loss. Solid defence work from Charlotte Best, Cathryn Shannon, Georgia Burrow, Lucy Keevil, Helen Allison and (in goal) Laura Ganis demonstrated the team's commitment and determination, and created opportunities – although Georgina Nash and Joanna Stanyard were unable to convert these into goals on this occasion.

Quickly learning their lesson in time for their second match against Kingston Grammar School, Sevenoaks set about passing the ball with purpose and intent, and given the skill, pace and conviction of the team it wasn't long before Georgina Nash found herself in a superb position to unleash her shot past the goalkeeper's ears.

Kingston replied shortly after with a well struck penalty corner goal but, realising how dangerous they were when they passed the ball, Sevenoaks continued to pile the pressure on a wilting opposition.

Sophie Thomson made no mistake on two occasions when her opportunities came to add to the score line. Expertly positioned, she pounced on two rebounds to seal on a fine team performance and 3-1 victory.

The defending Champions, Ecclesbourne School, were next on the list and Sevenoaks were also still in a great position to fight for the title. Unfortunately an early lapse in concentration caught Sevenoaks off-guard and a very accomplished Ecclesbourne, who boasted several Junior International players, seized the opportunity to score 2 goals. However, a spirited fight back from Sevenoaks created a number of chances with Joanna, Georgina and Sophie Thomson all going close.

A last-minute corner saw us lose this match 3-0 but this was a gutsy performance against a well drilled and talented side.

With third place still up for grabs, Sevenoaks set about conquering Wakefield, the last opponents for the day. Also boasting a couple of Junior Internationals, Wakefield took the lead 3-0 through some good individual skill and finishing from their distinguished players. However, determined to display fighting qualities, the team worked tirelessly to create opportunities and a couple of penalty corners saw Caroline Crawford come agonisingly close. Eventually Georgina found the net when she cleverly volleyed home a rebound.

With Ecclesbourne crowned Champions again and Millfield in second place, this last defeat meant Wakefield took third and Sevenoaks fourth best school team in the country at U16 level. Given the quality of opposition, Sevenoaks can be extremely proud of their achievement and the effort they put in to get there. Special thanks to Toby Shannon from Howard de Walden Estates for sponsoring the team in the National Campaign.

*Cathy Gilliat-Smith*

## INSECT PLAY

*Once a staple of school theatre, the now sadly neglected Insect Play by Karel and Josef Čapek was brought vividly to life in Pete Kino's colourful Junior School production in February 2008.*



Of course, the play isn't really about insects. Written in the aftermath of World War One, and deceptively bleak, it presents through its various invertebrate characters (butterflies, creepy-crawlies and ants) the futility of aspects of the human condition in a way which anticipates much of the absurdist theatre which came later in the century. Our guide to the play's microcosmic world is the Tramp, who was played by Jeremy Cribb (the only Sixth Former in the show, which helped to set him apart from the insect characters). Drunk and destitute, he becomes increasingly fascinated and repelled by the follies, vices and ultimate self-destructiveness of the insects.

A simple but effective set incorporating 15-foot high daisies (beautifully made by Chris Yelf and the Design department) established an appropriate sense of scale, and evoked the bottom-of-the-

garden setting, in and out of which the butterflies of the first act flitted splendidly. The female butterflies, Clytie and Iris, spend their time flirting with and being chased by the males, giggling as they go, and were played with flighty energy by Sophie Munden and Polly Young, although their underlying ennui was also well conveyed. The males are essentially comic characters, ranging from the more prosaic and lecherous Otto and Victor – played with real gusto and sharp timing by Ayman El-Farouki and Harry Hitch – to the effete and ineffectual poet Felix, wistfully portrayed by Tom Hughes. The atmosphere was of a 1920s country garden, with striped blazers and floaty dresses, but a pervading sense of darkness is gradually instilled from the moment Clytie and Iris giggle uncontrollably after Victor has been eaten by a bird.

The next group to emerge from the garden is an assortment of creepy-crawlies: a pair of dung beetles, portrayed with suitable earthiness by Tom Scott and Megan Annetts; a tuneful pair of crickets played by Naomi Carndorf and Matthew Maitra; the Ichneumon Fly (actually a type of wasp) ruthlessly and tirelessly feeding his Larva; a Parasite, and a Chrysalis. Joe Brown was especially impressive as the Ichneumon Fly, calmly going about his amoral business, and Annabel Turnbull made an amusing appearance from her hole in the ground as his precious Larva. They are all ultimately devoured by the Parasite (Louis Catliff) in what one realises is a bleak dig at the acquisitive selfishness of humankind. The contrast between the Parasite's appearance as a shabby, downtrodden member of the underclass and the middle-class obsessions of the beetles and crickets was very effective in reinforcing this point.

Act Three takes us into the regimented world of the Ants, where individual concerns are sacrificed for the 'good of the whole'. Initially this seems an ordered and purposeful society, but it soon becomes apparent, with obvious echoes of World War One, that the Ants are a bellicose bunch, and their industry is in preparation for a war which will be fought over a tiny scrap of land. The legions of young Ants were well drilled by Pete



Kino and his tireless assistant director, Jess Gates, both when in their production lines and during the frenetic ins and outs when the battle is raging offstage, and they were well marshalled on stage by Katie Brauer's and Tim Greig's Chief and Second Engineers. Katie's continued exhortations to attack while small bands of wounded Ants began to cross the dark stage to a backdrop of swirling searchlights and the noise of guns and explosions, poignantly evoked images of a century of warfare.

Throughout the final two acts, the action is interrupted by a Chrysalis (Ellie Newey) who is yearning to be born, under the illusion that this will be a moment of universal significance. The Tramp is drawn to the Chrysalis, perhaps in hope,

but her illusion is shattered at the end of the play when she emerges only to fly immediately into a light and die. This moment was beautifully realised when, among the dead bodies of the Ants and in grim red light, the Tramp lifted the newly emerged Moth towards the source of light and she died in his arms. A great moment of trust between a Sixth Form student and a Year 8 girl, and a moving climax to an accomplished and thought-provoking production.

*Jim Grant*

## YOUNG MUSICIANS

*The Musicians Forum this year was in honour of Peter Young, who retired this summer after 36 years at the school.*



*Peter Young at the organ in St Nicholas' Church.*

It followed the usual format in the first half, with our current top musicians performing, and in the second half some of Peter's former students paid tribute to his inspirational teaching before giving their performances.

The first half of the evening opened with Peter conducting the Sennocke Consort who sang Victoria's 'O magnum Mysterium', Elgar's 'Spanish Serenade' and Peter Young's own arrangement of the spiritual 'Humble'. Lorraine Preater, who was head of keyboard and prepared many of our outstandingly successful groups for the National Chamber Music Competition for many years, also left us this year. She presented two of her chamber music groups who played Dohnányi's Piano Quintet and the Suk Piano Trio in C minor. The pupils included Minn Majoe, Anna Blackwell, David McMenamin, Kate McMenamin, Oliver Blackwell, Joanne Sy, Alex Ying and Alex Hardy.

The second half of the concert started with Jamie McVinnie (OS), currently an organist at St Paul's Cathedral, playing Bach's Italian Concerto on a particularly fine and beautiful harpsichord which had been borrowed for the occasion. Next, Mark Holmes (OS) sang Schumann's *Dichterliebe* accompanied by Tim Horton (OS) who also played an Ireland piano miniature. This was followed by Ian McLauchlan (OS) who performed Elgar's 'Chanson de Matin'. Baritone soloist Matthew Best (OS) was indisposed, and at the last minute three of our pianists stepped in. Leah Broad played the last movement of Beethoven's 'Tempest' sonata (Piano Sonata no 17 in D minor), Bach's Partita for keyboard in C minor was played by Alex Ying, and Sabrina Chan performed Rachmaninov's Prelude in G sharp minor.

*Arabella Stuart*