



# insight

## Clash of the Benedictines



Worth and Downside hockey teams pictured before the match, with Fr Stephen Ortiger of Worth and Dom Leo Maidlow Davis, Head Master of Downside

The inaugural weekend of sporting fixtures between Worth and Downside Schools took place 6th-7th December. A rugby and a hockey team travelled up from Downside School, near Bath, to play against Worth in what is hoped will become an annual event. This was an opportunity for students to forge friendships and extend links between the two schools.

The matches were organised as part of the continuing Worth 75 celebrations: 2008 was the 75th anniversary of the arrival of monks at Worth from Downside Abbey to set up a priory, which was to become Worth Abbey.

The rugby match saw a Downside development team play a determined Worth First XV, spurred on by a large crowd of old boys, parents, students and staff. Sports Prefect Daniele Manzi, Year 13, said, "Downside played with a lot of heart until the final whistle but a great team performance gave Worth a good win 48-6, with tries from Joe Bradley (2), Charlie Forbes, Antony Riley, James Tighe, Chris Killoughery and Simon Jukes."

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## Ethics explored

Anglican Priest and Chaplain of the London School of Fashion and Art, Reverend Joanna Jepson, came to Worth in October to give a talk to senior students on the subject of 'Ethics and Abortion'.

Reverend Jepson was recently involved in legal action against two doctors who allowed an abortion on the grounds of serious disability after the 24 week legal limit. The disability was a cleft palate. She said at the time, "I just find it reprehensible to think that we could lose our lives for something which is only about physical perfection".

Addressing students from Years 11 to 13, Reverend Jepson gave examples of the reasons people cite for having an abortion and stated why she felt they were mistaken. She used her own family as an example as to why abortion is not the answer and we should accept all children as a gift from God. Reverend Jepson's brother Alistair has Downs Syndrome and she herself was born with a congenital jaw defect. She underwent surgery at 18 for her condition. Her parents were advised to abort her sister when doctors diagnosed her with Spina Bifida in the womb; when she was born this turned out to be a false diagnosis.

Reverend Jepson read out the ten Benedictine values for community living and commented that she thought everyone should have the opportunity to live like this. Ethically, abortion could not be condoned under these values.

The session ended with some interesting questions from the students. One Year 13 boy commented that she used examples and reasons that "really spoke" to him.

Reverend Jepson also appeared in a recent Channel 4 television series, *Make Me A Christian*, in which a panel of four Christian leaders, including Reverend Jepson, attempted to mentor volunteers who were exploring conversion to Christianity.



Reverend Joanna Jepson at Worth

interview



**Matthew Boughton** joined Worth as Head of Drama & Theatre Studies in September. Insight spoke to Mr Boughton about his passion for his subject and what the future has in store for drama at Worth.

**Why did you decide to come to Worth?**

Its ethos. What is important to me is not just what Drama you create, but where and in what context. Drama and Theatre Studies often help you understand yourself better – sometimes this is exhilarating, sometimes very difficult. Doing this in a setting where introspection and community are embodied with individuals who are living out the Benedictine ideal was a genuine attraction. Even in the short time I have been here it has struck me powerfully that a place that has a real heart of introspection and silence is also the perfect place for expressivity and expression. We are very lucky to have this.

**What about drama appeals to you?**

That's a good question. Perhaps because, exciting as it is, it is a puzzling art form. Peter Brook reminds us in *The Empty Space* that it is "written on the wind". It cannot be recorded satisfactorily, it only really exists live, and even then it is really never finished; there is always something that could be refined further. What also appeals to me is the impossibility of ever mastering every area of it, there is always something fresh to tackle. Drama demands that actors have those gritty but important virtues like discipline, tenacity and humility: there is always something left to learn and this is greatly appealing to me.

**What do you think drama has to offer students at Worth?**

There might be a temptation to say 'a creative outlet', 'an

escape', a 'pleasant relief from the rigours of other subject areas'! But this isn't remotely right. It offers a chance to be faced with a rich and exciting range of issues and ideas and have to confront them in an often thrilling, personal and immediate way, of facing testing situations and tasks, of discovering untapped skills and facing unknown and sometimes unnerving challenges.

**Are there upcoming productions in the pipeline?**

Sheridan's brilliant comedy *The School for Scandal* will be performed 18th-20th March [as part of the Festival of Arts]. It is something of a historic first, featuring a cast entirely drawn from Worth boys and girls. It will be an exciting enterprise with a number of different entertainments going on throughout the evening in different venues in addition to the main show in the theatre.

**What are your plans for the future?**

Some really very interesting discussions are happening to see how we can have more collaboration in the Arts, which may involve Theatre and Music Theatre. Apart from this we are already inviting professional companies into Worth, such as the Frantic Assembly workshop in November, and we had Dr Giuliano Campo from the British Grotowski project in late January. We also had an expert on Noh – Japanese – theatre visit the department in February, a very rare and exciting event. As things develop, and if conditions are right, we might take a production on tour: it is an experience all young actors should have.

**What have you enjoyed most during your first term?**

The sense of community – there is a real sense that people are willing to go that extra mile for one another and devote time to activities that celebrate and embody our community, be that dramatic, musical or sporting. I have very much enjoyed spending time with my colleagues, the cast of my first Worth play and my classes. What a lot of talent there is here.



Worth vs. Downside rugby

continued from front cover

The following bright and frosty morning, the girls' hockey teams played on the second pitch at East Grinstead's Hockey Club – the best pitch was frozen solid and resembled an ice rink! It didn't take long for Worth to get warmed up and soon into the first half a Worth goal was scored by Charlotte Hutchinson. Downside defended well after this and came back with an equaliser during the second half to make the final score a diplomatic 1-1.

It must be remembered that this is the first ever season of hockey at Worth. Head of Girls' Games Mrs Phillippo Nevill commented, "Everyone proved how much they have improved as a team and individually. I am so proud of the way the girls play together after such a short time. It is good to watch and fantastic to have the support from parents, staff and the rugby boys who were very vocal on the sideline! The team are looking forward to the 2009 season and also the chance to play the return fixture at Downside."



editorial team

insight

- Charles Bridge (y13) ■ George Calvert (y13) ■ Benedict Cardozo (y13)
- Thomas Keefe (y13) ■ Al Matthews ■ Rebecca Paterson ■ Karen Smith

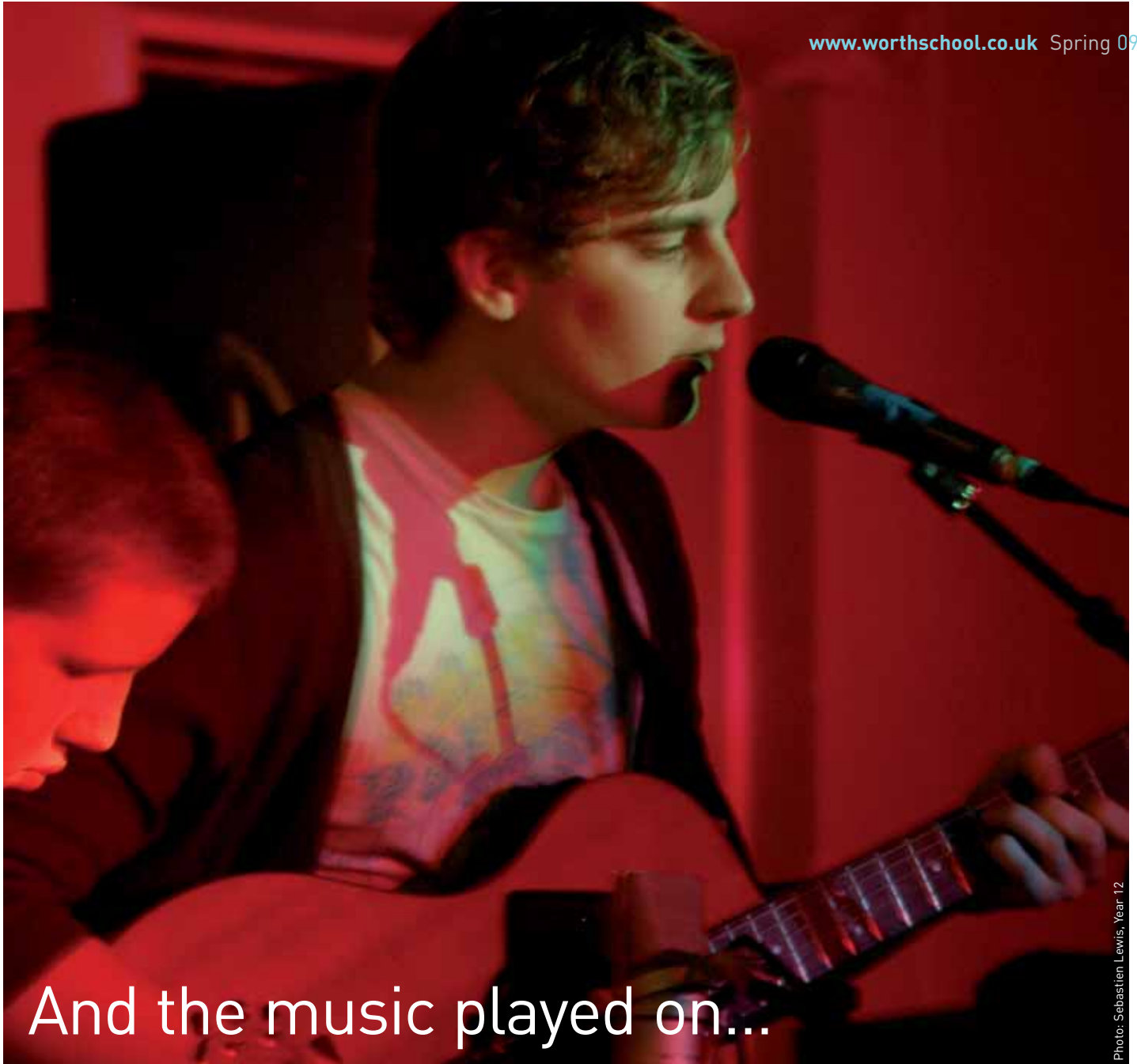


Photo: Sebastian Lewis, Year 12

## And the music played on...

In October, the Performing Arts Centre was the venue for two events that have become major dates in Worth's musical year.

The annual Battle of the Bands competition involved seven bands. Last year's winners Root Street Drivers and the renamed Paper Lifejacket competed in the first round, playing three songs each. The music on offer this year was extraordinarily wide-ranging, with the audience being presented with everything from Eminem to Vampire Weekend. The crowd rose well to the challenge, as usual, managing to dance and sing along to nearly everything.

During a short break while the judges conferred, the audience was entertained by music from the school's Jazz Band. Eventually the judges shortlisted two bands, Chewbacca Symphony and Redmond and the Bacons. The audience vote was close but Redmond and the Bacons were crowned winners and finished the night with a cover of Will.I.Am's *Heartbreaker* – a title that doubtless expressed some of the other bands' feelings exactly.

Worth Unplugged was once again a huge success. This concert allows Worth's musicians the chance to perform for their peers in a more relaxed environment than Battle

of the Bands or more formal concerts. Various school bands gathered in the Coleburt Room to play acoustic music to a highly appreciative audience. As usual the breadth of talent on display was impressive, with both covers of popular songs and individual compositions rewarded by enthusiastic applause.



Top: William Kelly, Year 12, performing at Worth Unplugged

Above: Richard Wiggins and Dylan Warren (both Year 11) at Worth Unplugged

## Worth rises to the challenge



Worth has won the South East Regional Schools' Challenge, a competition in the style of University Challenge. Apparently "defeat was not an option" and the six-strong student team brought home the shield as regional champions.

The first rounds of the Regional School's Challenge took place in November. Worth's team consists of three Seniors; Alex Gill, Thomas Keefe and Charles Bridge (all Year 13), and three Juniors: Aloysius Atkinson, Samuel Poynder (Year 9) and Arthur Russell (Year 10).

The first Challenge took place in Rochester and the team, accompanied by Fr Peter Williams and Mr Chris Marks, met Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Faversham, in round one. After a tied first five minutes Worth stormed ahead to win 670 points to 330, only to face the hosts, King's School, Rochester, in round two. Twenty-five minutes into the 30-minute round the teams were on equal points, but some impressive geographical trivia from Aloysius, and Thomas's

## Sporting history is made



Worth's First VII Netball team



Girls at Worth continue to make their mark as the school's first season of girls' hockey in the Autumn Term has given way to the first netball matches this term.

After just a couple of weeks as a squad the hockey team played their first match against Christ's Hospital. Head of Girls' Games, Mrs Phillippo Nevill, said, "It was a promising start for the team, who worked really well together." The team soon settled into shape and must be credited for the attractive, free flowing hockey played in the second half of the season. With a little more aggression and hitting power the team will certainly go onto greater things in 2009 and are proud of the start they have made.

Mrs Phillippo Nevill comments on the new dynamics of sport at Worth: "Worth students have great character and are willing to give anything a go if given the opportunity. This I love, and I know all of the PE Department want to make sure that they get the chance to do this by improving the range of sports, activities and high quality coaching that the students have access to. I believe in achieving real excellence and think that Worth is capable of this in a range of sports with a lot of hard work and effort."



Worth's Second VII Netball squad

seemingly limitless literary knowledge, pulled Worth through to a win of 630 to 590.

The semi-finals and final took place at St Edmund's School, Canterbury, at the end of January, where Worth beat their first opponents, Dover College, 740 points to 330.

Mr Al Matthews, who travelled with the team, described the final; "Worth faced King's School, Canterbury who had beaten a very good school from Rochester. Half way through the final Worth were well behind but then got stuck in, perhaps sensing some complacency in the opposition. With four minutes to go Worth were 50 points ahead and eventually won 660 to 570! They were astonishingly good in the second half of the match. Their speed really rattled the opposition."

Photo shows, left to right: Aloysius Atkinson, Alex Gill, Thomas Keefe, Arthur Russell, Sam Poynder (Charles Bridge is not pictured).



## National championship success

Worth fencers have enjoyed great success in recent competitions. In November Year 11 student Oliver Plumb won the Under 16s South East Regional Foil Championships and Chris Kirkman, Year 12, was awarded a bronze medal in the Under 18 category.

The competition was hosted by Worth, and their successes mean that both boys gained a place in the British Youth Championships which took place as *Insight* went to press.

Fr Peter Williams, fencing co-ordinator at Worth, commented on Oliver's significant achievement. "He fenced with great style and authority and was only seriously challenged in the final, which he led all the way and won 15-13. This shows how much his fencing has improved in the last 12 months. When also you consider that he won the South East Regional Under 16 epee competition this is a fantastic double. If he takes this form and positive attitude with him into the national competition he should be in with a chance of a medal."

Chris fenced well in his semi final, leading from the beginning and dropping just one point to finish 11-12; his opponent went on to win the final.

Oliver's winner's medal for the foil goes alongside that which he won in the epee just a couple of weeks previously. That result gained him a place in the British Youth Epee Championships in January in which he reached a fantastic 12th place, out of 63 fencers. He was just beaten by the second seed Alexander Paige who ended the competition in joint third place.

**STOP PRESS:** Chris Kirkman achieved an outstanding 9th place in the British Youth Under 18s Foil Championships at the end of January.



## behindthescenes Catering

Feeding the school community - around 600 students and staff - is the responsibility of Worth's Catering Manager, Mrs Emma Hickmott. *Insight* went behind the scenes to talk to Mrs Hickmott and discovered what a gargantuan task it is.

### What does your role involve?

The feeding of all pupils and staff in the school requires that we have a good supply of food, that there are enough staff to ensure that all meals are put out at the right time, served and cleared up and also that we are able to keep to a budget. My main responsibilities are personnel management, budgetary control and planning of the day to day running of the department. The budget takes up most of my time and covers all areas within the department including such things as food, equipment, staffing and maintenance, amongst others. I spend a lot of time talking to suppliers to ensure that we get the best standard of food for the best price.

### Who else works in the catering department?

I have a team of 30 staff which includes chefs, kitchen porters, supervisors, general assistants and café staff. They all work on a rota system which sometimes needs to be adjusted to ensure that we have enough staff in to cover everyday running and the extra functions that we supply. This can be fairly demanding as we sometimes need to make changes at the last minute. There are also around five casual staff that I can call upon should we need them for functions. I also look after staff welfare, staff cover, ensuring the café runs smoothly, ensuring that all equipment is working correctly and that the department meets the Food Hygiene Regulations.

### How do you decide on the menus?

Along with the Head Chef and Second Chef we look at the menus every half term to ensure that we are providing a balanced and interesting menu. We also have to ensure that we have a selection of function menus available. The department undertakes many other functions such as sports dinners, Christmas dinners and three-course meals for various special events. These need extra planning as they often require us to provide a more extensive menu and extra staffing. The key to making these events a success is by ensuring that you have enough information - the preparation involves good communication with the organiser to ensure that all parties know what is expected. I particularly enjoy this part of my job, as before I joined school catering I was in the conference and banqueting industry and used to plan and run weddings and functions every week.

### Can students get involved?

In September 2008 we were asked to provide a cooking course for students as part of the Wednesday afternoon activities programme. We have taken this on and I am currently putting together a brochure for the students to accompany the course.

### Worth's catering calculations

- Approximately 1,500 loaves of bread and 3,500 litres of milk are consumed at Worth each month.
- Approximately 500 apples, 80 melons and 42 pineapples are consumed each week.
- A typical lunchtime main course uses 60kg of meat.
- A typical day's consumption of fried potatoes is 100kg.

## News in brief

# Debating goes from strength to strength

Worth has taken part in two extremely prestigious debating events recently. In November the school hosted the local first round of the Cambridge Union competition for the first time and in January two teams travelled to Skinners School, Tunbridge Wells to participate in the Oxford Union debate.

The first debate in November's round concerned the pros and cons of performance-related pay for teachers, and perhaps unsurprisingly was attended by numerous members of staff! The home audience offered their traditional high level of support to the Worth teams throughout, with applause and improvised banners. The second, unseen motion was on whether post-watershed TV content should be shown at all. Once again

the Worth speakers spoke well and with conviction but were unable to make it through to the next round.

The Oxford Union competition brought greater success, with pairing Thomas Keefe and Alex Gill reaching fifth place out of over 30 competing teams, missing out on reaching the next round by just a couple of points.

English teacher Mrs Sarah Watson-Saunders, who organises debating activities at Worth and took the students to Tunbridge Wells, said, "Our two official teams spoke magnificently, tackling difficult topics with sophistication and charisma. Benedict Cardozo and Peter Fitzsimons spoke very well on tricky political topics. Thomas Keefe and Alex Gill really shone in their second round speeches".

## Musical delight

Two hundred musicians joined together in Worth Abbey Church in November for the fifth annual concert by the WHISPS consortium. This musical conglomeration comprises performers from Worth School, Hazelwick School, Imberhorne School, St Paul's Catholic College and Sackville School.



In the first half of the concert, following the now-traditional pattern, each school performed a selection of music in turn before joining forces to give their rendition of a number of orchestral works, including Antonín Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances* and an arrangement of the theme from the Academy Award-nominated film *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

The second half of the concert consisted of a gripping choral performance of Welsh composer Karl Jenkins' 2008 work *Stabat Mater*, which is based on the traditional Roman Catholic sequence.

The collection raised over £1100 for the Hurstwood Park Neurosciences Centre in Haywards Heath.

## Remembrance services mark 90th anniversary of the Armistice



On 9th November, a Remembrance Requiem took place in the Abbey Church to commemorate the sacrifice of all those who have fallen in times of war.

The Worth Choir sang Faure's *Requiem*, with James Bailey, Year 9, singing the solo for the *Pie Jesu*. A large number of parishioners and students attended this special event; Jeroen Bromilow, Year 13, said: "It was a very moving service for all involved".

An additional service was held on the morning of 11 November, during which the Last Post was played by a lone bugler and all students and staff upheld the traditional two minutes silence.

## Worth School website

For the latest Worth School news and events, please visit [www.worthschool.co.uk](http://www.worthschool.co.uk)

## Dates for the diary

- **1 March**  
Sequence of Words & Music for Lent, Abbey Church, 7:30 pm
- **14 March**  
Open Morning, 9:45 am
- **15 March**  
**Festival of Arts begins**  
Choral & Orchestral concert, Abbey Church, 7:30 pm
- **18-20 March**  
School performance of *The School for Scandal*, Performing Arts Centre, 7:30 pm
- **19 March**  
Festival of Arts Debate, *A Modest Proposal*, Coleburt Room, 6:30 pm
- **26 March**  
Worth 75 Concert: Trinity College London Orchestra & Choral Group with pianist Philip Fowke, conducted by James Jupp, Abbey Church, 7:30 pm
- **11 April**  
Worth 75: Abbey Parish Passion Play, locations throughout Abbey Campus, 3 pm
- **2 May**  
Open Morning, 9:45 am