



Classics master's book is published: 'Augustus, First Roman Emperor'

Monday 4 October 2020

Matthew Clark's book 'Augustus, First Roman Emperor - Power, Propaganda and the Politics of Survival' has just been published by UEP.

Rome's first emperor, Augustus, the adopted son of Julius Caesar, has probably had the most lasting effect on history of all rulers of the classical world.

This book presents a fascinating analysis of the ways in which Augustus was able to manipulate the mechanisms of power during his long reign (27BC - 14AD). Augustus emerges as the classical world's true master of 'spin', demonstrating that political propaganda is far from just a modern phenomenon.

Matthew examines the importance of his chief political advisor Maecenas, the patron of Horace and Virgil; and of his military commander Agrippa. He also considers the contrasting fates of the main poets of Augustus' reign, Virgil and Ovid, and the public monuments that – as much as poetry – served to shape his reputation. He brings Augustus' political manoeuvring to life and helps us to understand just how he was able to rise to supremacy, maintain power throughout his reign and create a lasting legacy.

The book is the latest in a series that introduces key figures and aspects of the ancient world in order to demonstrate that the legacy of Greece and Rome has both relevance and resonance in our world today. Another book in this series, 'Reading Catullus', was written by our Head of Classics, John Godwin. Matthew is also the co-author of 'Measuring the Cosmos' and reviews regularly for the Journal of Classics Teaching.

'Augustus, First Roman Emperor' is available from www.exeterpress.co.uk or from [Amazon](https://www.amazon.co.uk) in paperback for £13.50 ISBN 978 1 904675 14 3, and hardback for £40 ISBN 978 1 904675 43 3.

Basketball: v New College, Telford

Monday 4 October 2020

The U19's first outing was a keenly fought encounter against New College, Telford. The game remained tight throughout the first three quarters, but Shrewsbury proved too strong in the final quarter and ran out eventual winners – 39-35. This was a fairly rusty performance but, with two more friendlies this week, these should help iron out any problems.

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Golf: ISGA Cup, Monmouth - 30th September 2010

Monday 4 October 2020

Last Thursday three golfers represented Shrewsbury in the ISGA Scratch Matchplay Knockout against Monmouth School at Monmouth Golf Club. Stefan Hindmarsh played first and won convincingly with 3 holes to spare. Ulrik Cappelen unfortunately lost his match, so it was all down to the final game. Jack Stacey was at one point 7 down with 8 holes left to play, however the match ended up heading into a play off as the score was a tie. In an exciting play off, with a small crowd watching, Jack had two pars to win on the 20th Hole. Therefore, Shrewsbury won their first match in the Scratch competition for three years and will now go on to face either St Edwards, Cheltenham or Royal Grammar School, Worcester in the regional semi finals next month.

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Football: w/c 27th September 2010

Monday 4 October 2020

On Thursday the 1st XI had a comfortable passage through to the next round of the ESFA U18 Cup by beating St Thomas More School from Walsall 10-0, Roy Chatterjee scoring 6 goals.

The 2nd XI won 6-2 at New College, Wellington in their Shropshire League match last Wednesday.

We hosted three Shropshire Schools FA teams on Wednesday. All matches were very competitive but the County teams came out on top in all three games. Our 3rd XI lost 1-4, U16A's lost 4-6 and our U15 A's lost 3-4.



Football: 1st XI almost knocked out of the 2nd round Boodles Cup!

Thursday 7 October 2020

As the 2010 Boodles Cup Champions, Shrewsbury had quite a lot at stake yesterday, when our 1st XI were outplayed for long periods of their 2nd Round Boodles Cup tie against a very slick Hampton School. The opposition were comfortable on the ball, they retained possession well and we had to do a lot of ball-chasing. Hampton took the lead just before half time with a well constructed goal. In the 2nd half we did create some good openings. Roy Chatterjee hit the post and Jamie Board put narrowly wide. Tom Elcock drew Shrewsbury level with a deflected shot from outside the penalty area.

George Thomason was the Shrewsbury hero as he saved 2 penalties - the score being 1-1 after extra-time. Shrewsbury won the penalty shoot-out 3-1.

Press coverage: Salopian gets nation's top mark in Pre-U exam

Thursday 7 October 2020

David Kell (2010 leaver, SH) not only managed to get 3 A* A-Level grades and two distinctions in his Pre-U exams this summer, but he also achieved the highest mark in the country for his Pre-U Physics exam.

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Fencing: w/c 4th October 2010

Monday 11 October 2020

v Wrekin Sword

Representing Shrewsbury in the Epee category was Jack Viljoen, Ali Webb, Charlie Godman and Oliver Marshall. Wrekin won the Epee by 44 hits to 41.

Representing Shrewsbury in the Sabre category was Harry Cox, Christian Farina, Stephen Li, Ross Viljoen and David Vaughan-Jones. Shrewsbury and Wrekin drew the Sabre.

Mr J A Gabbitas



Football: w/c 4th October 2010

Monday 11 October 2010

The 1st XI scraped through their 2nd Round Boodles Cup match against Hampton School, West London. After extra time the score was 1-1, we won 3-1 on penalties after George Thomason made 2 excellent saves. On Saturday the 1st XI travelled to Bradfield and drew 0-0. A tight but very entertaining game with few chances.

The 2nd XI lost their Shropshire League game 2-3 at home to Ludlow College but won 3-1 at home to Bradfield.

Max Pragnell and Alex Styles continued their excellent progress by playing for the ISFA North Under 16 team against Bolton Wanderers Academy and winning 2-1, Max scoring one of the goals.

Mr S J Biggins



Girls' Hockey: w/c 4th October 2010

Monday 11 October 2020

1st XI v Wrekin: Lost 4-1

Shrewsbury were up against a strong Wrekin side, but started the game very well. We went 1-0 up in the first 15 minutes and continued to play the hockey of the season for the next 10 minutes. Unfortunately, in the last 5 minutes of the half, Wrekin pulled one back and then with one minute until half time, struck again to go into the second half 2-1 up. Shrewsbury continued to play well and fight hard throughout the 2nd half, but just fell short in the last 10 minutes of the game. Wrekin put in 2 more goals in quick succession, with the final score of 4-1. A disappointing result, but a good performance from Shrewsbury and plenty of positives to take from it. Player of the match was Hebe Dickens.

Mrs N J Bradburne

1st XI v Bedstone College: Won 6-2

The girls had a fantastic game against Bedstone on Saturday, demonstrating the great strides that they have made since the beginning of term. Teamwork was vital in this win, as the girls put together a number of superb flowing moves throughout the early parts of the game. Alice Long was important in spreading the ball wide to both wingers, Annie Brentnall on the left and Maddy Fisher on the right, which opened up huge amounts of space across the pitch. This was helped by the defenders pushing up to support the midfield, in particular Hannah Blofield and Cecily Higham, who worked tirelessly all afternoon. Firing in the crosses lead to a number of early opportunities, and though the forwards didn't always make the most of what was offered, the First XI quickly took a 4-0 lead. Unfortunately some complacent defending enabled Bedstone to recover a goal before half-time as a cross was met by an unmarked player on the back post, but we were very much in control at half time. Complacency appeared to have kicked into the team after half time, though, and as the girls tired, we allowed Bedstone to take a little more control. Certainly this suggests that fitness should be a priority over the coming weeks – we must be able to keep going through a full hour. That said, after twenty minutes we finally snuck in a couple of goals from short corners, before being caught napping at the back again to take the final score to 6-2.

All-in-all, a top game, and the girls deserve tremendous praise for a job well done, especially in the first half – roll on the county champs next week!

Mr C E Cook



Public Nose: Emma Darwin Hall - Progression or antagonism?

Tuesday 12 October 2020

A mere two years after the first girls' house opened on Shrewsbury's hallowed ground, the second girls' residence, Emma Darwin Hall, is underway. This is a contentious issue, not only because of the rise in the numbers of girls attending the school, but also due to the difference between accommodation of boys and girls in the school. This comes to light with the finding that of the 35 places available in Mary Sidney this year only 31 places appear to have been filled. The question therefore needs to be asked: is spending £5m on a new girls' house a good use of school funds?

No one can be unaware of the difficult financial climate, so it might come as comfort to know that the building of the house has been financed by a long-term loan, rather than using funds that were already in place for other projects – therefore building Emma Darwin does not have a knock-on effect on other developments. The bursar indeed was determined to state the school's keenness to continue with the refurbishment of the boys' houses. Further to this, Emma Darwin Hall is planned to be completed for July 2011, just in time to be let for the summer holidays, as all the other houses currently are. This means that the new house will immediately bring in extra funds – so financially, at least, Emma Darwin will be a sound investment.

The bursar also appeared to dispel the common misconception that Mary Sidney is not full. It was built as a house for more or less 60 people, and currently houses 64; and as applications mount up, it is clear that the school will not struggle to fill the extra places. The new girls' house is perhaps not as frivolous as some think.

The most obvious complaint is the apparent inequality in living space. To this those at the top accounted for the issue: at the time of their construction, a typical house would have 45 boys and 12 or so domestic staff. Many of them are re-purposed private residences, dating from as early as 1900, and as such the bursar explained, “a bespoke modern building is inevitably going to be different from an adapted building, which is more than 100 years old”. Though many around the school seem to feel that Mary Sidney is the ‘land of milk and honey’, with its own sauna, hot-tub and sunroom, in fact the bursar suggested that, “The furniture, fixtures and fittings of all refurbished houses are mostly identical to those in Mary Sidney, and the future Emma Darwin Hall.” Though one wonders whether the refurbished houses will have ensuite showers in their bedrooms, one can assume that this is more based on higher rental income than merely creating a two-tier living condition situation.

Whilst the bursar is at pains to identify the common quality of the furnishings across all homes, he also neatly highlights the differences in living spaces between modern bespoke houses and re-purposed private houses of the 1900s. Mary Sidney was initially conceived as a new boys' boarding house, which Moser's was due to move into. When it was re-purposed to become a girls' house, there was understandably some resentment among the boys; yet the change in plan was in fact due to opposition from Moserites, former and current, who sought to preserve the old buildings and the traditions embedded in it. This highlights one of the key issues of this debate: the school must achieve the right balance between modern accommodation and maintaining the traditions of each individual house. Similarly, in building new houses for the girls, rather than moving them into an old boys' house, we are giving them a chance to imprint

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their own identity onto the building. This will become an increasingly important issue over the next few years, as more girls are introduced into the school. Of course, this will always create objections from the boys, who see brand new buildings being created for the girls – but do they really want to leave behind the history of their own houses for the benefits of short-term jealousy? Obviously it is impractical to build several new girls' houses from scratch, so it will be interesting to see how the new headmaster plans to resolve this – especially with the plans to extend girls throughout the entire school.

Overall though, there is one thing I feel we can all agree on: the new house will mean more girls. The current girls of Mary Sidney may not feel quite so outnumbered, but more importantly, we will all be getting a more accurate representation of the social make-up of the world outside the school gates, leading up to a life ahead as more rounded individuals.

Rupert Langford



Old Salopian Day: Over 300 enjoyed a day full of events

Tuesday 12 October 2020

Last Saturday's early morning drizzle cleared and the sun finally managed to break through to show off an immaculate Site to around three hundred visitors to the Old Salopian Gathering.

The first highlight of the day was the Memorial Celebration in Chapel for Arnold Ellis. We had a real insight into the warmth, humanity and innate modesty of the man, as well as his intellectual prowess.

Then the President, Hugh Ramsbotham, opened the Art Exhibition of work from OSs who have made a career from their art. A tribute to the art masters who taught them, in particular Philip Woolley and John Alford, whose 80th Birthday (which inspired the event) we had great fun belatedly celebrating. We have now announced the formation of the Old Salopian Art Club, open to the whole Salopian Community (Parents past & present most welcome) which will put on exhibitions and visit galleries where there is a Salopian connection. Please contact us for information.

A splendid lunch, ably addressed by the President and the new Headmaster, Mark Turner, ended with some OSs rushing off to play fives while the remainder chatted on before visiting houses etc. Since this was a year for the over 70's Don was kept busy ferrying those with impaired mobility round the Site.

At 4.00 PM the Worth Fives Courts were officially re-opened after their complete refurbishment. It was highly appropriate that Richard Barber and Peter Worth should speak, as both the driving and financial force behind it all and as the past and current Chairmen of the national Eton Fives Association. The Headmaster thanked the Donors for their generosity and enthusiastically confirmed the Governors statement that Fives will remain a major school sport for the foreseeable future, and that he is taking up the game himself! Peter Worth was awarded the Pepper Pot Trophy for the greatest contribution to OS Fives. North versus South OS fives then continued with the North emphatically winning the Harding Cup.

After Tea in Quod, the Sabrina Club AGM and the OS Club AGM, most drifted comfortably away from a most convivial day, leaving those who arrived at the school in Michaelmas 1960 to late night revelry in Kingsland House with some of their old brushers.

AJW

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Children's music concert delights its young audience

Tuesday 12 October 2020

The annual children's concert has become a bit of a fixture in many Salopian families' diaries as it is a wonderful opportunity for their primary school-aged children to see and listen to various ensembles and soloists from within the School, and also to learn a bit about the instruments and how they are played. John Moore and Maria Curtis explained and introduced each piece brilliantly, so that even the younger children there were entertained and engaged.

This year's concert was particularly well attended, and we were delighted to see a number of new families there who had no previous connection with the School.

We will be holding another children's concert in May next year.



Public Nose: Doc Gee: The Man, the Legend ... and 50 years teaching at Shrewsbury School!

Tuesday 12 October 2020

Over the years at Shrewsbury there have been several teachers who have endured longer than the average human could cope. Amongst those there have been Mr Fanning, Colonel Jenkins and our previous Headmaster Mr Goulding. However none of these can compare to the legendary Doctor Gee, more affectionately known as Doc. Now famous for his stories and charm, he first arrived here at Shrewsbury back in January 1958 as a student-teacher. He then returned back to Oxford where he was at university for a term before the Headmaster at that time Mr Peterson offered him a permanent post to teach 6th Form History. So why did he decide to take up the offer and return to Shrewsbury? As a young man the Doc went to school in the south, yet being a Yorkshireman at heart, he wanted to work at a school further north. He also rowed with Salopians at Oxford and claims to have “thoroughly enjoyed” his time as a student teacher. Now, 53 years and 50 years of teaching later, Doc Gee agreed to shed some light on his time at Shrewsbury for us.

Of course many things will have changed over time at Shrewsbury, but only a few of these have stood out to the Doc. There have been the obvious changes like the fact that there is now a much wider choice of subjects than in 1958 and back then most of the intelligent boys did classics. “Also nowadays”, the Doc says, “there’s an even greater variety of extra-curricular activities and much more opportunities to get away from the school site.”

Some of the key changes that Doc has noticed are on the pastoral side of the school, whilst keeping control has changed dramatically with senior boys no longer in charge of discipline and without corporal punishment. On the other hand there are many things that fundamentally haven’t changed according to the Doc, “In their manners and attitudes the Salopians are recognisably the same, as are the exceptionally positive relationships between staff and pupils. Shrewsbury is, and in my memory always has been, a very friendly place.”

The Doc also chose to share with me two random memories of his time at Shrewsbury that stood out in his mind. Once when coaching on the river when it was in flood he got a school eight jammed at 90° to the current flow on two pillars under the Station Bridge. Another year he bet the History Upper 6th a target of a certain number of places (awards as they were known in those days) at Oxford. If they managed it, he promised to grow a moustache. He lost.

Anyone clever will have figured out by now that from 1958 to 2010 does not add up to 50. Since the Doc retired from full-time staff he is only asked to teach when he is needed and between 2004 and 2007 the teaching was fully staffed. However he returned to bat out half-century at Shrewsbury and still appears to be going strong – especially when it is noted that he has run 50 tucks races!

Finally when asked if he felt different at Shrewsbury now after 53 years he gave me this reply: “I feel just the same in class and enjoy it just as much, but of course I wouldn’t now want to teach a full timetable. I get special pleasure in teaching the children of former Salopians. There are many of those now and in a couple of cases their grandchildren have been in the school.”



So congratulations to the famous Doc and thank you for all your time and continued efforts to Shrewsbury School. We at the Public Nose stand and salute your contributions to Salopian life.

Alex Montgomery



Chapel Choir singing Evensong at Chester Cathedral

Thursday 14 October 2020

The Chapel Choir thoroughly enjoyed their trip to sing evensong at Chester Cathedral yesterday. The choir were lucky enough to have about an hour of spare time to look around all that the cathedral and city have to offer to visitors.

The music at evensong included a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Brewer (in D), and the Sanders responses, as well as a psalm, a hymn and an anthem. The music was also particularly enhanced by the fantastic organ accompaniment and voluntaries from Dr John Godwin.

The choir were fantastic ambassadors for the school in all respects, particularly in their music-making. The choir and congregation were also privileged to have the Dean of Chester Cathedral leading the service, and he said the school would be welcome back to the cathedral any time. The choir were grateful to have the support of several members of school staff and were especially pleased to see so many friends and parents in the congregation.

Eventing: Sam Ecroyd (3 Rt) wins at Weston Park

Thursday 14 October 2020

Sam Ecroyd added to his collection of trophies last weekend when he won the title 'Champion of the CCNP**' at Weston Park.

Sam competes again, this time with Shrewsbury's endorsement, at the National Schools Equestrian Association Qualifiers 'Jumping with Style' this coming Sunday (17th October). The competition takes place at [South View](#), near Winsford - we wish him the very best of luck!

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Girls' Hockey 7's Invitation Tournament at Wrekin College

Thursday 14 October 2020

This week we travelled to Wrekin for their annual invitation 7's tournament. We started exceptionally well, beating Wolverhampton Grammar 3-0. However, we were unlucky in our next two games, losing out narrowly to both Ellesmere and Ludlow 1-0. Our fourth game was against the High School and, although we had the upper hand, we couldn't get the ball in the back of the net so finished that one 0-0. Our final game was against reigning champions Denstone College, who had yet to lose a match. Shrewsbury fought hard and had a ball cleared off the line in the first 2 minutes, but then went down 2-0 in the end.

A positive tournament with some good play from Shrewsbury. Played 5, Won 1; Drew 1; Lost 3. Player of the tournament: Annie Brentnall.



Eventing: Sixth Former to compete at Badminton in April 2011

Monday 18 October 2020

On 2nd October Patrick Kenyon (G LVI) competed in a regional final for the Mitsubishi Grassroots Championship at Dauntsey Park in Wiltshire.

After a very creditable 4th place finish (in extremely muddy and boggy conditions) he has now successfully qualified for the Championship Final which will be held during Badminton Horse Trials in April 2011.

It is a fantastic achievement to compete at such a prestigious event, especially since this is Patrick's first pre-novice season, and we wish him every success.



Football: w/c 11th October 2010

Monday 18 October 2020

A good set of results for our Senior teams against St Bede's Manchester on Wednesday. The 1st XI won 5-0 with Roy Chatterjee scoring his 60th goal for the school. The 2nd XI won 5-2 and the 3rd XI won 6-0.

Mixed results but excellent matches against Thomas Telford. The U16's won 4-2, the U15's lost 2-3 and the U14's lost 0-4.

On Saturday we hosted Millfield for the first time. The 1st XI drew 1-1, Jack Hudson-Williams equalised mid-way through the second half after a 35yd own goal had given Millfield a first half lead. The 2nd XI won 3-1 and the 3rd XI lost 2-3.

Our U14 A's won 4-3 against an U13 West Bromwich Albion satellite centre who regularly train here at Shrewsbury School.

Mr S J Biggins



CCF Field Day Report

Tuesday 19 October 2020

Shrewsbury School's termly Field Days are prized by us in the CCF and we plan well ahead to make sure the cadets have a fun, challenging and useful day. Last week's Field Day was no exception and the 100 cadets who have volunteered to be part of the CCF had an excellent day.

The RAF has the 'X' Factor

The RAF Section visited Northolt RAF station – and observed air traffic control in action, inspected various aircraft and even had a tour of the Queen's Flight. The royal family and various politicians often fly from Northolt – but the cadets were surprised to see that Simon Cowell was the VIP going through the checkouts. The OC RAF Section Flight Lieutenant Rob Morris was pleased to hear that the RAF staff were very impressed with the attitude and bearing of his cadets.

Meanwhile the boys in green..

The Royal Marine and Army Sections, along with 60 new 'recruits' to the CCF left at dusk the previous evening for an extended Field Day incorporating an overnight exercise as well. Nitexes are much enjoyed by the cadets and to have one incorporated into a Field Day gave us scope to add some valuable activities. The recruits had an introductory night out – where they put up their 'bashas' (in effect a waterproof poncho cover) in a wood, played capture the flag (much shouting and hilarity) and after a very professional 'demonstration' of night noises crawled into their sleeping bags fully expecting to be 'attacked' by the senior cadets. This did not come until dawn when their position was compromised and the group had to move out at speed.

Over the previous night the RM and Army Sections had been undertaking an escape and evasion exercise involving observation posts and night navigation. After a hearty cooked breakfast (thank you to the school cooks!) the morning was spent preparing fieldcraft demonstrations to show the recruits the sort of activities the seniors get up to. The hostage rescue, casualty evacuation, ambush and section attack demos were done very well indeed. One member of staff was heard to say that they were 'almost professional!' One of the cadets commented in true Salopian style; 'awesome day!'



Football: 1st XI player's goal-scoring record is smashed!

Tuesday 19 October 2020

1st XI v Walton High, Stafford, ESFA Round 3: won 5-0

Roy Chatterjee (UVI SH) scored two of the five goals today against Walton High, taking his personal total of goals scored for the 1st XI to 62. The previous record of 60 had been held by Raul Alexis (SH 2006-2008).

This is a particularly remarkable achievement at this early stage of the season, and he will undoubtedly set a hard record for anyone to beat in the future.



Girls' Hockey: U19 County Tournament

Tuesday 19 October 2020

Wednesday 13th October - U19 County Tournament

There were 3 schools in total in the tournament this round: Shrewsbury School, Bedstone College and Shrewsbury High School.

In the first game, the High School beat Bedstone 3-1. We then played the High School and after a tense first 15 minutes, Imola Atkins scored. The High School came back strong and equalised, before Shrewsbury went ahead again in the 2nd half. A well-taken goal by Becky Corkill at the end of the game meant a 3-1 Shrewsbury win.

Our 2nd game against Bedstone was a little easier as by now we were playing well, but it took a while to get the first goal. Some great play down the wing by Annie Brentnall led to the first goal for Shrewsbury and there was no stopping us after that. Lois Davis and Alice Long played well throughout to produce a 5-0 victory.

Our next round match is against Ellesmere on Tuesday and the winners of that will go through to represent Shropshire at the Midlands Finals.

Mrs N J Bradburne



Severn Hill triumph in House Singing Competition

Thursday 21 October 2010

Severn Hill were the worthy winners of the House Singing competition last night, with a stunning rendition of 'Stacy's Mom' delivered to a packed Alington Hall – and followed up with a unison version of the Scissor Sisters' 'Fire with Fire'. Clad in pastel shaded cords, the part song group, led by teen idol Rob Collins, was amongst the most professional and zestful offerings of a top quality evening.

Churchill's and **Ingram's**, for so many years the 'nearly men' of House Singing, were finally vindicated as winners of the individual Unison and Part Song prizes; Churchill's with a zany rendering of 'Mambo No. 5', complete with an army of pop-up drag queens – and Ingram's with the haunting riff, 'Sitting on the dock of the bay.'

The award for the best arrangement went to **Nick Hawkins** of Moser's Hall for a lovely version of 'Don't Stop Hiding'. And decked in rainbow World Cup colours and complete with sticky lollipops, **Oldham's Hall** were awarded the Selby Martin Cup for entertainment.

For many years the Singing Competition has witnessed a ding-dong battle between old Titans, the Grove and Mosers – with recent entrants Mary Sidney Hall threatening runaway success. So last night's winning entries mean that this fiercely fought competition is wide open for the coming years.

The judges, all professional performers, (Bethan Dudley Fryar, Jeremy Finch and Kate Robbins) paid tribute to the extraordinarily high standard of the entries. The House Singing Competition is one of the most colourful events of the year; for the performers it means hours and days of intense preparation from everyone, eager to make a showing in front of parents, staff and friends – not to mention the further two hundred-plus who watch on a video link in the Ashton Theatre. Almost every pupil in the school takes part. And although there have to be winners and losers, yesterday evening's outright winner was undoubtedly the Celebration of Song.

PAF

House Swimming Gala

Friday 22 October 2020

The results of the House Swimming Gala are as follows:

Junior

1st - School House

2nd - Radbrook

3rd - Port Hill

Senior

1st - Ingrams

2nd - The Grove

3rd - Port Hill



Blue Chairs: World tour ends in kidnapping

Friday 30 October 2020

The Blue Chairs have been busy after their tour of the world with Nick Lynch-Staunton and Leo Emmett. They caught the travelling bug in a big way and, this year, have visited Europe with David Kell, Will Whittaker and George Huntley where they enjoyed pretending to be gladiators in the Coliseum and looking out at beautiful views of Venice among other things. They then travelled to Kenya courtesy of Tudor Sartain and his family, where they had a lovely time on safari until tragedy struck and they have been kidnapped.

We have had a demand for a ransom of £8000. Until now we have had a news blackout whilst we have searched desperately for the funds to pay their evil captors. We have had a picture of the Blue Chairs and apparently they are being looked after well. Although the psychological damage of such a trauma should not be underestimated! A Blue Chair medical expert recently told me that he was concerned that their legs may become a little shaky and there could even be cracks in the very heart of their seats. "I am concerned that their legs may become a little shaky and there could even be cracks in the very heart of their seats," said Dr. Legge.

In the face of such appalling behaviour I would like to thank those of you who have rallied to the cause. We held a concert at the end of last term called Top Common Pop and that concert raised £2000, which we feel sure, will prevent the removal of one leg from each chair. There is a new calendar being formulated and it will be available from the end of November from gjfb@shrewsbury.org.uk. For the fifth year in a row we have managed to keep our costs down so that it is a bargain at £10. This year the money raised will go to Cure Leukaemia, the Teenage Cancer Trust and the Motor Neurone Disease Association. If we can raise £4000 that will save another four legs, so please do feel free to buy a wonderful Blue Chairs Calendar.

I would just like to thank all the performers in Top Common Pop, in particular Tony Christie who came up from London where he was rehearsing for his run in Dreamboats and Petticoats, to perform for us. It was wonderful to see a true professional at work and the enthusiasm of the crowd was such that I am sure his new album will sell particularly well in Shrewsbury! There were other notable performances from Lena Wenner, Ali Webb, Joby Fitzgerald's band, Guy Burns-Mace's band, Jo Allan, and Johnny Mansell-Lewis. I would like to thank the School Shop and, in particular, Gill for selling soft drinks and confectionary and the KH staff for providing us with a wonderful barbecue, both of which raised lots of money on the night. There was also a bucket collection and thank you to everyone for their generosity in terms of time and dosh.

We very much hope there will be a repeat performance next year and that we will be able to interview the hopefully liberated chairs on the stage. (Don't get too excited, they don't normally say very much!)

GJFB