

Alfred Noyes: The Highwayman *The Southern Sky*

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees.

To the left of her an owl hooted, to the right something groaned. A tree falling, perhaps, or a trick of the wind whistling through the moors; whatever it was it didn't matter, because she wasn't listening. Her ears were already filled with the pounding of her heart echoing to her brain. She ran. Kiar didn't know why she was running, but she knew that something was very wrong. Her instincts had sensed danger before she even knew it was there. So she had run. What exactly from she didn't know, but she had run, and she was still running. She reached the thickest part of the forest. By now she was almost crawling, harsh branches scratching against her bare skin, and all the while fear flooding her head, filling the crevasses of her mind.

It started raining. Kiar was bitterly cold, and every movement she made seemed to take an age. She struggled against nature, willing herself on, but eventually she was conquered and fell to the mud, exhaustion and fear enveloping her. She lay still, silently sobbing, until the tears stopped falling and her breathing grew deep and calm. She slept.

Dew from the trees dribbled onto her face, and she awoke. Kiar's ears were filled with the sound of birds chattering, but her eyes were filled with piercing sunlight, and she raised a hand to shield them. She slowly sat up, squinting, and stayed there until her eyes had adjusted to the light. The girl looked around. She saw that she was leaning against a small tree, an oak, but there was something wrong with it. She rubbed her eyes, and realised what was wrong. Only half of the tree was still attached to the stump. The rest was lying two feet away from her foot, and she became aware of the sickening fact that had she gone on further the night before, and collapsed a little later, she would have been killed in her sleep.

Kiar was surrounded by branches and dead leaves. Standing up, all she could see for miles were trees and bushes. She tried to retrace her steps from last night (or crawls, as was the case), but the rain had long since washed the tracks away, and spattered the thick mud into a mottled shape. The girl had no idea how far she had travelled, or where she was. She didn't know how to find her way back. An unfamiliar word crossed her thoughts: Lost. She was lost.

She sat down on a tree stump and contemplated her position. After much useless thought, she gave up and thought out loud, "Well, I'll just have to find my way out of this place, look for someone to help me find my bearings. Who knows, I might even find my way back to Hampton." The latter part of the sentence, though, she said with not even a glimmer of hope, as she was in the middle of nowhere. And she was alone, though she had not yet learnt to feel it.

Kiar walked for what seemed like (and probably was) hours, but she had no way of telling, as curiously her watch had stopped. Her watch said the time was half-past eleven. That time was familiar, she knew, but she couldn't place it. And then she remembered: it was the exact time she had been born. Strange ... She shook it, and a few drops of water dribbled out from between the joints. The hands twitched, but she couldn't get them to start working again.

Kiar's feet ached with tiredness, though the rest of her body was awake and alert. She was determined to find her way out, and said nothing, thought nothing, just concentrated on a tiny blot on the horizon, that she could just see between the trees. The girl moved quickly, mechanically, every limb working like clockwork (except hers obviously). She walked and walked, and kept going until something made her stop mid-step. Without even realising it she was standing at the edge of the forest, and a worn dirt track lay before her. She followed it, and even before the sign that read 'WELCOMETO HAMPTON', she knew that she, somehow, had found her way back.

She broke into a run, screaming and shouting, and didn't stop running until she had rushed through the village gates and tripped over a large bucket. "OWW", she yelled, rubbing her bleeding knee, "WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?" She grabbed it by the handle and leant back to throw it as hard as she could – when a disturbing thought passed her head. Where had the bucket come from? She could've sworn it wasn't there before, else she would have dodged it! She lowered it slowly and then let it fall. Then something even stranger happened, for when it hit the cobbled ground, it made no sound. No crashing, no banging against the ground. And then she heard it, crashing against the pebbles, but it had already lain there for at least five seconds. It was almost as if time had been delayed, and the bucket had fallen before sound and gravity could allow it. "Oh, my eyes, I must be seeing things. Good thing I'm home!" she said, shakily, but she couldn't convince herself.

"Mum! Mu-", she began, but something stopped her from finishing. Kiar had only just noticed the emptiness and quietness of Hampton. She realised no-one had come to meet her, ask if she was alright, no one even appeared to be there. There was no one passing through the streets before her, no children screaming in excited play, no mothers chatting, not even a dog barking. Kiar got up and crept cautiously to the nearest cottage, which she recognised to be the village priest's. The door was slightly ajar, so the girl pushed it open and went in.

The priest was not there, and neither was his wife. She thought she could hear the sound of people, two men, talking in a language she didn't understand. But they stopped before she could investigate, so finding nothing, she left the house.

It was strange, for though Kiar searched every house in the village, there was no-one. Her house was empty, as was her Grandma's. One thing she did notice, though, was that some of the fireplaces still had fires going in them, and one house even had the table laid with steaming potatoes and a fat chicken gracing it. It was almost as though everyone had just disappeared. Gone.

She was recovering from this awful thought, when the shining glint of a sword caught her eye. The girl followed the glare of its reflection in her eyes, and when she reached it she saw that it was double-sided, and engraved in the hilt were the words: Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité. Kiar didn't know what it meant, but she knew it was French. Old French. The sword had an amazing power to draw her to it. "How intriguing," she said in wonder, almost forgetting her painful, surreal situation. She bent down to pick it up, and feel its coldness against her skin, when it vanished in front of her eyes. Kiar gasped, and would have screamed had a hand not covered her mouth, preventing her. Strong arms gripped her waist, and the force of a strong body pressed her down, back arched and helpless. This time Kiar did scream, and so loudly and piercingly that not even the weight across her

mouth could stop it. She struggled, flailing her arms in an attempt to release herself from her human cage.

"Quiet! Keep still!" A deep American voice hissed. Kiar went limp like a rag doll and croaked, "Who... and... you?" "Tan, Tan. Spoken ministry of zee crisis, black ash, y'know. Who are you? What do you know about Nubes Sanguis?" "Kiar, Kiar, Casteswell. What's Nubes Sanguis?" He released her. "Oh, nobin' really... oh, who am I kidding. It's gone, all gone. Listen, Kirsty—" "Kiar!" "Yeah, right, Kiar. Listen. I—I need your help, old! I know, ridiculous, isn't it, me needing your help. Who would believe it?" "Me? Why me? How could I help you?" Kiar asked, in astonishment. He was a stranger, and she knew nothing, so far of what he had spoken of. Nubes Sanguis, for example, what was that? "Well (he sighed), it's a long story, but, well, I guess we have time. Ah, guess, we have all the time in the world. Well, one of them..." He let out a nervous laugh. Kiar noticed that he kept looking at his watch, and kept fidgeting with something in his pocket of the crew black coat.

He started talking again, "Listen, carefully, Kiar. Ask no questions, don't speak unless I tell you to. Clear?" He didn't wait for an answer. "Right, then. It begins. I'll bet you have been wondering 'bout all those strange things 'vee been happenin'. Like, when you suddenly ran away, but didn't know why. Then your folks and all the people in this here village have gone. And to top it all, things keep appearin' and disappearin', don't they?" Kiar tried to speak but he raised a hand and she was silenced. He carried on. "Yeah, I ain' wachin' ya, ever since you entered this goddam place. Anyway, these things are all 'happenin' because of a death, a death of a cloud. Yeah, I know it sounds stupid, but I swear it's true. Clouds can die. See, clouds live for billions of years, it's just sometimes summer cuts their lives short, an' they die. The storm last night was enough to kill a weak cloud, an' it did that, it seduced me to say. Now, this ain't happened for millions of years, a cloud death was what wiped out them dinosaurs, y'know. 'ee when this cloud died, it let our millions of droplets of cloud blood, or nubes sanguis. They joined together in a freak disruption of gravity and formed a tidal wave the size of Canada. It swept across the world, through Europe, then through Asia, and eventually across the whole world, scattering the worlds together. And yes, that's right, I said worlds. 'Cos there's more than one, o'course. I know people go a'tollin' that there's only one world, but they're just ignorant. Ignorance is all it is." "Ysee, there are four worlds, the Southern Sky, the Northern Sky, the Eastern an' Western Sky. Anyways, this tidal wave was hit, at great speed by a bolt of lightning, that shook it apart, sending it flying to all corners of the world, causing windows through to the other worlds, invisible rips, like shards of glass. Fact is, Kiar, I'll bet you an' me are the only ones left on Earth! I don't know why you an' me were saved, perhaps me because of my knowledge of this subject, but whatever the reason, fate has brought us together, and it's on our head to save the worlds, however strange it sounds. I don't know how but we'll find out! Hell, we gotta go, go! There's a door over there. I can just see it! Let's go!"

Kiar was too shocked to resist, so she let him drag her in the space just inside the gates where the bucket had appeared earlier. Everything was in slow motion, and all she thought about was that she was dreaming and how strange this dream was.

"Ready, Kiar! Don't worry, I'll explain everything later, when we got more time, when we arrive. Ready?" "Yes..." she said wearily. "Then let's go!" And they jumped through the air and left the Southern Sky, with only one mission, to find their people and save the skies.

Clara MacNeill, Year 8

Shakespeare in the Twenty First Century

WIFE TAMERS GO 'GLOBAL'

Last summer I was lucky enough to watch a performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Globe Theatre, London, and an interesting experience it turned out to be. All the characters were played by women – a reversal of the roles which would have appeared on the original stage, when men played all the parts.

Before the play started we were entertained by a modern day prologue, written in iambic pentameter, reminding us of this fact and of how far women's lip had come since the days of the Bard and the Lord Chamberlain's men. It also requested that interruptions should be restricted to applause and not to sounds of modern technology – i.e. mobile phones.

It was interesting to see how women, some rather slender and lightweight, acted the roles of Hortensio and Lucentio, but suspension of disbelief was not needed for long as they convinced us of their ardour. Petruchio, the would-be 'wife tamer', was played very convincingly by a chestnut-haired actress, in oxblood red, high boots who swaggered about the stage very valisshly. Kate was hyperactive, and portrayed as a very loud, independent young woman, until the wedding breakfast scene when she pleaded, 'If you love me, stay', and later that night when, so hungry is she, that she sneaks back to the hall to snatch the dog's bone. She finds a way to Petruchio's heart by begging like a Spaniel, and acting as his cooerret. By learning to obey her husband she discovers the way to subdue him.

In the final act, when she surprises the company by her outward submission to her husband, we were treated to a wonderful display of mockery below the surface!

The comic characters in the sub-plot acted their parts in an extremely lively and humorous manner – complementing the more serious message of the play.

My 21st century belief in the equality of the sexes allowed me to predict that Kate would twist Petruchio around her little finger – a concept that 16th century audiences could not have readily accepted. It was a highly entertaining production!

Mrs S. Carruthers, ex-H story teacher

Awake to the Cold Light

The sun shone down on the dismembered figures, filling each corner of the room with a queer sense of uncertainty. The portraits of the countless sculptures displayed an unrealistic variety of expressions, yet each one shared the same shrill of horror beyond every extent. The uncanny shade of auburn rust captured every ounce of energy in my gaze. I lingered there transfixed into what seemed to be hypnotising my application into a dream of dunes.

No longer did I realise the morbid creatures stared straight up at me. I staggered to grasp back my attention from the miniature hypnotists. My eyes wandered across the many figures, shooting a chill of disbelief through my body. So sound, so calm, yet all at once slightly more than freaky. A figment of my imagination saw one of the sculptures blink. But what were they? Why were they there? Were they real? I felt my body tremble with fear. As suddenly as my thoughts flashed in my head, I was awake to the cold light. My questions that I did not really want answers to, were starting to unveil themselves.

The cold light pierced my brain, I tried to run but my feet stayed firmly glued to the floor. I could feel burning in my heart, that something was not right. That's why I wanted to get out of the white room so fast. But my head forbade my legs to move. I soon lost control over my brain, and my arms and my legs did what I did not tell them to do. I felt trapped within my own body, a prisoner in my own heart. I lost all feeling, the reason to live, for my life was no longer mine to live. So many ways to describe the burden laid upon my shoulders as my soul shrank down away from my eyes. Away from anything I knew, away from my own body. I felt my soul blink and in a flash of a...

I found myself looking up at my own body from the small sculptures I once looked down on in fear and dismemberment. I was trapped, forever in a place that no-one knows exists. My soul is lost forever in a place where there is no record of time, no knowledge of space. What is to become of me? What is to become of my soul?

Chloe Farkas, Year 9

It was impossible to leave town

I was just a traveller who saw a huge sign advertising free pie. Being the hungry man that I am I could not resist. As I walked through the wooden saloon doors everyone turned around and stared. For a broken down Texas bar it sure was busy. An old man sitting in the corner beckoned me over with his finger.

'You come for the pie, you stay for the soup' said the old man. 'Get on your way or you'll end up staying,' he said. Hey, maybe I should have taken his advice but it was free pie, any flavour; turning away free pie is easier said than done. What could pie hurt anyway, I thought. So I chose blueberry and apple pie with a small splodge of cream. It was freshly made and steamy hot: I sunk my teeth into the freshly made pastry with a little sugar sprinkled on top. As my teeth hit the hot sweet apple, my blood started to rush straight to my head. I felt giddy with the taste of blueberry. It tasted so good I just wanted more. 'Soup darling, to help you wash down that pie!' said the waitress. All I could do was mumble a reply that sounded mildly like yes. So the waitress filled an eggcup full of steamy hot soup and I poured it into my mouth. As soon as it hit my tongue all the different flavours overwhelmed me. As I swallowed it I felt sad that the taste was over. Just remembering the chicken, tomato, vegetable soup like taste put a smile on my face, and a shiver down my back. Just then I knew I would never leave town.

Kirsty Annets-Gledhill, Year 10

I wouldn't trade it for the world

My name is Sophie Bowles and I live in Cornwall. I moved to Cornwall when my aunt met a flower farmer named Reuben and he farms about 100 acres of mainly flowers. Nanfan Farm is situated about two miles from a little cove called Mullion and is on the Lizard Peninsular. It is the most southerly part of the UK and has an excellent climate for growing flowers!

The main crop is daffodils (narcissus) which bloom at the beginning of the year until the early spring. The sweet williams then start in early summer followed by pinks (dianthus) which flower from May right up until early December.

Daffodil bulbs are planted in August/September and are left in the ground for three years. They are then taken out of the ground, graded, cleaned and sterilised at 112 degrees to kill bulb fly and other pests, they are then replanted. The sterilising is done in huge tanks on the farm.

The flowers are picked by hand and Reuben can employ twenty pickers at his busy times. The daffodils are sold to a huge company called Winchester Growers. The pinks are sold to a supermarket chain called Morrisons. The sweet williams are then sold to local florists. There is much more to growing flowers than you think!

Also on the farm are lots of animals! We have a back yard where we keep all the animals. We have got forty-six geese, forty ducks, forty-six chickens and horses. Every day I go and feed the animals except the horses (because in the riding stable workers do that) because I love working with the animals. There is a family of geese who roam around the farm (who are normally quite smelly because they sleep on the muck pile). And I have had a few unhappy experiences when I got too close to them and they charged at me! They are brilliant guard dogs! We also have two dogs and two cats which are very very greedy, seeing as we get through twelve tins of cat food in five days. I go riding quite a lot and afterwards I tack up all the other horses. We normally have visitors down in the summer because my Grandma does Bed and Breakfast. My room is on the south side of the house. It faces the garden which is very big. My house is quite big, and quite in the wilderness (I think) because if you look out of the window at night in Brighton you would see lots of other lights in the distance. But if you look out of a window from my house you would only see about two other lights! But I love my house and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

Sophie Bowles, Year 8

The Mysterious Adventure

One day Lucas was told by his mum to go to the supermarket to get her shopping. He didn't want to as he thought that it was too girly for him. His mum said that all he had to do was go around the supermarket, get the food and bring it back home. Lucas had no choice but to do it. So he went to the supermarket to get the food.

But somehow, when he looked up from his mobile, he saw a whole load of trees. He said to himself 'Where am I, it looks like a wood, but how did I get here?' I thought I was supposed to go to the supermarket to get mum's food? He stood still looking around but all he could see were trees. They were so big that they shaded the ground where Lucas was standing except one ray of sun that somehow found its way into the woods. Lucas saw through the tree trunks a much brighter place, with more sun, so he walked over to the brighter part of the woods. As he was walking he saw two small round green glows. He was wondering what it could be, until he saw a few more that popped up around the first one. He got scared as he didn't know what he was in for. Lucas turned slowly around in a circle. The whole place was covered with green glowing things. He was more terrified than he had ever been in his life before, but then he actually saw what the green glowing things were. They were millions of different owls and they all came towards him, closer and closer, then suddenly they started to attack him. He got scared and he didn't know what to do, so he screamed and then he started to shout 'HELP, SOMEBODY PLEASE HELP ME!' He knew it was the most stupid thing to do because he thought no-one would live or even be in the woods, but he was wrong. Out of the air came a man with a green raggy top and beige trousers, tucked into black boots. On his back he was carrying a long, thin hunting gun. He made a grand entrance by swinging on a rope and then he jumped off the rope. Whilst doing so he squashed a few owls landing with the blood splatting on Lucas' face. As it splatted on his face he pulled the weirdest but cutest face ever. Then very stylishly the man swung the gun off his shoulders and started shooting the rest of the owls as they were still kind of attacking Lucas. After a while they had all died.

As the man introduced himself, he asked 'Are you o.k.?' and then just after he had said it, 'Oh by the way, I am Ethan John'. Lucas replied 'Oh, I'm fine just got a bit scared, I'm Lucas Egan.' Ethan asked him if he wanted to go to the village to his house for a drink. Lucas thought for a bit then replied, 'Yes please, if it's not too much trouble'. Ethan said very coolly, 'Follow me,' so Lucas followed Ethan to the village and just as they were outside Ethan's house Lucas noticed that there were a few logs of wood. He wondered whose it could be but then it hit him, they were obviously Ethan's as it was a cold, snowy winter and it was outside his house. After a while they started to talk about a lot of stuff, but strangely Ethan said to Lucas, 'You don't know how you got here do you?' Lucas replied stuttering 'H... H... how do... how do you know that?' Ethan said 'Don't worry, I know this because this has happened to lots of people before'. Lucas said happily, 'Really, how did they get back?' Ethan replied, 'Well Lucas, you see it's different for everyone.' Lucas said sharply 'Why?' Ethan answered 'Because you all come here differently so you get back differently'. Ethan asked Lucas 'Do you trust me?' Lucas said tearfully 'Yes, of course, I do.' Ethan said proudly, 'Good because if you didn't you probably won't get back, some people before you didn't trust me so it was really hard for them to get back'. Lucas asked Ethan 'Why was it hard?' Ethan said sadly 'Well unfortunately you have to do very dangerous things to get back.' Ethan and Lucas tried to figure out how to get back and it took them forever to figure it out.

After a few hours Ethan finally figured it out. Ethan asked Lucas if he did really trust him just to make sure because this one was really really terrifying. Lucas obviously said that he trusted Ethan totally; that was until they got to the place. It was a cliff. Lucas looked at Ethan and said 'You are joking aren't you?' Ethan said, 'No Lucas I'm not. Now remember when you get back it will be the exact same time as it was when you left, o.k.' Lucas said 'O.k. I better get it over and done with,' so he jumped. As he was on his way down he screamed so high it was higher than Justin Timberlake singing. Lucas fell from the sky, everyone looked at him whispering 'Oh my God it's a sign, thank you God for sending an ANGEL!', but Lucas chuckled then carried on walking to the supermarket. He got the food then went straight home taking a different route just in case it would happen again. When he got home his mum kissed him on the forehead and said 'You're an angel.' Lucas chuckled then said, 'I know mum, I know.'

Emily Ip, Year 8

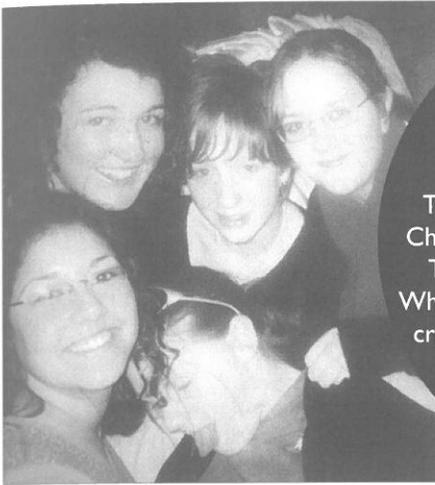
The Darkness

Have you ever had a nightmare, ever wondered what it meant? You can try to explain them, but you will never really know what they actually mean. Do you really want to know? This is a story of a girl who is about to find out.

"Ahhh!" screamed Sarah. "What's wrong, another nightmare?" said Sarah's room-mate, Anne. "Yeah it was weird, there was a door and I opened it, and inside there was a sweet little dog. It was so sweet and it was rummaging through the trash. As I walked up to it, to touch it, it changed into a face, just a face sitting there. Then it started to get bigger and bigger, so big all I could see was the left eye, it was as if it was about to swallow me up. Then I ran and ran. I found a door and I opened it and it was just darkness, silent, yet deafening. I started falling and falling. My eardrums burst, my eyes started watering. The air began to get so thick I couldn't breathe," said Sarah starting to sweat. "You will never guess what?" said Anne. "What?"

"Come with me!" said Anne. Then Anne brought her to a room. "Dreams really do come true!" She burst out laughing, ran out and pulled a lever. Sarah was in shock, the chair disappeared and she began to fall and fall into the darkness.

Sinead Barnes, Year 9



SKI TRIP

2002

The ski trip to Alpe d'Huez over the Christmas holidays was a great success. There was plenty of snow and Miss Whittaker reported that the girls were a credit to their parents, the School and themselves. As a result staff were also able to enjoy the holiday!



SKI TRIP

We had to arrive at school for 3.30 in the morning,
Much to Whittaker's disappointment everyone was yawning.

Eventually we arrived at Gatwick.
Surprisingly Big Gubbins wasn't sick.

At Grenoble, we began our two-hour journey,
To be welcomed at the resort by the Beau Soleil family.
With our boots and skis fitted as soon as we got there,
There was no time at all to despair.

The next morning brought an early start,
Bed and student had to be pulled apart.
Free skiing in the morning and afternoon,
Made us ski down the slopes singing a Christmas tune.
The teachers won the quiz to everyone's surprise.

Much to the student's demise.
The second day began with heaps of snow,
When a snowball fight arose, Emma hit Whittaker with such a blow.
For dinner we were served pea and ham soup as a starter,
Could have been regurgitated on the trampolines – a bit of a startler!

After third skiing everyone was wiped,
All the teachers singing Frank Sinatra at karaoke gave us a fright.
Along with Larry and Ash free styling,
They kept all of us smiling.

On the fourth day, Abigail and Saphy practised their French techniques,
However the locals all thought we were freaks.

'Hurry up, slow Emma' Ashley begs,
But first we see Peta and her banana legs.
At bum-boarding Ruth, Abbey and Laura sliding on their bum,
Shooting down the slope yelling 'Here we come!'

On the fifth day the top group had fun,
Going down a scary black run!
Later that evening we went to the ice rink,
Whittaker was a pro (at least that's what she can think!)

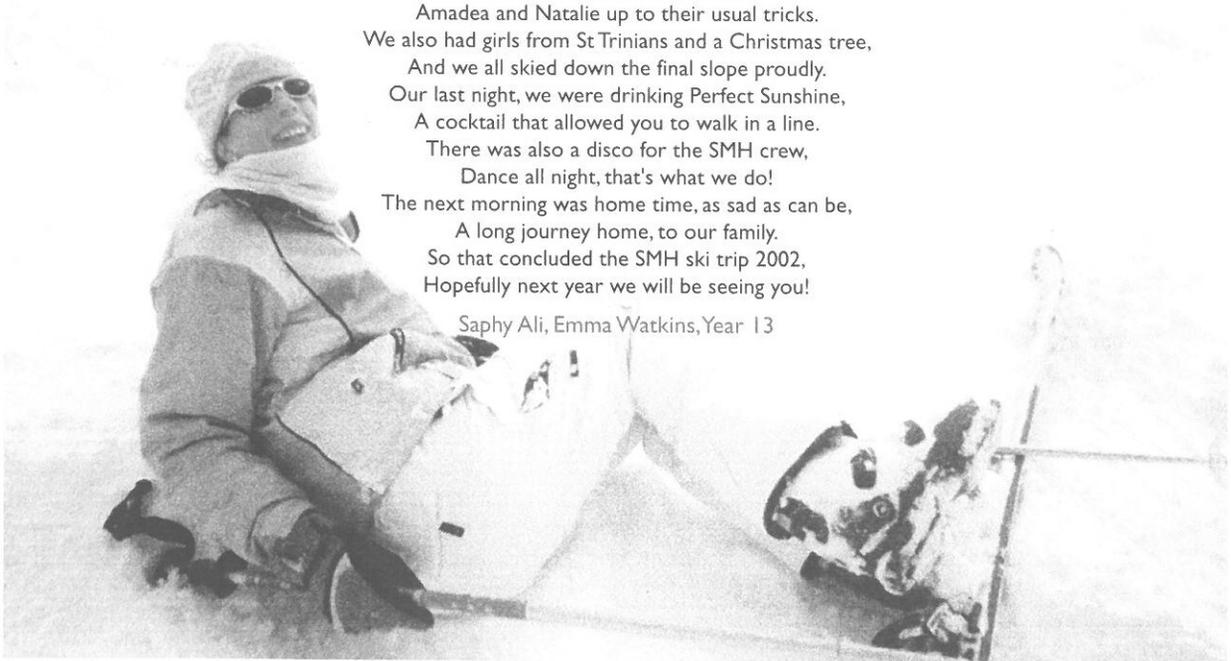
Vanessa had talent she wasn't lacking,
Chris and Miss Miles on the other hand were slacking.
Some adolescent boys started on us – it wasn't right,
So it all amounted to a massive snowball fight (AGAIN!)
The sixth and final day, which was a big disappointment,
But it was fancy dress much to our excitement.

We had a clan of mini St Nicks,
Amadea and Natalie up to their usual tricks.
We also had girls from St Trinians and a Christmas tree,
And we all skied down the final slope proudly.

Our last night, we were drinking Perfect Sunshine,
A cocktail that allowed you to walk in a line.
There was also a disco for the SMH crew,
Dance all night, that's what we do!

The next morning was home time, as sad as can be,
A long journey home, to our family.
So that concluded the SMH ski trip 2002,
Hopefully next year we will be seeing you!

Saphy Ali, Emma Watkins, Year 13



WORK *Experience*

Plumpton College Animal Care Unit

I arrived in the Reception of Plumpton College where I waited to be met by one of the students from the animal care unit. I was collected by Laura at 9am. She then showed me to the animal care unit, where I was introduced to the manager of the unit whom I think was called Jill.

I was supposed to be spending the day with Justine, but she was lecturing all day so Laura had the pleasure of my company. I was given an apron, and the first task was to change the water and food of all the rabbits, guinea pigs, mice, rats, degus, gerbils and some other exotic pets. This took quite a while, but when we were finished I was shown around the rest of the unit, in the reptile, spider, fish, amphibian and animals-like-slugs section. It was then time for the first break at 10.30am.

It was then back to work at 11am when we had to clean out the chicken coop and take the rubbish down to the muck heap, empty the wheelbarrow and fill it up again with wood chippings, wheel the barrow back to the coop and lay the wood chippings down. We then had to clean all animals' cages that we had changed the food and water in earlier. This was actually really fun because, before you could do any cleaning, you had to catch all the animals from the cage and put them in a container and put the lid on, which I forgot to do and a mouse got out. This was great fun and all the animals were really sweet and cuddly.

It was then 12.30pm and time for lunch, which we spent in the canteen. When we returned from lunch at 1.30pm, we had to prepare some of the exotic animals' food. It was at this point I opened the freezer and a snake's whole, frozen, dead rabbit fell out. Yuck!

We then had to exercise all the animals which just consisted of handling animals, and letting them walk around. I liked handling the rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits. I didn't like the snakes, but the lizards were okay. I was then picked up at 4pm when I was congratulated on how well I had done.

I found the day really fun, but I would have liked to have done some veterinary work with Justine, but never mind.

Jessica Daltrop, Year 9



Dog Grooming

The Job:

We have been doing dog grooming for our job. The place that we are working at is in a house's garage that is converted into a dog grooming parlour. We are working with Sue Hughes and her friend Barbara, that is Lorraine's mum and a close family friend. They are both professional groomers. It takes about two hours to do the grooming which includes a wash, blow dry, clip and/or shave or cut of the dog. It deals with the people's dogs and themselves which means you meet new people and get more customers, who we found were very friendly.

Our Day:

We got up at 7am, had breakfast, got dressed and washed as normal. We then went down the shop to get some special shampoo for the dogs with Sue and Barbara. That day we had a St Bernard called Lottie and two puppies, called Winkler and Hooch. When Lottie arrived at 9am we started by clipping her. She was quite a large dog so she was hard to keep still. We then washed her and blow dried her. The other two were also very good. We did the same routine with Winkler, but Hooch needed some shaving as well. We had lunch at 1pm, after that, that we groomed Winkler. After lunch we didn't have any other dogs until 2.30pm. At 2.30pm we had a boarder collie, called Steve, and a chihuahua called Vale. We followed the same routine when they were groomed. They were very well behaved until Steve decided to have a little 'accident' on the table – which was the laugh of the day! We finally finished work at 7pm when all of the dogs had been collected.

We really enjoyed doing this.

What we wore:

We wore casual clothes that we would normally wear, consisting of jeans and a top – but not something posh because you could spill shampoo/water or something down you.

We enjoyed not wearing our school uniform because we felt a lot more comfortable.

How we felt:

We thought it was quite a pleasant and relaxing day, and we thoroughly enjoyed working with the dogs.

Sounds:

The main sounds we heard were the dogs barking and the machines that we used working there, e.g. shavers, clippers, taps and the blaster, a very important and powerful hair dryer.

Our comment:

We feel that we did well for our working day. We enjoyed it a great deal and learned heaps about dogs and their ways.

Heather Holland and
Lorraine Hughes, Year 9

Sue and Barbara's comment:

Lorraine and Heather did lovely work at the salon and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Longmore Training Camp

For my work experience I went to RAFEP (Royal Air Force Experience) at Longmore Training Camp. RAFEP is run by the Air Training Corps otherwise known as Air Cadets and, for work experience, they show what life would be like for the first week if you joined the RAF. I am a cadet in the Air Cadets and so I thought I knew what to expect, but I was wrong. Although the Air Cadets gives me some insight into life in the RAF I had no idea it would be so hard! Saying this, I did really enjoy myself, and I still want to join the RAF after my education.

We arrived at Longmore on Monday after we had picked up students from all over Sussex. Some of the other students were cadets as well, but most of them had no idea of what the cadets are or anything to do with the RAF. I knew that I and the other cadets there would have it easier than the other students because we would know how to do some things like drill, which is marching in a group, and keeping our uniform ironed neatly. These are some of the minor things they teach you how to do in the cadets, so we had a head start.

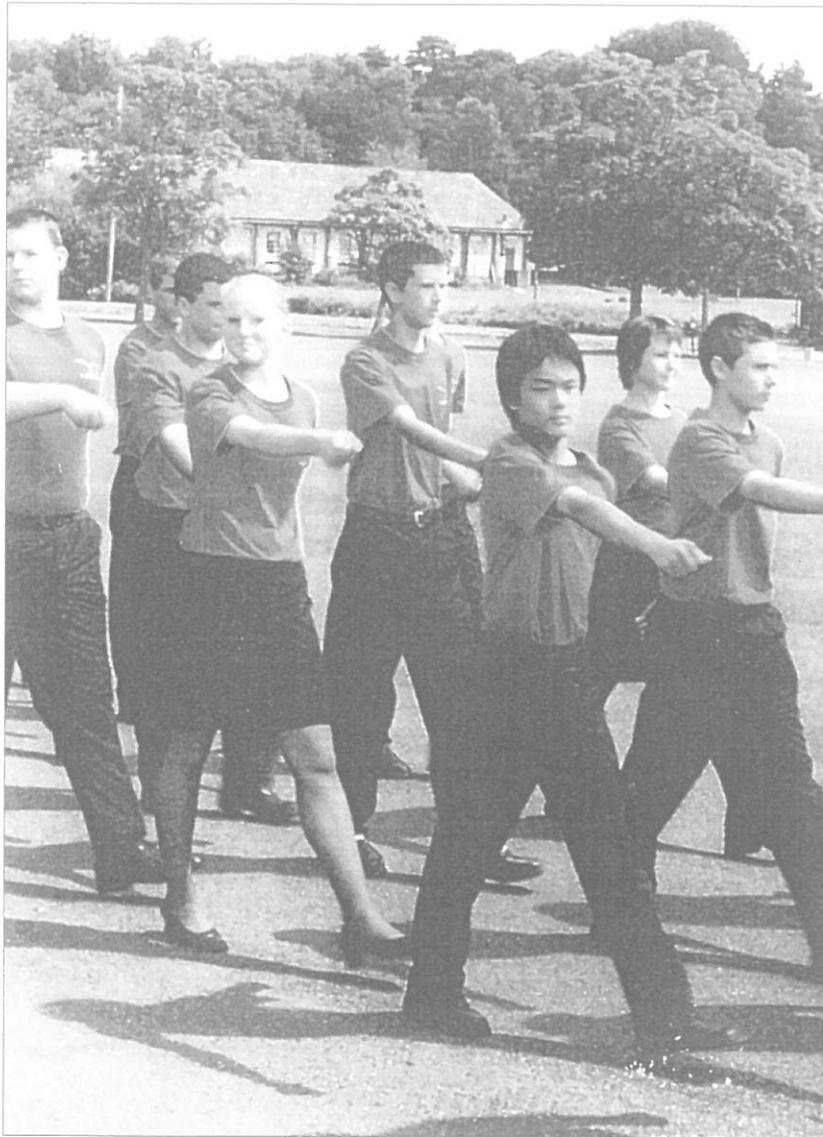
We all got off the coach, collected our bags and lined up behind our bags, facing the staff of the week. Some of the staff were cadets whom I knew, and others were officers from the RAF. Then the Warrant Officer, Mr Taplin, whom I knew through cadets, stepped forward. He told us that this week was going to be a hard one, and that we needed to be dedicated and want to succeed. I began to feel nervous as he continued saying he would not accept any misbehaving but would send us home! I was used to being told what to do and being on my best behaviour because of the cadets but as I looked around the group, I knew I was not the only one feeling nervous. Mr Taplin continued by saying that every year they send someone home, and he hoped this would be the year that he would not have to. He told us that he was going to be tough on us, but fair. This meant that he was going to be hard on us if we didn't listen to him but, if we did what we were told, then we would be treated more like adults and less like something that had just been dragged in by the cat. This made me feel at ease. I don't mind being told what to do, and as long as I did exactly as I was told, I would be able to get through the week. Some students on the other hand, looked as though they had just walked into hell and, as I was to see throughout the week, some of them did not like to take orders.

Our first taste of RAF life was being sorted into teams, known as squadrons. There were two squadrons, which each had four flights which were made up of five or six students. Luckily I was put into a flight with the other girl in my squadron, and a boy I knew through cadets. Alex Conn, who was the other girl sent to Longmore from my school, was put in the other squadron with the

other four girls on the course. There were about forty of us overall, with six of us being girls. It was going to be hard having to compete with all the boys but I thought that I would just have to try my best, and that's exactly what the other girls and I did.

After being sorted, we were told to take our bags and go to the billets where we would be staying for the week. Obviously, the girls' and boys' quarters were separate, so we went to our own billets to unpack. They gave us half an hour to unpack, and then we had to go and collect some gear that we would need for the next week. We went in squadrons and picked up blankets, sheets, pillow cases, cutlery, cup, and cover-all. We were told that we must wear our cover-all whenever we did exercises that would mean us getting dirty. The sheets that we were given had to be put on the bed and made to RAF standard, pulled tightly and with hospital-style corners.

This seemed to scare some of the boys, who looked as if they had never made their beds before in their life! The girls, on the other hand, looked quite calm about this, and Mr Taplin told me in private that girls always seemed to do better in the bed-making than the boys. Now, I wonder why that would be?



Nicola Johnson, marching at RAF placement

After returning our things to our billets, we were told to get notebook and pens and we had to go to our first lessons. We were in class an hour and a half after we had arrived. This week was going to be hard but, hopefully, I would be able to cope. Our first lessons were on the history of the RAF. Most of this I knew already, because we were taught it at cadets, but some of the other students were absolutely clueless. But, to tell the truth, I did need to brush up on my RAF history, so I took notes as the others did and tried to remember what I had forgotten. After this half an hour lesson we were allowed a break, not long, but it was nice to get some fresh air and to let our minds relax a little. We continued with lessons throughout the day on weapons and aircraft in the RAF and also of the history of warfare. All these lessons, we were told, were going to help us complete our tasks over the next few days.

That night, we were told to make our beds properly, and were informed that we had to be up at quarter to six the next day to make them again and sweep and mop our rooms. The girls' billet was one big room with about twenty beds in these. Six of these were taken up by students and three were used by the staff who were in charge of us. A nice early start to the second day of lessons. We continued with lessons about leadership and teamwork. We only had breaks between lessons and for lunch. The food there was nice enough, standard military food, but they kept us well fed and we needed it for we would be burning a lot of energy in the field over the next couple of days. The lessons we learnt on the second day were going to be more helpful in the tasks that we were to undertake.

It was another bright and early start to our day as we woke, made our beds and cleaned our rooms. We were told to put our cover-all on, which only meant that we were going to get dirty. Thankfully, it had not rained so the ground was not muddy, but instead dusty. We marched, with difficulty, since not all the students knew how, up to the woods nearby. There, we were split into our flights and carried out command tasks. Command tasks are tasks where one of the group is in charge and acts like a leader. They are told the mission and the materials which could be used. They would then have to think of a plan, with the help of their team, and complete the task. We all got a chance to be the leader, and we were marked on our results and whether we completed the tasks in the time allocated. My task was to get the team across the river using just four stepping stones, and only one person was allowed on the stone at a time. This was an easy task compared to some of the others, but it took some time to complete. This day was a vast improvement on the first two days and I enjoyed it very much, as did all of the other students. We got a surprise that day as well. The field where we were doing the command tasks, was actually an air field. We saw two Puma helicopters flying overhead, and they came into land. They just touched down for a few seconds and took off again, but it was an amazing sight to see. The helicopters were beautiful, and I would have given anything to fly in one. We returned back to the billets that evening tired, but happy, after completing most of our tasks and seeing a Puma.

Another early morning, and we were up and ready to go. We were split into flights, and we had to work together as a team to say how we would defend the Falklands Islands, and the Argentinian border, from an attack by terrorists. This was to be presented to the officers that evening. While we were doing this the staff would interrupt us saying that there had been an incident that needed to be dealt with, for instance a terrorist attack on the base or a bomb had exploded. These were all pretend incidents, but still had to be dealt with as a military

procedure. My flight completed these very well, and got very good marks. All these marks would be added up at the end of the week to decide the best flight, best cadet in each flight and best cadet overall. For the rest of the day we completed our original mission about the Falklands Islands, and presented it that evening to the officers. This went well and, again, my flight received good marks. So far, the week was going really well. I was enjoying myself immensely since our first two days' lessons, and I was so glad I was in first place. I couldn't wait for the excitement that was facing us tomorrow. We had the basic fitness test and more command tasks, and I couldn't wait. But there was another surprise we were to face that evening!

I and the other girl in my squadron were told to put our cover-all on at ten o'clock that night. We were not told what was happening or why we were going out, but we soon worked out that we were going on a night exercise! The rest of our squadron had also been told and we met outside the classroom. One of the boys was chosen as leader, and he led us in the mission to retrieve stolen papers. We travelled through woods quietly and slowly until we reached a Land Rover, which was heavily guarded. We closed in, but we were heard and some of us were taken prisoner. Many of the others, including me, hid from the captors, and tried to rescue the others. But the exercise was ended and we were told we had succeeded. We made our way back to the classroom where squadron two were waiting. The leader of our group had to brief them on the night exercise, and we were sent to bed. This had, without doubt, been the best day so far!

On the second last day we were allowed a slight lie-in, but we were up and practising for the 'Passing Out Parade'. This was the parade which occurred at the end of the week, saying that we had passed or failed the course. We marched around the parade square until we had got it perfect. Then it was lunch. After lunch, we were back on the parade square for one more try. We were now almost perfect. We were then told that we were going to have a little party that evening, and this cheered us all up after a long hard day. We all went back to our billets and got ready. The girls arrived about half an hour late, because we all had to blow-dry our hair and there was only one hair dryer! It was dark when we went inside, then the music started and the boys jumped out from their hiding places. Then the party started. We had food and music and party games and it was a great end to an excellent week. We had all enjoyed ourselves so much, and I was sad that the week was ending. We all went to bed well fed and in a good mood.

The next day we were up early for the last time. We dressed and had breakfast and made our way to the parade square. Our parents had already arrived, and we all started to feel nervous. Would we get it right, would we be awarded with anything, and would our parents make fools of us? But, it all went smoothly, we marched perfectly, the awards were given, and we could all go home! There was tea and coffee offered, but after a long and tiring week I was ready to go home. I left the base feeling pleased that I had accomplished so much in such a short time, but sad to leave all my new friends behind.

Overall, I really enjoyed my week and I would urge anyone to go on RAFEP. Although it was hard work, it was highly rewarding, and now more than ever I want to join the RAF. I hope that other students enjoy it as much as I, and that students who go on the course after me find it as enjoyable and as much fun as I did.

Nicola Johnson, Year 11

Cabin Crew

I entered the company's building with my nerves jangling like broken bottles, with a hint of excitement. I was with my friend Ashley whose dad works here as a managing director. We went to the third floor where the managing director works. He introduced us to the rest of his colleagues but I wasn't really paying any attention because I was surprised everybody was so laid back and organised.

He then assigned us to our first job of the day. However, I wouldn't call it a job, more like a mission. This mission was to file some documents to help one of his colleagues.

We had half an hour to go until the person who was going to take me around was to come. So I wandered around and observed the workplace more deeply. It was a very bright, fresh and clean building which seemed to make people liven up a bit, so they might work with a bit more enthusiasm.

Once the 'break' was over it was on to the next building, which was directly across the road from the last one. Again, my first impressions were the same as the last offices, until I got past the reception. You felt the atmosphere getting louder and much more claustrophobic. There was a lot of movement and only half of the people were at their desks. The managing director escorted us straight to the area where I was introduced to Terry Douglass, the Head Trainer of cabin crew. She was wearing uniform and looked the part. Anybody's first impression would be that she was a natural leader. Terry then took over from the managing director to escort us around that building. She taught us how everything worked and how separate areas would connect information to others, so everything is perfect for the company, and it all fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle to make a pretty picture.

Soon after, came the exciting bit, getting the uniform. She took us to a huge version of our uniform shop at school. We went to a separate area allocated to 'Excel Airways' to get the uniform. The room was filled with navy blue jackets for men and women aligned in order of size, sky blue shirts, three types along another row; shelves stacked with shoes, leather bags, orange fleeced scarves and even aprons. Terry kitted me out with the right size and I went to try it on. I felt really insecure in the uniform, probably because it made me look about three times as old and it didn't feel like me. I looked like a blue cuboid on two sticks. The most ridiculous part of the uniform, I thought, was that you had to have regulation Excel Airways' leather bags and scrunchies for your hair. I was already embarrassed, and I hadn't even let anybody see me yet. Meanwhile, she explained why the uniforms are designed the way they are.

Safety, I learnt, was the main use of the uniforms. Long hair has to be tied up neatly in a bun, using a regulation scrunchie, so if anybody tries to grab you in flight, they can't use your hair. The men have to wear clip-on ties so they have less chance of getting strangled by an angry passenger. The material of the suits is made to suit all weathers and to suit every figure, so you don't spend your time worrying about how you look, but instead you do more work.

Eventually after a very long speech about safety, we made a move for the ladies' toilet to freshen up. Apparently, the best stewardesses always wear lipstick and never have a stray strand of hair on their head. And, of course, that means a can of hairspray is needed and one big lipstick is always a must have in your personal 'first aid kit'.

Later on, we went to have all the necessary security procedures done to get through to the air side of the airport. We went to the cabin crew department, and checked whether there were any flights which needed 'seeing to'. We weren't allowed on-board the aircraft unless it was on the ground because of certain laws and recent terrorist events. Instead, she made sure we could go onboard when it was parked on what they call a 'finger'. There was still an hour before the next aircraft was free, so we had some lunch in the South Terminal. This was probably the worst part of the day because passengers are constantly looking at you because you are in uniform, which makes you feel incredibly self-conscious. Even Terry said that when she first started in the business she felt strange and self-conscious, but you would eventually get used to it.

At about one o'clock we made a move to the aircraft. Firstly, we had to check-in to go onboard at a small hidden office, and we hitched a ride with the aircraft engineer. It took about five minutes just to get to the aircraft engineer, because of the tiny, winding airport roads. We climbed the steep steps and Terry entered the code to get in, which was a bit of a mission because she had forgotten it. Eventually, we got onboard the plane which was empty and all of the electricity was off. So she taught us the 'famous' safety routine which the public make fun of, and also showed me all of the tricks of the trade. The best one, I thought, was how to get into a locked toilet from the outside, because I can use it on a certain person in my family. Twenty minutes went by, and then there was another aeroplane which had cabin crew onboard which was next door to this aircraft. I made my way on-board first, then Ashley. The atmosphere was very relaxed, but as soon as they saw Terry the cabin crew sharpened up their act and got on with their jobs. I didn't realise how much power she had over them. We helped neaten up the pockets of the seats and made sure everything needed was on the aircraft. I looked down the list and thought it would take forever. It had: check the spare seatbelts; make sure there are enough baby cots; check the first aid kit; read through safety book; make sure electrical equipment was onboard and working and much, much more. Luckily, we had the company of the cabin crew to help. We soon left the cabin crew to do the stuff which we had left out, and then it was onto the third plane.

This one was much bigger and only had the caterers on, so Terry explained what went in that department of the aeroplane. During this, I was so tempted to sit down and curl up in one of the big, blue, leather seats and go to sleep because my feet were hurting from all of the walking around. After, we headed back to the cabin crew department and had a break, which was a great relief to relax my swollen feet. Their motto, which was something like 'Does your appearance say responsible?' was dotted around on the walls, and then I realised that in the uniform shop, she wasn't talking nonsense. Once that was over, we headed back to the office buildings and I was tested on my tea and coffee making, which, apparently was the most important part of the job. While I was making the tea, I realised that most of the employees of Excel Airways were in there and not at their desks.

At late afternoon, I went back to the original place where I started the day, and worked on the phones for a while and was taught how to book flights. Then the end came to a very long day and I went back home.

Daniella Woudman, Year 9

Tour Operator

When we decide we want to go on holiday, we go to a travel agent, pick somewhere exotic, plan everything out, book our week abroad, hand over money and from there we expect things to run smoothly. We expect our flights to be on time, the hire car to be at the airport, and the hotel room to be ready and waiting for us, and so it should be . . . we've paid for it, right? Whether things go as beautifully as we planned, or whether the holiday seems to fall apart before our eyes, if it wasn't for the tour operator, we'd have no holiday at all. The tour operator takes all the things needed for an enjoyable holiday, puts them together, packages them up and sells them. It sounds simple, but I bet you've never thought hard about what actually goes into your holiday . . . or how hard the people behind closed doors have to work to arrange your holiday.

First Choice is one of many tour operators but, of course, they want people to choose to buy from them, and so they are very competitive. It is essential that they sell their holidays for the right prices: too expensive and their customers will go elsewhere, too cheap and they lose money.

I spent a day at Sandrocks in Haywards Heath. Sandrocks is where individual holiday companies have offices and call centres but, although they are different, they are all owned by First Choice and work towards the same goal, selling holidays for First Choice. Some of the companies working in Sandrocks include First 4 Extras and Suncars. First 4 Extras sell passengers any 'extra' things they may need before they go away. For example, if your flight is early in the morning, you may want to stay in a hotel near to the airport the night before. Then you may want to park your car or get a lounge when you are waiting in the airport, and these are the types of things F4E provide. Suncars arrange hire cars, they have a call centre at Sandrocks to take bookings from direct customers or travel agents. Both F4E and Suncars are in competition with the likes of ABC, another company outside First Choice, who sell the same types of things that they do.

When I arrived at Sandrocks with Cathy, Ruby, Naomi, Emily and my dad, he showed us around, so we knew where the toilets were and where the vending machine was if we needed a drink. Then I was taken upstairs to 'Yield Control' who control the price of charter flights. Charter flights are the opposite to scheduled flights. Scheduled flights have a fixed routine, they fly to a country, let's say, every week, regardless of how full they are. Charter flights are more of a 'one-off', they are arranged for specific dates. 'Yield Control', as I said, control the price of charter flights.

They monitor First Choice's sales and if seats aren't selling, they will compare their prices to the prices other companies are offering. If their seats are a lot more expensive than other prices offered, they know why they're not selling and will consider lowering their price, perhaps to match another company. If their price is too low, they will not make enough profit, but if it's too high, they won't sell the tickets. They have a computer system called 'Farebase', which allows them to compare prices, and another called 'Gemini' that allows them to change their price, and also make reports of how well they are doing. These reports are very helpful and predict how many more seats they are likely to sell before the flight leaves. From a report like this, the company can decide whether to raise or lower their ticket price.

Sometimes, they have the lowest price but they still aren't selling the tickets. Usually, there is an explanation for this. For example,

during the World Cup they find hardly any tickets are sold because England fans want to stay in England. Also, just after September 11th, I'm sure their sales would have gone down because people were scared to fly. So there are often other explanations why tickets don't sell, but it is their job to find out why, with the help of modern computer systems.

While I was in 'Yield Control' for charter flights, I asked Yvonne, the lady looking after me, what advice about work she would have been grateful for when she was my age. She said that she would have been grateful for someone giving her the advice to keep your choices open, and I suppose not to set your mind on one particular job when you are so young and there's so much to discover about work, and what you are capable of achieving. That's what I understood from what she said anyway, and I hope that's what she meant. I think that's good advice.

At 12.30pm it was lunch time, so I was taken down to F4E, where my dad works, and I met with Emily, Ruby, Cathy and Naomi so we could all go to lunch. The canteen was separate from the main building and it was a sunny day so we ate together outside. They brought packed lunches, but I had money to buy food. It was like the school canteen, with a choice of main meals, cooked or salad, desserts and fruit. Everyone had lunch at different times, when there was a convenient break between what they were doing, I suppose. The food was yummy . . . the flapjack was the best.

After lunch I went to Hayes and Jarvis, a tour operator inside First Choice. They arrange a lot of tours and long haul flights to far away places including: Africa and Egypt, The Orient, Australia, the Pacific Islands, India, Islands of the Indian Ocean, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Latin America. They are not going through the greatest of times at the moment because certain things, like the war in Iraq and the SARS virus, mean people are scared to travel, so the company have to work really hard to sell their holidays. I realised how easily the tourism industry is affected by world issues, all it takes is one unpredictable earthquake and their business can come to a halt. This is why often holiday companies can suddenly go bankrupt.

Terrorism is another thing that has a huge effect on the success of holiday companies. I realised this when I sat with Lisa Ancombe. She is an aftersales consultant, who takes calls from travel agents and customers who want to make changes after they have paid for their flights/hotels/car hire. She told me that an enjoyable part of doing what she does is that it is very different every day. She said that because the calls vary so much, you have to be quite knowledgeable about the various subjects that come up. A few random examples of varied calls are; some people may phone to cancel their bookings, some people ring about dress code inside certain hotels which for religious or other reasons, ask for women to wear full length trousers, and not shorts. Another example is quite strange, one particular person once phoned her up and asked if it was possible to take a whole suitcase of Bisto gravy granules to her friend who owns a restaurant abroad! I asked what the worst thing about her job was. She said dealing with angry customers. I can imagine that this can be very stressful and takes a controlled person to deal with it. In a confrontational situation, the other aftersales consultants like Lisa, have to remain calm and be polite to the customer. A lot of unwanted fury is probably taken out on them when it's not their fault, and that's unfair, but part of the job.

After about 5 o'clock, the calls really started picking up because lots of people travelling to Kenya at the weekend were obviously

very concerned about the terrorist warnings. It was quite exciting in a way, because it was interesting to see how problems like that were dealt with. Lisa had no choice but to inform the customers/ travel agents that she couldn't do very much until a policy had been set up, and that she would ring them first thing in the morning to let them know what was going on. I felt sorry for a couple who were supposed to be going on their honeymoon, but there was nothing Lisa could do apart from explain politely, which she did.

The offices I went to had different atmospheres, the aftersales was a bit busier and the 'Yield Control' more competitive, but in both there was a mixture of young and middle-aged people. Both had a friendly environment, which I have learnt is needed in an office, because the workers are often many to a room, with their own desk and computers, but near to other people, and the environment would just be horrible if they weren't all friends and had a laugh together now and again.

Rachel Strong, Year 9



Julia Fortune at a pathology laboratory

Take Your Daughter To Work Day

For 'Take Your Daughter to Work Day', I went to Jagwa (beauty salon) in Seven Dials. I had a good time experiencing a typical salon environment. I also learnt that although it sounds like an easy, glamorous job, it was a lot of hard work. The first job I was appointed to do was to answer the phone and take bookings, whilst answering the clients' incisive questions. It was a small place with an upstairs, where manicures and pedicures were done, and downstairs where the facials and massages were done. It was very busy all day. Altogether there were three women working. The boss was English and the two other colleagues were Japanese. The age group of the workforce varied from young to middle-aged. All the clients seemed to get on with everyone and it was a lovely environment to be in. The main jobs in Jagwa involved answering the phone for appointments, ordering products, cleaning the reception area and making sure clients had complete satisfaction and comfort. There was a lot of gossip and everyone got on. But overall it was a very independent and strong workforce. Whilst I was there I saw extensions being applied and endless coats of nail varnish piling onto the perfectly shaped nails. They had an air-brushing machine which sprayed colours on to the stencils. They had different designs and pictures which could be transferred onto the nail, and small diamante to add a little class. Downstairs, relaxing aromatherapy massages and facials were done. And it was the ideal place to go and get pampered and feel special.

Zara Miller, Year 9

Feetures

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PE Department

The PE Department has had another successful year. In the Interhouse Competitions Adelaide won the swimming gala by the largest margin in the last five years. However Bristol House reigns supreme in all other events winning the rounders, hockey and netball.

Year 8 Camp

Another event that was greatly enjoyed last year was the Year 8 camp where the year group were brought together in various adventurous activities, whilst cooking on open fires and sleeping under canvas. Fortunately the weather was perfect!

Swimming

The major success this year was in swimming, particularly the junior swimming team which won every gala beating close rivals Roedean and St Leonard's, Mayfield. The junior swimmers also attended King's School Canterbury Swimming Festival, coming a very creditable third, swimming against strong competition in an Under 14 age group although the team consisted of four Under 13s and one Under 12. Great experience for next year!

Athletics

In athletics, the Under 15 team consisting of year 9 and 10 girls came third out of the fifteen schools competing at the Brighton and Hove and Portslade Schools Championships. St Mary's Hall was also placed third overall in the throwing events which was a remarkable achievement for the team. Jessica Daltrop and Sophie Kent both came first in their events. For the County Championships in Crawley, Jessica was selected to represent Brighton and Hove in the 200 metres; Tina Fong in the Discus; Abigail Williams in the Javelin and Charlotte Ridge in the Long Jump. Congratulations to them all – and to Lucy Monnery who was selected as a member of the Under 14 hockey development squad and again to Charlotte Ridge who played for the Sussex Under 16 netball team last year. Charlotte's outstanding achievements in PE and her invaluable contribution to the PE Department as a whole, have been recognised in her well-deserved award as an Honorary Sixth Form Sports Scholar.

Sports Exhibitions: Ashleigh Robertson and Claire Stokes

Honorary Sixth Form Sports Scholarship: Charlotte Ridge



'Shell study' by Gina Ou, age 14

THE JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

The past year in the Junior Department has delighted us with its academic and personal highlights. We have all shared in the success of our young pupils. It is just as gratifying when a child in the Nursery understands that if you add one more conker to a group of two conkers there will then be three conkers as when a child in Year 6 can explain probability and how to calculate it. We all remember the story of 'the very hopeless Camel' trying to find its way to Bethlehem, presented by Gloucester pupils; the lively production of 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat' by Elliott pupils and, as staff, we also remember the anxiety over whether or not to have lit candles at our Christingle service – as the firemen were threatening strike action.

As we all know, 'real' life is not made up of unmitigated success. We have had to cope with frustrations, disappointments and failure as well. An important part of our work at school is giving children the emotional tools to deal with these feelings. They need to learn that, sometimes, things do not go the way they would like. It would be remiss of us to smooth out all their difficulties as how would they then learn to cope with the demands of 'real' life? Skills that they learn outside the classroom and in the playground, are of lasting value. Here, they learn to

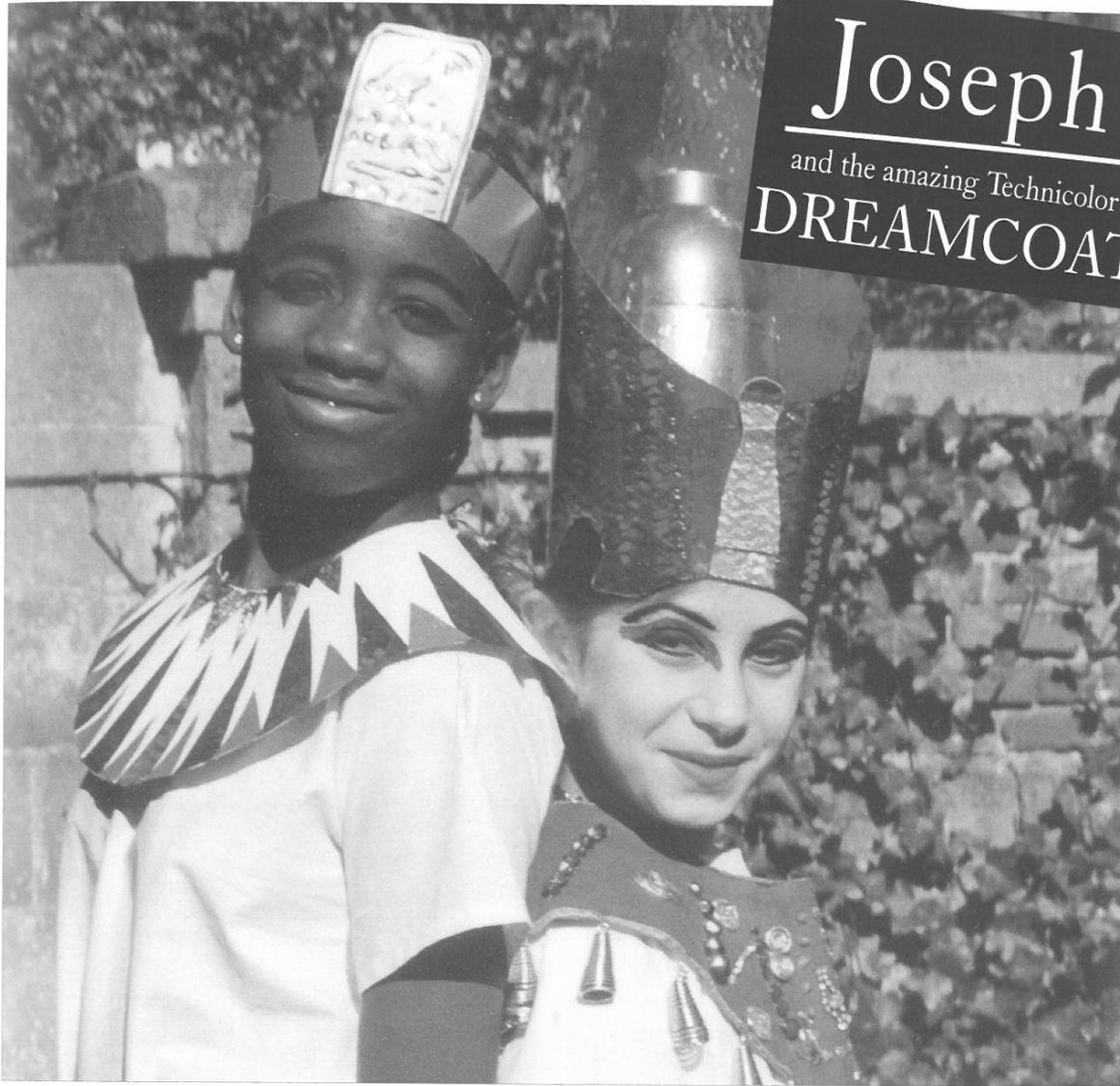
negotiate, to share, to manage their feelings and relationships. These, surely, are some of the most valuable lessons they can learn.

Our own relatively minor disappointments were brought into sharp focus, this year, by the war in Iraq. As the father of one of our pupils was actively engaged in the conflict, we learnt from his letters of the devastation wrought in the lives of the children there. He gave us a chance to take an active role in trying to do something to enhance the lives of Iraqi children, as well as bringing home to us how unimportant some of our frustrations were. The children in Year 6 wrote personal letters, and sent photographs to girls at a school in Basra, and all the children throughout the Department collected spare stationery, books and writing equipment to send. It was a small gesture, but one which made us all very appreciative of our school, which we take for granted so easily.

I leave you with a poem written by Bethany Dubow who was in Year 4 at the time:

Mrs H J Hawtin, Head of Junior Department



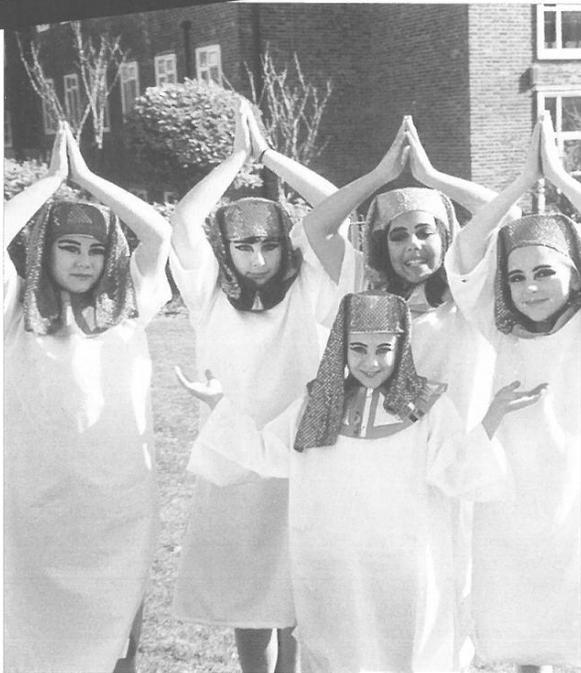


Joseph
and the amazing Technicolor
DREAMCOAT





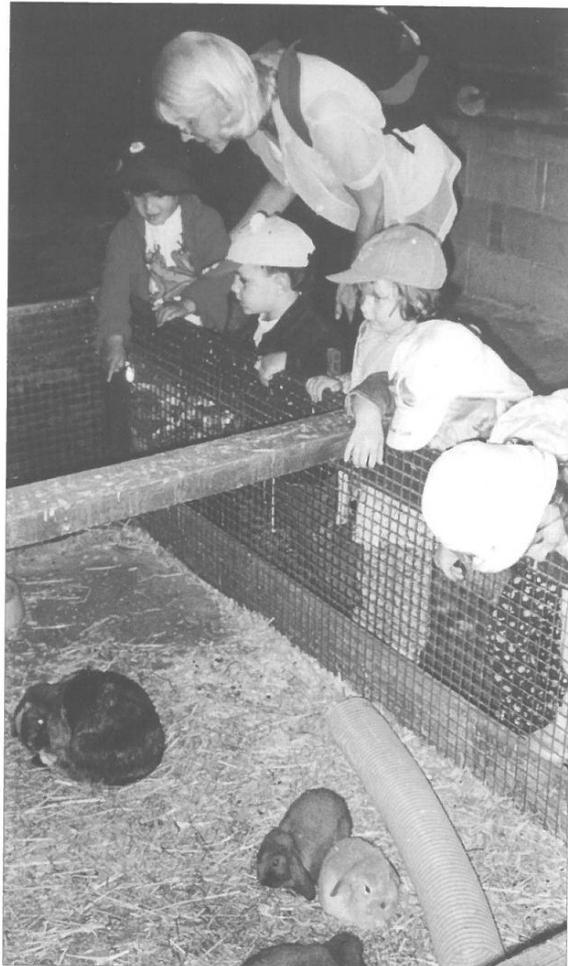
Joseph
and the amazing Technicolor
DREAMCOAT



The Nursery



As part of their 'Growing Project', the Nursery children planted out their sunflowers which they had grown from seeds



We all enjoyed a trip to Washbrooks Farm to see how animals grew.



After lunch we had a chance to sample the attractions of the adventure playground at Washbrooks Farm.



Nursery and Reception classes raised money for Childline by having a sponsored Pedalpush.