

In 2007-2008, we achieved fantastic results in all aspects of our House - a particular highlight being the inter-house play. Eva's performance was absolutely outstanding and stunning - the judge even suggested that our house play could be published. This was really remarkable. Apart from the house play, we did a great job in sporting events.

In the swimming gala, all the Adelaide team strove for excellence and finally, even if narrowly, we became this year's champions.

In the Spring Term, the netball team and hockey team contested fiercely and made every effort against their competitors. We ended up becoming

runners-up in both competitions. In the Sixth Form this year, every house was asked to prepare biscuits or cakes for students and tutors at the coffee morning. Adelaide did extremely well under Mr. Peebles' supervision, with every member contributing by baking delicious home-made cakes. It was much appreciated by the staff and the sixth form and nothing at all was left over!

Everyone in Adelaide is trying to foster more of a 'house feeling' with a sense of community and shared goals.

**Rosalind Caldwell**

Adelaide House Captain

## A tempestuous evening

**On the 10th March Year 7 went to see an adapted version of 'The Tempest', presented musically.**

We had a wobbly journey. The television weather presenters said that there was going to be a storm that night and indeed, they were right. It poured with rain as we rushed for the minibuses and the storm boomed. The noise level increased when we got inside the theatre, though this time it was because we managed to get front row seats, the best seats. Everyone was excited. The house lights dimmed, the curtains opened and the play started; strangely with a song about how the characters were all going to die on a ship and how they were never going to survive in the stormy tempest at sea. The characters were very different from what we had expected after reading the original Shakespeare play. Prospero looked more like a

pirate and the King, Alonzo, looked about as old as his son (maybe older). All the people in the Royal family wore a white jacket, a red crown on the side of their jacket and white slippers. Our favourite character was Trinculo, the King's Jester. The thing we liked most about him was his accent as we couldn't decide whether it was Irish or Welsh. He was a very annoying clown and had a funny fight with Caliban. Once the play ended the actors all stood up on stage, took a bow and waved as the curtains were going down. Outside too the storm passed over. All in all we agreed that seeing the play being performed made understanding the text much easier and much more enjoyable than we thought it would be.

**Sondus Khan, Maisie Trafford, Ishbel Amyatt-Leir and Kirsty Deacon.**



## Shining example

Congratulations to May Ho who received an International Student Award at the British Council's Shine Ceremony in London in April 2008. By receiving this Award, May was nationally recognised as a student who had shown an outstanding achievement, not just with St Mary's Hall but the local community as well.



# Theatre Studies: imaginative, exciting and demanding

The Drama Department has continued to visit Brighton theatres in order to see some of their excellent productions.

In April the Year 10 GCSE Drama class saw a fantastic production of *Equus*. First performed to critical acclaim in 1973, the content of the play is still riveting. The portrayal of both the child psychiatrist Martin Dysart - a strong performance by the always-excellent Simon Callow - and the disturbed boy, Alan Strang, sensitively played by Alfie Allen, were first rate.

The entire Drama Department also saw two plays in one evening. *Chatroom/Citizenship* are plays written under the umbrella of the National Theatre 'Shell Productions' scheme. Enda Walsh's *Chatroom* takes a gripping and slow-burning look at the plight of troubled teen Jim, who feels suicidal and depressed as a result of his father's neglect. We watch in awe as he seeks solace in an internet chatroom. Waiting for him there are a couple of 'players' determined to push him to suicide. Steven Webb, George Rainsford and Jade Williams were the actors who played these teenagers and the two bullies were both excellent at manipulating Webb's 'Jim' as he naively bared his soul. The production ended comically and sweetly with a table top dance routine of 'Rawhide'. The girls loved it.

Mark Ravenhill's *Citizenship* is a funny and heartfelt look at a gay teen's life at school and at home. The performances were more caricatured than in *Chatroom* and the girls loved the overt comedy of this production.

Steven Berkoff resurrected his one-man productions of 'Dog' and Poe's 'The Tell-tale Heart', which I saw with the sixth form. Steven Berkoff is an acquired taste: the theatrical equivalent of Marmite. He has been unapologetically the 'enfant terrible' of the theatre for over three decades now and this was certainly the chance to see him at his best.

The image of him being eaten by his own dog in mime will stay with us for a while. The girls were impressed by the sheer theatricality of these fantastic productions and have had their ideas on the possibilities of theatre, rather than film or TV, as an imaginative, exciting and demanding art form broadened.

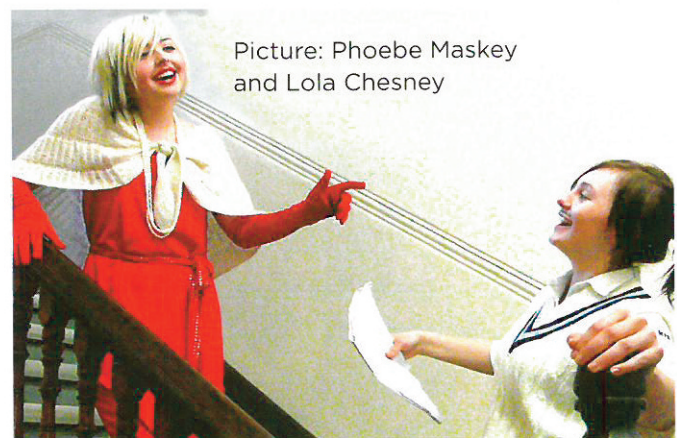
A mention has to be made about the practical examination and coursework performances.

In the A2 practical, Lily Vernon-Hunt and Claire MacNeill both gained full marks for their performances in 'The Chairs'. A fantastic achievement, I send them my congratulations, once again.

In GCSE Drama, Year 11 completed their practical coursework. Images that will stay with me for years to come include 'geeks' on park benches; charming Scottish postal workers; enormous lads doing a 'fat boy dance'; a truly moving monologue about a black girl murdered on her way to vote for the first time, in Southern USA, in 1964 and the terrible treatment of children in 'Bindoon Boys' Town'. I thank all the girls for their wit, intelligence, sense of fun and for playing so nicely!

## Ken Lawrence

Head of Theatre Studies



Picture: Phoebe Maskey and Lola Chesney



# Oh, what a science circus

In February, Year 7 celebrated the 80th anniversary of the commercial yo-yo as part of the Brighton Science Week. Students discovered that the yo-yo most likely originated in China. The first historical mention of the yo-yo however, was from Greece in the year 500 B.C. These ancient toys were made out of wood, metal, or painted terra cotta disks. Around 1800 the yo-yo first arrived in Britain and gained its name from the native language of the Philippines meaning 'come back'. In 1928, in America, a Philippine immigrant became the first person to mass-produce yo-yos, at his small toy factory.

Here are our Year 7 girls, having fun, practising tricks with their yo-yos and gaining an understanding of energy transfer.

On Tuesday the 10th of June the Senior School Science Department treated Year 5 and Year 6 to a Science Circus. The posters illustrate some of the activities the girls enjoyed. There was also an interactive session discussing how to obtain lower and higher pitches on musical instruments. In the end we came together for a grand finale with a successful attempt to form a drainpipe orchestra playing a recognisable version of "Happy Birthday"!

Events such as these help to ease the transition from Junior to Senior School and we are looking forward to seeing these enthusiastic, young scientists in September.

Years 5 & 6

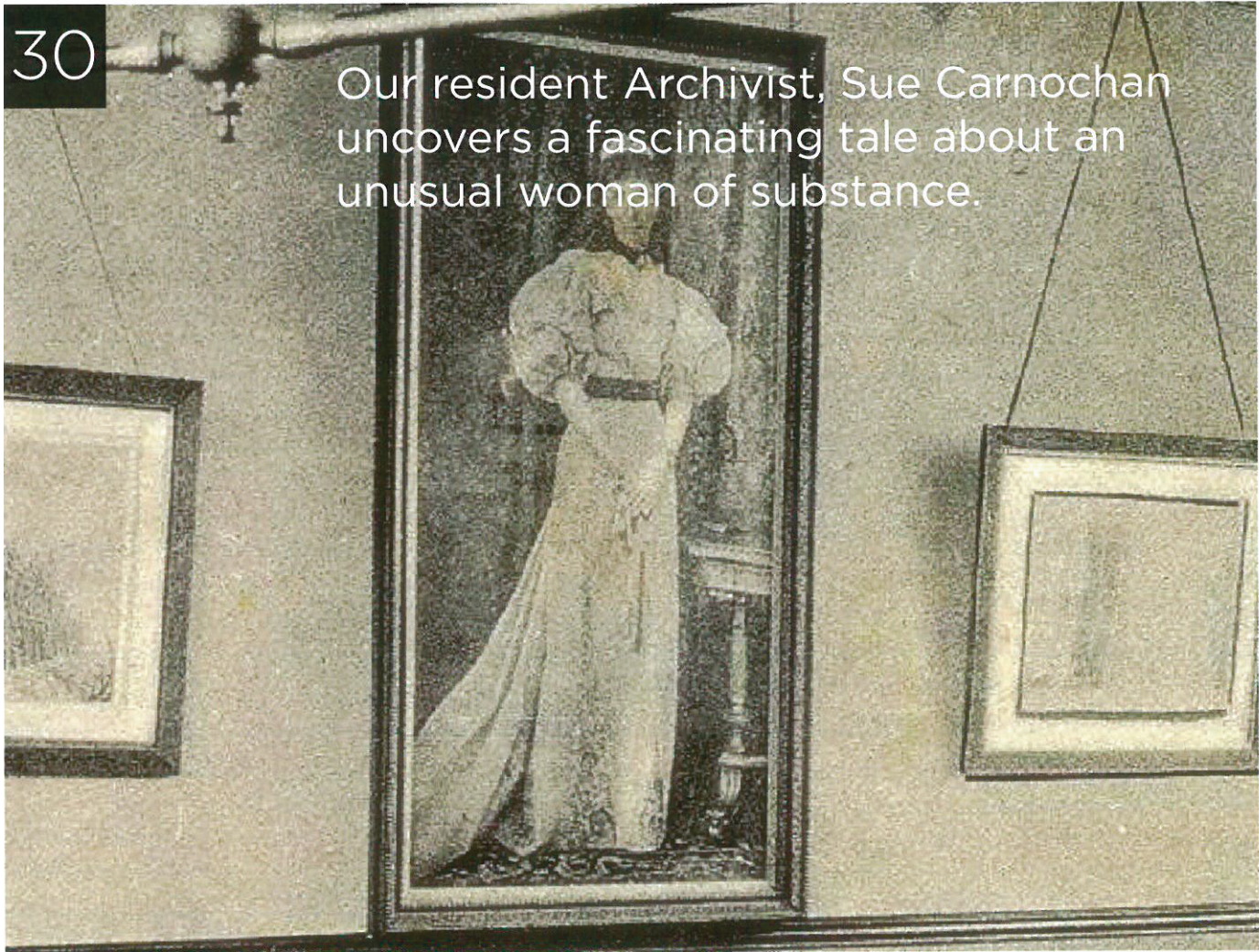


Year 7





Our resident Archivist, Sue Carnochan uncovers a fascinating tale about an unusual woman of substance.



## The story of a remarkable lady

The research on Miss Churcher was prompted by the family who live in the house in Suffolk where Edith was brought up and wanted to know more about her. This is the story!

Edith Churcher came from Suffolk to St Mary's Hall, to teach English in 1884. Having taught for 13 years, she felt the call to go to China to assist missionary work. She went to Yang-Cheo and taught in the China Inland Mission School. Each year she sent back articles about her life in China to be printed in the Old Girls' magazine. In 1900, she was at Chefoo teaching the children of missionaries and they included boys to whom she was not used! In 1901, she experienced the fear of a Boxer uprising in which "all foreigners were to be killed" but luckily the Mission compound was not attacked. The Consul was to raise three red flags if the inmates were in danger and had to flee downstream by boat. Whilst at Ying-Shan, Western China, she reported that all the Chinese Christian women had unbound their feet and the men had ordered their children's feet to be unbound.

She was sent to various Chinese towns to help undertake Mission work. At Kuang-yuan Szechwan, she started a "Total Abstinence Society" to try to wean people off smoking opium. Then in 1907, she returned to St Mary's Hall on furlough and attended the Founder's Day Service. By 1909, she was suffering severe attacks of rheumatism, which grew worse. Eventually she returned to England, and sadly, in 1929 was knocked down by a car in Hastings, probably because her hearing and eyesight were poor and she was not used to "motorised vehicles". Therefore, a lady who had survived the privations of life in rural China from 1897-1927 succumbed to modern technology!

Whilst writing this account an amazing coincidence happened. I was clearing my loft and came across a book describing the life of three other lady missionaries in China in 1923-1926! They were there at the same time as Edith but in different areas.