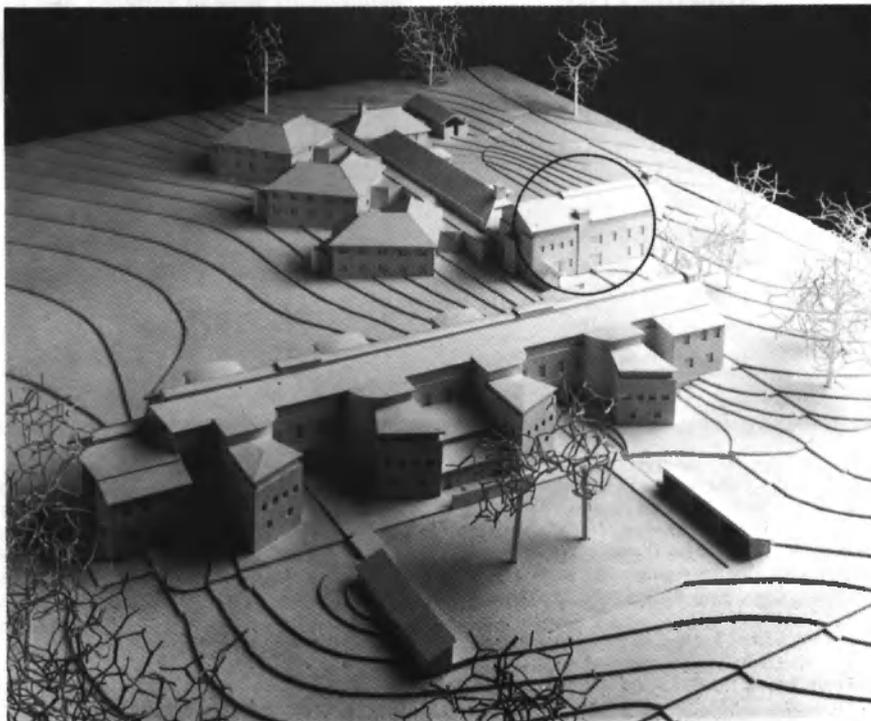


## Founders' Sixth Form



Upper Sixth with Mrs duCharme

*Photo: Gillman & Soame*



*Photo: Sloman and Pettitt*

## 20 More Sixth Form Study Bedrooms

Benenden's School Council have approved the preparation of detailed plans for a 20 bed extension of Founders', attached to Beeches, and including accommodation for a fourth Sixth Form Housemistress.

Original plans for the creation of Founders' Limes and Oaks - shown in the model pictured left - included this provision. Details are being discussed with architects and the final decision to proceed is likely in about 12 months' time with completion for September 1997 occupation.

The creation of 20 new study bedrooms would raise the capacity of the Sixth Form (Six One and Six Two) to 160 students.

# Echyngham

**Head of House**  
Katherine Taylor

**Deputy Head of House**  
Lucy Hutton

**Captain of House**  
Hilary Low *Autumn*  
Kathryn Eustace *Spring*  
Johanna Newhall *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Natasha McDonald *Autumn*  
Emma Cole *Spring*  
Sara Bateman *Summer*

**Head of Middle and Lower School**

Sophie Colville *Autumn*  
Emma Parfitt *Spring*  
Deepika Lal *Summer*

**Junior Dram Producer**  
Susanna Davidson

**Almoner**  
Henrietta Paul

**Sacristans**  
Henrietta Paul  
Alexandra Gordon  
Serena Seddon  
Natasha McDonald

**Fire Party Captains**  
Serena Seddon  
Charlotte Prince  
Sara Bateman  
Henrietta Paul  
Sarah Baddeley  
Hannah Harper

**Seniors' Rep**  
Alexandra Gordon

**Lacrosse Captains**  
Emily Gore  
Alexandra Seddon

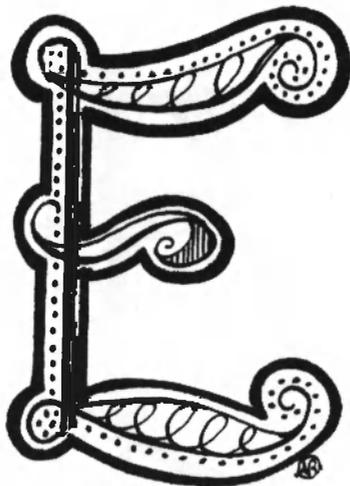
**Netball Captains**  
Tabytha-Lee Hall  
Nicola Close-Smith

**Swimming Captains**  
Gemma Shearman  
Serena Seddon  
Sarah Kirke-Smith

**Tennis Captains**  
Emily Gore  
Rowena Martin

**Volleyball Captains**  
Anna Colbeck  
Hannah Vaines

**Squash Captain**  
Lucy Hutton



**E**chyngham has had what, in the vernacular, might be termed 'an all-round great year'. In Junior Dram, held during the Autumn Term, everything ran smoothly, thanks to the efforts of the whole House and especially to those of the director, Susanna Davidson and Anna Colbeck, stage manager. Next time around, Hettie Paul will be in charge and we hope that all will go as well.

In sport, the blissful summer sun saw the welcome sight of Echyngham playing outstandingly well in the House tennis competition, though we had to concede first place to Norris. Rowena Martin was one of those awarded colours in tennis. In the

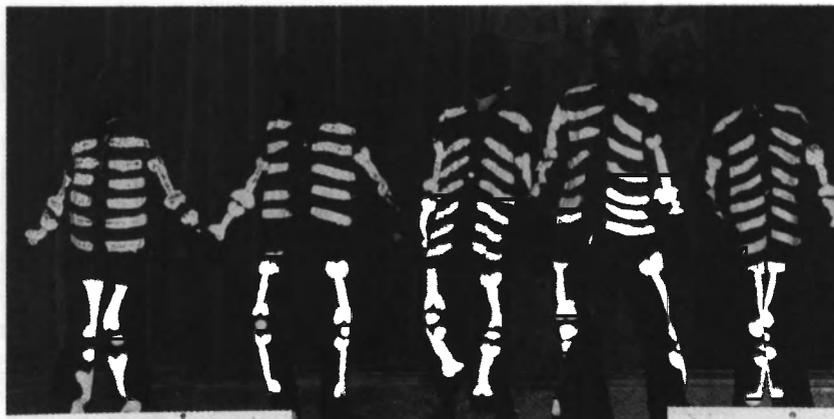
Inter-House Swimming Challenge, cheering crowds of supporters once again urged us on to second place in the Upper School competition and fourth place in the Lower School. Vanessa Kirke-Smith was presented with a cup acknowledging her continual involvement in, and organisation of, School swimming events.

On the social calendar, a highlight was the visit of boys from Park House at Tonbridge School who came to play tennis and also to enjoy the following volleyball and barbecue. This event was a great success and a splendid recreation for all of us.

With the stress and tension around the time of examinations, the Sixth Formers have still managed to remain in close contact with 'junior ranks', ably supported by the enthusiasm of Mrs Brinkhurst and Mrs Banks.

As this Summer Term ends, so too does Mrs Brinkhurst's distinguished period as Housemistress of Echyngham. She has contributed an immense amount to the development of the House and that of its students during her eleven years in charge. She will be greatly missed by us all and we thank her and wish her all good fortune in the future. We know she will not be idle!

Katherine Taylor  
Head of House



Dancing Skeletons - Echyngham Junior Dram

# Guldeford

**Head of House**  
Yara Shamji

**Deputy Head of House**  
Abigail Banfield

**Captain of House**  
Davina Langdale *Autumn*  
Jodi Riches *Spring*  
Annabel Mackenzie-Beevor *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Elisabeth Parish *Autumn*  
Caroline Preston *Spring*  
Vanessa Hunt *Summer*

**Head of Middle and Lower School**  
Alexandra Tweed *Autumn*  
Nicola Robinson *Spring*  
Elizabeth Waterhouse *Summer*

**Junior Dram Producer**  
Barbara Holroyd-Pearce  
Abigail Banfield

**Almoners**  
Barbara Holroyd-Pearce  
Caroline Preston  
Kate Cullinan

**Sacristan**  
Victoria Webb

**Fire Party Captains**  
Joanna Aitchison  
Juliet Douglas-Hughes  
Lucy Briggs

**Seniors' Reps**  
Annabel Mackenzie-Beevor  
Charlotte Watson

**Lacrosse Captain**  
Alice Carver

**Netball Captain**  
Victoria Hervey

**Swimming Captains**  
Jodi Riches

Antonia Van der Bijl  
Jessica Porter

**Tennis Captain**  
Sheelagh Houlden

**Volleyball Captain**  
Yara Shamji

**Squash Captain**  
Gemma Prall



Once again Guldeford has had a successful year and we have been well represented in all scholarly activities as well as in sport of all kinds.

The transition to having Mr McQueen as Housemaster has gone smoothly although quite recently there were conflicting views between our leader and the rest of us over something called the Rugby World Cup (who won again?).

There are congratulations due to all involved in the winning Junior Dram production, especially Boo Holroyd-Pearce, the director, and this, together with the School Play contingent, established yet again that Guldeford is a force to be reckoned with where acting is concerned.



Miss Lewis receives her leaving present from Yara Shamji and Abigail Banfield

Sporting success was most notable in the number of Guldeford girls selected for Kent lacrosse, in House netball, School lacrosse and even the cross-country run. However, regarding the swimming sports, any helpful tips would be greatly appreciated.

The VE Day walk posed few problems for a House of Guldeford's athletic ability. All attended, except Emily Macmanus who had a prior engagement with the Queen.

We hope that the public examinations went well for all involved. Post-examination celebrations were certainly engaged in with enthusiasm and taken full advantage of in truly traditional style. However, the end of examinations brings the imminent departure of the leavers. On behalf of the House, we wish them all luck and also extend our sincere thanks to Mrs Strong, a long-serving and much-appreciated Friend of Guldeford. We lack words to express to Miss Lewis our gratitude for what she has given, not only to us in Guldeford but to the whole School. We shall miss them both and hope that they will not forget their time in our House.

Yara Shamji  
Head of House  
Abigail Banfield  
Deputy Head of House



Guldeford House Supper Leavers Alice Carver (left) and Gemma Prall

# Hemsted

**Head of House**  
Belinda Cole

**Deputy Head of House**  
Ailana Kamelmacher

**Captain of House**  
Elizabeth Kendon *Autumn*  
Yasmin Yarwood *Spring*  
Phensoame Assakul *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Amanda Cowan *Autumn*  
Hilary Smith *Spring*  
Lucy Gossage *Summer*

**Head of Middle and Lower School**  
Melanie Campbell *Autumn*  
Rebecca Saponaro *Spring*  
Surina Cohen *Summer*

**Junior Dram Producer**  
Emma Lewis

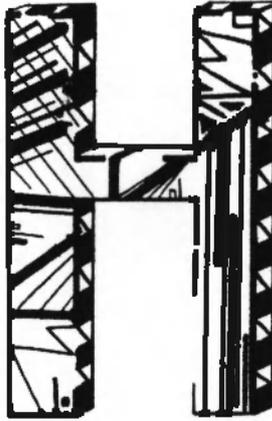
**Almoners**  
Marcia Ho  
Anneline Groves

**Fire Party Captains**  
Emma Barkas  
Hilary Smith

**Seniors' Rep**  
Jennifer Grey

**Lacrosse Captains**  
Jennifer Grey  
Rebecca Saponaro  
**Netball Captains**  
Olivia Ruggles-Brise  
Vanessa North  
**Swimming Captains**  
Charlotte Baden-Powell

Melanie Campbell  
**Tennis Captains**  
Phensoame Assakul  
Charlotte Dunstan  
**Volleyball Captains**  
Ailana Kamelmacher  
Nicola Wood  
**Squash Captain**  
Rosemary Cox



At the beginning of the year, Hemsted was glad to welcome Miss Chana into the House as Assistant Housemistress. She also teaches biology and chemistry in the School. We were happy to see her settling into Hemsted quickly but during the year, she was away for quite some time because of an accident to her knee. Fortunately Miss Mullins, who was originally a House Academic Tutor, took her place during this time and helped Mr Walls and Mrs Wodehouse keep Hemsted going and 'under control'.

We were pleased to welcome all the new girls who arrived in September. They had no problem at all, it seemed, in adapting themselves to their new environment and have brought a great deal of new talent to the House.

Junior Dram, with Emma Lewis and Lucy Poole at the helm, was a great success and although we did not win, everyone enjoyed the chance it gave us to work together as a House on a major project.

Hemsted has proved itself once again to be a friendly, lively and active establishment which is particularly strong in swimming where we once again triumphed in the Knock-out Competition. We also have great potential in netball, lacrosse and tennis. With dedication and increased effort, we trust that our sporting performance will improve next year.

As always, Hemsted organised another charity event in the Spring Term. A band called Sushi came to play in the Clarke Room during one weekend evening, to the enjoyment of all who attended. The money raised was sent to help the war-ravaged people of Bosnia.

Without doubt, this has been a very successful year for Hemsted. We would like to thank Mr Walls, Miss Chana, Miss Mullins and Mrs Wodehouse for running the House so smoothly and thank also all the House officials for their hard work and support. We look forward with optimism to next year and hope that we can bring out Hemsted's full potential.

Phensoame Assakul  
Elizabeth Kendon  
Six One



Rapid sketches by Nina Bartelot

## House Supper

On the last night of the Autumn Term, the School was invited to the annual House Supper, which was hosted by Hemsted.

Upon arriving at the dining-room, the School could have had no doubt as to what the theme for the evening was to be. Huge banners, previously painted by the budding artists of Hemsted, revealed copies of the well-known album covers of bands such as The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. Peace and Ban The Bomb posters hung from every wall, between the miles of psychedelic streamers and hundreds of balloons. Each guest was handed a flower as they stepped back in time to the 'Swinging Sixties'. Hippies, teddy-boys and dolly-girls greeted them and showed them to their tables. Throughout the evening, greatest hits from the Sixties created the enjoyable party atmosphere and Hemsted themselves added the mood by dancing 'Sixties Style' to *Judy In Disguise*.

Mr Peters and the rest of the domestic staff prepared a delicious supper. On the menu was: Carnaby Street Chicken, Penny Lane Potatoes, Petits Pois and Mersey Mud Pie (commonly known as Banoffee Pie). Between courses, the School were lucky enough to be entertained by the leather-clad Leader of the Pack (alias Dr Lewis), and the rest of his gang (Miss Cannon, Miss Mullins, Mrs Wodehouse and Miss Reynolds) and of course his adoring admirer (Miss Kemp)!

The usual embarrassments and humiliations were inflicted upon innocent members of School as they were called up to 'do the Twist' and feed yoghurt to the Upper Sixth and, naturally, the staff were not spared!

The evening came to an end with an entertaining rendition of Sonny and Cher's *I Got You Babe* performed most excellently by Mr and Mrs



Sonny and Cher or Mr and Mrs Walls as they are better known

Walls, who bear a striking resemblance to the original couple.

In all, the evening proved to be a great success, for the performers as well as the guests, and Hemsted would like to thank Mr and Mrs Walls, Mrs Wodehouse, and Mr Peters and his team for all their hard work in making the evening truly memorable.

Zita Yarwood  
Lower Fifth

## Hemsted Junior Dram

### Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

This production was very successful and everybody worked hard and tried their very best. The newcomers as well as the existing members of Hemsted enjoyed themselves on the actual day of Junior Dram as well as in all the rehearsals, except for the times when a few members of the House became a little frustrated. It was also a good way of everybody getting to know each other.

The atmosphere in House before the performance was filled with laughter and excitement. The rather unusual(?) make-up and costumes of some of the characters provoked many giggles from the rest of the cast, especially the big camel with more than two humps.

In the original story, there were forty thieves but we had to manage with just eight; however, they made up for the other thirty two with all the noise they made entering the scene. We had a variety of acts, including the belly dancers (Sai Patpongibul, Julia James and Eva Phillips), who were dressed in sophisticated, baby-pink and blue outfits and we had live singing from Ali Baba (Victoria Dorich) and the beautiful princess (Nikki Wood).

We have to congratulate our brilliant producer and stage manager, Emmy Lewis and Lucy Poole, because without them we could not have done so well; more to the point, we would not have had a Junior Dram Production at all. Although we did not win, it was worthwhile and a pleasure to take part and perform in front of all the other Houses on the afternoon of Junior Dram.

Natasha Shah  
Fifth

## Sushi

**F**our good-looking young lads from East Sussex came to Benenden on Saturday, 29 April for a charity 'gig', under the aegis of Hemsted House.

The School's appetite was whetted by a great number of posters displayed everywhere it seemed, of the four, posing fetchingly. Their most successful song was played in Prayers with various members of Hemsted Lower School displaying just how 'wicked' and 'fit' this band was going to be. This occasion simply could not be ignored.

### *Commendable specimens...*

So, on that eagerly awaited weekend, along came the much-talked-about band and spent Saturday afternoon carefully setting up and preparing, not quite sure what to expect. Who could blame their being a little apprehensive, performing to a gaggle of excitable teenage girls eagerly awaiting an energetic performance and exciting guitar solos. Eat your hearts out, Guns 'n' Roses, one might say.

The Clarke Room was filled with Benendonians clad in denim minis and 'Babe Power' T-shirts, admiring these four commendable specimens of the opposite sex. In fact, their playing wasn't bad either. They per-

formed a number of funky, rockin' tunes, sending the audience into a wild frenzy. The band enjoyed the attention and became quite carried away. The evening proved a great success.

### *Enjoyable cavortings...*

As a result of all these enjoyable cavortings, Hemsted raised £381 for Project Spark, a charity brought to the School's attention when Sally Trench spoke in Prayers about the appalling living conditions in Bosnia. The money we raised will go towards food and clothing which Sally Trench will help transport to its destination in the charity's lorries. The funds were raised from ticket sales for the Sushi event and from a pleasing number of tapes sold after the 'gig'.

We hope that the band will return in the near future though, if not, we shall no doubt see them on *Top of the Pops*.

Tabitha Langton-Lockton  
Lucy Poole  
Six One



Hemsted's Belly Dancers

## SENIORS' DAUGHTERS AND GRAND-DAUGHTERS

### **Echyngham**

Nicola Close-Smith (Rachel Earp); Sophie and Rose Colville (grand-daughters of Pamela Tulk-Hart); Katie and Alexandra Gordon (Susan White); Kasia Grocholska (Caroline Hamilton-Fleming, grand-daughter of Bridget Mann); Sarah and Vanessa Kirke-Smith (Catherine Dixon)

### **Guldeford**

Jessica Alford (Penelope Wort); Alice Carver (Andora Derbyshire); Vanessa Hunt (Julia Bennett); Annabel MacKenzie-Beevor (Gail Paterson, grand-daughter of Audrey Langford); Emily Macmanus (grand-daughter of Fiona McAlpine); Emma and Nicola Robinson (Anne Bevan); Philippa Tennant (Jane Seabrook); Charlotte and Victoria Watson (Lynne Paterson, grand-daughters of Audrey Langford); Candida and Julia Wells (Louise Ward)

### **Hemsted**

Charlotte Brooke (Consuelo Alexander); Julia James (Helen Patterson, grand-daughter of Jenny Chandler); Emma Lewis (grand-daughter of Diana Dick-Read)

### **Marshall**

Zoe Bedford (Deborah Sitwell); Poppy Buxton (Rosaleen Bagge); Anna and Camilla Dingle (Jacqueline Stead); Anna Fremantle (Sarah Whitbread); Venetia Grove (Jennifer Calvert); Sophia and Marina Mooney (Gail Turner); Mariamne and Sophie Moore (Georgina Calvert); Julia Pendred (Penelope Davidson); Serena Rowe (Sarah Thomas); Elizabeth and Sarah Scott (Jacqueline Pool)

### **Medway**

Eleanor Akenhead (Elizabeth Jackson); Hannah de Courcy Morgan (Belinda Evans, grand-daughter of Anne Oliver)

### **Norris**

Laura Boome (Rosemary Barstow); Georgina Harland (Claire Hunt)

# Marshall

**Head of House**  
Camilla Dingle

**Deputy Head of House**  
Sophie Kemp

**Captain of House**  
Sophie Brodie *Autumn*  
Olivia Higgins *Spring*  
Camilla Bennett *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Zoe Bedford *Autumn*  
Mariamne Moore *Spring*  
Poppy Buxton *Summer*

**Head of Middle and Lower School**

Rebecca Macmillan *Autumn*  
Frances Morrish *Spring*  
Sophia Mooney *Summer*

**Junior Dram Producer**  
Lucinda Smallman

**Almoners**  
Alice Pulman  
Li-Kun Phng

**Sacristans**  
Mariamne Moore  
Julia Pendred

**Fire Party Captain**  
Kathryn Pinker

**Deputy Fire Party Captain**  
Jennifer Newton

**Seniors' Rep**  
Venetia Grove

**Lacrosse Captains**  
Serena Rowe  
Georgiana Aitken

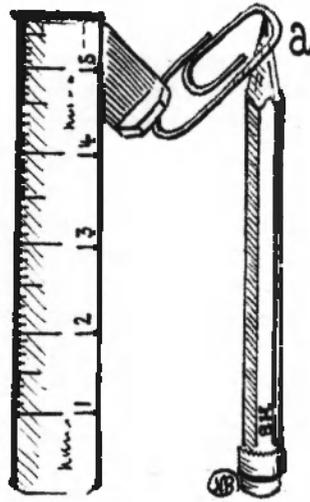
**Netball Captains**  
Sophie Kemp  
Frances Morrish

**Swimming Captain**  
Nicola Cronk

**Tennis Captain**  
Virginia Simkins  
Clare Kendrick

**Volleyball Captain**  
Annabel Barnett

**Squash Captain**  
Elizabeth Scott



Marshall has had yet another very successful year and its friendly and happy atmosphere has once again been coupled with talents in every area.

Lucinda Smallman produced an admirably polished performance of *Dracula* for this year's Junior Dram and the intricate programme, made by Gemma Murdoch-Smith, proved the skill involved in making it by winning the best-programme competition. Mariamne Moore and Georgie Dancy excelled themselves with superb performances in the School Play: *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Georgie Dancy showed her versatility by being, along with Anna Jennings, one of the front runners in the cross country. Indeed, Marshall has produced impressive performances in all the Inter-House sports competitions and I know that academic achievements match these.

Mrs Murphy's presence has been missed but her place was brilliantly filled by Mrs Irene Denis, who gained the confidence and respect of the whole House. Unfortunately, her having to leave after only two terms created another vacancy and I would like to thank Mrs Olive Lunney for her generous help at such short notice. I wish her successor luck and hope that she enjoys her time in Marshall.

I would like to take the opportunity of thanking Mr Watts and Miss

Boyce for all they have done to help House members this year and also wish to record my special thanks to my deputy, Sophie Kemp, for her never-ending support and dynamic ideas. I wish Olivia Higgins and Anna Jennings the best of good fortune and have complete faith in their abilities as our successors.

Camilla Dingle  
Head of House



'Erm... could we have those lights out now, please?'

Louisa Macmillan  
Upper Fourth



Marshall Junior Dram

# Medway

**Head of House**  
Sophie Robinson

**Deputy Head of House**  
Harriet Storey

**Captain of House**  
Eleanor Akenhead *Autumn*  
Keziah Kelsey *Spring*  
Hannah Morgan *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Vanessa Robinson *Autumn*  
Emily Latham *Spring*  
Katharine Morris *Summer*

## Head of Middle and Lower School

Anna Shadbolt *Autumn*  
Lucie Lambert *Spring*  
Katie Riesco *Summer*

**Junior Dram Producer**  
Charlotte Witheridge

**Almoners**  
Holly Vernon-Smith  
Anna Shadbolt  
Clare Roberts

**Sacristans**  
Abigail Burton  
Olivia Cotton  
Alexandra Nutting

**Fire Party Captains**  
Katharine Morris  
Julia Burton Brown

**Seniors' Rep**  
Hannah Morgan

**Lacrosse Captains**  
Sophie Robinson  
Katie Riesco

**Netball Captains**  
Hannah Cotton  
Bryony Bullard

**Swimming Captains**  
Harriet Storey  
Anna Shadbolt

**Tennis Captains**  
Sophie Robinson  
Emily Orwin

**Volleyball Captain**  
Abigail Burton  
**Squash Captain**  
Vanessa Kaoukji



This academic year, Medway welcomed a new Housemistress, Miss Steven, in place of Miss Barker, who left after dedicating nine years to the House. Medway has taken this major transition in its stride and Miss Steven has already shown her enthusiasm as well as her support for all House members.

The Autumn Term, as always, saw Junior Dram bring together all the acting talents possessed by the House, producing a superb perfor-

mance of the *Dancing Damsels*, written and directed by Charlotte Witheridge. Congratulations must go to all of those who helped in any way to make this enterprise such a successful one.

On the sporting front, Medway has continued to show increased confidence and determination, culminating in the winning of Upper School Netball and a valiant third place in Upper School Swimming. It proves that the House spirit is as strong as ever.

Medway has once again enjoyed a number of social events this year, having a new link with Manor House at Tonbridge and undertaking a trip to London to see Willy Russell's *Blood Brothers*.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hattie Storey for all her help as Deputy Head of House and wish Alex Roberts and Eleanor Akenhead the best of luck as our successors.

Sophie Robinson  
Head of House



Medway Junior Dram

# Norris

**Head of House**  
Sally Clarke

**Deputy Head of House**  
Alexandra McGowan

**Captain of House**  
Georgina Harland *Autumn*  
Emily Hayward *Spring*  
Melissa Clive *Summer*

**Vice-Captain of House**  
Kate Stanley *Autumn*  
Naomi Chambers *Spring*  
Holly Havers *Summer*

**Head of Middle and Lower School**  
Georgina Cross *Autumn*  
Katherine Cameron *Spring*  
Lucy Bucknall *Summer*

**House Play Producer**  
Marina Greenhalgh  
**Stage Manager**  
Emily Hayward

**Almoners**  
Holly Havers  
Maidie Yeung  
Georgina Barker

**Sacristan**  
Gemma Perkins

**Fire Party Captains**  
Georgina Barker  
Gemma Perkins  
Kate Stanley

**Seniors' Rep**  
Georgina Harland

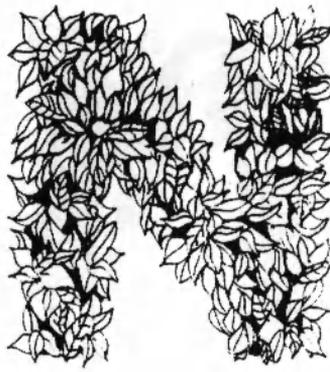
**Lacrosse Captains**  
Penelope Hands  
Emma Nye

**Netball Captains**  
Sally Clarke  
Lucy Bucknall

**Swimming Captains**  
Georgina Harland  
Sarah Deloford

**Tennis Captains**  
Emily Hayward  
Georgina Cross

**Volleyball Captains**  
Jennifer Papas  
Lucie Sargent



Norris has once again seen a busy and successful year in all areas. In inter-House sports we have gone from strength to strength, winning the Upper School netball, swimming, tennis and volleyball, with the Lower School coming second in swimming, netball and tennis. Again, Georgie Harland has achieved outstanding performances in both swimming and running.

One of the year's biggest events was the House Play: *The Jungle Book*, which took place in the Spring Term. Marina Greenhalgh directed, with all members of the House, including staff, involving themselves with great enthusiasm.

Many social events have also occurred throughout the year. These included links with Tonbridge and Bethany Schools, an ice-cream party and a trip to the theatre to see the musical *Grease*.

The House has fortunately had only one change in staff: Mrs Jean Reeves replaced Mrs Buckles as non-teaching Assistant Housemistress at the beginning of the year. As the year ends, Mrs Dinah Clayton, our Assistant Housemistress, is leaving with her husband David, to take up a post in Suffolk and will be deeply missed.

We would very much like to thank Mrs Smith for her encouragement and support throughout the year and wish good luck to Georgie Harland and Emily Hayward as Head and Deputy Head of House for this year.

Sally Clarke  
Head of House

# Grease

On the evening of 21 January, the whole of Norris, very excited, piled onto a double-decker bus to travel to see the musical *Grease* in London. This followed our performance the previous day, in front of our parents and the rest of the School, of *The Jungle Book*. As this had been taped, we watched ourselves on the televisions on the bus.

Once in London, we were given our tickets, disembarked, entered the theatre and waited for the show to begin, settling back in our comfortable seats.

The production starred Sonia and Shane Ritchie and was, to coin a phrase, 'totally brilliant'. The play had convincing atmosphere and all the actors looked as if they were really enjoying performing. The effects and the sets looked completely realistic. I liked the song *Greased Lightning* best because it used a real car which looked as though it was actually moving and which was covered in realistic-looking lights.

The music was especially enjoyable with a live orchestra playing and the conductor made sure that all of the score was very dramatic. At the end, everyone sang along with the cast and none of us could resist tapping our feet to the beat! All of us in Norris thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and would like to thank those who took us.

Henrietta Williams  
Upper Fourth

# THE JUNGLE BOOK

Norris House Play - 20 January 1995

When I was asked to write a review of our House Play, I first wondered if they had chosen the right person for this 'onerous' task. Being unfamiliar with School ritual, I assumed that an outside observer should write the review, in order for it to be fair. But then I realised that the whole point was to see how the play looked from the inside.....so here is what I have come up with.

I started out with a question - was this really *The Jungle Book*? There was certainly no Kiplingesque mongoose setting the scene, as my parents and their parents would have expected... No, poor Kipling has been cast aside by the Hollywood machine and *The Jungle Book* we have all now come to recognise is, it seems, the Disney version. I think a large portion of the audience would have been more than a little confused to see a mongoose at the beginning of the play.

In the circumstances, it seemed only natural that Mowgli should have an American accent, and who better to play him than Sarah Jensen? That was not her only asset however - she possesses the ability to fall convincingly as almost no one else can (except perhaps for Emily Hayward). I thought the casting overall was apt (then why did I play the snake?!).

What amazed me was how quickly it was over. After the anticipation and nervousness, suddenly we had reached the end. Not to say it was an anticlimax - how could it be?! - but it just went so fast!! All I can say is I hope it was as speedy for the audience...I thought you were great. The response to Danielle-the-tree was incredible, and I was just a little unprepared for the amount of boing I received once on stage.



The Jungle Book Cast

Photo: Emily Hayward

But what were your first impressions of our play? I, of course, cannot say, but it had to be one of stunning scenery. Norris House artists spent countless hours painting backgrounds as well as the main elements of the jungle and the city with its ape-like inhabitants and the unforgettably charismatic King Louis (Toks Akande). (My own artistic contribution was limited to two leaves and the eye of the gold statue - for which I received rather over-generous praise from Mrs Greenhalgh.)

I was completely taken aback by the finished result, and I was not alone. I'm sure we'd all like to thank Mr Greenhalgh for designing the set with such expertise and attention to detail.

The costumes and make-up were also striking. The most intricate details were painted on us - I even had a forked tongue sticking out of the side of my mouth, for example - and every member of Norris was transformed into a surreal-looking beast. The atmosphere just before we began was terrific, mingled with a strange, almost sad sensation, knowing it would be the last time.

The director, as I'm sure you are all aware, was Marina Greenhalgh.

Marina directed the play with great enthusiasm and imagination, with Emily demonstrating Mowgli's daring stunts and providing similar insights. Added to this, the sound and lighting crew did an excellent job of creating just the right ambience.

Marina was ever coming up with new ideas and impressed us all with her patience and determination -

"SING! I can't hear you ...

**LOUDER! ... LOUDER!!!"**

Great pains were taken over the actions of every member of the cast, and the results were shown in the outstanding choreography in many of the scenes. Given their many other commitments, the contribution of the staff as elephants was much appreciated, in particular the memorable cameo performance by Mr Harmsworth as their incompetent helmsman. Mrs Roche was suitably sinister as the menacing Shia Khana.

This play gave us a lot of enjoyment and an involvement of the whole House. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we enjoyed presenting it.

Madeleine Boshier  
Upper Fifth