An audience with Bill Oddie

Bill Oddie, TV personality, conservationist and Old Edwardian, entertained a large audience during a special event held at the School on Tuesday 5 May.

Bill, who left the School in 1960, talked about his time at King Edward’s, his development as a comic writer and his interest in the world. Both of these passions were developed during his time at School. He also answered questions about his career and working with the great comic figures of his time.

Over 300 boys, parents, former pupils and staff attended the event, which was held as part of the School’s Assisted Places 100 (AP100) Campaign. Bill is one of 12 ambassadors for the AP100 Campaign, which was launched in June 2014 and aims to raise £10 million to fund 100 Assisted Places within the School by July 2016.

Bill, who has widely spoken about how much he enjoyed his time at School, said: "King Edward’s School is where I discovered what really mattered to me for the rest of my life. That is what a good school can do. It is an opportunity that should not be bought, it should be a right. That is what the AP100 Campaign is about.”

John Claughton, Chief Master, said: "Bill provided great entertainment for the audience and everyone enjoyed it, from the young boys in the School to Bill’s own contemporaries, who left the School 55 years ago. It was a pleasure to welcome him back and he also had time to talk to some of the boys and staff who continue his interest in birds and conservation.”

To find out more about the AP100 Campaign, visit: www.trust.kes.org.uk/ap100
A brief word from...
The Chief Master

It was either Napoleon or Frederick the Great – neither of whom are Old Edwardians or ever came here on a languages exchange – who said that an army marches on its stomach.

Well, there isn’t that much marching goes on here these days, but there is no doubt that few things matter more than food to a bunch of growing boys – and their teachers. And that’s why my 200 words are dedicated this topic to offering the thanks of all of us to Peter Webber, who is retiring as Catering Manager after 32 years.

It’s not just the fact that he and his staff provide healthy food of such quality that the Dining Hall is full at break and at lunchtime. Nor is it that he has developed our catering in a truly remarkable way as our events for outsiders have grown beyond all recognition. It’s the fact that Peter has gone on to provide up to £500,000 in matched funding, so that any gift made between now and 1 December 2015 will be doubled in value.

I sit here as the summer term is drawing to a close and I am struck, both as a mother and a teacher, by the reality of loss. Our Sixth Form boys are leaving the School to pursue their university careers, to travel and no doubt discover a few jelly haunts. How different must boys leaving the glorious New Street building in the summer of 1915 have felt, to be venturing out into a world so turned upside down?

By June 1915 the War had already run six months longer than expected; the Western Front was fully entrenched and the deadlock unbroken. By the end of August the Gallipoli campaign had also failed with a loss of 200,000 men and King Edward’s School had lost 21 former pupils.

Second Lieutenant George Costrell, Killed by shellfire at Ypres while keeping his men under cover on 11 May 1915, aged 22. We lost his brother Harold in 1916 too.

Lieutenant Douglas Goulston, Died at Ypres whilst trying to save a buried officer on 20 May 1915, aged 20.

Private Gordon Seers. Died in Givenchy in France on 25 May 1915, aged 32. Gordon was probably the brightest of the Old Eds lost that summer; he had studied directly under Headmaster Cary Gilson, was a composer and a gymnast, and worked at the Consular Service.

From here we move to Gallipoli, the campaign designed to reopen the Dardanelles to the Russian Navy and where seven of our Old Boys died that summer.

Able Seaman Lewis Salaman. Killed by a grenade, aged 32. Lewis was a Cambridge graduate, sportsman, debater and keen photographer.

Sapper Edwin Warth. Died a month after being wounded, aged 26. He was a civil engineer with a First Class Honours degree from the University of Birmingham and a capable gymnast.

Lieutenant William Ward. Mortally wounded while on duty in the signal office at Cape Helles, he died the next day and was buried at sea, aged 27. He was an electrical engineer who came top of his maths set.

Second Lieutenant Gavin Arbuthnot. Reportedly wounded then missing, presumed dead, aged 22. Arbuthnot was another gymmat.

Private Gerald Crichton. Mortally wounded while on duty in the Dardanelles campaign had also failed with a loss of 200,000 men and King Edward’s School had lost 21 former pupils.

As you go into your summer break, spare a thought for Mr and Mrs Collett who by 1916 had lost both of their sons, one 22, one just 18. There is a memorial dedicated to them in St Augustine’s Church in Edgbaston and it reads: ‘They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they were not divided.’

KMB

Commemorating our war dead

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KMB
Chemists triumph in national quiz

Pupils in Year 8 and 9 took part in The Chemical Reaction Challenge as part of British Science Week in March 2015. Hosted in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), our boys participated in the multi-player online chemistry quiz, competing live against other students and the clock.

The Challenge was overwhelmed by the number of schools competing across the country, 125 in total, and yet two KES boys ended up occupying first and third position. Declan Bradley was crowned overall champion, winning an iPad Air and Raunak Jain came third, earning himself an iPad mini.

The boys received their prizes and medals at The Challenge awards ceremony, held at Burlington House in London on Wednesday 6 May. They also enjoyed a tour of the historic building, home to the RSC.

Biology Big Quiz winners

Two teams of Year 10 pupils took part in the Biology Big Quiz 2015 on Wednesday 25 March, competing against 50 other teams from over 40 schools.

The Quiz, run by the University of Birmingham as part of their Outreach programme, included questions on topics ranging from microbes to light and over half were on topics that the boys have not yet covered in their syllabus, such as genetics and evolution.

Junior Team Maths Challenge 2015

After a runaway win in the Regional Final of the Junior Team Maths Challenge 2015, the KES team progressed to the National Finals held in London on Monday, 22 June 2015.

Over 1,750 schools from across the country competed in this year’s Challenge, of which 88 went through to the National Finals. The KES team of Anyi Wang (c), Mingke Peng, Mark Li and Aroun Kalyana, had a disappointing first round in the National Finals but put in a heroic performance to shoot up the rankings and finished 14th overall.

Notwithstanding the shaky start, the boys did superbly well and it is an amazing achievement to reach the Finals of this national competition.
Junior Schools’ Challenge 2015

Having won the Regional stage of the Junior Schools’ Challenge Competition last term, we took part in the smaller Inter-Regional round against The Perse School, Cambridge. After having lunch at the School, we played our all-important match. Our team, all in Year 8, of Aroun Kalyana, Joseph Ward (c), Shiv Mandal and Toby Wallis, competed positively throughout. We answered a huge variety of questions on different subject matters and of varying difficulty, ranging from ‘Which animated series and films feature four teenagers and a dog who call themselves Mystery Inc.?’, to ‘To the inhabitants of which country call it Österreich?’ and finally ‘What chocolate bar used to be called Marathon?’.

Unfortunately, The Perse School were just a little faster than us on the buzzer in the vital starter questions and beat us in a tough match 400-650. All of the team will now be too old to play Junior Challenge, but we look forward to trying out as the younger players in the Senior Team next year. Aroun Kalyana and CRB

Outreach Maths Challenge

Over the past year, KES Outreach has been organising Maths Challenges for primary school children most Friday afternoons.

The Challenges involve children racing to complete a Crossnumber (like a crossword, but with numbers instead of words and maths questions for clues) and a Relay Race, which sees the children running up and down Big School trying to complete as many questions as possible.

Currently, we have held two Challenges, one for Year 6 children and another for Year 4 children. More than 70 schools have participated in the Challenges, which is an incredible achievement for only our first year running the competitions.

For the Year 4 final, author and television presenter, Kjartan Poskitt visited the School and gave out copies of his famous book series, Murderous Maths, which the children really enjoyed. Despite all the successes, none of this would have been possible if it were not for Dr Rackham’s great work in creating the challenges from scratch for the competitions.

KES Outreach would like to thank Dr Rackham’s great work in creating the challenges from scratch for the competitions, and give out copies of his famous book series, Murderous Maths, which the children really enjoyed.

Physica round-up

As part of the International Year of Light, Aston University’s Institute of Photonic Technologies provided a workshop to enthusiastic Divisions physicists on fibre optic communication.

Dr Paul Harper gave an introduction to the theory and practicalities of global communications cables, and brought an example multiplexing system for pupils to try.

Congratulations to everyone who took part in the Physics Olympiad Challenge competitions this year. Edwin Bahrami Balani, Lokesh Jain and Toby Jewett all achieved Gold awards, Nathan Chung, James Cleasby, Si-Woo Kim, Navjot Singh and Bitt Xuan received Silver Awards, and 25 boys achieved Bronze.

Outreach

Children get a buzz from outreach

Primary school children have been learning about beekeeping and seed planting as part of a new outreach initiative between the School and Winterbourne House and Garden.

The ‘Nature Day’ gives primary school children the opportunity to learn about horticulture and beekeeping, as well as receiving lunch and an academic session at the School.

The children visited the hot houses in the Botanic Garden to see a variety of fruits and plants before planting their own seeds to take home. They were then given a demonstration on beekeeping which included seeing a cross-section of the hive and the queen bee.

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Vidy Reddy

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DLT

Edge Festival 2015

The KES Edge Festival is put on each summer term for younger boys in the School and for local primary schools around the Edgbaston and Selly Oak area.

The Edge Festival consists of an afternoon of fun activities and performances, with fair-style stalls, rides and obstacle courses, run and booked by boys in the KES Leadership option. The Festival is the main event of the year for KES Leadership, with all boys in the option from Year 10 to 13 involved in the event’s organisation.

All in all, the Edge Festival is a unique, pupil-organised event which allows not only local primary school involvement with KES, but also the personal development of KES boys and the promotion of charitable causes.

Barnaby Hobbs
Performing arts

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

With exams finishing relatively early, the Post-IB play is a way of keeping a totally random group of Sixth Formers off the streets.

The cast consists of anyone and everyone who feels like having a go, so contains a wide variety of theatrical experience, and with 10 days from start to finish, experience is useful!

This year’s offering was Tom Stoppard’s intellectual tour de force Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, which takes two minor characters from Hamlet and places them centre stage where they muse on the nature and meaning of life. It’s an awful lot funnier than it sounds.

The cast stepped up to it magnificently, considering the vast majority had never appeared on a KES stage before. Who will forget Jihoon and Yang’s amorous embraces? Will and Xiaofan as Claudius and Polonius? Alex’s moving finale and Sam Whitworth stealing entire scenes as Hamlet?

At the heart of things were experienced old hands: Aaron Thompson as an immensely watchable theatrical luvvie and Sam Wilson and Aaron Chote steering their way through Stoppard’s verbal hoops with charm, wit and genuine skill.

The Post-IB play is always a pleasure to be a part of. Thanks to this fine group of young men for making this one another gem.

MJB

Lunchtime Recital

The last of this year’s prestigious Lunchtime Recitals was held on Thursday 30 April.

There were performances by Teresa Czepiel and Harriet Harkcom from KEHS, as well as Shivang Shastri, playing the harmonica.

Shivang is the U18 National Youth Harmonica Champion, and will be competing in the adult classes next year.

MDL

Musicians hold concert for homeless project

Pupils in the Choral Society and Senior Swing Band held a concert in aid of the South Birmingham Young Homeless Project on Tuesday 24 March.

The concert raised £863 for the Longbridge-based charity which provides support and advice on housing, benefits, debt and health to young homeless people between the ages of 16 and 24. A further sizeable donation was made directly to the charity from an Old Edwardian.

On Thursday 14 May Roberta Bassett, Project Administrator for the charity, collected the funds raised from Mr Monks and Mr Jarvis, who jointly organised the concert. Roberta said: “We’re very grateful to the pupils and staff at King Edward’s for their support. These funds will help a lot of young service users in practical ways such as purchasing travel passes, emergency food parcels and key deposits.”

This year’s Summer Concerts were held on Sunday 26 and Monday 27 April and included performances by KES Choir, Wind Band, Training String Orchestra, Concert Band, Junior and Senior Swing Bands, Concert Orchestra, and Symphony Orchestra.

Works performed included Fauré’s Cantique de Jean Racine, Arnold’s Four Scottish Dances, The Unanswered Question by Charles Ives, and John Adams’ The Chairman Dances.

MDL

Performers’ Platforms

The Performers’ Platforms are this year’s innovation and have proved popular with audiences and performers alike.

The final concert was given on Tuesday 9 June, and included performances by Altay Gardiner, Nikhil Handa, Joshua Markman Morris, Michael Ollerenshaw and Magnus Yap. There were memorable performances of Chopin by two pianists: Bryan Chang, who played Berceuse op.57, and Abhinav Jain, who gave a monumental performance of Ballade No.1.

MDL
Tudors carry on touring

How many coins could be struck from a single set of dies in one day in the early Tudor period? The answer is about 1,000 which we exceeded on the final day of the heroic Tudors on Tour event at Tatton Park.

With 12,000 visitors over the three days, the 18 members of the group ran six different activities and six timed displays every day. Organised by Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) the event was a recreation of a royal progress with Henry VIII, his queens and nobles, a tournament, plays, crafts and us, and all participants of the LHG did brilliantly.

Special mention must be made of Nathan Cornish, who displayed and played a wide range of historical instruments brilliantly, and David Callear, who struck enough blanks and coins to send some 2,000 children away with their very own half-groat! A small group of us will be back at the Tower of London in July and we should be back at Tatton next year.

Watch us on parade at Tatton Park:
b.t.ly/LHGatHRP

JPD

PROJECTILE DELIVERY SOLUTIONS R’US

In light of our recent antics at Bolsover and Carlisle Castles, I have decided to rename the Living History Group (see above).

In May we provided the heavy weapons for two big English Heritage events. Our normal projectile, the humble cabbage, was augmented on both occasions by our new fireballs, which provided a terrifying crowd pleaser.

At Carlisle we had to shoot over the 30-foot outer walls of the keep to land them very precisely in the courtyard beyond. Fortunately we achieved this, due in no small part to the engineering and computational skills of Commander Simpson and Mr Gardiner, Elizabeth’s in-house designers.

We will be shooting again at Evesham from 8-9 August and finally for this year at Kenilworth from 30-31 August. Our brief on this last occasion is to hit and set on fire the main gate. I now know why the Group is insured to the tune of £30 million!

To view more photos and a video of the trebuchet shooting, visit: www.facebook.com/EHCarlisleCastle

JPD

Wildlife trip to the Highlands

During the Easter holiday we visited the picturesque Highlands in Scotland to see and appreciate the vast array of wildlife that resides there.

We took the train up to Inverness, where we were staying, and in the evening we ventured out to Chanonry Point to watch and photograph a gathering of bottlenose dolphins that were leaping in and out of the water.

The following day we drove through dense woodland and forests and spotted what was certainly my highlight of the trip: a red squirrel.

Later that week we travelled down to the east coast of Scotland, passing snow-capped summits and countless lochs and reservoirs on the way, and saw a pair of grey seals relaxing on the rocks in the sun.

On our last day we caught sight of the seldom-seen golden eagle, which soared above us for almost a quarter of an hour, flying aggressively amid a pair of common buzzards.

We also witnessed the exodus of several dozen red deer drifting through the valley, but finally had to make our way back, to catch the sleeper train back home.

Howard Kordan

KES pupil flies solo

On Thursday 12 March, Year 11 pupil James Cleasby made his first solo flight in a Cessna 150 at Coventry Aeroplane Club, after passing his Aviation Law exam and obtaining his Civil Aviation Authority Medical Certificate in February 2015.

James made his solo flight on his 16th birthday.
Trips

German exchange to Dorsten

After the German pupils visited KES in February, it was our turn to fly over to Germany to spend a few days with our exchange partners in Dorsten, a small town at the northern edge of the Ruhr valley.

On Friday 1 May, a bank holiday in Germany, we took part in the traditional ‘May walk’, picnicking on the banks of the local river Lippe. The following day, we visited the industrial heritage site Zeche Zollverein, an old coal washery, which provided an insight into the industrial past and working conditions of a mine.

Shopping in the city of Essen was one of the highlights that followed, but it was probably the visit to the theme park, Movie World, which was most enjoyable. The Germans gave us a great send-off on the last evening and the goodbyes the next morning were heartfelt and sincere.

To take our minds off leaving, we squeezed in a few hours at the local high ropes course, before heading back to the airport.

It was a great exchange (the last one for me) and I hope that some of the UMs who took part will keep in touch with their partners... Thank you to SBA for joining me over the last two years!

JH

Berlin

On the first Saturday of half term, a group of 13 boys and three members of staff set out for five days in Berlin.

We began our trip with our first walking tour and saw many of the notable historical sites in central Berlin including the Reichstag, Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie.

On Sunday we followed in the footsteps of Messi and co. by going on an extensive tour of the Olympiastadion, built by Hitler for the 1936 Olympics. The Nazi influence is still clear to see with the dramatic architecture and many statues of the ideal Aryan man still left intact. Later we went to the Berlin Wall Memorial, in part dedicated to the 136 people who lost their lives trying to cross the Wall.

Monday saw us visit an incredibly poignant exhibition dedicated to all aspects of resistance to the Nazi regime, located on the site where General Stauffenberg was hastily executed in 1944 after his failed coup.

We ended our trip with visits to Sachsenhausen concentration camp, an incredibly moving and harrowing experience, and also to Wannsee, the affluent and leafy suburb where the SS plotted the final solution to ‘the Jewish Question’.

All in all it was such a powerful, exciting and interesting trip and thanks must go to Mr and Mrs Milton and Mrs Ostrowicz for accompanying and for planning our trip to such an impeccable degree.

WW ARIs

Hay Festival 2015

The Hay Festival takes place each year, bringing readers and writers together to explore a plethora of subjects in the picturesque town of Hay-on-Wye. As in recent years, a group of Divisions joined them for a day.

Talks given by notable personalities like Alex Salmond and Bear Grylls proved to be the most popular. The former offered some fascinating anecdotes and judgements on the Scottish referendum campaign talk of independence seemed fitting in a town made famous by Richard Booth’s declaration of sovereignty in 1977. By contrast, the latter offered excellent selfie opportunities.

Those interested in history had a field day, with big names like Simon Schama, David Starkey and Andrew Roberts discussing subjects from Magna Carta to Napoleon. Other topics discussed included the Japanese Ichiigo Offensive of 1944, feminism in the Middle East, climate change, and how language shapes our identity.

A day spent listening to and questioning some first-rate speakers could not disappoint. I would like to thank Mr Arbuthnott, Mr Tuohy and Mrs Ostrowicz for making the trip possible.

Josh Kimble

Death of a Salesman

On Wednesday 29 April, our Divisions class went to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman, directed by Gregory Doran.

It was an excellent production that captured the dark comedy of the play whilst expressing with equal quality the shocking breakdown of the relationship between the lead character, Willy Loman, played by Antony Sher and his son Biff, played by Alex Hassell.

Sher has gained widespread acclaim for his fantastic attempt to portray the psychological issues that Willy deals with, as he switched from the jovial salesman pursuing the ‘American Dream’ to a depressed figure who has failed in almost every walk of life: as a salesman, a father and a husband.

It was a truly great performance and lovers of theatre would be well advised to see Sher in other productions in the future. Theatre is rarely a passion of 17-year-olds, but the fact that the majority of the group were engaged and appreciated the quality of the performances demonstrates the fact that this really was an excellent portrayal of a deeply complex play.

Nathan White
The School’s chess teams have once again competed in local and national competitions this year, and a strong group of players have performed very well and, most importantly, in the right spirit.

In the Birmingham District Junior Chess League, all three senior teams won their divisions, the U13s won all their matches and the U12s were runners-up in their league. KES also won the Members’ trophy at the U14 tournament at Queen Mary’s Grammar School.

In the ECF National Schools competition, the 1st team again reached the last 16, eventually losing to Nottingham High School. Well done to everyone who has taken part.

DLT

Dave Collins, who has been the School’s cricket professional since 1998, is retiring at the end of this summer.

He was instrumental in setting up the winter training programme and has worked tirelessly with all age groups from the Shells to 1st XI. It is with the 1st XI that he has proved to be the ‘legend’ that the boys refer to with great affection.

He has worked with genuine fondness and the desire to improve every individual with whom he has had contact, using his vast knowledge and Black Country humour to convey his message.

There was a final farewell to Dave at Eastern Road Pavilion on Saturday 4 July after the OEA match.

LMR

U16 badminton team national Runners-Up

The U16 badminton team has won the Runners-Up medal in the National Finals of the Center Parcs National Schools Championships 2014/15.

The team competed in the National Finals of the tournament at Center Parcs, Sherwood Forest on Wednesday, 29 April 2015. The team reached the Finals after a flawless performance in the regional stage of the competition in February.

Congratulations to JooHee Bong in Year 10, and Jordan Chan, Simran Dhanda, Justin Hsu and Gabriel Young in Year 11.

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LMR

Work experience in Germany

It was with a degree of apprehension that six Divisions flew in the Easter holidays to the relatively trifling town of Lampertheim in Germany.

Of course one always travels with anxiety when faced with the prospect of living with a foreign family, but the opportunity to undertake work experience in a foreign country, in lines of work suited to our individual interests, excited us all.

Although we had a variety of work experience organised for us; ranging from work in the headquarters of a world-leading engineering firm, ABB, to hospital work and council planning, we were all very much united through the local culture of Lampertheim. Within the first two days we had all experienced the white asparagus synonymous with the locals of Lampertheim, as well as the cycling culture within small German towns.

We also took on Miss Lee’s advice on conversing in the native tongue of our host families, which was greatly beneficial in improving our ability to listen and speak at a quicker pace than in the classroom.

Sunny Chatha

The U16 team with their medals

KES Wildlife: Creatures of the Night

On Tuesday 5 May, from around 9-10pm, we attended a bat walk based around the forest and reservoir of Edgbaston Nature Reserve, right next to the School.

A group of around 20 people, complete with two bat detectors and a few red-filtered torches so as not to disturb the bats, set off into the forest. Some clicks began to register as we walked into the woodland, growing in number as we could also see bats flying through the trees in the twilight.

Both in the clearing at Prior’s Field and at the reservoir itself there was an astonishing number of bats flying above and around us. Whilst several bats flew over and amongst the trees, many flew straight past our heads, a wonderful night-time spectacle.

David Callear
U13 cricket team through to National Final

The U13 cricket team has reached the final of the national competition for the Bunbury Cup, sponsored by David English.

They qualified for this competition by winning the County Cup as Under 12s. To get to the final, they have had to travel to Abingdon, Nottingham and The King’s School, Worcester. Northampton School for Boys were beaten at home.

They have been playing against good teams and the depth of batting has been important, especially as early wickets have been lost in all games. However, King Edward’s has managed to set competitive targets and bowled and fielded well to restrict the run-scoring opportunities of the opposition.

There have been many good individual performances including 52 for Aadil Ali, and 5 wickets for no runs by Suyash Poshakwale at Abingdon, 63 by Suyash at Nottingham and 43 by Emil Ali at Worcester. However, it has been a good team performance with everyone playing their part, especially in the field.

In the semi-final, they travelled to Newcastle-upon-Tyne to play the Royal Grammar School. Unfortunately, rain spoiled the match and the result was determined by a successful bowl-out 5-4 with Oscar Henrick hitting the stumps twice. Emil Ali had scored a good 69 not out before the rain came. The team will miss the last day of term as the final is on Wednesday 8 July at Oakham School.

In other matches the U13 team have had a lot of success, with an unbeaten century by Emil Ali against The King’s School, Worcester being the highlight. Unfortunately, they just lost to Solihull School in the County Cup semi-final. But they have bigger fish to fry.

TM

www.kes.org.uk