

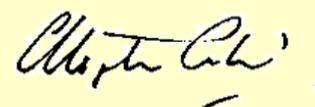
The Headmaster writes:

With a welcome return to plays, concerts, inter-school fixtures, rugby and netball tournaments, squad competitions, themed weeks, visiting speakers and a host of external competitions, the school has felt busier than ever over the past half term, and certainly busier than at any stage since the outbreak of the pandemic over two years ago now. There has been plenty to enjoy and to report on!

The long-awaited Thanksgiving Service for former Headmaster, Mr Ian Argyle, took place during our Weekend Leave. It was an event attended by over 350 people, although by only the choir and a few senior or long-standing members of staff from the current school community. For those attending, it was a wonderful and poignant reminder of the rich history of the school. My predecessor was Head at Aldro for 17 years, and all of us currently at the school benefit daily from his legacy, most obviously from the many buildings and facilities we enjoy that date back to his tenure. The event also highlighted the affection in which Aldro is held in the memories of former pupils, many of whom went to great lengths to attend and who embraced the occasion to reminisce and share happy stories of their formative years at the school. My sincere hope for all our current pupils is that one day they too will look back on their time at Aldro with comparable affection and gratitude.

And when they do, they will have every reason to remember fondly this past half of term! Forms 5 and 6 put on a spectacular play, 'Let the Games begin', and many took part in the Spring Concert and the inter-squad music competition. Smaller groups competed in the Pangbourne Poetry Competition, the Bradfield Demosthenes Public Speaking Competition and the Oratory Debating Competition, many more will have taken part in Science Week, Shakespeare Week, and World Book Day, and of course all our pupils took part in the Grimston Cup, an afternoon typified by nervous anticipation, grit and determination and ultimately, of course, by a much-warranted sense of personal triumph. My congratulations to all the children for everything they have contributed to making this past half of term so special!

At the end of term, the persistent rains of February eventually gave way to some early and very welcome spring sunshine, leaving us with the promise of warmer summer days to come. I hope the school community enjoys reading about the events of the last half term in the pages that follow, and together we can look forward to the exciting prospect of the Summer term ahead.



Chris Carlier
Headmaster



Let the games begin

In the last week of term we had our 3 performances of 'Let the Games Begin' the Form 5 and 6 production and the first big audience we have been able to have for some while. It was an energetic affair and with Sonic Speed and the power of Donkey Kong we were transported into to the land of Lady Fortune, the Land of Games!

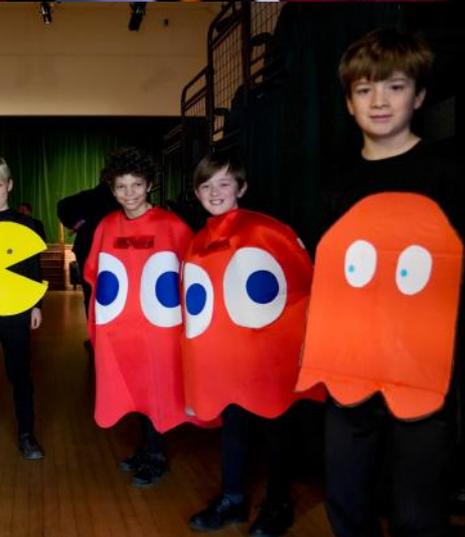
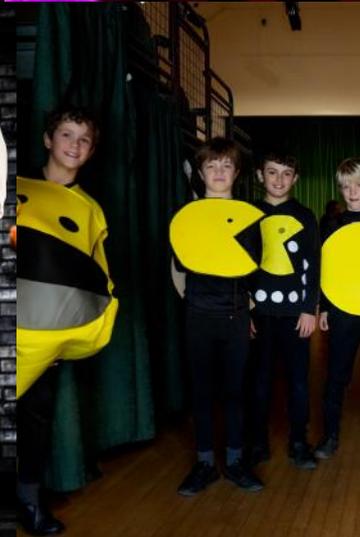
The Form 5 Lady Fortunes choir put on a wonderful show with some of the most imaginative costumes helpfully made and organised by the Form 5s themselves (with a little parental help, thank you!).

Form 6 took to the stage and helped Robin, Marney and Vicky navigate through Lady Fortunes games and defeat her in the great chess battle to finally return home to Granddad and realise life is not all about being on your phone: a lesson we can all learn I feel!

This term we were treated to brand new stage props, two spinning, 3-sided flats. They will be such a great edition to future productions and this one! A big thank you to the estates team for putting my visions into reality on that front.

A huge thanks to everyone involved in this uplifting musical, I'm still waking up with the songs in my head now! Well done on all your efforts!

SA





World Book Day

It was a delight to finally welcome authors back into Aldro as part of our World Book Day celebrations.

The Juniors met with William Grill, the author and illustrator of *Shackleton's Journey*. His visit could not have been more appropriately timed with the discovery of Shackleton's ship 'Endurance', which was discovered the same week.

William held a workshop explaining the various stages of his artwork and he supported the children in order for them to produce their own illustrations. Surprisingly, he allowed both the children and the staff to freely browse through his personal sketch books, giving us a privileged insight to his process.

The Senior pupils had an inspiring and entertaining visit from Lucy Strange who talked about her stories, their locations and how she became an author. Lucy provided the children with some good tips for writing fiction as well as recommending books from different authors.

Both authors joined our children for lunch and were happy to answer the children's questions. It certainly was wonderful to be able to finally follow our pre-COVID tradition of author visits, long may it last!





Form 6 take part in the Oratory School Debating Competition

On Tuesday 8th February, three pupils from Form 6 ventured out to the Oratory School in Reading where they proceeded to participate in a Debating Competition. The morning was filled with several workshops where they had a chance to try out different debating techniques. After lunch, they embarked on their debate prep for the topic they were given. The three of them had a great day and ended up winning their debate. Well done!

LE



International Women's Day

Aldro celebrated International Women's day earlier this month with a visit from three members of the emergency services. Assistant chief constable Alison Barlow, station commander Tessa schooling and Dr Sophie Mitchinson spoke at assembly about their work in the police, fire and ambulance services. Initially dressed in 'civvies', the children had to try and work out what they did for a living before they changed into their respective uniforms. After assembly they joined PSHE and science lessons where they talked further about work. What fabulous role models for our pupils.



Art of the Week

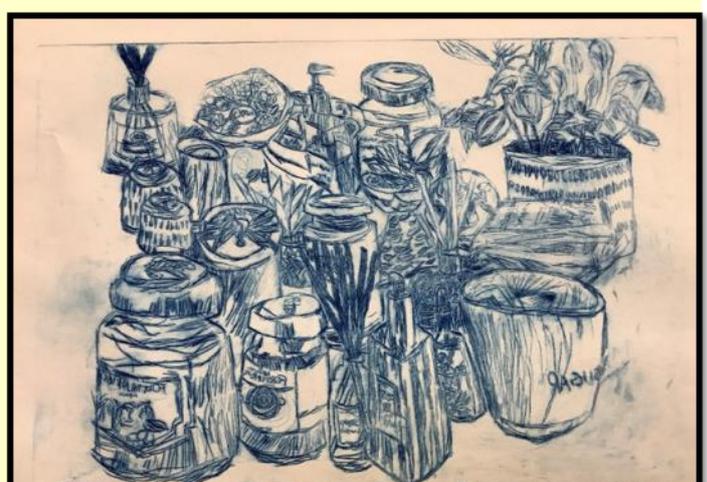
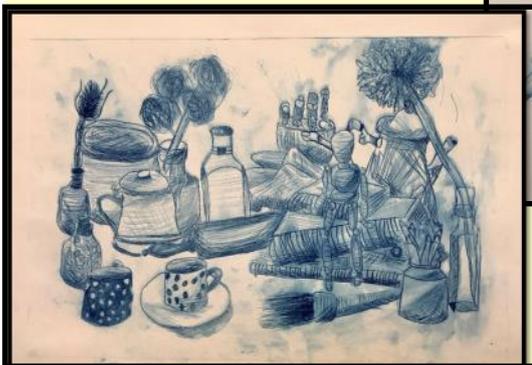
Children in Form 7 have created these stunning Dry-point Etchings. First, they spent a few weeks carefully composing an A3 still life drawing from some of the many interesting objects in the art room. They worked only in pen and they had to work hard to overcome the challenge of achieving light and shadows. They discovered hatching and cross-hatching as well as stippling. They then photographed and printed their drawings in A4. These prints were placed behind sheets of transparent acetate and carefully transferred onto the acetate using very sharp etching needles. These needles allow the artist to achieve incredibly fine lines by scratching into the acetate.

Once the marks have been scratched into the acetate, ink is rubbed onto the surface and it embeds itself in the tiny grooves made by the etching needle. After the excess ink is wiped away, the acetate is placed under a sheet of damp paper and passed through the printing press. And here are the results!

Actually, most the pupils in Form 7 could have been Art of the Week. They have done brilliantly.

LF

Emily T 7A, Tio S-W 7A, Aidan M-S 7D, Maisie M 7T, Paul B 7T, Leo L 7T, Cecily T-W 7D and Henry C 7D



Godalming Festival review...

Ladies and gentlemen...

Well, that was pretty incredible. To have not been able to show their work for so long because of world events, and then to come up with that kind of a day, SPECTACULAR! And it was great to see so many parents who we had not properly met, thank you all for your support, it was great to see you all.

Joy and I were able to sit and watch nearly 80 Aldro boys and girls get up on stage and control their nerves and just go for it. Speaking from a purely Actor's perspective, the exams are all well and good, and great scores are always great and it helps to give schools something tangible to point to as a successful program, but we have always maintained that getting up on stage in front of an audience (and surviving) is the best way to build and foster confidence in a child and give them a genuine sense of having done something special.

There is a definite bounce in the performers step, which has led some of our quieter boys to talk about the festival and express an interest in it next year.



For us, it is a way to see how the children react to an audience, and how they cope with their nerves, and for the children, it was another step forward in their personal growth.

Now firstly I would like to say a big thank you at the Godalming festival, who managed to accommodate all of us and the 10 different group we were entered in. How brilliant to see so many children do so many different things for the first time in quite a while.

I cannot remember seeing so many high quality performances from so many different schools, and it is always great to come out on top. (Sometimes I can't help myself!)

Nerves were certainly a factor for some of our new students, which led them to be a little quieter, and a little smaller than we are used to seeing, but next time they will all be that bit bigger and that little bit louder.

We had the majority of the performers in the year 4 and 5 groups, so walked away very happily with I believe 4 x 1st, James G, Tom N, Katie T and Henry C. 4 x 2nd, Joshua R, Cesca F, Jamie P and Alexander Y and 5 x 3rd places, Freddie E, Maisie T-W Henry E and Charlotte L. These were the judges picks on the day but we were incredibly proud of everyone for getting up and delivering on stage. The year 6 monologues, again we had most of the performers, but it was great to see some of the year 5s take their first steps. Again, a clean sweep of all places, a testament to some great talent, backed up by other very talented children. Alfred W 1st, Alfie G 2nd, and James P 3rd.

The year 6 poetry was also a learning and growing experience, with our entries earning a 2nd Alejandro E and 3rd place Glen D.

Year 6 duologues, an incredible array of scenes, with I think 13 different entries, we had 4. And these guys really went for it in a packed room, with a very big and close audience. Watching our pupils give it everything, with a calm confidence that hid the wild peddling that was going on underneath was wonderful, we took 1st place Alfred W and James P.

The year 9 to 7 acting Shakespeare, was all us again. All brilliant performances, with as ever great constructive comments from the judge, a clean sweep of Oli A 1st, Cormac S 2nd, and William B and Barnaby E joint 3rd.

LAMDA cont'd

The year 7 to 9 poetry group had a surprise winner, none more surprised than himself, but again a clean sweep for Aldro. Jack G 1st, Zachary W 2nd, Jacob K 3rd.

The year 9 to 7 Monologues were fabulous. Watching our year 7 boys deal with the year 9 boys in the room with some cracking performances, and we managed Albie F 1st and Theo P 2nd.

And finally to the year 9 to 7 duologues. Last class at the end of a very long day, I sat early as did the 3 pairs of Aldro year 7 children, only to watch maybe 10 pairs of, children seems the wrong word, young adults, all of who take acting very seriously, most of whom will be looking to go further with acting past GCSE. Our three pairs went at the end, and I am not sure if I could have felt prouder of how they went in that scenario. Alden and Barny did not put a foot wrong, Wren and Grace, having stumbled at first, got back up and delivered a good performance, and then Augi and Benjy absolutely stole the show, making every one laugh, and managing to stay in character all the way through. I am very happy to say that these guys did not look out of place amongst these other older talented performers, and thrilled for Benjy and Augi for picking up third place. Oliver Adelsbach was festival champion for Shakespeare, all age groups, and that Alfred W and James P were festival champions for duologue scenes, for all ages.

And we had a full house of distinctions for all those who did a LAMDA exam in march. Fingers crossed for the next 6 days of exams in may and June.

We try not to look at the placings and focus on the courage it takes to get up and perform, and we have had many lovely comments from Aldro parents, and indeed parents from other schools. The children all behaved beautifully, being great support for each other and anyone else who performed, and the judges gave great feedback, so all in all an amazing day and I hope you had as much fun as we did, sorry if we seemed distracted, but Joy and I had lots to keep track of. We will be giving individual break downs in the end of year report.

Adrian Cardy Brown

6 Nations Prediction Competition 2022

It has been a tradition for quite a few years that the 6 Nations rugby Tournament is echoed at Aldro in a prediction competition: pupils and teachers are invited to predict the score of each of the fifteen games. Participants gather points according to how close each of their guess is. Rugby prizes are awarded after each round to the best girls and boys.

From Year Three up to the Headmaster himself, 139 participants took part. What a fun it is to have a game that involves the whole school - girls, boys and teachers!

History will recall that, unsurprisingly, 1st XV Coach Brett Taylor came first overall. My being runner-up carries no merit as I am by far the only one having witnessed more than sixty tournaments...

The competition was so popular that I have decided to repeat it with the women's tournament following the men's. It is also meant as a celebration of the school's successful transition to coeducation and related to my Chapel talks about women's rights and status in Society. Allez les Bleues!

Here is the final ranking (top ten from 139 entrants. Whole ranking displayed in the vestibule).

1. Mr Taylor, 230pts
2. Monsieur, 216
3. Miss Barrett, 212
4. Mr Carlier, 210
5. ChristopherT, 208
6. Cesca F, 206
- 7= Jack G / Mrs Eves, 202
9. Finley E, 200
10. Miss Shaw, 198

SPORTS | TALK

Grimston Cup

Friday 11 March 2022 was probably the wettest Grimston Cup in history! It certainly was the wettest I have witnessed in my 15 years at Aldro! But it didn't half make this a spectacle! Cross Country running is meant to be challenging and, on this occasion, it was doubly so. The weather certainly played its part and really tested the endurance, resilience and determination of all the runners.

Further history was created in 2022; the first-time girls have taken part in the event and the first running of the New Squads; Alders, Darley, Hall & Meads. We were absolutely delighted by the efforts of all the runners but most specifically this year the performances of all the girls in their first ever Grimston Cup. On top of these new features; the pupils also ran for an extremely good cause. We thought the running was a challenge but in fact that factor paled into insignificance when you considered the War in Ukraine. All our pupils ran for the people of Ukraine and an incredible **£9,758.21** was raised. Well done and thank you.

The ongoing beauty of the Grimston Cup is watching the best characteristics and personality traits emerging from the each of the pupils as they tackle the challenge of the race and deal with all the trials and tribulations that the course, and weather has to offer! The key areas of perseverance, resilience and determination and sportsmanship become very evident and are important elements to learn and develop in such an event and contribute hugely to the way these young people grow and prepare for teenage years followed by adulthood. These essential life skills will stand them in good stead for the future and they will have been nurtured in their first instance at Aldro. Well done once again and we look forward to a dry Grimston Cup in 2023!

GD





Musical Notes

Spring Concert

After three long years (due to Covid Restrictions), the Spring Concert was finally scheduled in the Aldro Calendar. The CHC was packed with parents, boarders, teachers and other pupils who came to show their support to their fellow peers. Alfred W and James P were the perfect comperes for the evening; witty, clear and confident. They introduced each item throughout the evening. The pupils had been working extremely hard all term playing in their various groups and working towards this end of term event. We had stunning solo performances from Christian (viola), Leo (violin) and Ricky (piano). All the ensembles then took to the stage to perform their pieces; Chamber Choir, Jazz Band, Guitar Ensemble, Guitar Quartet, Oboe Trio, Recorder Ensemble, Aldro Percussion Ensemble, Woodwind Ensemble, String Ensemble and Function Band. I would like to thank all the visiting music teachers and all the pupils for all their hard work to be able to put this event together.

Squad Music Competition

A new initiative for 2022, Mrs Lett started the preliminary round of the Squad Music competition after half term during her class music lessons. Almost every student participated and earned points for their Squad by performing a short piece on their instrument of choice or singing a short song. The range of talent in every Squad was phenomenal. It was very hard to choose any finalists so a semi final round was held. 6 finalists were then chosen from each year group: Juniors, Middle School and Seniors.

The Final was held in front of the school with a prestigious guest judge, Andrew Bernardi (a world renowned violinist and musician). Mr Bernardi had the difficult job of choosing one finalist from each of the three age groups and then an overall winner.

For the Juniors, Anjali won on the drums. For the Middle School Luca won on the piano and Augustus took the prize for the Seniors. The overall winner was Xavier (saxophone) for his squad Alders. Mrs Lett would like to thank everyone who took part in the event. It is a real challenge to stand up and perform a solo in front of an audience





SPORTS | TALK

Aldro U13 Rugby 7s Tournament

Whilst the Grimston Cup may have been the wettest on record on Friday 11 March, the Aldro 7s on Wednesday 16 was not far behind! Following a 2 year hiatus due to Covid the Tournament returned with 8 schools participating. The long and eagerly awaited event was sadly badly hampered by terrible weather. A two phase waterfall style tournament was reduced to one phase and a final match meaning it was difficult to have all the final outcomes as planned. However, the tradition of the Aldro 7s Tournament and all its values were clearly on show once again and all involved played incredibly and behaved impeccably in the appropriate sporting manner we have become accustomed to and fully endorse.

We were fortunate to have referees from Tonbridge, Sherborne, The Lions Academy and Aldro and we would like to thank them for their efforts in the rain!

We hope in 2023 to complete a full tournament in some more friendly weather conditions!



SPORTS | TALK

Rosslyn Park Sevens

A number of injuries meant that a depleted 1st VII headed off for the Rosslyn Park Sevens bolstered by some members of the Under 12 squad. This tournament remains a real highlight of the schools' sporting calendar and the sight of over 600 boys taking part in the prep school section alone is one that few will forget once they have experienced it!

It was a glorious early spring day, and there was a real spring in our step as we began with a fluent attacking performance to win our first game against Cundall Manor 40-0. This was followed by a real end-to-end tussle against Fulham Prep in a game that might have gone either way, and which ended in a 25-25 draw. Walhampton were up next and provided a real challenge with some strong runners. Defensive lapses allowed our opponents to build a lead that they were not to relinquish, although we once again showed what we were capable of in attack and pushed them all the way, eventually going down 20-30.

We had a gap in our schedule next and this allowed the boys to walk across to the main pitches to see some of the U18 Cup competition, watching the best schools in the country putting on a real spectacle - a great treat for our boys and a glimpse of where their own school rugby journeys may one day conclude.

Our final game was against Dean Close, who had gone unbeaten in the rest of their matches, conceding just 25 points, and scoring over a hundred. Unfortunately, missed tackles gave them an early lead but a spirited showing in the second half again proved our attacking threat as we scored some great tries. A 20-35 defeat, but once again we had given a big school a real run for their money.

This group of boys have been a pleasure to work with and have played some wonderful rugby along the way - Rosslyn Park 2022 was a fitting way to round off their Aldro rugby careers. GW



SPORTS | TALK

U12 Rugby Sevens



A great first ever Rugby Sevens tournament for the Under 12s, as they had all missed the chance to play sevens last year due to Covid. We started off slow, losing our first game, but once the boys found their rhythm in the second game they ended up playing some beautiful rugby. They won the Third Place playoff and were awarded with the Vase Snell Trophy and medals.

All the boys played brilliantly winning 4 out of their 6 matches, but player of the day was Zach W, who scored an incredible 12 tries throughout the day. Well done all. SN

Girls Football

This term saw our first girls' football matches for Aldro teams. Our middle school teams played away at Elstree, while our junior teams played at home to St Edmund's. As many of the girls were new to football, we enlisted the help of two of our Form 8 first team players: Sandro L and Oli R. The boys did a brilliant job of calming the girls' nerves, reinforcing their positional roles, and coaching through the matches. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their fixtures and are really keen to play more in the future. KA



Boarders' News

Lent Term 2022

Boarding has continued to grow this term and we have had a wonderful 76 different boarders stay in the boarding house throughout the Lent Term, which clearly shows how popular boarding is at Aldro and how much it continues to grow. It really has been lovely to be on duty this term with the House truly buzzing with boarders learning life lessons regarding organisation, having a great time in the evenings and clearly enjoying each other's company as a result.

The Full-Time boarders have been on a variety of Sunday Trips this term ranging from the sporty activities (Top Golf and watching Reading Womens' Football Club beat Leicester) to the action-packed events (Paintballing and Go-Karting). They even managed to push outside of their comfort zones with having a go at Ice-Skating at the Spectrum where, even though there were a few nerves having never done it before, the boarders persevered and by the end grew in confidence on the ice. Overall, Sundays have been great fun and have really given the boys an opportunity to grow and have fun during the weekends.

Ahead of us is the consistently lovely Summer Term for Boarding where the evening activities consist of such things as swimming, tennis, football and sometimes evening rowing along with many more. We are also planning on having a Big Boarding Weekend for Forms 3 and 4 in the sunshine and we have other events planned for our boarding community to enjoy. I know I'm already looking forward to the next term and I'm sure the boarders are as well.

SN



Junior Department

Form 3 study Romeo and Juliet

Form 3 have enjoyed learning about Romeo and Juliet as part of Shakespeare Week. After hearing the story, they did some drama and acted out key events in freeze frames—can you guess the scenes?



Junior Department

Parent & Child breakfast & Argyle Cup

On a warm spring Saturday morning, Form 3 and 4 pupils with a parent were treated to a delicious breakfast which was gratefully appreciated by all. Following breakfast the children took great delight in their parents their books. After this the children took to the fields to show their prowess on the rugby and football pitches.

Having not been able to do this traditional morning for a couple of years, the children, the staff and the parents really appreciated being able to enjoy this community event properly at last. A terrific morning was had by all—special thanks to Mr Drayton, Mrs Andrews and the sports staff for their organisation of the matches and David McCoy and his catering team for a delicious breakfast.



General Photos

