



English



Vinehall School 2002-2003

The retirement of the 'guv'nor' after seventeen years' service to the school was a cruel blow to the English department. Jim Gatherum's contribution to the teaching of English over the generations is the stuff of legend and his lessons, spiced with quick-fire wit and incisive caricatures of his charges (and his fellow teachers), will live long in even the most jaded of Vine memories. Jim's eloquence, clarity and droll sense of humour inspired and invigorated many staff, children and parents. He is a first-rate teacher who will sorely be missed.

The English department's year has been jam-packed with visits from chart-topping authors, battling inter-school debates, poetry prowess performances, record-sized book fairs, the expansion of the library into the biggest of its kind and the best results yet achieved at SAT's, Common Entrance and in scholarship examinations. All of the successes of the children must be attributed to the enormous efforts of the slavishly dedicated teachers within the largest department at Vinehall. I am certain that an equally eventful year awaits...

K. Doble



Mr Doble teaching the parents English!

Tim Bowler visit Michaelmas term

Tim Bowler visited Vinehall in mid March to talk about his books and his craft. Tim is a highly regarded author of children's fiction and in 1998 he joined C. S. Lewis and Arthur Ransome as a winner of the prestigious Carnegie Medal. Tim delighted the elder pupils with his description of his daily life and of how he motivates himself to write such powerful stories.

Following the talks, Tim signed copies of over 400 books for the eager readers.

K. Doble



Celia Rees visit Summer term

Celia Rees, acclaimed author of *Witch Child* and *Sorceress*, agreed to visit Vinehall on the last Wednesday of the summer term. Mrs Rees spoke to the senior children about the enormous success of her work and the life of an author, following which she has kindly agreed to sign copies of her books for the pupils.

K. Doble

"Any Questions?"

Friday the thirteenth of June, unlucky for some, was lucky for the inimitable sextet consisting of Mr Doble, Nicholas Weston-Smith, Max Weston, Christopher Doherty, Sam Gilbert and Hamish Auld as we were invited to a live presentation of the longest running British radio show, 'Any Questions?' We were proud to hear that the pupils in the group (Mr Doble excepted!) were the youngest people to have ever been invited to a recording of the show. Over the course of the weeks running up to the show we had been thinking of challenging questions to ask the panelists: Evan Harris, the Liberal Democrat Health Spokesman; Lord Tebbit, a conservative peer; Digby Jones, the chairman of the CBI; and Estelle Morris, the brand new Minister for the Arts. In the absence of Jonathan Dimbleby, the presenter was Nick Clarke.

We traveled to Battle Memorial Hall in high spirits hoping that at least one of us would ask a question; however, after a few minutes of playing hangman, sipping our ever-so delightful orange juice and discussing whether James Bond was a spy, we found, to our disappointment, that not one of us was to ask a question. The show was live on air at 19:02 and we sat watching the trials and tribulations of the selected famous persons. At



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19:45 the show drew to a close and we all arose from our seats to seek out, with a piece of paper and a couple of pens, Evan Harris and Lord Tebbit. After successfully attaining the signatures of the two famous men, we retreated outside, bought an ice cream and were back at school in no time at all. I would like to thank Mr. Doble and everyone involved with making this a Friday 13th to remember.

Nicholas Weston-Smith



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