

THE HARROVIAN

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Rendalls House Play, 21 & 22 November

Whilst the days are now getting longer and the ‘cold bleak biting weather’ has lessened in intensity, I implore you to cast your minds back to last term, and to the second (and last) House play of the Autumn term: *A Christmas Carol*, directed by GLJ and performed by Rendalls.

Gathering in the Ryan, both performances drew considerable crowds of guests, from prep schools to grandparents. As the lights dimmed, the show began with the three charismatic storytellers John Bonas, Charles Harrison and Thomas Plasintescu bursting through the rear doors with greetings of merriment, scattering candy canes throughout the audience like Victorian elves. However, as they mounted the stage, their merriment died. Harrison put on an emphatic display, setting the sombre scene as we entered the pitiful world of Scrooge. The storytellers acted with charismatic chemistry and added a cheery – and at times amusing – contribution, carrying the audience with them as the story progressed.



With an iconic background of Victorian London and contemporary costumes, we followed the miserable life of the humbug Scrooge. Johnny Blake McGrath put on a fantastic performance as Scrooge, filling the famous shoes of the role with all the reluctance, irritability and frequent explosions of resent (with “Bah humbugs” worthy of the West End) associated with Dickens’ famous Grinch. In the murky setting of the ‘Scrooge and Marley’ counting house, the ‘tight-fisted’ lead laments the cursed festiveness of the characters around him. The lowly and timid Bob Cratchit, played by the ever-talented Max Morgan, was left stuttering and pleading as he was forced to work on Christmas Day; Mr and Mrs Thompkins, excellently played by Jack Hargreaves and Ben Walsh, were left grief stricken as he pressed for their debt; and even the charity men are lambasted and sent reeling for their begging ways. The irritatingly festive Fred (Scrooge’s nephew), played by Freddie Dinan, could not bestow an inkling of Christmas cheer in his uncle, despite his utopian merriment.

As Scrooge continues his one-man war against Christmas, the choir injected some much-needed merriment into the bleak world Scrooge was desperately defending. They sang heartily to Jaime Pound’s piano accompaniment, enduring his slip ups.

They certainly evoked the Christmas spirit in the audience, and helped give the play its friendly community appeal; the audience even joined in for *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*, which was performed at the very end. However, while the choir created an aura of easy-going merriment, Scrooge’s Christmas Eve took a somewhat less friendly turn. Starting with the storytellers sporting with him, and followed by the appearance of Marley’s ghost, played by Adam Chambers, wearing a fantastic cloak of chains (who, with the aid of some SFX, created a suitably terrifying display), Scrooge’s night time trauma began.

The Rendalls cast managed to strike an effective balance throughout the rest of the night, with the highs and lows which came with each of the Ghosts’ scenes, showing emphatic passion or desperate sadness. The music also varied with each of these scenes; gone were the earlier traditional Christmas carols when Fezziwig, played by a boisterous Woody York, burst onto the stage and marshalled his rather confused looking colleagues into an old country jig packed full of colour, dancing and joy. Meanwhile, when Scrooge is faced with a deprived Cratchit household, Tiny Tim, played by Digby Emus, bravely sang a forlorn rendition of *Silent Night* in pin drop silence. However, it wasn’t all grand performances: Old Joe, played by William Esam, rapped out *Deck the Halls*..., later joined by Mrs Dibler and Charwoman, when shifting through Scrooge’s abandoned goods.



The Ghosts’ different journeys effectively created an emotional roller-coaster, starting with the terror of Jacob Marley’s reappearance and followed by the Ghost of Christmas Past, who depicted both the loneliness of Scrooge’s schooldays, and the fond memories of Fezziwig. The Ghost of Christmas Present, played by Jolyon Glynn, who fitted the jolly giant role perfectly, came next, and brought with him the desperately sad Christmas table of Cratchit’s household. The Cratchit bunch put on a resounding performance, and conveyed the importance of finding joy despite being plagued by illness and poverty. This was followed swiftly by the turfed-out and indebted Thompkins, and finally a rendition of the Christmas at Fred’s, which Scrooge had previously thumbed his nose at. Next came the silent Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, played effortlessly (no lines!) by Kit Davidson; this horror truly turns our now overwhelmed and confused Scrooge. Here, Scrooge is presented with his most grim visions yet. Long gone is the rapturous Fezziwig scene, replaced instead with the aftermath of Scrooge’s death. However,

not all is gloom and doom; while the Cratchits mourn the death of Tiny Tim, who they could not help because of Scrooge's 'tight-fistedness', the aforementioned Old Joe, Mrs Dibler and Charwoman carelessly flick through his once beloved items, claiming some for themselves. Adding salt to the wound, the business men are looking forward to the meal his funeral will provide, while the ever-relentless Thompkins is overjoyed with the prospect of a new debt collector.

While the cast effectively portrayed the scenes from the Christmases Past, Present and Future, drawing on an array of emotions, it is really Blake McGrath's reaction that carries the play from scene to scene, imbuing each with emotional impact, with an impressive shift from the morose and irritable Scrooge to shock, horror, joy, grief and even – yes, I know – sympathy (Bah humbug)!



As the sun rises on Christmas Day, the choir is back, singing gleefully while the storytellers try to wrestle for control over the story from the Ghosts, and are successfully making merry. Now, a completely different Scrooge is busy righting all his wrongs: spending Christmas with Fred, giving the Thompkins the debt they owe him, ordering an oversized turkey, brewing some punch and letting a vividly shocked and confused Bob Cratchit have the day off. And we even got some snow!

We must give a massive 'thank you' to the Rendalls cast and crew for putting on a blitz of a performance in the final days before Trials, and for not only entertaining two audiences but for also putting us all in the Christmas spirit for the now past holidays. Similarly, we extend our thanks to the crew at the Ryan for designing and creating a set and such convincing costumes. Finally, we thank GLJ for sacrificing her time to unite, teach and drill a crew of Harrovians into a cast (!) and for putting on such an enjoyable performance.

JUNIOR MATHS SOCIETY

Issah Merchant, *The Knoll*, "Topology and the Euler Characteristic", 20 November

On Wednesday 20 November, Issah Merchant, *The Knoll*, addressed the Junior Mathematical Society on the subject of 'Topology and the Euler Characteristic: How we know the Earth is not a Donut'. He began by convincing the audience that, according to a topologist, a donut and a coffee cup are in fact the same shape. This is because one object can be continuously deformed into the other. He then explained the concept of the Euler characteristic, an integer related to the number of holes in an object. Because a donut and a coffee cup both contain one hole, they are topologically identical. By

deforming an object continuously, one cannot alter the value of the Euler characteristic, because one cannot add or subtract holes without breaking the object, which would violate the definition of continuous deformation.

Merchant then talked about some of the applications of this way of thinking, showing how the problem of connecting three utilities to three houses without crossing connections is impossible. He also spoke about its usefulness for the study of computer networks. Using the concept of simple connectedness, he then showed that the Earth truly was topologically distinct from a donut.

Finally, Merchant spoke about the Platonic solids, and proved through some careful reasoning with fractions and inequalities that the lever of Euler's Characteristic could be successfully used to pry open the topological box of mathematical truth to reveal that there can only be five possible polyhedrons that satisfy these conditions.

ROYAL ARTILLERY

Larkhill Live Firing Day, 3 December

Royal Artillery, based in Larkhill, Salisbury, represents the British Army's artillery arm, and has been doing so since 1716. The Gunners, as they are known, are an active regiment currently deployed all over the world from Estonia to Afghanistan. A selection of Harrow Rifle Corps cadets were invited to spend the day at MoD Larkhill in order to experience artillery live firing: a rare opportunity, and one highly sought after.

The day commenced with an early 6.30am departure from school, in order to arrive at the RA barracks for 10am. After a short briefing from our RA escorting major, we headed out to Salisbury Plain to the Gun Line. Salisbury Plain remains one of the MoD's main training areas, offering a suitable landscape to test the MoD's new equipment.



The equipment to watch during our viewing was the L118 Light Gun: a versatile 105mm light gun, with a maximum range of 17.2km. Each 105mm round costs approximately £1,000. We were told that during this particular training exercise £860,000 of rounds had been fired off, and a further 482 needed to be used up (much to our delight!). Some of us cadets even had the chance to hold the 105mmFD HE live round. Sadly, to one cadet's misunderstanding, the 15kg low friction round slipped straight through their grasp onto the floor – the excuse being he had a banana peel in on hand! Apparently, the round was still safe.

After a well-earned spectator's lunch in the mess hall, we heard a brief lecture explaining some of the capabilities of the Royal Artillery. This was further complemented by a tour around some of the multi-million-pound equipment used to destroy both

ground and air targets, with some cadets even being allowed to hold an anti-aircraft rocket launcher.

The day was very successful with all cadets having been inspired by some expensive gun firing. We would like to pass on our thanks to Major Davies and HAH who helped make this trip possible.

OSRG ARTS SOCIETY

Anthony Gormley Exhibition, RA, 20 November

On 20 November, the OSRG Arts Society group travelled to the Royal Academy to see the exhibition featuring old and new works by Anthony Gormley. He is the creator of famous installations such as *Angel of the North*, and *Another Place* and is probably Britain's most respected living sculptor. Everyone was certainly expecting big things! Having arrived with time to spare before our tickets could be accepted, we first explored the RA forecourt, with the imposing statue of the RA's founder, Sir Joshua Reynolds, looming over us (the OSRG has one of his portraits in its current display). To one side, looking rather lost and abandoned, and curled in the foetal position, was a tiny sculpture by Gormley of a baby, made in cast bronze. We pondered over the meaning of this oddity for several minutes before finally entering the RA and descending to the lower level to while away the remaining minutes gazing at a monumental statue of Heracles (and trying to translate the Greek inscription) and opposite him, a statue of a crucified, flayed man. Both statues were immediately engaging and threw up loads of questions about the depiction of the male body.



At the appointed hour we made our way into the Gormley exhibition. Its entrance was wide and impressive, promising much. In the first hall we encountered blocks arranged in strange, often irregular, three-dimensional shapes. We quickly put two and two together (with the aid of the handlist) and realised that they were in fact representations of the human form but presented in the most basic of geometric shapes – the rectangle. Once we got our collective eye in we saw that some were holding hands, some reclining, and some even engaged in more sociable acts! The next room contained various lead sculptures and works of art with rather dark names. An optical illusion christened *Blood Mixed with Earth* attracted visitors like moths to a flame; LAM was fascinated by an onion-like bowl; Mrs Walton particularly enjoyed a hanging exhibit depicting a falling man made from dozens of slices of toast that was now in its fifth iteration because the original ones had long since decomposed. Moving on, the next room was filled with vast, super-scaled swirls of metal wire all interconnecting in complicated and curious ways, reminiscent of that long-forgotten fad, loom bands. Travelling around its edge (we weren't allowed to enter into it), we pondered on its meaning. The handlist said it might represent the scribbles of a child, or electrons swirling around an atom. There were associations too with the coils of barbed wire seen in WWI footage.

The next expansive room contained another surprise. There

was a giant steel lattice comprising many, many interwoven three-dimensional, empty, cage-like constructions hanging from the ceiling. Its weight must have been enormous and the structural impossibility of the sculpture – combined with the invitation to walk underneath it – made one very nervous. It was the size of a small house; the eyes became confused with trying to separate out the different boxes – it was like a 3D Bridget Riley painting – an excellent analogy for the repressive nature of cities. It was very alienating.

We then moved into a room filled with hundreds of Mr Gormley's notepads, working drawings and sketches. (He is known not to leave home without a notepad in his pocket.) The latter were drawn exclusively in red and black. They were hypnotic and very beautiful, and explored a number of themes, such as a child being trapped in a seed. On the wall were huge sketches of the enormous coils we had seen rendered three-dimensionally in the 'loom bands' room. The next gallery contained multiple cast statues of a nearly-naked Mr Gormley displayed in unnatural planes – for example suspended from the ceiling or emerging horizontally from the walls. They provided an excellent opportunity for Mrs Walton to take photos of us all – especially two Remove boys who, oblivious to the public, were engaged in sketching the scene. The penultimate room was entitled *Cave*. Visitors entered a low, dark passageway, that got increasingly dark so that it became impossible even to see the person walking one pace ahead. The advice was to retain contact with the left-hand wall as the passageway twisted and turned in unexpected ways. People had to edge forward with great care – few of the normal senses were available in such a remorselessly black environment. Some visitors were noticeably frightened and distressed by the experience. Gormley's notes explained that there is a pitch-black emptiness that embodies us all and this inside-out sculpture presented an opportunity to understand it.

The last installation, occupying a huge, empty gallery was called *Host*. Visitors were not permitted beyond the threshold. The floor was covered up to a depth of around 40cm with cold, motionless North Sea water over a shallow layer of sand. I personally enjoyed the piece, seeing it as quite reflective and calming; Mrs Walton's instant reaction was a desire to cast a stone in to set up ripples and waves, but some of the boys struggled to see any point in it at all. For Gormley the sea is where all life began and the installation should make us think about environment and what happens when something is removed from its natural state.

Overall, the trip to the Anthony Gormley exhibition was an extremely insightful experience which raised many questions about how the human form interacts with the world. I would like to thank Mrs Walton and LAM for taking us on such a wonderful trip, and we are all certainly looking forward to the William Blake exhibition in January.

SIR STEPHEN CLEOBURY

For many, Christmas is synonymous with the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (created by OH Eric Milner White in 1918), which is broadcast annually from King's College Chapel. For the last 37 years, this musical masterpiece has been directed and conducted by Sir Stephen Cleobury, who was Director of Music at the college from 1982 until his retirement in July 2019. At the end of last term (22 November 2019) Sir Stephen passed away on St Cecilia's (the patron saint of music) day to the great sadness of everybody who knew him. His legacy will not be forgotten in the genre of choral music: teaching the pronunciation of every syllable and word to the highest standard and conducting outstanding and unique arrangements. His death will leave a huge hole in the hearts and minds of all those who knew him, and our prayers are with his friends, family and the community of King's College, Cambridge.

ORIENTAL SOCIETY

Teikyo Speech Content, Teikyo School, 21 November

After every exeat, Harrovians left, right and centre are desperate for any chance to escape. On Thursday 21 November, that opportunity was provided under the guise of an Oriental Society trip. Smooth. In reality, this outing was intended for boys studying Japanese who were not native speakers. In the end, four boys were coerced into coming: Lawrence Leekie, Trevor Tang, Edos Herwegh Vonk and Edward Cleeve.

At the stroke of five, the minibus drove off into the night, bound for the 2019 edition of the Teikyo Speech Contest, held at the eponymous Teikyo School.

As always, we were up against our usual opposition: Teikyo and Eton, along with debutants St Bernard's. The competition was stiff – literally – it's a Japanese speech contest. Whose idea was that? Jokes aside, the contest is always tough, and our opponents are never to be taken lightly. Etonians, as stated by TS, "are good at making small things sound big". Harrovians are quite the opposite. Interpret that how you like, but the message was stark and clear: this wasn't going to be easy. Worse still, Anthony Cho wasn't there to carry us this time.

Before the night's formal proceedings, we settled in for what was supposed to be the highlight of the trip: dinner. Expecting Teikyo's signature mochi and roast beef in their lovely dining hall, we were slightly disappointed to receive samosas and sausage rolls in the gymnasium instead. Then again, at least there wasn't a fire in the kitchen or a malfunctioning alarm. Yes, I said it.

Bellies somewhat full and minds completely off-task, we were escorted to the lecture hall because it was time for the Speech Contest to commence. Cue heavy breathing and frantic script reading.

We began with the 'Beginners' section, aimed at IGCSE students. Our first representative, Edward Cleeve, *Lyon's*, wowed the crowd with his presentation about his hobby: engineering. Among many things, Cleeve discussed ion thrusters and his favourite book, *Unsouled* by William Wight. He showed nerves of steel throughout and delivered his speech with poise and accuracy. He deserves special credit for dealing with a difficult question from a very keen audience member. All in all, it was a positive start for the Harrow cohort, which I should add was the smallest by some considerable margin. Quality over quantity, as they say.

Not long after, Edos Herwegh Vonk, *Newlands*, took to the stage to talk about his Swiss hometown, Montagnola. Herwegh Vonk covered plenty of bases in the two-minute slot he was given, providing the audience with lots of information as well as some stunning visual aids. Once again, some top-drawer Japanese was on show, making one question if maybe, just maybe, Herwegh Vonk could be Japanese himself? I guess we'll never know.

After a brief recess, it was time for the main event: the 'Advanced' category. As with the 'Beginners' category, Harrow had two representatives in store. There was a lot of hope going into this, as Eton's talisman and two-time defending champion was miraculously absent. So, who was going to capitalise on this rare opportunity?

Lawrence Leekie, *West Acre*, certainly tried. His presentation about *Heisei*, the recently concluded reign of Emperor Emeritus Akihito, was strong in many respects. He discussed the history of this period along with five events he felt shaped this era. Being the budding comedian he is, Leekie managed to squeeze a few laughs from the audience – more than any other speaker. Overall, he gave a good account of himself and displayed some degree of Japanese capability.

Following that, Trevor Tang, *The Grove*, stepped up to the plate as the final speaker of the entire evening. His presentation was about *sanjuu-koku-bune*, boats which were used by Japanese

people to transport rice in a bygone era. It was an obscure topic to say the least, but Tang did a good job of explaining the nitty gritty of it all. He even had time to do some calculations to help explain the archaic metric *koku* to the audience, who were left gaping. Or maybe they were yawning.

After some deliberation between the judges and an audience-wide vote, the winners were decided. Taking after the beloved 1st XV, we lost out, with Teikyo and Eton deservedly claiming two prizes apiece. I suppose Eton didn't need their star player in the end; they already had his protege in store.

Although the night ended in disappointment, it was truly a great experience and a wonderful occasion to show off the strength of our Japanese department, led by and consisting exclusively of TS and RMT. Our four speakers represented the School admirably and navigated the intellectual challenge of the Speech Contest with scholarly tact. Not only that, they should be commended for their good spirit and respectful attitude throughout the event. A particular mention should go to TS, who deserves a lot of thanks for his starring role in organising the trip and helping the boys prepare for this contest. Hats off to you, Sensei.

The night concluded with our boys proudly receiving their participation prizes: pens. A horrendous crash on the A40 left us stranded for a bit, but we finally arrived back on the Hill at 10.45pm, much to the delight of the four House Masters concerned. Upon arriving, TS made it clear that he wishes to decline the invitation for next year's competition.

ST LUKE'S HOSPICE

Charity Shop Carol Singing

It was December – time for Mariah Carey songs, family gatherings, and gifts around our Christmas trees. Even for those of us who refuse to celebrate Christmas due to its "paganist origins" or its "economic inefficiencies" (*cough, cough, CST*), everyone has something to appreciate in the traditions Christmas has brought to us. But can we forget the most important tradition of all?



Return your minds to the afternoon before December. Most people were busy playing away matches or finding the right clothes for the evening concert with Wycombe Abbey girls. For the carol singers, however, there was no time for rest. The self-proclaimed "School Glee", comprised of an army of volunteers, had practised hard under the leadership of two-time (actual) Glee winning virtuoso Theo Nash. It was 2pm and it was getting dark, so we swiftly headed down the frosty hill towards St Luke's Hospice charity shop. Thanks to the shop owner's hospitality and TMD's kindly offered support and hot chocolate, the chilling air didn't feel so bad. Though it wasn't warm, it was heart-warming.

This year, we raised £175, a number worth taking pride in. Yes, £175 may seem like nothing compared to what Newlands can amass with "voluntary" donations in the weeks before Long Ducker, but it's enough to make a difference to the hospice. Or, you could pay for nine takeaways from Mr Sushi with that money.

Our choice of songs comprised some timeless carols: *Once in Royal David's City*, *Away in a Manger*, *Deck the Halls* and of course, *Silent Night*. So popular they were that even the kids working at the shop wanted to sing along, albeit being a little embarrassed by the audience.

During those rare moments when we glanced up from our sheet music, we noticed some familiar faces. PSL came jogging with his equally athletic son. JMA passed by, but his blue bike was nowhere to be seen. Even Miss Payne stopped by to have a listen – perhaps she just wanted to hear a form of noise, pleasant or not, having spent hours in the silence of the Vaughan Library.

Thanks to the organisation and hard-work of this year's carol singers, the hospice received a boost in donations, and perhaps an additional person may be able to enjoy a very special time of the year. Giving is the tradition that makes Christmas what it is – let's not forget that.

MESSAGE FROM HEAD MASTER

We are fortunate, those who work in schools and those who attend them, that each year has two beginnings, September and January.

The September start is lovely; it is still basically summer, everyone is fresh from holidays so long that work seems like an exotic esoteric pleasure, and there are many transitions: new school, new year groups, new classes, subjects and all the rest. Aspirations are high and so still is the Sun.

The January start is harder; we are in the midst of the academic year now, newness and the excuses of novelty have gone, introductions, inductions and loftier aspirations have met with the rock face of realities: UCAS, trials, selections and some distinctly chillier, shorter day certainties. Offers must be met, universities and A levels chosen; "Wouldn't it be great if ..." has become "Now I need to ...". The Spring term is one then of earnest delivery, of making good on promises made, goals set and condensing the vapour of pipe dreams into something sure and firm set. But these times need not be dour and cheerless; we have an exciting new decade, we have our own optimism as a School community to be increasingly sustainable, academically rigorous and expansive, showing athletic and philanthropic prowess and cultural dynamism, and we have that significantly Harrovian steely grit that sees us smiling to the footer fields and back: that particular quality of being at our best when the circumstances are least prepossessing. So, enjoy this term and besting the challenges that lie before you, and have a good 2020.

– 6 January 2020

HERE AND THERE

Twenty-four Fifth Form boys took the Astronomy Challenge. Brandon Chang, *Druries*, Ilyas Qureshi, *The Park*, Ben Kyd, *The Park*, Aum Amin, *Elmfield*, Jake Brockwell, *Moretons*, Archie Kyd, *The Park*, James Pang, *Druries*, Tiger Dai, *Rendalls*, and Aiden Hargreaves, *The Head Master's*, achieved Gold and, among these, were some of the highest marks in the country. The rest of the group achieved Silver. Well done.

Last term, 25 boys in the Sixth Form sat the British Physics Olympiad Round 1 paper. The boys achieved a strong set of results this year, with Gold awards going to Junseok Choi, *Newlands*, Andrew Holmes, *The Grove*, Sean Hargreaves, *The Head Master's*, and Sam Shi, *Bradlys*; Silver awards to Eugene Kim, *West Acre*, Hamish McCreanor, Freddie Murley, both *The Park*, Alex Saunders, *The Knoll*, and Jason Zeng, *Elmfield*, with a further 12 boys achieving Bronze awards. Zeng's performance is particularly noteworthy as he sat the paper a year early. Of the boys achieving Golds, Choi and Holmes achieved 'Top Gold'

awards, putting them in the top 5% nationally and qualifying for Round 2 of the British Physics Olympiad. Congratulations to all boys who took part.

Congratulations to the following boys for passing higher grade ABRSM examinations with distinction at the end of last term: Dat Doan, *Bradlys*, Grade 8 violin, Dante Doros, *Elmfield*, Grade 6 saxophone, Lucian Morrison, *Newlands*, Grade 6 singing, Ruairi Pringle, *The Head Master's*, Grade 8 cello, Cody Xu, *The Grove*, Grade 8 violin. There was one other result that was particularly noteworthy; marks more than 145/150 are extremely rare and Jiho Ro, *The Park*, achieved 146 in his Grade 4 singing. Congratulations also to Kieran Leung, *The Park*, on passing his LTCL diploma on the cello.

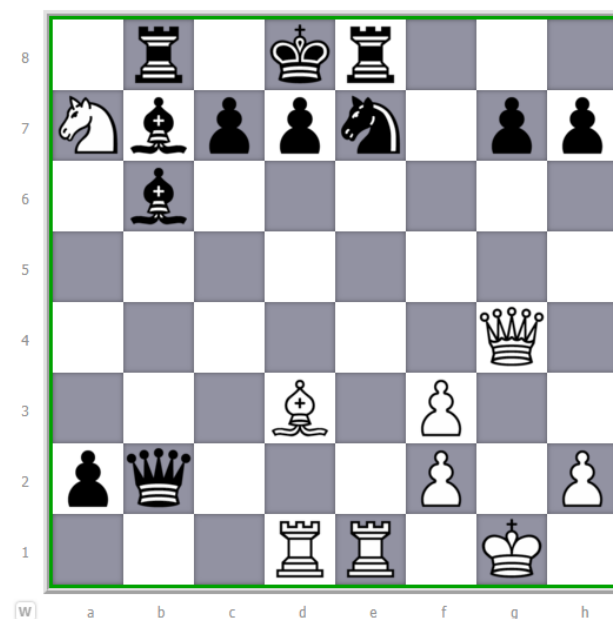
NEW MASTERS

We welcome three new members of Masters' Room: Mr Griffith-Jones (AGJ) joins the Classics Department and was previously at Stonyhurst College. He read Classics at the University of Nottingham and also holds a Masters in International Security and Terrorism. He has considerable experience of both playing and coaching rugby. Mr Cullen (GJBC) joins the Geography Department, having read Geography at Newcastle University. He then took a Masters in Sustainable Urban Development from the University of Oxford. He has also played professional rugby and, last year, cycled from London to Tokyo to raise money for charity. Mr Jordan (HWJJ) joins the Economics and Business Department. After completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Exeter, he was at the Oratory School in Reading. He has just completed his Masters in Poverty and Development at the University of Sussex.

CHESS PUZZLE

The weekly Chess Puzzle set by JPBH. Email your solutions to him (jpbh@harrowschool.org.uk) to enter the termly competition. Answers are published with next week's puzzle.

This edition's puzzle: White to play and mate in 2 moves.



Last edition's answer: 1. ... Bd4+ 2. cxd4 cxd4#

Fancy playing chess? Drop in to Chess Club – Tuesdays and Thursdays 4.30–6pm in Maths Schools 5. All abilities (boy, beak or non-teaching staff) are welcome!

SUDOKU

Persevera per severa per se vera

6		9			2	8		
	3				1	6	2	9
	8		7	9			1	
					7		4	1
2			5					6
				8	3			
	9					1		2
7			6					8
	6	4						

METROPOLITAN

FEAR AND LOATHING

As seen from the point of view of The Hitchhiker

I stood, twitching, on the side of the road running into Vegas, eager to see what the infamous city was all about. Still with the taste of sand and dirt in my mouth from the dust whirlwind which had been whipped up by a slick, black Camaro speeding down the highway past me. A cloud formed as it whizzed by, its awesome mechanic muscles being flexed.

However, my excitement conjured by this beast began to wane as I stood like an Egyptian explorer, covered in sand (and clueless). The soft tones of Bob Dylan floated across the dirtied air from the diner across the street from which I had emerged 10 minutes before. The heat waves seemed to dance with the soothing tones of Dylan, which jumped and skipped with the harmonica and created a beautiful mirage in this heat-struck deserted scene. Nonetheless, I still stood waiting, fingers crossed, eyes ablaze, waiting.

My arm outstretched with my thumb pointing to heaven, I felt like a disfigured stop sign, bent in the morphing heat. My body kept stiff and straight by the excitement and anticipation this spontaneous idea had generated. The call of a hitchhiker feels like a half-cocked SOS. It was true my soul most probably needed saving. However, the judgement of this was left solely in the driver's hands. As he speeds down the highway feeling the warm embrace of a combination of wind and sun, he sees a skinny, wide-eyed 'dude' with his arm outstretched and an eager grin. He is waiting, and probably has been waiting for a while now, for the driver's decision of mercy or speed. The art of hitchhiking was, in a way, pure lottery; you never knew what would emerge over the horizon. On my way to this point, I had ridden in a wide variety of cars, in all shapes and sizes.

In my journey across Colorado, I rode in a polka dot Mercury Cyclone, with a kinky older woman named Shirly with obscene breast and lip implants smothered in a smooth cherry lipstick. My ride before forming a dust cocoon in this peculiar outer Vegas outpost was with a burly truck driver named Burt, equipped with a somewhat suspect moustache and a flame-emblazoned but eerily rusty Chevy Half Tone. The beast moved with such an erratic pace, and the engine produced such a dreary growl, that it was as if you were travelling on a tranked out wildebeest.

However, neither the cougar nor the trucker were my most unique chauffeurs across sunshine America. No, this came in the form of the men who were to shortly approach me in their souped up, 'shark', as one of the men referred to it. It was a fine automobile, capable of speeds I'd only seen on the television; it glimmered in the ebbing sun as it flew over the horizon towards me, leaving a sandstorm in its wake. The dust cloud was approaching me with the same rapid speed as the vehicle, and I feared that I would soon be rewrapped in my dust cocoon from which I had just blossomed out of into a sweat-drenched denim-clad butterfly. I locked eyes with the driver of the automobile, and the hitchhiker's stare-off began. They flew along the highway in such a fashion as I had never seen; it was as though they were floating, high above the constraints of human reality. The driver's eyes had a certain devilish fashion, with an intense but somehow lost look. It seemed now that I would be doomed to an eternity of standing by this highway in an ever-building sand coffin. No sane man would attempt to call the vehicle to a stop before reaching me for fear of flying out over the windscreen and into the hard embrace of the tarmac.

To my surprise, the fine vehicle screamed to a halt and filled the air with the potent odour of burnt rubber. This smell signalled a trip, my final stretch across the fierce Nevada desert until I reached my destination: the blaring, unruly Las Vegas. The vehicle streaked across the dusted tarmac road and eventually found a resting spot a few metres past my current position. Nonetheless, they had stopped and, with a giggled run, I hopped into the fine cherry cruiser. As I vaulted the precipice of the car and bundled into the backseat, I exclaimed with glee: 'Hot damn, I never rode in a convertible before!'

My words were met with two faces of stammering expression. The man behind the wheel clasped a cigarette holder loosely between his lips, and dangled it erratically in my face. The other man, a small but full man with shaggy hair, blurted in a slurred fashion: "We're your friends. We're not like the others." This opening line confused me somewhat, as I was unsure who the others were. Nonetheless, he was right; they were taking me to my final destination and thus were indeed 'my friends'.

By this point, we were already hurtling down the highway at a blistering pace, leaving the destitute diner in our dust (literally). With the desert breeze propelled by the husky exhaust, the tidal wave of dust followed our gliding descent into the firepit of Vegas.

The peculiar pair chatted to each other, although I couldn't decipher anything they were saying, owing to the gale-force wind. The smoking man turned around in his seat and garishly leant over into the back to speak to me, an ecstatic smile painted across his face. "By the way", he said, "there's one thing you should probably understand." He followed this with a drawn-out pause as if waiting for a response. I replied with a puzzled look, he began babbling again: "Because I want you to know that we're on our way to Las Vegas to find the American Dream." I smiled, unsure if I was awake. I pinched my arm; nothing. He continued. "That's why we rented this car. It was the only way to do it. Can you grasp that?" This man was a peculiar creature; he anxiously darted his head around as if possessed and spoke in such a rushed muddled fashion. He was surely deranged. As for his companion, he had been twitching ever since I had jumped in the car. I began to feel, at 80 miles per hour, on a deserted highway, running into one of the seediest cities in America, that I might be in danger.

TALES FROM THE OSRG

Just before the end of term, while conducting an audit of unaccessioned items kept in an unfrequented part of the OSRG stores, one box, marked 'Joseph Banks', came to light and was brought into the office for investigation. Bank's *Florilegium* (on loan from WMAL) is on display in the gallery as part of the commemorative events surrounding Captain Cook's voyages two and a half centuries ago, and any further objects associated with this great OH botanist would be welcome additions.

Sure enough, the top layer of items in the box did relate to Banks, but they were merely photocopies of Natural History Museum documents used in a School exhibition in 1993 – they will be put on file in due course. What was far more intriguing, however, were the myriad objects underneath those photocopies – and, as a curator, I can quite understand why none of them had ever been accessioned. They were mainly what might be termed 'ethnographic' materials, but of such geographical and historical variety that they could not in any way be related to Banks. The objects have now been photographed and properly wrapped while they await conservation, and the photographs have been sent to the relevant departments of the British Museum and V&A for identification. Two very dry but very large botanical fruiting specimens found at the bottom of the box have been brought to the attention of the Natural History Museum – just in case they can be linked to Banks' travels. They are certainly not from this continent. The contents of such a box cause endless problems for a curator as there are no records explaining what they are or where they came from. The most we can establish is a brief description and possible cultural or geographical context. Over the course of the next months it is hoped that the mysteries surrounding the contents of what we now call 'Box 535' will be revealed and will be published in this 'Further Tales' series.



Happily, there was one curiously familiar object in the box for which provenance was provided – provenance of the sort that gladdens the heart of any museum professional. The heavy, metal Harrow Hat, half actual size, was completely black with grime and age. A light application of silver cleaner brought it back to decent condition and, while handling the item, it became apparent that the crown was far taller than customary. The cleaning process made it possible to lift the crown from the brim and thus was revealed an inner cavity in which had been placed a neatly hand-written note. It read: Butter dish in the form of a Harrow boater. Gift of Mrs Butcher (granddaughter of Titchener, Custos 1885-1922). The note was dated 25.IV.1987. One can only suppose that these butter dishes were made in Titchener's time (ie before refrigeration) when the metal properties and shape of the cavity provided a space cool enough to prevent the butter from melting. An impressed stamp '3069' suggests that they were manufactured in large numbers. At any rate, the note made sense of the object and gave a superb Harrow context for the gift. Ultimately, the object will be placed in Custos' display cabinet to join his extraordinary collection of Custodian-related conversation pieces.

The contents of Box 535 are a lesson to us all and something that boys doing the Elective on The OSRG Collections and their Care will already be mindful of. Whenever a gift is made to the OSRG (and Archive) a full record must be made of its provenance to enable the documentation and research processes to be properly completed. Without such a record, the relevance of the gift will be lost and all we can do is try, by association, to locate it in time and place.

HILL LIFE

I hope you all had a very merry Christmas and have started the new decade strongly (bring on the roaring twenties). For my part, new year new me and, as such, I will seek to discard an issue that has become prevalent, with clashes between the "woke" elite and – as was revealed in the recent GE – the people. Voicing opinions in a public domain is always dangerous, even if you are just floating an alternative argument to play the devil's advocate. Once aired in public (or sometimes private), it becomes not only impossible to judge your audience's reaction, but it also becomes impossible to even keep the meaning of your words/opinions intact. Take George Eaton's interview with Roger Scruton, for example, when, during the interview, Scruton had not made any outrageous comments that made him out to be the fascist Eaton so badly wanted him to be. As such, Eaton fabricated large chunks of the interview in order to be able to label Scruton a misogynist, racist and anti-Semite. Scruton was fired from his unpaid Government job and was smeared throughout the press. It was only after the confiscation of the interview tape that Scruton was revealed actually to be innocent of all accusations. How outrageous, right? Eaton was rightly fired but the damage was already done: there are many who only see Roger Scruton as the outdated creep he was made out to be.

However, this is not uncommon. Across the later part of the 2010's an aggressive "woke-ism" set in. Those who made obtuse or "un-woke" comments (however humorously intended they may be) – such as Boris' "letterbox" jibe – are immediately charged guilty of every sin under the sun: bigot, extremist, supremacist, misogynist, etc. Yet bigotry is being unable to tolerate views that differ from your own and, as such, is grossly misused by the "woke" elite who now run rampant over Twitter and most media highways. In fact, it would be more correct to label "woke-ists" as bigots for their intolerance of views contrary to their own.

Think how many people have fallen victim: McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook was fired for having a consensual sexual relationship with a junior colleague; the aforementioned Roger Scruton was disgraced for things he had not even said; Toby Young was fired for sexual tweets he made when he was a teenager and there are many others. Think of the pressure that Extinction Rebellion has put on this country through shaming people's ways of life. Take Harrow, for example: you may love eating meat but some dislike the fact that you eat meat and, as such, we will be having meat-free days.

How, you may ask, can these people have their culture, lives, income or careers ruined at the hands a few bigots? Beats me. But I can tell you this: 2020 represents a new start. Hollywood's "woke" hypocritical celebs have had a thrashing at the hands of Ricky Gervais; for all Stormzy's, Hugh Grant's or Lilly Allen's insistence that the public got it wrong, they decided they hadn't... again; Boris campaigned against the establishment and won; in short, it looks as if the high-headed arrogance and bigotry of the "woke" liberal elite telling people what is right and wrong has not been popular (gasp).

It is not their views but their bigotry that has caused so much division and outrage. So to start the new year with a resolution for all on the Hill: however right you may think you are or wrong you think others are keep the "wokeists" in mind and be genteel and not bigots.

HARRY WATTS

General knowledge competition last term

Overall

1st Freddie Murley, *The Park*, & Alex Morrison, *Newlands*: 82
3rd Paddy Breeze, *Elmfield*: 80

Upper Sixth

1st Freddie Murley, *The Park*: 82
2nd Ben Davies, *The Grove*: 78
3rd Henry Lozinski, *Lyon's*: 74

Lower Sixth

1st Alex Morrison, *Newlands*: 82
2nd Paddy Breeze, *Elmfield*: 80
3rd Adam Ait El Caid, *Druries*: 78

Fifth Form

1st Edward Blunt, *Elmfield*: 72
2nd Hugo Heffer, *Elmfield*: 69
3rd Matt Travis, *The Head Master's*: 68

Removes

1st Casper Kingsley, *Elmfield*, & Baba Obatoyinbo, *The Knoll*
3rd Aum Amin, *Elmfield*, & Archie Tait, *The Head Master's*

Shells

1st Toni Alaka, *The Head Master's*
3rd Sebastian Murray, *West Acre*, & Leo Waschkuhn, *Lyon's*

By House, the top three were:

1st The Grove
2nd Elmfield
3rd The Head Master's

Freddie Murley has come top of the School in the Harry Watts General Knowledge Competition three times in a row, a feat never before achieved.

Ways to contact *The Harrovian*

Articles, opinions and letters are always appreciated.

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Read the latest issues of *The Harrovian* online at harrowschool.org.uk/Harrovia
