

From the Chairman of the Governors:

Welcome to Gaudy in the School's 146th year.

It is such a beautiful day to talk about sad things but in the holidays, a few days before this term began, three of our pupils and a pupil who left the school last year were involved in a tragic road accident. Grace Hadman died and Joe Robinson was seriously injured. Grace was a charming talented young woman about to leave school to start her University career; sadly this is not to be. It makes you realise how tenuous is the link between life and death.

Please remain seated, but in remembrance of Grace let's each of us take her into our hearts and our minds and hold her there for a few moments in silence.

To live in this world

You must be able to do three things:

To love what is mortal;

To hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it;

And, when the time comes let it go.

In dealing with a situation involving so many people a situation so complex and emotional as the aftermath of this disaster it must have been very difficult for the School to have satisfied everyone. From my own experience the School handled matters in an exemplary fashion. Although I was many thousands of miles away at the time, the Warden called me within hours of the accident and from then on kept me closely informed about the action that was being planned by the School, in conjunction with their professional advisers.

Joe Robinson, whose condition was initially giving his doctors very serious concern, has made a remarkable recovery, he is long out of hospital working towards full rehabilitation. I was pleased to read the email Joe's father wrote to the Warden in which he thanked warmly the School and staff for their support not only for Joe but the family too. My board and I join Kevin Robinson in thanking the school for the caring and sensitive way this sad business was handled. I thank the Warden, the Sub Warden, the two house mistresses most closely involved and the two Chaplains who played such a pivotal role helping us through this tragedy, as well as the teachers, members of staff and last but by no means least the many pupils and their families friends of Grace who were also closely involved in supporting the Hadman family. Thank you very much.

We are in the middle of the worst economic crisis any of us have ever seen.

The Governors are acutely aware of the struggle and sacrifices that many of you have been making to give your children the benefit of the education we provide at Teddies and the current climate we know will be making it even tougher for you.

Of course we have always been concerned about the effect of fee level increases, We run a tight ship and we have a fine Bursarial Staff, but at the end of the day we are not a richly endowed School and we have to finance much of our capital expenditure from revenue. We have been very lucky recently an amazing single donation covered a substantial part of the cost of the new Science building, whilst two Cricket loving old boys have paid for virtually all the new pavilion which you can see is well under way.

In order to keep fee increases to the absolute minimum in this troubled time we have temporarily delayed major capital projects and we are seeking to keep the School's staff numbers at around its current level. This will in no way affect the School's facilities, the teacher pupil ratio nor the wide range of extra curricular activities that are available however this action will allow us to contain the level of the 2009 -10 fee increase and I shall be writing to you about this within the next few weeks.

Gaudy – a time for joy and rejoicing.

I haven't brought you much of that so far.

I was told by someone the other day that I am what is known in the theatre as 'the warm up act'.

- So here you have it – you are going to hear of some wonderful achievements from the Warden and then see an exciting range of talent, bright hardworking pupils being rewarded for their application and achievement. So Warden the stage is yours...

...Thank you Chloe and thank you Richard. It is good to see young people so at ease with themselves. Thank you Warden for your clear and concise report. Finally I'd like to remind you of a thought I have shared with you before. If you are planning a year ahead plant seeds. If you are planning ten years ahead plant a tree, if you are planning a lifetime ahead: educate your children. Have a happy successful and enjoyable summer.