

Boarding

2007/8



What will be remembered about boarding at Vinehall in this historic year? The new houseparents, Magnus and Helen Caithness, will remember the terrific welcome from the wonderful family of boarders, and the Ofsted visit for which we were awarded **'Outstanding.'**

Our boarders will remember the many activities that we have all enjoyed, ranging from Hannah's return of the Red Barrel, to Jules's triumph in the Connect 4 competition. We have taken part in team building games - treasure hunts and quizzes, a scuba dive, cooking, jewellery making, football, hockey, cricket, rounders and American football, den and raft building, exploring the gully and the infamous Vinehall Water Slide. There have been film nights, BBQ nights, girlie nights, big screen rugby nights, extra-talking-time nights and dressing-up nights. Also many trips - mountain biking, bowling and laser quest, Tenterden Leisure Pool, Brighton, theatre trips, shopping in Tunbridge Wells, Ice Skating, Knockhatch Adventure Park, and Camber Sands. Saturday afternoon clubs have taken our boarders far and wide.

Our leavers will be best remembered for their love of music and dance. Many will have heard their rousing singing in the chapel or theatre, or seen their wild moves on the dance floors. Some were lucky enough to witness the Year 8 dance routine at the Christmas dinner! Their creativity was especially evident on the night that Will Orr and Hearts dorm won this year's excellent Dorm Decs with the Yellow Submarine.

Our boarders have been wearing their new boarders' hoodies and played Fort Dodge Ball obsessively with Mr Gunning. They will recall enjoying both lie-ins and late nights. Additional food opportunities (always important to boarders) have included toast with the Gappers, Caithness teas, breakfast in bed for some boys, marshmallows and popcorn for some girls, and late night biscuits for all during exam week. We have enjoyed barbecues and a number of outside suppers, and eaten a record number of Weetabix!

This has been a very happy and busy year for the boarders and we have a new generation of Dr Who fans. Our younger boarders have enjoyed cosy TV sessions in The Peel. They have adopted Archie and Elizabeth Caithness as surrogate siblings! Mr Reid will forever be remembered for his *Vinehall's Strongest Man* event - Ed Jeremy holds the title for 2008.

Staff and boarders were sad to say goodbye to Mr Craig Hudspeth when he left the boarding house at Christmas together with Gappers Mr Gunning, Miss Welsh, and Miss Stapleton and Mr Reid moves on this summer. Our gap year students are a vital part of the boarding house, and the boarders get to know them very well. In January we welcomed our new Gappers, Mr Davies, Mr Walter, Miss Hanley and Miss Davis. Sister Kate decided that it was time to concentrate on her own children and Sister Victoria arrived at the same time as the Inspectors in February. We are very glad that she didn't leave with them too!

MC



Boarders' Activities

2007/8



Our boarders take their daily Dorm Marks very seriously, since the more points they earn, the closer to the front of the tuck queue they are on a Saturday. In the Michaelmas term, Andrew McCredie and Rabbits dorm were victorious in winning the Dorm Cup; Lent term's was won by Isi Thomas and Elephants; and the difficult Summer term was a triumph for Chris Bensted-Smith and his junior boys in Rooks. The Matrons' Cup was awarded to Archie Todd and Arthur Walsh.

Natural History Club

This year Mr. Caithness ran a Natural History Club for the boarders a good excuse to be outside taking in the beautiful surroundings we find ourselves in, and a wonderful opportunity to get dirty.

Being so near to the coast allowed us to explore the coastline on several occasions. Rock pools hold a fascination for all ages what is living in there? Will we find a crab? What is that odd looking tentacled creature? How does it live? Then there are the ever popular chips to warm us up at the end of a blowy winter's beach walk.

The beach was not our only destination; we also explored a number of local woodlands, looking at the plant and animal life, in between playing hide and seek and building forts. Wild food, reed spears and raft building have all contributed to us having a great time.

As well as getting lost in the wilds, we have managed a trip to the aquarium and a very enjoyable mountain bike ride around Bedgebury. This was challenging and fun for everyone, from Mr. C to Gonzalo and something we hope to continue with in the future.

Mr and Mrs Caithness

History Society

The History Society has enjoyed looking around some famous and some less well-known sites in the South East this year. London trips were to St Paul's Cathedral, HMS Belfast and the Tower of London. We saw the Bloody Tower, Traitor's Gate and the site of many executions - Tower Green. We walked along the Thames and across Tower Bridge, and important sites were pointed out. We visited the castles at Hastings and Bodiam and we teamed up with 'Food, Fashion and Fine Art' to visit the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. At the Palmerstonian Gun Fort at Newhaven we were able to tour the underground tunnels and see many displays about the Second World War. We visited Mount Caburn and our Summer Term day out was to Greenwich. We sailed down the Thames and enjoyed a visit to the beautiful Painted Hall and Chapel of the Royal Naval Hospital and we visited the National Maritime Museum.

I have very much enjoyed taking the group round all the sites and I am delighted to report that there has not been a single occasion this year when other visitors at these attractions have not complimented me on the boys' behaviour.

AGW



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Food Fashion & Fine Arts

This year we have had so much fun doing cookery, making things and going on outings. We have made bagel snakes, French crepes, fruit smoothies, chocolate crispy cakes for Easter, decorated and iced Christmas cakes and delicious chocolate cookies - those were definitely our favourites! The outing to the Medieval Fayre at Michelham Priory was great fun and we put Alice Whaley in the stocks! We also visited Sissinghurst Castle and Mrs West set us a quiz. We learnt the names of the flowers and found out that lavender helps you sleep! Mrs West organised arty activities too such as Mothers' day boxes and placemats. It has always been a relaxing atmosphere and we really look forward to our Saturday activity. Once we went to Battle to shop for a secret Santa present. It was a nice surprise to see what people bought each other. We have really enjoyed our girls' club on Saturday and we shall miss Mrs West next year. She has been so good at thinking up inspirational things with which to entertain us.

Emilia Dexter and Katie Orr

