

ALLEYN'S SPEECH DAY 2017

Chairman, distinguished guests, Governors, Ladies, Gentlemen and prize-winners: it is my pleasure to report for the seventh time as Headmaster on another outstanding year of co-educational excellence here at Alleyn's.

Our Chaplain tells me that today is the 150th anniversary of the state of Canada, and that he expects my rhetoric to be as towering as the Rockies, as sweet as maple syrup, as mellifluous as a Mountie, or a Moose, or somesuch. Emboldened by this ecclesiastical challenge, I shall try to present a survey of the School year as sweeping as the Canadian prairies.

That decidedly global perspective seems right in 2017 as we continue to process the result of last year's referendum on whether or not to leave the European Union. Whatever the rights or wrongs of that decision there can be no doubt that it precipitated a period of political instability. Aside from planning prudently for every eventuality, the best guide in troubled times tends to be one's values, whether individual or institutional. That's why we have spent the last year reviewing our School Vision, consulting with pupils, staff and parents to ensure it continues to reflect who we are and what we stand for: co-educational excellence, a lifelong love of learning, commitment to well-being and flourishing, encouraging participation in the co-curriculum, and cherishing (in our contemporary way) the educational tradition that we've been part of for almost four hundred years.

Of all those values, it cannot be repeated often enough that safeguarding and pastoral care are the wellsprings from which all else flows: that's certainly what my colleagues feel, and it's the chief criterion for me as I decide whom to appoint to the staff each year. The result is a Common Room of dedicated professionals who care about the children and look out for them all each and every day. It is that culture of genuine concern for young people and all that they are going through, just as much if not more than subject knowledge and know-how, that

helps talented, hard-working children to flourish at Alleyn's and achieve the great things that we are all so proud of – not least the prizes to be awarded today which represent and reinforce the culture of excellence which permeates our School.

Last year, Alleyn's boys and girls achieved a record-breaking 99% A*AB at GCSE (of which 68% were graded A*) and 91% A*AB at A Level (with 34% awarded A*). Seventy-five Y13 students gained at least three A*A grades; nineteen three A*s or better; and three gained four A*s. With results like those, it is little wonder that the vast majority of Leavers enrolled at their preferred university, whether Bristol or Manchester, Oxford or Cambridge, Edinburgh, Durham or London. Thirteen students took up places at Art College; and six decided to move as far away from their parents as possible and study in Europe, the United States or Canada. Many of these institutions were represented at our second Higher Education Fair which is now an established part of the calendar.

That calendar is increasingly saturated with opportunities for students and staff to enrich and extend their learning, acquiring that scholarly frame of mind which is what we want our pupils to cultivate and to cherish. In the last year alone there have been a staggering 45 academic talks ranging from cardiology to contract law and from ancient Mesopotamia to the Sublime Porte. In November we were thrilled to welcome (thanks to the good offices of our Scientist-in-residence Dr Adam Rutherford) the renowned geneticist Professor Steve Jones, while just last month Old Boy Orlando Von Einsiedel held a Q&A session with Y12 on his Oscar-winning documentary on the Syrian conflict, *The White Helmets*. Another highlight was back in March, when His Excellency the Italian Ambassador to the UK, Mr Pasquale Terracciano, entertained a packed Great Hall with his take on Brexit and the life of an honest man sent abroad to lie for his country, as the saying goes.

The Ambassador enjoyed his tour of the School, which we've continued to invest in this year. Following the recent works on the Music School, Swimming Pool and

Science Building, the current major project is the new Lower School that will provide a contemporary yet cosy environment for our Year 7s and 8s. (That said, they have been pretty happy in recent weeks in the temporary classrooms, an air-conditioned oasis in an otherwise slightly sticky School.) I am grateful to all those parents, alumni and supporters who have contributed to these projects via *Advancing Alleyn's*. This has enabled us to install our Observatory, Cloud Chamber and Spectrometer in the Science Building, electronic timers in the Pool, the new Astro surface, GPS trackers and much more. In September we shall have a new suite of Hymnbooks curated by the Chaplain and the Director of Music which have also been generously supported by distinguished donors & the All Churches Trust.

Just as the singing in Assembly enriches our lives every morning (well, most mornings; ok some mornings!) so the lives of the pupils are enriched by all the opportunities we seek to provide – and some students find for themselves – to deepen their learning. The systemic context for this is Enrichment and Learning about Learning, now recast as the Alleyn's Learners' Programme, or ALP. These programmes seek to instil and develop qualities of independence, curiosity, ambition and resilience in all our students, so they feel confident in making the most of everything that School, London, the World and its Wide Web - properly understood and prudently navigated - have to offer.

Some of those students who have achieved remarkable things in this context are Clara, who won the Governors' Research Project Prize with her study of Dark Matter and the Fate of the Universe. Ella won first prize in the Christchurch Oxford poetry competition for her poem *Rosetta*, the fifth national poetry prize Ella has won while at Alleyn's. Other students who have been commended in Cambridge essay competitions include Florence and Lily (both English), Helena (History), and Maia (Philosophy); while Eliza was runner-up in an Ancient World Video Competition with her bloody interpretation of *Medea* filmed in her back garden. Remarkably, Sasha achieved the highest mark in the country for GCSE OCR

Geography last year. Thomas and Zoe both won prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarships, while Ruby is one of only six finalists in the Lord Mayor's Luminaire Design Competition. Little wonder then that our Design & Technology Department has been recognised as a Teentech Centre of Innovation & Creativity.

This year's Science Fortnight kicked-off with FameLab, a series of two-minute lectures from pupils on topics including Gravitational Waves, the Mandelbrot Set, the Death of Stars and Angiogenesis in Cancer. Our Y13 students achieved one gold and three silver awards in the Chemistry Olympiad (our best-ever result); our Y12s achieved gold in the Biology Olympiad; and silver and gold medals were also won by Middle School pupils in the Biology and Physics Challenges. Student science research has also taken-off this year, notably an Upper School entry in the York University CanSat competition to design and build a satellite in a Coke can. Another team of Sixth Formers developed a project in which they measured and assessed the lifetime of cosmic ray muons to make measurements of the Higgs field. In this light, it's perhaps not surprising that we have launched GCSE Astronomy this year which we hope – like GCSE Dance and A Level Art History – will become an established part of the curriculum in the future.

In visual terms, the Summer Show this year was supplemented by our first ever exhibition of Y8 architectural designs and maquettes. Al Scott, of IF_DO Architects (who designed the summer pavilion at Dulwich Picture Gallery) gave a dynamic talk at the Private View and selected three winning designs by Jennie, Kiera and Archie. Congratulations also to Amy, Morgan, Ben and Ginny who designed the "street art" murals on the side of the Old Gym and opposite the Science Building, further testament (if any were needed) that Alleyn's is a creative, contemporary and pretty cool place to be. Just ask anyone who attended the pitch-perfect polyglot MfL Concert; the temporary Zoo in our new multi-purpose lab (featuring a Burmese python, a spectacled caiman, and a skunk); or the DT Dragons' Apprentice Pallet Challenge!

Opportunities for enrichment and extension abound beyond our shores, too. Some of the highlights this year have been the Food & Nutrition trip to Venice and the GCSE Geography expedition to Switzerland. Some of our linguists went to Málaga, others to the Opal Coast, where they developed links with a French Lycée. Even further afield, students on the Religious Studies trip to China visited the Great Wall and a Shaolin Monk Kung Fu show as well as a traditional Chinese School where they took part in a calligraphy class and, I gather, an exchange of songs of greeting. (Briefly stunned, our pupils chose *Lord of the Dance*, a firm favourite in the current and no doubt all future iterations of the School Hymnbook.)

The Chaplain was delighted about that – just one of many highlights in another year considering deeply, warmly and inclusively issues of mind, body and spirit. Our assistant chaplain, Mrs Gemma Birt, accompanied a group of pupils to the Commonwealth Service in Westminster Abbey in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen; Michael Ramsden delivered a thought-provoking Chaplaincy Lecture on the problem of suffering from a faith perspective; and the three Foundation Schools enjoyed their first combined Confirmation Service at a wonderful occasion in this very space taken by the Bishop of Woolwich, Dr Karowei Dorgu.

The new Bishop certainly has a way with words, which brings me nicely to Debating, which got off to the best possible start with AOG Rosa being a member of the much-lauded Team England who won the World Schools Championships in Stuttgart last summer. In the younger age group, Nikita and Daisy in Year 9 reached the Finals' Day of the ICYD competition, and Jackie, India and Lucy won the Novice Final at the LSE World Schools debating competition just a fortnight ago.

Debating is just one area of potential cooperation with partner schools like the London Academy of Excellent in Tottenham, a new sixth form college which will

open in September with our active support and encouragement. We have also taken the lead on a number of Southwark Schools Learning Partnership initiatives this year, including lectures for students, masterclasses for teachers, and a joint Y12 educational visit to the Particle School at Cern in Geneva. Outside the SSLP, we are on course to exceed our target of providing over 450 hours of facility use benefitting over 2,500 local school children. Both Heber Primary School and Harris Primary Academy in East Dulwich have free access to our top fields each week for PE and “forest school” lessons, and will also – along with other local schools – have use of our facilities for sport, swimming, music and drama this summer.

More broadly, we have continued to provide thousands of hours of public access to thousands of people through our Community Programme. Examples of this include the South London Schools Football Association U13 Cup Final; the British Red Cross annual fundraiser; and the Dulwich Youth Orchestra, for whom we waive a commercial hire fee so that free places can be offered to up to 10 children per course. We also have fostered a link with a local school music department to promote this opportunity to their pupils.

Our own pupils play a hugely important role in partnership work, reflecting and cementing those core values I adumbrated earlier. One component of this is the Southwark Community Education Council, which some of you supported via the retiring collection at last night’s Commemoration Service. Our contribution to the SCEC, the Saturday Maths Scheme, continues to flourish with 4 tutors teaching over 50 Y5 pupils from 12 local primaries with the help of over 50 Alleyn’s Y11 volunteers. This is just one of several increased opportunities for Volunteering this year which our pupils have embraced with enthusiasm. Some have been working towards the Community Sports Leadership Award; others have delivered Physics & Biology sessions at Dulwich Hamlet; and still others have been helping children with their literacy at Goodrich Primary as part of our Rhythm for Reading scheme.

Our Outreach programme has also expanded dramatically this year under Miss Demain, who has developed a new Primary Partnership programme through which Y12 students are trained in subjects where primary schools often lack specialist teachers. Seventy Y12s have delivered projects at 5 primary schools including Abstract Art, Dance & Storytelling, Drama through Greek Myth, Music & Song, Sport & Fitness, and Animation. We are proud to be making a difference in our community as well as offering such a worthwhile experience to our students.

On top of all this, one of the major outreach successes of the year has been our partnership with the charity 'Sweet Readers' whereby Y8 pupils work each week with elderly people suffering from dementia. Our pupils have created a range of artwork with their elderly partners, patiently seeking to discover the person behind the disease. Lots of pupils have told us that Sweet Readers has had an enormous impact on them so we are delighted to be able to extend the scheme next year.

These new initiatives complement the long-standing culture of Volunteering developed here by Mr Bruni. This year, pupils from Y10-13 have worked at 'Fun Fizz' (for children with special educational needs); 'Elm Talk' (at a local care home); Junior Saints and Senior Saints (where Y12s help the elderly with computing). Each of these schemes provides a demanding challenge for our students and reinforces our commitment to the community and those who live here, in good times and bad.

Just before Christmas, the Alleyn's community gathered here in St. Barnabas to celebrate the life of Hamish, one of our former pupils, and to honour his family, friends and the School community in our grief at his early death after a long illness. Then a few weeks ago there was a cricket match in his honour on the Paddock, dedicating the new electronic scoreboard to a boy who loved the game

and loved to play it here. We continue to remember, and treasure, all that Hamish meant to us.

I should also like to acknowledge the heartfelt and dignified way in which the School community responded to those tragedies which have recently afflicted our great city, at Westminster, London Bridge, the Finsbury Park Mosque and Grenfell Tower. Our thoughts remain with all those who have lost loved ones in these and other terrible events, in Manchester and across the wider world over the course of this difficult year.

That global perspective is as vital now as it has ever been, so I'm delighted that we continue to foster links with other schools and communities around the world. In November we welcomed 30 students from Kobe University Secondary School, who gave presentations on living with deflation in Economics and earthquakes in Geography and showcased calligraphy and origami in the Lower School. Thirty Alleyn's pupils are looking forward to visiting Kobe in October. We also continue our links with Ganet's Adventure School in Malawi and the Diocese of Manicaland in Zimbabwe, whose scholarship fund – supported by the APA - continues to make a real difference to boys and girls in that part of the world. More generally, we hope that our "Green" initiatives – recast and extended by Mr Sleath – will make a difference to the global resources we all share. The Eco-Committee has this year focused on coffee cup usage and recycling, as well as running a successful 'Switch Off Fortnight' and hosting an Eco Film Night to raise awareness and inspire action.

I'm pleased to say the Eco-Committee is chiefly run by students, as is the Charity Committee overseen by Miss Schüller. We are proud to have established strong links with our two chosen charities, Sparrow Schools in South Africa and Demelza Hospice for Children. Events like the Inter-House Dance Off, the LipSync Competition, the new Y7 Charity Social and a multitude of bake sales helped us to

meet our target of £10,000. We hope to exceed it over the course of today – so advanced thanks for all your support on behalf of these excellent charities.

Our eight Houses have also raised many thousands of pounds for their charities this year, chosen by the pupils who also help to shape the fund-raising events at lunchtimes and in the evenings. This year, Brading's have supported the Burkina Health Foundation; Brown's the Epilepsy Society; Cribb's the New Day Children's Centre; Tyson's the Campaign Against Living Miserably; Dutton's Reach and Meningitis Now; Spurgeon's Médecins Sans Frontières; Tulley's St Christopher's Hospice; and Roper's Women & Children First.

House spirit – so superbly nurtured by the Housemasters - was in evidence again at the Decades Reunion earlier this month, when Old Boys and Old Girls from 1957 to 1997 returned to their old stamping ground and proceeded to argue about which House was best. The only thing that seemed to unite them was the conviction that Alleyn's was infinitely superior to DC and JAGS, a judgement which attests to the quality of their education and enduring good sense. Our alumni also enjoyed reminiscing about teachers they had loved (or learned to love, sometimes only with the benefit of hindsight) and co-curricular activities they had enjoyed, or dreaded. There were precious few of the latter, as pupils choose what they do outside the classroom, and appreciate the wealth of opportunities provided. This year, a staggering 600+ co-curricular clubs and societies were offered by staff; while 4,500 pupil places were booked on educational trips, not counting sports fixtures. Such numbers obviously speak for themselves; but I'll speak for them anyway, as like most teachers I really do love a captive audience!

Let's begin with the Duke of Edinburgh Award, whose forty years at Alleyn's and 60th anniversary nationally were celebrated in May with a dinner for 120 guests spanning those four decades of expeditions, skills and service. The Scheme currently has 191 pupils enrolled – the largest number ever – with 83 Bronze, 41

Silver and 67 Gold. All Bronze participants passed their qualifying expedition in the New Forest, while the Silver and Golds are looking forward to completing their assessed expedition in North Wales very soon. Many congratulations to Laura, Freya, Viola, Megan and Greg who are the 14th–18th Alleyn's students to complete their Gold Award while still at School.

Like DofE, the Combined Cadet Force continues to go from strength-to-strength, including a new nautical syllabus in the Royal Navy Section who visited Historic Chatham Docks, canoed down the Medway and sailed at Shadwell basin. After a thirty-year absence a new CCF Rifle Team has also been formed, reviving over one hundred years of tradition at Alleyn's. The eight marksmen from the Middle and Upper school have undertaken firing using both live and laser targetry and look forward to training for the National Schools Meeting next summer. Many of us enjoyed the Year 11 Cadre ceremonial drill at their pass out parade and the Remembrance Sunday parade through the Village. Special mention to RSM Alice who spoke so eloquently about the benefits of being in the CCF, and thanked so warmly all the staff who make it possible, at the recent Annual Dinner.

Not to be outdone in aristology, the Drama, Dance and Music departments hosted our first ever Performing Arts dinner last week, celebrating the hard work, inspiration and achievement of all those who strut and fret their hour upon the stage. The actors started last summer in Edinburgh with *All Might Seem Good*, a fringe show devised by the players from verbatim transcripts. The Upper School Musical was *Cabaret*, whose company of 70 actors, designers, musicians and technicians transported us to Weimar Berlin; while the Middle School play, *Lovesong*, was the story of one couple played by 32 different actors in a *tour-de-force* of emotionally intelligent acting. Most recently, an enormous Lower School company treated us to a superb performance of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. Throughout the year we have also enjoyed 8 separate Bear Pit shows;

and the Bear Pit Theatre Company will return to Edinburgh in August with *A Compendium of Lost Things*, featuring original music and puppetry.

It has been an exciting year for Dance at Alleyn's, too, with a new Director, Miss Demain, and the inclusion of the subject in the curriculum for the first time. Every Lower School pupil now participates in one term of Dance where boys and girls learn the building blocks of choreographic method. Next year, Dance will also be part of the Y9 Creative Arts curriculum and the GCSE timetable. Our first cohort of GCSE pupils excelled themselves on moderation day when every one of them was awarded full marks for their group performance and choreography. Their pieces were also showcased in the Dance Show which included 130 pupils performing 34 pieces and a vast grand finale. Two groups will perform at the O2 Arena in December.

The musical life of the School also continues to flourish, of course. The Chamber Choir sang evensong at St Paul's Cathedral in February, while the Choral Society and Parents' Choir joined forces with the School's percussionists and pianists for an epic rendition of *Carmina Burana* at St John's Smith Square in May. Next week, Chamber Choir head to Paris where they will perform in Notre Dame, St Sulpice, and La Madeleine. Singing also featured in the inaugural Jazz Night at the Hideaway in Streatham, featuring Gospel Choir, Saximus Maximus, Swing Doctors and the Jazz Band, as well as two student-led Small Bands. These new ventures have been underpinned by the Friday Lunchtime Series; the December concerts in the MCT; a superb evening of Chamber Music at Blackheath Halls; the ever-eclectic Hot Air and Scrape; two fantastic Year 7 Concerts and next week's Year 9 Music Festival. Jessie Ware and Florence Welch are just two of countless pupils who look back fondly on their musical education at Alleyn's, which culminates for many with the St John's Smith Square concert. This year, as well as Carl Orff, we were treated to some outstanding orchestral playing from both Symphony and

Chamber Orchestra featuring this year's Y13 soloists, Alinka and Drake. Both will surely be names to look out for in the future.

There can be little doubt that our performing artists demonstrate enormous commitment, resilience, skill and stamina in achieving what they do; and the same can of course be said for our sportsmen and women, with whose endeavours and achievements I shall conclude this whistle-stop tour of another year at Alleyn's.

In general, we have been pleased to offer a variety of sports trips this year, including Football to Germany and Hockey to Barcelona. Our triennial multi-sports tour to South Africa involved over seventy boys and girls and included a memorable visit to one of our chosen charities, Sparrow School in Johannesburg.

Back at base, our Netball 1st team won the national plate in the Independent Schools' Cup beating St Catherine's 38-35 in the final, while both the 1^{sts} and U14 represented Surrey at the regionals - the first time we have had two teams reach this level in the same season. Representative honours go to Renée who trains at the Regional Performance Academy as well as with Surrey Storm U19s.

In Hockey, the girls' 1st XI reached the Surrey Finals in the National Schools Championships missing a place in the regionals on penalties. The 1^{sts} also reached the quarter-finals and the U15s the semi-finals of the Independent Schools' National Cup. Of local significance, 1st XI won the annual TKB Cup against JAGS 3-2 in a thrilling game; while 8 girls have represented Kent and Surrey this year. The boys 1st XI had a very successful season winning 6 of their 10 games and reaching the 3rd round of the England Hockey plate; while the U14s reached the South of England semi-finals, losing out to Whitgift on penalties. The U12s became London champions before losing in the semi-finals of the South Championships.

In Fencing, eight pupils competed at the Public Schools' championships, where Laura Sheffield was champion. Representing Great Britain in the Cadet Epee at the European championships, Laura won individual bronze and team silver. Further

notable successes in sports outside School include Freddie in the U18 England volleyball; Eden, who has been diving for GB; Daisy who continues to sail for GB; and Hannah and Elizabeth who won the national Futsal championships playing for Crystal Palace FC.

In Cricket, a number of boys and girls are now representing Surrey, London or Kent; and the School teams for which they play are flourishing. The boys' 1st XI are on course to play 11 matches this term, including the annual matches against the XL Club, the EAC and the MCC; while the U12s, U13s and U15s are all contesting London Cup finals next week. Equally brilliant is the fact that over one hundred girls have been coming to lunchtime clubs and representing the School at tournaments and in local fixtures, winning all but one of the 48 played. We also have a number of Y7-8 girls joining the boys on Saturdays for hard-ball matches.

Both girls and boys have enjoyed their Football, too, with over 250 games played by 20 teams totalling over 300 pupils in what has been a busy year at every level. The boys' 1st XI boast an impressive record having lost only 3 out of 28 games played, losing 3-1 to Millfield in the last 16 of the ISFA Cup. Sam and Zach were both selected for the ISFA U16 national team, while Billy represented the U15 national side. Luke and Laurie were in the ISFA U14 national squad and Luke was selected for the full team. For the girls, the U15s have had an extremely successful season which ended with a tense ESFA national cup semi-final against Heathside. As in Cricket, so in Football, girls have also played in U12-13 teams on Saturdays – something we shall be seeing more of next year with the further expansion of Saturday sport for girls.

In Athletics, Oscar, Ryan, Mabel and Cassie were selected to represent London at the regional championships; and Mabel was also selected for the English Schools' Track & Field championships. Twenty athletes represented Southwark at London Schools where several new records were set: Oscar in the 400m hurdles, Mabel in

the high jump, Betrys in the Y7 javelin (last set in 1990), and Elena in the Y10 triple jump. There were also new records set in the following events: Y7 girls' shot putt (Eve), Y7 girls' hurdles (Sally), Y10 girls' high jump (Holly Callaway), and Y10 boys' 100m hurdles (Oscar). Both the junior and intermediate girls' teams reached the regionals in the ESAA Track & Field cup; and in all a whopping 15 new records have been set by Alleyn's athletes this term.

In Cross-country, 14 Alleyn's pupils represented their borough in the London mini-marathon, while Ailbhe was selected for the winning London team as a result of her performance at the LSAA championships. Our junior boys won the London Schools' championships with the girls coming 4th; while our Y7 girls came 3rd at the London Schools and won, with JAGS, the Y7 London inter-borough championship. At the National Schools Biathlon at Crystal Palace, Gabriella finished 12th, Megan 8th and Ailbhe 9th; while at the Whitgift Biathlon Zack came 1st in his first ever competition and Finlay finished 2nd after being 9th after the swim!

Talking of Swimming, at the Bath Cup in the Olympic aquatic centre our girls finished 21st and the boys 7th in the Alderman cup, perhaps attesting to the value of the Early Morning Swimming sessions which have been attended by over 150 pupils this year! In Water Polo, we've had another vintage year, reaching 4/6 English School national finals and achieving two Bronze and two Silver medals, cementing our reputation as the most successful co-educational school in the country in this sport. Special mention to former School Vice-Captain Ben who got his first full international cap in March – a brilliant achievement.

In Basketball, Alleyn's qualified for the play-offs in 3/4 age groups. The U15s finished 4th; the U19s lost a close semi-final to Whitgift but beat Dulwich College to finish 3rd; while the U16s won their semi-final against City of London only to lose a close final against Whitgift to finish runners-up. It has been an equally enjoyable and encouraging year for Fives, with a committed group of Y13 players

led by co-captains Julian and Ben. Sky and Billy, enjoyed early season success by winning the doubles plate at the West of England Championships; while Gwydion was U13 National Champion in both singles and doubles, partnered by Jamie who was singles runner-up. At U14 level, Gwydion was national runner-up in both singles and doubles, partnered by Sonny. These successes were matched in the U13 National Girls' Championships by Martha who was National Champion in singles and doubles, partnered by Katie, who was national singles runner-up.

And on the eve of Wimbledon, it's good to mention that Tennis too continues to thrive at Alleyn's, with both the U15 and U13 teams qualifying for the London Division Championships, finishing 3rd and runners-up respectively. Finally, I should like to mention that a Blue Plaque is being unveiled by English Heritage on Crystal Palace Road in memory of Sir Henry Cotton, who attended Alleyn's between 1918 to 1923 and went on to win the Open Golf Championship in 1934, 1937 and 1948, becoming the leading British player of his generation. We salute his memory.

Just as in Sir Henry's day, so today, individual and team triumphs would not be possible without the dedication of teachers in the PE and other departments who give their time at weekends and in the holidays to train and accompany pupils to fixtures home and away. My sincere thanks to them, and in particular to Miss Walker, who steps down as Director of Sport this term after twenty-one wonderful years. Our thanks to Marilyn for her phenomenally dedicated service, and best wishes to Mr English who succeeds her as Director of Sport next term.

Although I'm pleased to say Miss Walker will remain in a part-time capacity next year, for some colleagues this is their final term at Alleyn's. Mrs Susannah Brooks (Food & Nutrition), Ms Jen Noble (Geography), Mrs Jackie Gibbs (PE), Ms Kelly Galvin (Economics), and Ms Nicola Oakley (Biology) have all been brilliant temporary staff, and now depart with our best wishes. So too do all those support

staff who leave us this year, including several long-serving colleagues like Mrs Susan Miles, our Events Manager; and Mr Jordan Smith, AV and Sound Technician.

Five permanent members of the teaching staff are also moving on next year: Mrs Victoria Arter-Furlong, who will continue teaching Drama at Dulwich College; Miss Anna Blythe, who plans to move to the USA after eleven years at Alleyn's and is currently Head of Department at Sydenham High; Mrs Rachel Dale, who left last term to become Head of Physics at Ampleforth, having been Head of Physics and then Housemaster of Cribb's; and Miss Dominique Ellis, Upper School Enrichment Co-ordinator and, this term, Acting Head of Economics, who leaves to become Head of Economics & Business Studies at Trinity School, Croydon. Finally, Ms Antonia Legg, who joined Alleyn's in 1999 and has been Vice President of the Common Room, Head of Media Studies, Housemaster of Tyson's and Tulley's, and is now Head of English, also moves to Trinity as their new Head of Upper School. We thank all these wonderful colleagues for their hard work and dedication at Alleyn's, and wish them every success and happiness in their new ventures.

Finally, I should like to pay tribute to four superb colleagues who are retiring after many years of service. Mrs Melanie Heaton-Caffin joined the PE department in 2003 and has supported all aspects of the curriculum, coaching numerous teams notably U12 and 2nd XI Hockey. Mrs Carol Wells joined in 1999, teaching Mathematics and Tutoring primarily in the Middle School and Brading's, as well as being Deputy Director of Studies and more recently Senior Academic Coordinator. Mr Gordon Reid, teacher of Religious Studies and Alumni Ambassador, joined Alleyn's in 1985, becoming Head of RS and Housemaster of Brading's where he instigated an annual trip to Disneyland Paris and once presented me with a Mickey Mouse snowstorm which I still use as a classy paperweight. Gordon has remained a stalwart of School football up until this year, and will enjoy continuing with his examining work, and examining the fortunes of the Arsenal, in his retirement.

Last but by no means least, the inestimable Mr Stephen Smith joined Alleyn's in 1984, when the Eurythmics were top of the charts and Liverpool won the league. A teacher of Classics, Tutor, 2nd XI football coach and Master-in-Charge of Cricket, Steve was appointed Headmaster of the Lower School in 1994 and in 2003 took over 11+ Admissions and the Saddler's Scholars. He undertook these weighty responsibilities with charm and skill for 21 years until 2015, and has remained i/c of the Saddlers' to this day – a long stint in an important role which the Company have honoured by awarding Steve the Freedom of the Company which allows him to become a Freeman of the City of London. Steve is very proud of this, I know, and will enjoy it along with travel, reading and relaxation in the years to come.

I should like to wish Steve, Mel, Carol and Gordon all the very best in their well-earned retirements; and to honour them now with the customary valedictory gifts as a token of our collective thanks and sincere best wishes for the future.

Before we turn to the crucial business of prize-giving, I should like to thank all those who have supported the School throughout the year. My sincere thanks to our Chairman, Mr Iain Barbour, and to the Governing Board for their advice, support and encouragement to me and my wonderful colleagues on the Senior Management Team. I should also like to thank the Dulwich Estate, its Chairman Martin Bagley and Chief Executive John Major; the Wardens and Court of the Worshipful Company of Saddlers, particularly the Prime Warden, Mr John Robinson, and Clerk, Brigadier Philip Napier, both of whom join us today. My grateful thanks, too, to the ever-supportive and industrious Alleyn's Parents Association, its Committee and Chair, Jessica Wattles, Vice Chair, Janie Yang, Treasurer, Jocelyn West, and Secretary, Dee Fay; and to the Edward Alleyn Club for all our alumni, led by its Chairman Paul Barber and President John Battle.

I should also like to thank our current pupils, especially Y13, who joined the Senior School when I did in 2010, and when the hit parade was humming to the strains of

Eminem feat. Rihanna... They now leave Alleyn's having, I hope, enjoyed the experience and learnt a great many things from it. Particular thanks to all the House Captains, Senior Prefects and Lower School Prefects, to Vice-Captains Niamh and Ben, and to School Captain Oscar, from whom we shall hear a little more shortly. They have been an excellent team, part of a superb Year Group, and we shall miss them all – until they next visit, which I hope won't be too far in the future. The lure of this place is a strong one, evinced by all those alumni who get in touch or visit every year, maintaining those mystic chords of memory across the generations back to the Founder himself.

It remains only for me to thank you all for being with us here today, sharing in the success of our prize-winners and of the School community whose values have created the context in which such prizes can be won. I do hope that you all have a wonderful Founder's Day, and a restorative summer. Thank you very much.

JUNE 2017
