

SENNOCKIAN

NEWS AND REVIEWS FROM THE SCHOOL AND ALUMNI 2010-2011



SEVENOAKS SCHOOL



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Opposite: GCSE artwork by
Lottie Abrahams



AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE HEAD

Welcome to the fifth edition of *Sennockian*, our magazine for the whole school community. Last year's theme of Science and Technology saw its climax in the visit of NASA astronaut Dr Nicholas Patrick in January and a live link with the International Space Station. It was an epic moment, and for 17 minutes our students communicated via satellite with the crew as they travelled in zero gravity 230 miles above the earth.

That event brought together two spaces, the school's Pamoja Hall, where the event was hosted, and the larger sense of space that surrounds us, from which we move to a sense of our responsibility for others. Our focus this year is Service. The school holds a reputation for service, and has been instrumental in the establishment of community service in schools. More recent initiatives include Charity Week and an international programme of student visits to work in orphanages in India, Romania and Russia.

Service is a strong feature of school life, and we read here about the work of Old Sennockians in this area. Our aim is to develop compassion, tolerance and open-mindedness in Sevenoaks students: central elements of the IB learner profile.

In February, the Centre for Innovation will host a conference on service. In this same spirit, the school's sponsorship of Knole Academy has seen two schools engage to mutual benefit on a number of levels, including Higher Education events, lectures and leadership cooperation.

The pages that follow are filled with highlights from the rich life of the school, from outstanding performances in music and drama to excellent team and individual achievements in sport; from outstanding examination results to the deserved successes of our students in gaining places at top universities; from exciting trips abroad to the daily life of the school. The sense of community is strong, and our students seem ever more confident and outward-looking – which is of course the best service we can give to them, and to the wider world they will soon join.

Katy Ricks

Katy Ricks

LEAVERS



LEAVERS 2009

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Winston	Surrey	Liberal Arts	Middlebury College
Rosie	Fletcher	History	London School of Economics

LEAVERS 2010

Feyikemi	Abudu	Chemical Engineering	University College London
Michael	Allen	Medicine	Peninsula College of Medicine & Dentistry
Alessandro	Barbieri	Philosophy	Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
Laura	Bateman	Portuguese and Spanish	University of Nottingham
Charlotte	Best	History	Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge
Rowan	Border	Artificial Intelligence & Computer Science	University of Edinburgh
Georgina	Burrow	Biochemistry	New College, Oxford
Abby	Carruthers	Engineering	St John's College, Cambridge
Neeraj	Chandi	Architecture	University of Nottingham
Philip	Clayton	Accounting, Business Finance and Management	University of York
Andie	Cockerill	Economics and Politics	University of Edinburgh
Nicholas	Codd	Physics	King's College London
Tom	Dawe	Chemistry	University of Bristol
Andrew	Dawson	General Engineering	Durham University
Cameron	De Haan	History	University of Edinburgh

Above: 2011 Leavers

LEAVERS 2010

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Sophie	Dillon	Psychology	University of Edinburgh
Rory	Dunnett	Geography	Durham University
David	Edward	Architecture	University of Nottingham
Elizabeth	Everard	Geography	University of Edinburgh
Vittoria	Fallanca	Philosophy	Churchill College, Cambridge
Lucy	Featherstone	Modern and Medieval Languages	St Catharine's College, Cambridge
Martin	Felton	Film and Literature	University of Warwick
Anna	Feroldi	Sociology	Durham University
James	Ferrigno	Business and Marketing Management	Oxford Brookes University
Wilhelm	Frost	International Relations	London School of Economics
Jasmine	Granata	Italian	University of Warwick
Charles	Greig	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	University of Bristol
Sebastian	Guterres	Geography	Durham University
Joshua	Henshaw	Art History	University of Nottingham
Alexandra	Hitch	English Language and Literature	University of Edinburgh
Rose	Innes	Combined Honours in Arts	Durham University
Joanna	Kabuye	Liberal Arts	University of Notre Dame
Peter	Kenny	Land Economy	Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge
William	King	Business Management	Newcastle University
Isabelle	Krauel	Medicine	Westfälische-Wilhelms Universität, Münster
Daniela	Kriegbaum	Integrated Social Sciences	Jacobs University, Bremen
Oliver	Lambert	Business Finance	Durham University
Roman	Lyashenko	Law	University of East Anglia
Alexander	Lyne	Ancient History and Archaeology	University of Bristol
Harry	Lynn	Politics	University of East Anglia
Caroline	Mackrill	English Literature	Newcastle University
Thomas	Meikle	Physics	University of Exeter
Sophia	Michael	Classics	Trinity College, Cambridge
Thomas	Mitchell	Ancient History	Durham University
Lucy	Mote	Modern European Languages	University of Edinburgh
Wayne	Nussbaumer	Business Finance	Durham University
Alex	Paine	Philosophy	Merton College, Oxford
Mihika	Sapru	Liberal Arts	New York University
Sophie	Shall	Geography	St Catharine's College, Cambridge
Annabel	Shepherd-Barron	Natural Sciences	Emmanuel College, Cambridge
Tanita	Sira	Medical Sciences	University of Edinburgh
Tim	Smith	English and Classical Studies	University of Bristol
Frederick	Soames	English	University College London
Sarah	Sturrock	Medicine	Imperial College London
Sophie	Thomson	French and English Literature	University of Edinburgh

LEAVERS 2010

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Jamie	Tittle	Natural Sciences	Churchill College, Cambridge
Cosima	Vester	Economics	Boston University
Olivia	Volk	Medicine	University of Nottingham
Phoebe	Weston	Social Anthropology	University of Edinburgh
Alastair	White	Asian and Middle Eastern Studies	Pembroke College, Cambridge
Ross	Williams	Geography	University College London
Isobel	Wood	Modern and Medieval Languages	King's College, Cambridge
Aniela	Wrobel	Archaeology and Ancient Civilisations	Durham University

LEAVERS 2011

Okigbo	Aghaji	Mathematics and Statistics	University of Edinburgh
Chiara	Alessandri	Physics	Cardiff University
Mofe	Alli	Law	Durham University
Moni	Alli	Accounting and Finance	Durham University
Athena	Amili	American and English Studies	University of Nottingham
Katie	Anscombe	Art History	University of Nottingham
Grant	Arnold	English	University College London
Luke	Austen	Urban Planning, Design and Management	University College London
Zoe	Bailey	History	University of Warwick
Annalisa	Baillie	Natural Sciences	Durham University
Flora	Baillie	English	Clare College, Cambridge
Nicholas	Baldwin	Chemistry	University of Bristol
Olivia	Ball	Economics and Chinese	University of Edinburgh
Maryam	Barma	Medicine	University of Dundee
Charlotte	Baron	Medicine	University of Edinburgh
Will	Barratt	Theatre and Performance Studies	University of Warwick
Anna	Bartsch	Mathematics and Philosophy	University of Munich
Antonia	Benfield	Politics with Year Abroad	Durham University
Vaidehi	Bhargava	English Literature	University of Warwick
Rebecca	Bibb	Materials Science	The Queen's College, Oxford
Oliver	Blackwell	Business and Management	University of Exeter
Emma	Boobbyer	Spanish and Latin American Studies	University of Southampton
Eyisan	Boyo	Accounting and Finance	Durham University
Alasdair	Brenninkmeijer	Film and Digital Cinematography	London Metropolitan Film School
Lara	Bryan	English Language and Literature	Exeter College, Oxford
Ciara	Bullock	Medicine	Girton College, Cambridge
Heather	Catchpole	Classics	University College, Oxford
Mey	Cezairli	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	University of Warwick
Kong	Chamornmarn	Economics	University of Warwick
Sabrina	Chan	Economics	Murray Edwards College, Cambridge

LEAVERS 2011

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Peter	Chinnock	Architecture	University of Manchester
Max	Clinch	Aeronautical Engineering	University of Bristol
Oliver	Clipsham	Physics	Imperial College London
Olivia	Codd	Law	Newcastle University
Elena	Conci	Medicine	Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
Anna	Cooke	Sociology	Durham University
Louisa	Cooper	Sociology	University of Warwick
Celeste	Courtenay	Liberal Arts	University of Pennsylvania
Harry	Craggs	Business Economics and Finance	Loughborough University
Francesca	Danczak	Psychology	Durham University
William	Davison	English Language and Literature	University of Leeds
Simon	De Vuyst	Engineering	University of Toronto
Amy	Dooley	Social and Political Sciences	University of York
Dana	Drutis	Management	University of Warwick
Madeline	Dumbreck	Biochemistry	University of Bath
Joe	Edwards	Economics	Newcastle University
Edward	Elliott	Combined Honours	Durham University
Byamba	Enkhbayar	Law	London School of Economics
Helen	Eo	Law	University College London
Charlie	Farrant	Business and Management	University of Exeter
Jack	Findlay	Economics	University of Exeter
Daniel	Finley	English and Film	Manchester Metropolitan University
Rita	Fitchett	International Business	University of Leeds
Henry	Forward	Pharmacology	University of Bristol
Yasmin	Gagne	Liberal Arts	Columbia University
Susannah	George	Geography	University of Leeds
Laurence	Gibbons	Architecture	University of Bath
Adesuwa	Giwa-Osagie	Liberal Arts	Duke University
Hannah	Goozee	International Relations	University of St Andrews
Tabitha	Grainger	Medicine	University College London
Xander	Gurnee	Medicine	University College London
Oliver	Hammett	Spanish and Portuguese	University of Edinburgh
Julian	Harlow	Management	University of Warwick
William	Hearle	Philosophy	University of Edinburgh
Sophie	Heilbron	Sociology	University of Exeter
Alex	Helly D'Angelin	Liberal Arts	McGill University
Tilman	Hisarli	Economics	University College London
Harrison	Hodgkins	Business Economics with Industrial Experience	University of Exeter
Kayla	Hollenbaugh	Liberal Arts	Washington University in St Louis
Rebecca	Huckstep	Religious and Theological Studies	Cardiff University

LEAVERS 2011

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Lara	Izzard-Hobbs	European Social and Political Studies	University College London
Joshua	Jackson	Business Administration	SP Jain Center of Management
Shahrazad	Jahanbani	Middle Eastern Studies	School of Oriental and African Studies
Tara	Jameson	Natural Sciences	Jesus College, Cambridge
Tomasz	Janczyk	Economics and Business with East European Studies	University College London
Amritha	John	English	Pembroke College, Cambridge
Sallyann	Kemp	Archaeology and Anthropology	Girton College, Cambridge
Morwenna	Kotz	Modern and Medieval Languages	Trinity College, Cambridge
Alistair	Kung	Business Management	King's College London
Pia	Lai	Psychology	University College London
Matteo	Lenzi	History	London School of Economics
Jennifer	Lin	Liberal Arts	Emory University
Mesky	Loane	History	University of St Andrews
Yi Jun	Loh	Engineering	St John's College, Cambridge
James	Looi	Law	University of Exeter
Megan	Loureiro-Rickman	Biomedical Sciences	University of Manchester
Arisa	Manawapat	International Relations	London School of Economics
Samuel	Manyweathers	Biochemistry	University of Bath
Luke	Martin	Liberal Arts	Duke University
Lizzie	May	Geography	University College London
Emily	McEachern	Psychology	University of Bath
David	McMenamin	History	Durham University
Thomas	Meadley	Chemistry	University of Bristol
Jonathan	Merican	Sports Technology	Loughborough University
Frederik	Mulke	Law	London School of Economics
Nicole	Ng	European Social and Political Studies	University College London
Alexandru	Nisenboim	Liberal Arts	University of Miami
Anna	Orlova	Politics with International Studies	University of Warwick
Olivia	Paine	Architecture	University of Manchester
Imogen	Palmer	Law	University of Bristol
Elizabeth	Parry	Business Management	Newcastle University
Laurenz	Pauleikhoff	Medicine	Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
Hugh	Pfeil	Philosophy and Literature	University of Essex
Harry	Pickering	Economics with Study in Continental Europe	University of Bristol
Alessandra	Poblador	Liberal Arts	Columbia University
Harry	Ponting	Management with Marketing	University of Leeds
Rebecca	Prifti	Anthropology and Sociology	Durham University
Madeleine	Pryde	Spanish and Portuguese	University of Edinburgh
Jacob	Rainbow	Jazz Piano	Trinity Laban Conservatoire

LEAVERS 2011

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Meera	Rajah	Law	University College London
Samir	Rea	Politics and Arabic	School of Oriental and African Studies
Lucy	Reid	Natural Sciences	Durham University
Nada	Reza	Medicine	University of Dundee
Thomas	Richards	Natural Sciences	St John's College, Cambridge
Ben	Richardson	Management Studies with Spanish	University of Nottingham
Alex	Scarsi	Information Systems with Business Studies	Newcastle University
Anna	Schidlovsky	Liberal Arts	University of Virginia
Charlotte	Shieh	History	Churchill College, Cambridge
Philip	Sinclair-Jones	Psychology and Animal Behaviour	University of Exeter
Zara	Smith	Geography	University of Edinburgh
Mischa	Snaije	Liberal Arts	McGill University
Becky	Staffurth	Mathematics	Balliol College, Oxford
Elizabeth	Stephen	Mathematics	University of Bath
Elizabeth	Sukhinenko	Liberal Arts	Smith College
Jessie	Sullivan	Fine Art	Lancaster University
Jonathan	Swee	Medicine	Queen Mary University of London
Gregg	Szep	Physics	King's College London
Siu Hay	Tai	Liberal Arts	University of Miami
Nicholas	Taki	Economics & Economic History	London School of Economics
Illya	Tarassenko	Physics with Theoretical Physics	Imperial College London
Jamie	Tasker	Information Management and Business Studies	Loughborough University
Natalie	Taylor	Combined Honours in Arts	Durham University
Karan	Thakker	Liberal Arts	Hampshire College
Miranda	Thewlis	Politics with International Studies	University of Warwick
Max	Thorpe	Social Sciences	University of Bath
Elizabeth	Trend	Modern Languages	Durham University
Tom	Triffitt	Physics	Durham University
Owen	Turner-Major	Philosophy and German	Jesus College, Oxford
Raphael	Uribe	Liberal Arts	McGill University
Samuel	van Damme	Engineering with Business Finance	University College London
Valery	Vasilyeva	PPE	Durham University
Oona	Venermo	English	University of York
Antonia	Ventura	German and Spanish	University of Bristol
Mikhail	Vorontsov	Liberal Arts	University of Virginia
Leo	Walter	Medical Microbiology	University of Bristol
Eddie	Watkins	Geography	Newcastle University
Gemma	Weeks	English and Film Studies	University of Exeter
Peter	Weston Smith	Medicine	University of East Anglia
Alexander	Whincup	Chemistry with Industrial Experience	University of Bristol

LEAVERS 2011

Forename	Surname	Degree	Destination
Adam	White	Biology	Durham University
Tom	Whittaker	Geography	Newcastle University
Georgina	Willis	Geography	Durham University
Camilla	Wilson	French	Newcastle University
Kristina	Withers	Physiotherapy	University of Birmingham
Gary	Wong	Economics, Politics and International Studies	University of Warwick
Su Lin	Yeo	Liberal Arts	Stanford University
Nicole	Yim	Medicine	University College London
Alexander	Ying	Economics	St Catharine's College, Cambridge

2011 GAP YEAR

Frances Ainsworth	Saskia De Quant	Rachel Lewis	Eleanor Riches
Nicholas Ashton	James Dwyer	Freddie Lloyd	Lottie Ritchie
Mariam Belgore	Zara Dyson	Charlie Lord	Nicholas Robinson
Isaac Bernier-Doyle	Hugo Ellingham	James Manning	Jack Rountree
Nicholas Brauer	Nicholas Fraser	James Marshall-Lockyer	Kelsey Rush
Hanna Cameron	William Graham	Victoria Moynes	Gregor Scotland
Kit Carter Leno	Robert Hammond	James Mursell	Ali Strutt
Tanis Chalopin	Erica Hands	Thomas Nickols	Robert Sutton-Mattocks
Zoe Chan	Bradley Hayes	Harry Oliver	Max Wallis
Tat-Meng Chiam	Angelica Hicks	James Orchard	Jimmy Watkins
Oliver Clarke	Jasmine Horsey	Johannes Osterrieth	Jacob Wedderburn-Day
George Clift	Daniel Hughes	Christopher Parr	
Roberta Collyer	Luke Jackson	Alice Pearce	

FEATURES



THE VOLUNTARY SERVICE UNIT

Students preparing the weekly raffle at Thursday Club, a VSU activity held in Sennocke House for members of the local community.



The Voluntary Service Unit (VSU) began at Sevenoaks School in 1961; it was one of the pioneers of school-based community service in this country, and it remains one of the largest and most ambitious.

Service at Sevenoaks is far more than fulfilling IB criteria or contributing to the ever-expanding co-curricular programme. It aims to broaden our students' minds and enable them to gain a healthy perspective on life beyond school.

We currently have around 250 students who actively take part in a service activity each week. With an array of placements on offer, they are given the opportunity to try something new and different, and to apply their strong interpersonal and practical skills to many challenging situations.

Over time, barriers are broken down and many students gain a genuine appreciation for others less fortunate than themselves. In the short period of time I have been involved in the Service section I have had incredibly positive feedback from the local community, expressing how our pupils make a difference to those with whom they work.

Over the coming years our aim is to broaden every Sevenoaks student's perspective so that they make a difference in their own community and beyond.

Rebecca Brown

VALENCE SCHOOL



Valence School offers high-quality learning opportunities and social and health care to young people with physical disabilities.

A group of Lower Sixth and Year 11 pupils help out at Valence every week. Two Sixth Form students reflect on their experience.

Valence School students on the track at Sevenoaks School

On first entering the doors of Valence School, none of us knew what to expect. Placed in an idyllic location, the school teaches and houses physically disabled children from the ages of six to 18. We were assigned different class groups and followed them throughout their three afternoon lessons. At first, the task seemed daunting. We were not sure how we would adapt to differing circumstances and individual students' needs, but eventually came to realise that we just needed to be ourselves. The Valence pupils we met were extremely friendly and seemed to love having us around. We learned how those with different levels of speech ability are able to communicate effectively.

Valence School has two main sections: the primary school and the upper school. As a sports college, they are committed to the health and well-being of all of their pupils and strive to provide as many opportunities as possible. The school offers the usual core subjects which are adapted to meet the special needs of each student (English, Maths, Science, the Humanities, the Arts, other languages) as well as subjects tailored specifically to his or her abilities, such as Physical Education and Communication Skills. The school's facilities include a large number of classrooms and laboratories, a multi-purpose gymnasium and a very popular swimming pool.

Visiting Valence is both fulfilling and instructive, but also fun and interesting. We have all managed to create solid friendships with many of the students and we have come to admire the teachers who seem able to overcome any difficulties they face. Now, after almost one year of regular weekly visits, we can safely say that our choice of VSU greatly exceeded our expectations, giving us a great insight into the lives of the Valence students.

Samina Gagné and Laura Grunberg

RIDING FOR THE DISABLED

This VSU activity takes place at Bradbourne Riding Centre in Sevenoaks on Thursday afternoons. Students are engaged in individual support for children with various physical and learning disabilities, helping them to learn how to ride horses and accompanying them on hacks.

Bradbourne RDA will be celebrating its 50th birthday in 2012. Thursday afternoons are always busy for us, as we have three groups of riders, two of which are large groups of small children. Our Sevenoaks School volunteers are crucial to our provision of rides on Thursday. We have up to seven children from Cage Green Primary School's Centre for Autism, and five autistic children who are home-schooled and attend school full or part-time. The Sevenoaks students help with tacking up the ponies, and then bring them into the riding school. They lead the ponies and talk to the children as they ride, helping them with instructions and keeping them attentive. We are very appreciative of the time the students spend with us and hope that they find it as beneficial as our riders.

The Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) was founded in 1969 and now has 500 member groups across the UK helping 23,000 people take part in riding, carriage driving and vaulting activities. Apart from a small staff at National Headquarters, the RDA is run almost entirely by volunteers.

*Jenna Leight
Bradbourne Group Riding for the Disabled Association*

'RDA is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I am so glad to be a part of.'

Jessica Hui



SERVICE COLOURS

Service colours are awarded in recognition of outstanding service to the school or the community. Nine students explain why they received their green and silver ties.

HUGO ELLINGHAM

I was in the Charity Action Group for VSU throughout Year 11 and the Lower Sixth. Over the two years I helped to organise fundraising events such as concerts and charity weeks, as well as raising awareness for the charities by presenting assemblies. Additionally I made a promotional video for the Children's Liver Disease Foundation during its 'Big Yellow Friday', and the charity used the video on their website and as promotion for the fundraising day in future years. The experience of organising events to raise money for such worthy causes motivated me greatly. It allowed me to improve my organisational abilities, not to mention my ability to speak to a large audience. The process has been extremely fulfilling.

HARRISON HODGKINS

I was in charge of the student magazine *The New Oak* and helped to revolutionise the production process. I instigated the purchase of an Apple Mac, to enable the current and future editors and designers to have a better creative control of the magazine. Working with the editorial team required a strong commitment to meeting deadlines and also enabled me to develop my managerial skills.

CIARA BULLOCK

I volunteered with the Bradbourne Riding for the Disabled group for three years. Every week for one and a half hours I helped teach young autistic children and blind children to ride. Talking to them and seeing them improve was very rewarding.

I also volunteered for two hours a week with St John Ambulance over the course of two years, and learned practical first aid skills. Having acquired this proficiency, I was able to go on duty with the ambulance as a junior member to the Sevenoaks Round Table fireworks in 2010.



LAURENCE GIBBONS

I received my service colours for my role as senior technician for the Drama department, which meant preparing and running lighting and sound for school performances. My role also meant teaching the tricks of the trade to young aspiring technicians from the years below. This is a crucial job for the continuation of student technicians and a great chance to meet other students in lower years. Being a 'techie' is both interesting and exciting (believe it or not, a sound cue can really get the adrenaline flowing!) and over the last five years I have learnt so many things that I can carry forward. In truth, it is so enjoyable that it does not feel like a service at all.

*Right: Laurence Gibbons
Below: Harrison Hodgkins*



SERVICE COLOURS (CONTINUED)



WILLIAM HEARLE

I received my service tie for efforts towards the Charity Action Group. This mainly consisted of organising concerts, charity weeks, and comedy shows. What drew me to this responsibility was the chance to raise funds for charity whilst enjoying the reassuring feeling which comes when watching an event run smoothly. During my time at Charity Action, we spent quite some time researching various charities and meeting with the people involved. Seeing the excellent work that so many people are doing to help others inspired me to want to do the same. I hope to continue this sort of commitment in the future.



SASKIA DE QUANT

When I arrived at Sevenoaks I was most excited about the prospect of being able to utilise the school's resources for activities outside the curriculum. Inspired by a family friend who had dedicated time and money to building two schools in the Hohoe district in Ghana, I began to find ways to help provide these children with an education that would allow them to fulfil their dreams. Over the past year and a half, with the help of my Divisional Head, Miss Tebay and my Housemistress Mrs Haworth, I have collected several hundred textbooks from Sevenoaks and other local schools. With the generosity of school parents I was able to raise enough money to pay for the shipment of these books to Ghana. I have chosen to take a gap year next year and will be spending time with these children in Ghana with the hope of making a small difference to their lives and education. I would not have been able to do this without the help and support from the school.



TANIS CHALOPIN

Design was my VSU option and I was asked to design and create two identical glass vases that would be sold at a PA ball charity auction. Not only did I truly enjoy designing these vases, but I have always enjoyed participating in charity work, as I feel that I have been fortunate in life, and should give back to others in need. Being able to combine a passion for art with charity was of great value to me and I hope I can continue to do so in the future.



LARA BRYAN

For the last 18 months, working within the Design Voluntary Service Unit every Thursday afternoon has been a great privilege. Initially, my wish was to somehow help the local community in a tangible and practical way. There followed an amazing learning experience as I helped to make a variety of objects, from a giant grandfather clock for a school play to a reading aid for children who are deaf without speech. I soon found that what I gave in time and effort was equally matched by what I was being given in return: manual skills, the opportunity to work in a team, knowledge of different materials and the satisfaction of knowing that our work was of use to others. It was, in short, an amazing opportunity, for which I am thankful.



LOTTIE RITCHIE

I believe one hundred per cent in the power of education. It is for this reason that my voluntary service has always focused on aiding children in their development and education. I have been a part of the Junior Science team for over two years, and in that role have strived to motivate and teach the children to the best of my ability. This work has fuelled in me a desire to teach which may well inform my future career.



Fifty years ago, Sevenoaks School started the Voluntary Service Unit. Its founder, Kim Taylor, explains how service became an everyday part of school life.

In the late 1950s, when we began to think about what became the Voluntary Service Unit (VSU), there were two shining examples to encourage us: Voluntary Service Overseas, the creation of Alec Dickson; and the service units at Gordonstoun, founded by its great headmaster Kurt Hahn. Both these prophets were inspiring speakers. They came down to Sevenoaks and addressed our Sixth Formers and, later, a crowded Johnson Hall of parents.

After hearing Alec Dickson, Julian Blackwood, the School Captain, promptly volunteered for VSO. No sooner had the summer term of 1959 ended than he was flown to British Guyana. After briefing by officials in Georgetown, he was sent to be a sort of district commissioner in an Amerindian community up-river. He organised their communal rebuilding of the village, their schooling and their cooperative trading. As for Gordonstoun, I went to the north of Scotland to stay a few days. The boys provided round-the-clock watch at coastguard outposts, manned lifeboats, trained in an auxiliary fireman section and organised mountain rescue teams. I was very impressed. The question for us, though, was whether service by the young could be done in everyday, rather than epic, circumstances. Could we find genuine needs for community and social service by the young within the familiar confines of suburbia?

With thanks to James White for commissioning this article.

My wife, Sue, and I duly went to see people in charge of various institutions in the town to see what help from schoolboys (Sevenoaks wasn't co-ed then) might be welcome. We were surprised at the ready response. Soon we had 20 jobs they could do, each taking about two hours a week. Twenty jobs – at the Almshouses, the Blind School, in care homes, in children's homes – enough to begin with. We needed a master in charge. A young historian, Neil Patterson, due to begin in September and, therefore, unencumbered with other out-of-school activities, seemed the vigorous and creative sort required, and he agreed to take the unit on. I explained to the boys after morning prayers that September 1960 how demanding regular community service would prove. Nineteen volunteers stayed behind. The School Captain, Ian Duncan, added his name. VSU had begun.

I had always been anxious that the Unit should not be confined to Sevenoaks School alone. Local headmasters and headmistresses proved supportive and their volunteers joined ours the following year, September 1961. A year after that, the Unit had swelled to 100 boys and 80 girls. By 1964, there were 253 regular volunteers, with some ad hoc additions for impersonal tasks like litter clearance alongside roadside verges, and woodland replanting.

The increased variety of jobs, plus more schools involved, meant complexities galore. A particularly frustrating problem was transport. Somehow, we had to lug about the lawnmowers and rakes needed to look after old people's gardens, and the clobber needed for small repairs and decorating – not to mention the young bodies who would be using the equipment, and who provided, in this process, interest, conversation, comfort and company to the garden owners. At first, our family Volkswagen Microbus was pressed into service; then parents and helpful adults joined in, brilliantly organised by Di Day (the school secretary) from her small house opposite the school – not just transport, but help with jobs too, especially in hours and during holidays when the young volunteers weren't always available.

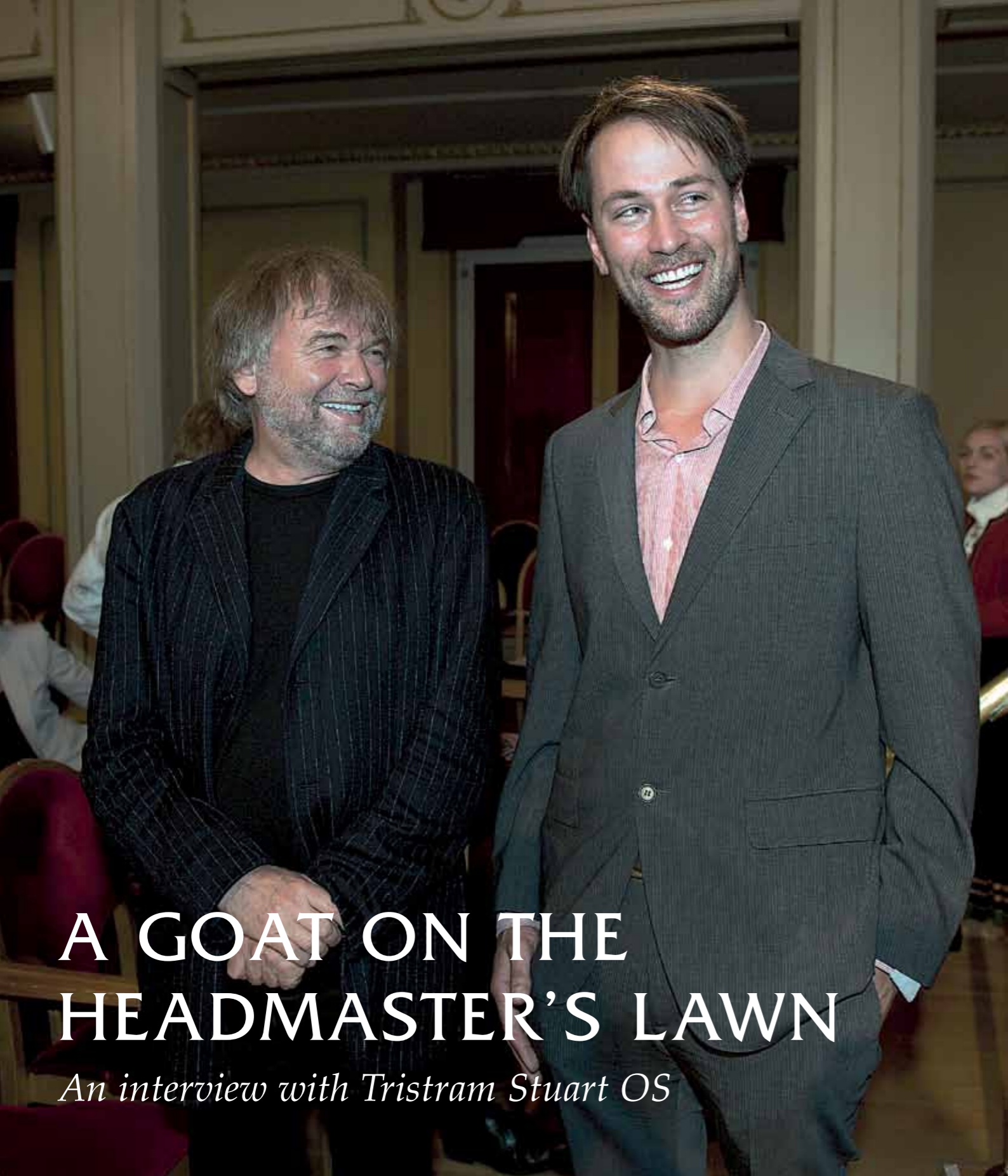
We soon found, too, that we often had to fit into the schedules of recipients of VSU help: for example, boys, trained by the police, had to miss morning prayers to be available as lollipop men at children's road crossings. These and many other complexities led in time to Di Day's associated adults becoming the first Volunteer Bureau in Kent and to the Kent Education Committee paying for a full-time coordinator to support and extend Di's voluntary work. Our solitary microbus was supplemented by an ex-ambulance (bought for the giddy price of £25) and then by more reliable transport, growing into the fleet available at the school and at other local schools today.

Yet if the sprouting of Sevenoaks VSU was alarmingly vigorous, so too was the bewildering speed with which this 'suburbanised' sort of community/service was taken up elsewhere. Newspapers took note of what we were doing. There was a flood of visitors from schools. Soon, Neil Patterson was asked to lecture to students at London University, then to write the Schools' Council paper on Community Service, widely circulated to secondary schools. Neil's successor, David Howie, became Director of the National Youth Bureau and Director of Community Education at the Open University. Boys and girls from the Unit started the equivalent at various universities.

Only two years after VSU began, I was asked to address the Headmasters' Conference at its annual meeting in 1962 about school-based community service. I concluded with the following words:

'A Voluntary Service Unit can provide the sort of boy who asks those questions about purpose with the actual experience of being useful. It is a sadness of the present time that among the young it is more fashionable to be cynical than to do anything which might be labelled unselfish or positive... But these are dangerously large words about something which is essentially ordinary... It is simply that there is a surprising amount to be done and "it is better to light a candle than shout at the dark".'

*Kim Taylor
Headmaster 1954-68*



A GOAT ON THE HEADMASTER'S LAWN

An interview with Tristram Stuart OS

Tristram Stuart (OS 1995) was awarded the 2011 Sophie Prize, an international environmental award, for his 'innovative, energetic, humorous and thoughtful contributions to raising consciousness about one of today's most palpable environmental and moral scandals... food waste'. Author of the award-winning Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal (Penguin, 2009), he is a regular contributor to newspapers, radio and television programmes in the UK, US and Europe on the subject of food, the environment and freeganism.

Kathy Stocker and Adam Hill (L6) caught up with Tristram to ask him about what motivates his work, and his time at Sevenoaks School.

KS: Where did your original environmental concern stem from?

TS: It goes back further than I can remember, so it's difficult to say specifically, but all of these things come down to an appreciation of nature and the world we live in. If one doesn't care for and value nature, it's difficult to care about the destruction that is currently being wrought on it. I grew up in the countryside so my father taught me about wildlife; when I heard about deforestation I was appalled by it and I think that's really where it started. I remember sending a letter at the age of nine to my local McDonald's saying, 'I won't come to your restaurant any more until you stop using CFC packaging.' About a month later I received a response: 'You'll be pleased to hear that our branch of McDonald's and all other branches in the UK have stopped using CFC packaging.' Obviously as a young boy, I thought, 'I've really achieved something here.' Of course it was just a coincidence.

KS: What did you do at Sevenoaks?

TS: I remember giving an assembly when we were just turning 18 encouraging all my school friends to vote Green. By then I had been rearing animals (pigs and chickens at home) for a few years and that really helped fire my interest for land management, how we need it to survive and how we're misusing our land at the moment. I did

actually try to extend those activities into school – I think there's an old school rule at Sevenoaks permitting the head boy of School House to keep a goat on the Head's lawn. I was a friend of the head boy of School House and we actually tried to get this goat, which I wanted to milk in first break (I thought I should be more productive during morning break), but unfortunately we weren't allowed.

KS: What would be the benefits to the wider world if all the pupils from Sevenoaks ate everything on their plate, without wasting any food?

TS: Everyone at Sevenoaks is part of the whole global food supply chain, and everything depends on the global system of food. I estimated, and the United Nations report has just backed up my claim, that about a third of the world's food supply is wasted, meaning essentially we are wasting resources – all the land and water and fossil fuels that goes into producing that food, putting an unnecessary strain on the climate, environment and global food supply. If we in the Western world are buying food we don't even need, we're making it scarcer for people elsewhere in the world who actually do need it. It's important to stress that I'm not talking about sending the leftovers from your school friends' plates out to Africa; I'm talking about not buying the food that you're not going to eat in the first place. By doing that we would reduce the pressure on global food supplies.

*Tristram with Jostein Gaarder
© Elin Høyland, 2011*



Feeding the 5000,
Trafalgar Square, 2009
© Martin Bowman
www.feeding5k.org

KS: You've adopted a concept called Freeganism, for which there is no exact meaning; can you define what this is and tell us what led you into this way of life?

TS: That's absolutely right, there's no clear definition, but I can tell you what it means for me – I take food out of supermarket bins and eat it. I do that for one reason only; to demonstrate the injustice of the global food waste scandal. My point is that bins should not be full of food that is fit for consumption, and my aim, if you like, is to bring an end to Freeganism by convincing businesses to stop filling bins with good food. I'm not proposing that Freeganism is a solution; it's a way of demonstrating the problem.

AH: What type of food do you find most often in these supermarket bins?

TS: The truth is that when you open up these bins it's like being in a supermarket. You have thousands of products, but instead of being on shelves they are wrapped up in plastic bags and put into a bin. One of the things I find most distressing, and that you find in large quantities, is bread. In the UK we buy and sell wheat on the world market and it's the very same market that people from Africa and Asia buy their wheat from. We in Britain buy millions of tonnes of wheat

which we then put into bins, but which if we hadn't bought, and hadn't put into bins, would have remained on the world market available for the people in Africa and Asia to buy. That's one of the clear ways in which we are literally taking food off the tables of starving people.

AH: You have done some really interesting projects in the past, for example the awareness-raising 'Feeding the 5000' in 2009, in Trafalgar Square, when 5000 people were served curry, smoothies and fresh groceries from food that would otherwise have been wasted. What gave you this idea and did it achieve what you had hoped?

TS: It achieved far more than I hoped; the immediate aftermath was that the Minister for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs wrote to the major UK supermarkets requesting that they stopped destroying food, and instead give it to charities like FareShare, which redistribute surplus to people who need it. FareShare received extra funding, and the response from the industry is also quite encouraging; there are a number of measures now being adopted by most of the big supermarkets and other businesses to reduce waste. One of them is to increase donations and surplus food for redistribution. The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee discussed the findings in my book and made a series of



recommendations for food waste reduction. So the impact on politicians and businesses was beyond what I expected and of course, through media coverage on the day, the message reached tens of millions of people in Britain and worldwide. I'm pleased to say there are replica events being organised in other countries and another in London this autumn. I am optimistic that this massive global problem can have simple solutions, ie eating and enjoying food instead of wasting it.

AH: Do you have any similar ideas for projects in the future, particularly in terms of working with schools?

TS: Yes, I co-founded an organisation which is doing projects in schools precisely on this issue. We are making smoothies from fruit that would have been wasted, and teaching kids about what they can do to reduce the global food waste scandal. I absolutely agree that there is a huge desire to address this theme in schools and I'm always amazed how clued up school kids are on this issue. Actually I think that young people's instinct to troubleshoot is often still intact, whereas when I give talks to adults they stroke their chins and say, 'That's terrible, but what we can do about it?' But give the same problems to children and they dive in immediately with a hundred solutions.

AH: Are you hopeful for the future?

TS: In terms of this particular campaign against food waste, I've never been involved in something that has been so readily taken up, with solutions sought and applied to situations. In that respect I have been amazed about how much good stuff has happened over the past few years.

In the wider perspective of environmental degradation, I'm sorry to say that the outlook isn't promising. We are in the middle of one of the world's several mass extinction events, in that we are exterminating species evolved over billions of years – a process that is showing no sign of diminishing. In fact it is increasing, and that is directly a result of the way we, in the rich world, consume. In South America and South-East Asia, forests are being destroyed in order to supply our markets with products like meat and vegetable oils. That is one of the worst things happening in the world today. However, the initiative on the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation tentatively agreed in Copenhagen in 2009 promises to introduce measures to try to put a value on keeping forests intact. This shows that there may be some cause for optimism, as regards preserving our forests. A glimmer of hope, if you like.

KANAN SEYIDOV: TEENAGE PHILANTHROPIST



Kanan Seyidov (Lower Sixth) has been actively involved in charity work in Azerbaijan and Georgia for over three years.

For Kanan, charity is not an exceptional action but a sincere need and he views it philosophically, believing that every individual is in search of answers to the questions quoted above. He feels that responding to a person in front of you is not merely essential but second nature, and that interaction is an integral part of our daily life.

Kanan's first forays into charitable action were at school in his motherland Azerbaijan. He gathered a team of peers who worked together helping social institutions: collecting useful items for orphanages, cleaning windows in residential homes, painting fences, and organising holidays, concerts, sport competitions and games for orphans and children with restricted mobility. He went on to become involved in many other humanitarian causes:

HEALTHCARE

At the age of 14, Kanan joined an international MUN club where he became interested in the problem of Aids and decided to make a contribution to fighting the illness through a series of awareness campaigns. 'To know means to live' was the motto of the project. He adopted an 18-step plan which involved gathering like-minded people, talking to specialists, publishing booklets, and holding advertising campaigns among the city's youth. At the end of the campaign Kanan won two awards in the local community for his contributions to raising awareness and improving young people's education.

The blood disease thalassemia is fairly widespread in Azerbaijan. Approximately 800,000 people are considered to be potential carriers of the thalassemia gene. As a result of a voluntary blood donation campaign organised by Kanan, 107 people including students, teachers and administrative workers of the Physical Fitness and Sports Academy of the Republic of Azerbaijan became blood donors. Kanan contacted the Head of the Sports Academy and designed posters and information sheets to publicise the event on campus. His campaign attracted national news coverage.



A volunteer gives blood during the blood donation campaign

Photo supplied by Kanan Seyidov.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

In 2008 Kanan helped to install a pump and provide a water supply system at a residential home for the elderly in Azerbaijan. During his stay in the home Kanan helped in the kitchen, purchased sweets, clothes, cleaning facilities, wheelchairs, bedlinen and blankets, and devoted time to walking and talking with residents. As well as providing them with much-needed company, he was able to learn a lot from those residents who were witness to historical events or contemporaries of famous people.

STREET CHILDREN

In addition, Kanan has been heavily involved with a rehabilitation centre for street children – visiting regularly and also organising a charity exhibition and the sale of artwork by children from the centre, some of whom suffer from serious health problems or impairment. 'I feel very strongly that whatever path they have taken to the centre, every single child deserves love and attention,' he says. He realised that for many children, creative work is a chance both to make a name for themselves

and express their inner worlds. This encouraged him to organise charity exhibitions and the sale of drawings, handicrafts and items of decorative-applied art. All the funds raised were spent on the purchase of materials for the further development of the children's creative artwork.

SUPPORTING REFUGEES

Kanan's charity activities have not been restricted to Azerbaijan. With 'Russian Club', a student group at his previous school, he travelled to Georgia to interact with the victims of the conflict between Georgia and Ossetia. Raising funds through cake sales, they bought clothes, food and other essential items to give to refugees living in terrible conditions on the border of the Russian Federation and Georgia. The group was recognised with an International Student Award from the Council of International Schools in 2007.

Kanan joined Sevenoaks School in September 2010 and has continued to be very active in volunteer work. During the Michaelmas half term he returned to the residential home for the elderly for ten days. In March 2011, he joined the school PROMO trip to the SKSN School in India, which is a home for some 550 physically challenged children. He describes observing the challenges the pupils face as 'a life-changing experience' while also experiencing culture shock.

For Kanan, showing support for those less fortunate is a task that should be undertaken daily and on a permanent basis. 'Displaying solidarity towards the less privileged is a duty, and my generation, with its open-minded and globally focused approach, has all the talent and power to carry out effective and long-term charitable work,' he says. 'A mixture of kindness and courage are essential ingredients to empathising with and helping those that need protection.' Put in the simplest terms, he feels that the willingness to undertake charitable activity does not depend on one's income but on one's heart.

Navaneethan Kunaratnam

*'Why help a man who has met an accident?
Why help a fallen old man stand up on his feet?
Why give up a seat to a pregnant woman in an
underground train?
Why on earth feed a hungry kitten wandering
outdoors?'*

Suleyman Rustam, Azerbaijani poet (1906-1989)

SERVICE BEYOND SEVENOAKS

Many of our alumni are employed full-time in the voluntary sector or dedicate their spare time to fundraising for various charities. We spoke to six OS about their work and motivation.



**GAVIN BATE (OS 1982),
DIRECTOR, ADVENTURE ALTERNATIVE**

Gavin is a mountain guide, explorer and speaker, founder of Adventure Alternative and Moving Mountains Trust and co-founder of Fair Trade Volunteering. He campaigns against exploitation in tourism and lectures on management in developing countries, mountaineering and developmental aid work. In May 2011 he summited Mount Everest for the first time.

After attending university in Northern Ireland, I crossed the Sahara Desert alone and on foot, and since then have travelled constantly. In 1991, during a long period of travel and exploration, I started Adventure Alternative, a Responsible Tourism company which provides ethical

adventure holidays. I had previously worked with aid agencies and these experiences led me to set up Moving Mountains Trust, which supports children and community initiatives in Nepal, East Africa and Borneo, where I spend a lot of time doing developmental work. Moving Mountains is supported logistically and financially by Adventure Alternative.

I have made six expeditions to Mount Everest, including three without oxygen and two solo, as well as many high-altitude trips to some of the world's highest peaks. I've spent my whole life climbing, and reaching the summit of Everest was an amazing feeling. But it's important to remember that climbing mountains is quite a selfish, pointless pursuit. It's difficult for people you've left at home. Raising money for everything that I do makes it more worthwhile. All of my climbs have been linked to Moving Mountains and my ascents of Everest have raised over half a million pounds for the projects and programmes I run. I can't think of Everest without translating it into charitable projects, with hundreds of people benefiting.

www.adventurealternative.com
www.movingmountainstrust.com
www.myeverestchallenge.com

CRAIG ALDRIDGE (OS 2004), ASSISTANT CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, ALERT

The African Lion and Environmental Research Trust (ALERT) is a charity based in Zambia. ALERT works with all sectors of society throughout Africa to promote the development of sustainable conservation management plans for the African lion. It is the subject of the ITV documentary Lion Country.

When I left Sevenoaks I decided to fuel my passion for international travel. During my gap year I travelled the globe, working and volunteering. It was the one of the most incredible and liberating experiences I have had, and opened my eyes to the world around me. However, it wasn't until I was 21 that I went to Antelope Park in Zimbabwe for a month's work with a lion rehabilitation and release programme. The objective was to use hand-reared

*Right: Craig Aldridge
Far right: Will Grut*



lions as the springboard for tackling one of the biggest problems facing African wildlife to date, the decline of the African lion in the wild. I was shocked to learn that lions are listed as vulnerable in the wild and that over 90 per cent of the population has disappeared in the last three decades. I returned to the UK, but the project was never far from my thoughts. In January 2010 I received a message from David Youldon, a friend and Chief Operating Officer of ALERT, asking if I would like to move to Livingstone, Zambia to work as ALERT's fundraiser. Less than a minute later I said yes, and two months later I began work! Though the job has its challenges, not a day goes by when I am not grateful to be here.

www.lionalert.org

**WILL GRUT (OS 1969),
CO-FOUNDER, ROSE CHARITIES**

Rose Charities is a group of independent organisations based in several countries with the aim of rehabilitating people to a better, more productive life.

Rose Charities was founded in 1998. Our first project work was medical assistance in Cambodia: sight restoration and rehabilitative surgery after land-mine injuries. The organisation has grown since then, and now encompasses many areas,

including emergency relief, education, community development, early childhood care and development, and sports for peace. Rose Charities' principles are those of working person-to-person to enhance the quality of lives of individuals and communities. This might be through a cleft palate operation, helping a young adult gain higher education, or assisting a village to start an income-generating business through micro-credit. We run with close to zero administration costs and our emergency relief teams aim to stay on location to help reconstruct, not simply dip in and out.



I was not a star at school, but I learned there that you can still achieve aims with determination, focus and perseverance. My interest in the work I do evolved from doing VSU at Sevenoaks. On Thursday afternoons we would assist disabled or elderly people in the community or give road-safety training sessions at a local special school in Halstead. One of the most influential people then was the school secretary Miss Di Day, who, out of her own pocket, bought an old London taxi to help with transport for the elderly. Rose Charities UK runs out of Sevenoaks, and we would love to hear from anyone willing to help as a trustee or volunteer.

www.rosecharities.org.uk

SERVICE BEYOND SEVENOAKS (CONTINUED)



A Women for Women by IPRAS project

DR SARAH LORENZ (OS 1999), CO-FOUNDER, WOMEN FOR WOMEN

Sarah completed her Medical Diploma in 2007 and began her career in the trauma unit of Schwabing Hospital in Munich, where she began to develop an interest in plastic and aesthetic surgery and burn care. During clinical clerkships and placements in India, Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Nepal and Tanzania, she became familiar with medical care under different socio-cultural circumstances and aware of the need for plastic surgical assistance overseas. With two other OS, Sarah is participating in a humanitarian project called Women for Women by IPRAS (the International Society for Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery). This is an international charity programme in which female plastic surgeons help women in developing countries suffering from disfiguring or socially excluding injuries and trauma. The goal is to enable such women to lead happy and prosperous lives despite their injuries.

CICELY BROWN (OS 1985), VSO

Twenty years into a successful London-based career, Cicely spent two years living in the village of Kagoro, Nigeria. She worked as an MSME Development Officer for Fantsuam Foundation in the nearby railway junction town of Kafanchan, with VSO volunteers from the US, Canada, India and Uganda.

If someone had told me that the best two years of my life would be spent without electricity, running water, television or cheese, I wouldn't have

believed them. But after years of corporate life in the printing industry, I had become bored with holidays as a substitute for international travel and wanted to see the world as I had done as a British Council child: to live in it. I applied to VSO, which matches skilled candidates with development organisations, and travelled to Nigeria in October 2008. Fantsuam Foundation is an organisation committed to integrated rural development, and provides computer training, microfinance, HIV/Health service and local volunteer training. My work for them was business and marketing management and support, as well as advising and training microfinance clients. Thanks to an impressive battery bank and satellite dish, we had electricity and internet access at work. The area was peaceful then and I have only wonderful memories. Unfortunately, after I left, Kafanchan suffered serious violence following this year's presidential elections in Nigeria. The entire market was destroyed, many people died, and more were forced to leave. The town is recovering and I hope that, when I return one day, will have rebuilt itself above and beyond where it was.

cicelyinnigeria.blogspot.com

HAMISH JACKSON (OS 2007), UK REPRESENTATIVE, MASH FOUNDATION TRUST

During his gap year in rural Jinja, Uganda, Hamish discovered that the single mother of a bright local schoolboy, Julius, could not afford his termly school fees of £20. With the help of a Kenyan social worker called Charles, Hamish responded by setting up the MASH Foundation Trust. Based in Nairobi, the charity supports academically high-flying single parents or orphaned Kenyan secondary school pupils through assessed scholarships, donation profiles and a microfinance scheme. MASH would be delighted to welcome OS volunteers to work in two secondary schools in Nairobi.