

dairy, the seamstress, the soldiers' camp, the basketmaker's, the spinning house, the apothecary woman, the charcoal women, the washing house, the chair leg maker and many others.

One incident which no-one can forget was when we were looking at the charcoal women's land. We were asking the ladies questions when Mr Liddel wanted to take a close-up picture of their burning fires. So he cautiously stepped onto the 'charcoal land', but before he could take another step the 17th Century women moved rapidly towards him and shouted "This is our land. Keep off it now or we will burn you!" Of course, the people were acting just as a 17th Century person would have done then, but we were all very frightened, so we kept clear of their boundary from then on!

Another funny incident that happened outside the inn was this: a group of people in my class were sitting quietly on a bench outside waiting for everyone else to finish looking inside when along came a local villager. He was singing joyfully; he then started to chat to us, but he took a fancy to one particular girl and took her by the hand,



In the 17th Century village of Little Woodham (Photo J.B.L.)

leading her off to his hut leaving the rest of the party behind in hysterics. Fortunately he brought her back a few minutes later, saying that she was too short and modern for him.

After a long enjoyable day we climbed aboard our comfortable coach for the long journey back to the 20th Century and to St Mary's Hall.

Abigail Delow, IIG

On the 1992 expedition to Greece



Attack!

School visit to Greece

On the 13th April 1992 we were met at Gatwick by Mrs Thomason, her bag and Mrs Overshott. Everyone was excited about the prospect of a week with friends in the sun (and culture).

We arrived at our hotel in the centre of Athens in the early hours of the morning and decided that there was really no point whatsoever in going to bed because we had been informed by Mrs Thomason that we would be leaving in two hours - 6.00am!

The sun was just beginning to shine when we left the hotel. Bravely clad in shorts and armed with cameras and sun cream, we bought our lunch provisions at the local fruit market. We sat on Pnyx overlooking Athens with the Parthenon overlooking us! We visited the Theatre of Dionysus and took a coffee break (with cheese and spinach pies) in the Plaka overlooking the remains of a monastery in which Lord Byron stayed. We then went to the sanctuary of Olympian Zeus and had lunch in a traditional Greek taverna (in which Judith fell asleep).

After all the culture of that day we were ready to witness the Greek nightlife. So it was off to a taverna to try out the local drink, ouzo, sample the many courses of Greek food and to have a real giggle as members of the sixth form got on the stage to join in with the Greek dancers. We had also met our Sardinian courier, Giuseppe, who greatly amused most of us throughout the week with perhaps the exception of Judith who seemed to spend the whole time either arguing with or trying to confuse him - the latter being the far easier of the two!

On Wednesday morning we walked through the meat market which amused everyone except the vegetarians and visited the National Museum, University and Parliamentary buildings. After a hurried lunch at the hotel we left for a drive with breath-taking views for the mountain sanctuary of Delphi. We made a photo stop on the way at the ski resort of Araknova. Our hotel rooms in Delphi had balconies overhanging the mountain slopes with spectacular views looking out over five miles of olive grove to the sea.

The following day some of the group rose at 5.45am for a walk in the foothills of Parnassus. The sun was just coming up and all the surrounding cliffs glowed pink. It was an amazing sight; Giuseppe would probably have described it as "fantastica" but he was in bed!

Later that day we washed our hair in the Castalian spring - well, it was more of a water fight, really! The idea behind this was to 'purify' ourselves as had the ancient pilgrims, before approaching the famous oracle of the god.

At the precinct of Apollo we saw the 'theatre' (which we learnt wasn't a theatre at all but a political meeting place) and had House sprinting races in the stadium. Chichester won!

The it was onwards to Olympia via a beach for

a lunch stop. We arrived in Olympia in the late afternoon and spent the evening haggling for the beautiful silver jewellery for which the area is famous.

On Friday morning we went to the site of Olympia where the Olympic Games were first held and the flame is even kindled today. Another race was held in the arena, but how the Greeks managed to race in the summer sun is beyond me; the heat was unbearable in mid-April.

In Epidaurous we went to the ancient theatre where I had been asked to read to demonstrate the clever acoustics. It seated 20,000 and when I stood in the centre at the bottom looking up to where Mrs Thomason and the other girls were sitting high up above I felt completely overawed. When I began to read it was the most amazing experience of my life; there was absolute silence and it sounded as if I was reading into a microphone even though I was reading normally.

Then our lovely coach driver, Pandeli, drove us to the fishing village of Paleo Epidaurous where we were taken on a boat trip around the headland to see the fourteenth century BC Mycenaean walls on the hills and the fourth century BC Hellenistic remains under the water. I was convinced Mrs Thomason would fall overboard, she was so excited (she didn't, but it would have been very funny!). Judith kept the young sailors amused by confusing the Greek for "Thank you" with "I love you".

In the evening we strolled around the harbour where the local fishermen demonstrated mending their nets. Some of the third years tried to weave the nets - Ayesha was particularly good.

The next day a couple of us got up early but for different reasons. Mrs Overshott took some girls for an early morning swim (freezing!) although I don't think she took the plunge. Mrs Thomason and I went for a walk around the headland and found some more Mycenaean remains. Later that day we visited the Corinth canal but decided against a game of Pooh-sticks - it was so huge you could hardly see the water at the bottom. The site of Corinth was unfortunately shut so we travelled back to Athens.

On Sunday Mrs Overshott faced the delightful prospect of taking us on a cruise of the three islands of Poros, Aegina and Hydria. It was a perfect day with blue skies and sunshine. We all sat on the deck in swimming costumes and then visited the ethnic shops and tavernas at each of the islands.

In the evening, back in Athens, we climbed Mount Lykabettos in the dark - working up quite a sweat! We enjoyed a cool drink in the mountain-top café and spectacular views of Athens at night. Terri, however, had to be carried down - the climb having proved too much - but the whole outing was very successful.

On our last day we went early to Cape Sounian where King Aegeus threw himself to his death on seeing the black sails of his son Theseus' ship returning from Crete.

We spent the afternoon in Athens shopping for presents in torrential rain. We were described as "trellos patatas" as we danced through the streets of Athens literally singing in the rain, up to our knees in water. In the evening we had the sad task of saying thank you and goodbye to Giuseppe. He was quite tearful as he received a bottle of Metaxa, a St Mary's Hall plate and a tea towel which we all had signed.

Before we packed our cases we had a sing-song and thanked the hotel staff before leaving for the airport. We arrived back in England totally exhausted but really happy. I think we all slept for a week.

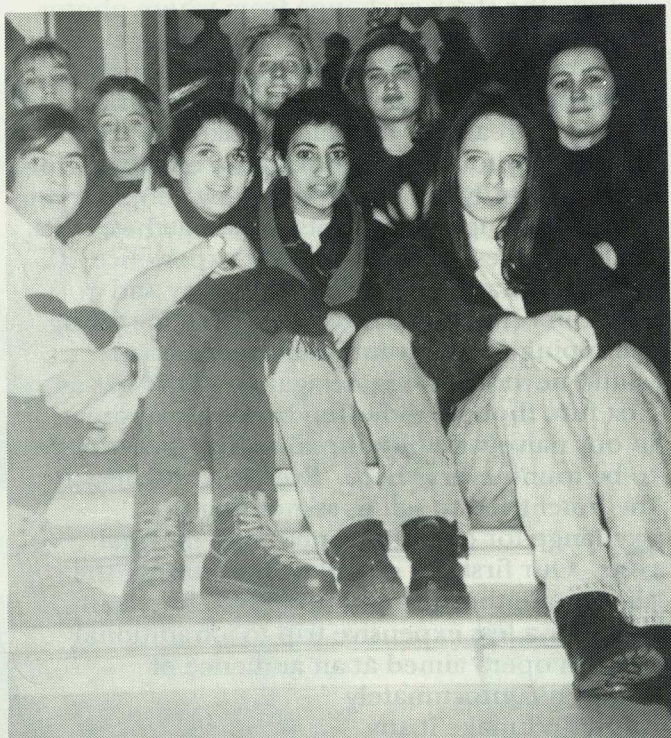
With much thanks to Mrs Overshott, Giuseppe, Pandeli and of course Mrs Thomason for what can only be described as a trip of a lifetime!

Alice Tatham, VS

Russia Trip

So, it wasn't British Airways - although contrary to popular belief, the Aeroflot plane with which we flew did have two wings, engines, and was not a Blue Peter creation constructed of the inner tubes of toilet rolls and sticky black plastic. Yes, we arrived safely in St. Petersburg ready and prepared, armed with chocolate, chewing gum, diarrhoea tablets, water sterilising tablets and plenty of thermals. What we were ready for we were not quite sure and as we were in Russia it soon became clear that you never knew what to expect (except the unexpected). What was immediately clear, though, was that there was snow and how could we resist the obligatory

St Petersburg, in the snow



At The Hermitage

temporary lapse into madness outside the airport involving the first, but not the last, snowball fight of the trip.

After having (looking at) what you can only describe as an interesting breakfast, our first day commenced with a guided tour of the city by coach, during which we stopped at many of the most interesting sites/monuments to have a look and take photos. It was also our first chance to spend some of the piles of dollar bills which we were carrying. I remember our first stop being

outside the stock exchange from where photos could be taken of the Hermitage (a large gallery and museum, but not, as some had thought, a recluse's home somewhere in the mountains). Not really realising how clearly like a group of snap-happy tourists we looked, we emerged from the coach only to be jumped on by people trying to sell us things: army coats, hats, watches, belts, dolls, etc. Yes, this was our first experience of the black market. In a frenzy, money and souvenirs changed hands as we tried bartering (shopping at a conventional supermarket would never be the same again). What was at first fun, though, did often become a chore as in our naivety we didn't realise that sellers were to be found everywhere. Even our cleaners at the hotel tried to sell us something in exchange for one of our ravishing thermal vests. Our first day ended with us having the choice of either going to the Kirov to see an opera or a less expensive trip to a traditional Russian opera aimed at an audience of children (unfortunately this didn't make it any easier to understand, although the music was very good).

One of the most interesting visits of the week had to be that to the Russian school. We arrived armed with chocolate to give them as gifts. The class that we spoke to were surprisingly proficient at English, which made our efforts to say things like "I'm from England" (in Russian) quite feeble. The school was quiet, contrasting with the homely feel of St Mary's Hall. It

felt sterile and impersonal. The curriculum was fairly similar to ours except that I could never imagine us participating in what they called war classes where they learn how to use guns and gas masks in case of war.

As our remaining days in St. Petersburg passed we were astounded by both the beauty and extreme poverty of the city. We felt guilty as we appeared so wealthy and they so desperate. Our guide in St. Petersburg's monthly wage averaged just £20 which in Russian terms is considered well-paid. The emotional strain was beginning to show: we became tired and deeply affected by what we saw. Binges on chocolate and junk food became one of our few comforts as well as the thought that we were lucky enough not to live permanently in such a dire situation.

After three days in St. Petersburg we left and headed towards Moscow on an overnight train (that in itself was quite an experience). Each compartment had two bunk beds and about 0.5 square feet of standing space. It seems surprising that just two people could fit into the compartment let

At St. Basil's.

*Opposite:
another scene in
St. Petersburg*





alone four of us as well as our bulging suitcases. Unfortunately, though, it was rather hot and stuffy and the windows didn't open. We would have opened our door had there not been a Russian who'd been enjoying his national drink, roaming around outside in the corridor all night. It was early the next morning when we arrived in Moscow. After a long night without much sleep all we wanted to do was collapse into a bed. Much to our dismay this was not possible as there was still more sightseeing to do. Moscow was such a contrast to St. Petersburg as many of the buildings were much more Westernised. It was bizarre to see traditional Russian churches stuck in the middle of what looked like 1960s high-rise council flats. Monuments and sites which we visited included Red Square and the Kremlin. In my opinion Red Square was rather disappointing. After much hype it was just a large open expanse with Lenin's Tomb at one side, where it's possible to watch the changing of the guard on the hour, every hour of the day. Adjacent to Red Square was St Basil's Cathedral which I thought had a Spanish feel to it inside. We also had the opportunity to visit G.U.M., their largest shopping centre. Inside European hard currency shops (full of stock) such as Benetton were situated next to Russian shops which, someone

commented, are like UK charity shops, only the choice is less varied.

Moscow was also our opportunity to get at least one decent meal (as by now we were truly fed up with beetroot and coleslaw). Before visiting the Bolshoi to see *Carmen* we went to McDonald's for dinner. It was like being in England again except that these burgers would not be easily forgotten and they seemed to act as a huge morale booster.

Our final day was spent in Zagorsk where we visited a monastery. One of the chapels we went into was extremely moving and as tourists we felt as if we were intruding. This was because everyone in there was crying for those who had passed away.

Finally, we were on our way home. All we could do was reminisce and look forward to the mountains of food (i.e. soft bread, fresh vegetables, milk which wasn't sour and, more important, clear drinking water from a tap) which we'd devour when we got home. We were all both emotionally and physically completely exhausted, but felt that it had been the trip of a lifetime. We also agreed that we'd like to return some day, hopefully to find that the situation has improved.

Georgia Trott, UVI

On the 4th September 1992 the St. Mary's Hall unit of The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme were going to the Isle of Wight for two nights' camping and three days of masochism commonly known as 'walking'. We arrived at school at 10:00 am to get all equipment such as cooking stoves, meths bottles, first aid kits, bivvy bags and waterproofs (which was a good thing!).

At 12:30 pm two minibuses full of enthusiastic school girls were waiting to go to the Isle of Wight. We arrived in Portsmouth at 2:00 pm and were all desperate to get out of the minibuses, so out trampled sixteen girls. At 3:00 pm, after an hour of listening to the radio, we heard the call to all passengers who were booked onto the 3:00 pm ferry to Fishbourne that they may board the ferry now.

So after a half an hour ferry ride we arrived on the Isle of Wight and only wanted to pitch camp at the National Trust Compton Farm, cook our food and have a good night's sleep as we had two long hard days of walking ahead of us. With the tents all pitched and the food supply all eaten we turned in for the night.

We all awoke at dawn, 6:00 am, and started to get ready for the long day ahead of us. The night before the weather report was that there would be slight showers over the Yarmouth area (just our luck that we were in that area). "But anyway," we told ourselves, "it will be different". At 8:30 am our group, which consisted of Karina Zajac, Emma Gest, Amy Ellison, Sarah Terrot and I set off with two sets of maps and three compasses on our way to the next camp site which was Grange Farm. Our destination had showers which made us walk even faster than we had on our last expedition.

At about 1:30 pm we stopped to have our lunch as we all thought that we deserved something for not getting lost yet - but little did

we know! At 5:00 pm, after numerous arguments about which way to go or whether we were lost or just that these particular trees weren't marked on the map, we arrived at the camp site and set to straight away, getting the tents up and cooking dinner. As we had eaten all the food supply the day before we were a bit stuck, but luckily there was a small shop that sold food and sweets so we bought lots of sweets for the next day and bought all the food we would need for that night and for the day ahead.

In the morning we were up at the same time and were even more unhappy about the day

THE RAIN CAME DOWN!



Ready to go

On the South Downs Way





Or was it the other way?

ahead of us as the clouds in the north-west looked like rain and yesterday we didn't get a drop of rain. So at 8:30 am our group once again started off on the final stretch of our walk together with the other two groups, as it could be dangerous walking along the coast line since there were only two feet of path between an electric fence and a sheer drop of 150 feet.

It had slowly started to rain and my waterproofs were keeping my body heat in so I had already started to perspire and get short tempered which didn't really matter as everyone else was in the same boat. Of course, that didn't do much for our enthusiasm but we all had to carry on.

After our first stop, which was by the side of an A road, we were all soaking wet and could wring our clothes so that we created a small puddle.

But after ten minutes we had to carry on - much to our disgust! The next stretch of our walk would be walking through a field that was like a swimming pool, but we battled through it just so we could stop and get changed into some dry warm clothes.

We finished our walk at around 3:00 pm and sat in the minibus waiting for our ferry to come and, whilst we were sitting in them, soaking wet, we thought that never in our lives had we seen so much rain or felt so wet and cold and all because we wanted our Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. Nevertheless, after thinking what we would get at the end of the weekend, we realised that it was very well worth it.

Justine Mayers, VT

Don't blame me - blame the map!





Marine Parade, Brighton (Photographic Society)



Night time in Lewes Crescent (Photographic Society)

For the last nine years the school darkroom has been situated in the art building and this had some disadvantages, not the least being that as a north-facing room it was difficult to use in cold weather. The low ambient temperature were not only uncomfortable for those using the room but there were difficulties in keeping the developing and acid fixing baths at the required temperature of 20°C.

In July last year the Bursar arranged for the darkroom to be moved to one of the bathrooms in Elliott House. This bathroom, a relic of the days when Elliott was one of the school boarding houses, proved ideal and meant that with the studio under the same roof we now have a unit that can be used all the year round. This relocation of the society would be incomplete without a word of thanks to Mrs P. Lock (Head of Art), who for so many years allowed us to use a room in the art building for our annual exhibition on Garden Party Day, and to Mrs S. Lynton for allowing us to use her room as a temporary studio on occasions during the dark winter evenings.

Last summer it was with regret that we said farewell to the UVI members and some promising Vth formers. We wish them well and in the case of the former hope that even if they lack the time to pursue their interest at university they will come back to it in the years that follow.

In September we were pleased to welcome an influx of new members who are now experiencing the multitude of traps that forever lie in wait to ensnare beginners. We hope that

they will persevere and at the same time look upon their time with the society as an opportunity for creative enrichment undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere.

Among our activities in the autumn term were included the ever-popular portraiture sessions, several local expeditions for night photography of which we were able to display some examples in school and then two efforts at ghost photographs of which no examples, unfortunately, were suitable for display.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

In conclusion it is interesting to note that with all the progress that has been made in electronics over recent years, there is now hardly an S.L.R. camera to be seen in school and most members possess automatic or semi-automatic compact cameras. From a recreational angle these are ideal as they produce acceptable photographs in colour or mono without recourse to any of the multitudinous facets of basic photographic instruction that was required in former days. The rudiments, however, are still required because during the autumn term one new member, being the proud owner of a new compact, was acutely disappointed when her developed film came out completely black. She admitted subsequently that the back of the camera had been opened periodically to see how the film was 'getting on'!

Peer Gynt

Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* is a demanding, but rewarding dramatic poem. In *Educating Rita*, the self-taught Liverpudlian housewife, Rita, exasperates her tutor by answering the examination question 'How would you stage *Peer Gynt*' by writing 'as a radio play'. But there is an element of sense in Rita's reply.

The hero has to age at least 40 years in the play and in Act Two must go from 40s to 60s without going off stage. Scene follows scene very rapidly and there are some demands, for example, the appearance of a giant pig on which Peer rides, that are best ignored.

Also the play is very long and puts great demands on the leading role.

However, like any great Victorian work of art, a Wagnerian opera, a huge novel, Browning's poetry or the massive and ornate buildings that still dominate many city centres, *Peer Gynt* fascinates by its confidence, complexity and energy.

It is a difficult school play, but it is very much to the credit of the cast of the St. Mary's Hall production that they did their best to grasp and convey its meaning, and to act it with real feeling. There were lots of opportunities for character acting, and even small parts were important. The 'chorus' scenes of villagers, trolls and lunatics gave the players a chance to work together and for some of the younger girls to take part.

For Miss Best and me, the enterprise was a challenge, but we were very well served by our cast, who gave their all. They were willing to 'have a go' and lose inhibitions. It is not always easy to be a belly dancer, or a madman, or a

strange woodland creature that jumps and gibbers, in front of one's friends and classmates; but everyone threw themselves into the play. Talented performers took on smaller roles and enjoyed being part of an ambitious production. There was a very lively and committed spirit backstage.

As always, colleagues were generous with their time. Miss Best was a great support and battled with costumes, shared the direction and was unfailingly good-humoured. Mr. Knight took on the burden of administration; gave up many lunchtimes to sell tickets and was there at every performance to organize Front of House. Mrs. Lock produced her usual apt and imaginative decor, beautifully painted. Mr. Grant gave the

DRAMA

lighting crew valuable instruction and organized the technical side. The girls who took on lighting and stage management, under Liz Terry's firm but tactful direction, were efficient and well-organized.

That such a large cast and crew worked so well as a team is one of the most valuable educational 'spin offs' for a school play.

Our two Peers have written their impressions of the play and they shouldered their considerable responsibilities cheerfully and bravely. They had big roles, and they both rose to

(Photo J.B.L.)



the challenge, even keeping in character for a 'curtain speech' after the final performance.

More popular and accessible productions may win easier applause, but I hope that Emily and Victoria will be proud of their achievement and that everyone in the cast will look back on *Peer Gynt* with satisfaction.

There is a lot of acting talent in the school at the moment, but in *Peer Gynt* there was also a willingness to learn and to give commitment and support to others that is just as important, in drama at every level, from the school hall to the National Theatre.

M.E.W.

This year's school play was to be the fantastic and dramatic *Peer Gynt*. Auditions were held and after numerous wasted journeys to the drama notice board the empty space was filled with the cast list. I hurriedly searched it to find my name. I had been cast as Peer Gynt the younger. I felt excited, pleased, nervous and slightly dubious. The part, I had been told, was extremely energetic and the character fickle and lively.

Mr Wells and Miss Best, to whom I am extremely grateful, directed the play. Vicky Lewis and I were presented with a script; despair hit us as the innumerable words came in sight. I must confess my failure to understand the script, even after the second reading. Therefore it is totally excusable for any member of the audience to have been slightly lost!

Rehearsals began: they were long and we all worked hard. As the term moved by, the rehearsals began to become slightly laborious and monotonous, when we kept repeating our scenes so many times. Our spirits immediately rose, however, once the costumes arrived and the magic of characterisation came to life.

The dress rehearsal went well, despite the predictable uncertainties and technical hitches. Thursday, the day of our first performance, came - I admit that my concentration was not directed towards lessons and work on that day, but on the evening ahead. Deplorable thoughts kept arising in my mind of all the possible disasters that could happen, and I looked at my script at least every five minutes.

One and a half hours till curtain up and the transforming process began. We were plastered with make-up and coated with hairspray. Mr Knight's continual but necessary warnings about time unnerved us. I had feelings of anxiety and anticipation as Abigail and I waited behind the door. The music began: that was it! I decided to banish all fear and show the audience 'what we were made of'!

That evening and the next were both successful. Once Saturday had arrived my voice had deteriorated to an extremely low volume. Even so, I found it difficult to accept that *Peer Gynt* would be all over very soon, after all our hard work.



(Photo: J.B.L.)

The last night was by far the best. As I left the stage, I felt sad that it was all over, but happy because it had been so enjoyable. I will always look back on it with nostalgia.

I would like to express my thanks once more to everybody who made *Peer Gynt* possible - to the directors, everyone behind the scenes and the entire cast.

Emily Hall, IVP

Playing the part of Older Peer Gynt was a great experience, and one I will never forget. I remember when I was told I had the part. The first thing that came to me was the learning of all the lines and all the things that could go wrong. I know it wasn't a very optimistic attitude, but in the end it all went very well.

I saw the character as an arrogant man who never listened to anyone but himself. I know they say that you put your own character into anyone you play, but I can definitely say I am nothing like him I hope!

After many rehearsals the first night of the production of *Peer Gynt* had arrived. I remember how, every night before going on stage, everything that could go wrong would go through my mind. Things like: forgetting my lines; falling off stage - but when I finally got up there, the thoughts would go.

Everyone in the cast was great fun, and I enjoyed it very much.

The three nights went so quickly, too quickly in fact. I hope everyone who came to see the production enjoyed it as much as I and the rest of the cast enjoyed performing it.

Victoria Lewis, IVY