

NORTH HOUSE
END OF YEAR LETTER 2009

1st July 2009

Dear Parent(s),

Another year ends in which the boys of North House have continued to excel in many different activities. I want to begin by acknowledging the many people who assist me in running the house.

- The boys – without them and all the antics they get up to, this would be a very boring job, though on reflection it would be easier! This year's Upper Sixth has been truly memorable; they have supported me without hesitation and have been fantastic role models. This is more satisfying because they were my very first intake five years ago.
- The Cleaners – they are very special to the boys. They do more than they should but remain happy and totally supportive, despite the state of some of the rooms!
- The Tutor Team – the depth of experience and enthusiasm in this group of men has provided your sons with an outstanding level of pastoral care; they truly know the boys and give them honest advice in all situations.
- The Matrons – Marion and Liz continue to do so much for your sons. Their treat nights, the quiet talks, the unwavering support at all times of the day and night and their genuine love of the job make them so special.
- The Parents – I appreciate the support and generosity that so many of you offer me. To be entrusted with the care of your boys for such a period of time involves a high degree of trust from you.
- Linda – my absolute sounding board and the person who tells me when I have got things wrong! She proof reads every one of my end of term reports and does know the boys much better than many of you would think. Without her I think I would go totally insane!

This year we have quite a large number of leavers:

Nico Weake (4th Form) has decided to move on from Cranleigh and I wish him all the best at his new school.

In our Upper Fifth Tom Birkinshaw, Bertie Berkeley, Ollie Cartwright, Oli Holden, David Jameson and Andrew Jones–Davies are leaving. I am genuinely sad to see them depart and as I told them at the Final House Assembly, they are always welcome back here in North.



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We have twenty two new fourth formers arriving in September. Also joining us are four new lower sixth boys. Next year North House will have one hundred and three boys, once again making it the largest boy's house here at Cranleigh.

Andrew Shelley leaves us for a second time! Andrew has been here for two terms covering for Dr. Andrea Saxel whilst she was on maternity leave and returns to Canberra Grammar in September. He has been totally supportive of me and the boys in this time and his very dry sense of Aussie wit will be missed.

Matt Commander leaves us after only one year. In that time he has had a huge impact in the school and shown to be an outstanding all round educator; he will be a Housemaster in the near future. He leaves to take on a more senior role at Christ's Hospital and I wish him and his family all the very best.

The legendary Peter Kemp moves to Oundle School after twelve years at Cranleigh, eleven of those attached to North. He has been Acting Housemaster, Deputy Housemaster, Day Warden and a Tutor. His wake ups accompanied by his ipod and tuneful singing voice have been a highlight for many of the boys. Peter has many fine characteristics but in my opinion the one that stands out is that he always sees the positives in boys, always! He was appointed as a History teacher but has already been promoted to Deputy Housemaster. Peter, Titch, Thomas and Emily are very close to the Haynes family and we will miss their hospitality and friendship.



Joining us will be Mr Mike Worsley who will teach Business Studies and will be a fourth form Tutor. He will also coach the Second XV. Mr David Ardley joins the staff as Head of Design and will be a lower fifth Tutor.

We fared quite well in house competitions this term. Our win in the swimming competition was a truly outstanding effort from all involved. The sixth formers were dominant, winning nearly all the races. The fifth form placed highly in their races, and this fact was important. The 4th form won quite a number of races, led by Tom Taylor and Julian Browning. Captain Nic Froy provided outstanding leadership and support and he was a very happy young man when the final result was announced. Another win was in the junior croquet competition. Under the expert guidance of Mr Frank Hardee our team of Nick Roberts, Angus Peters, Ollie Cartwright and Josh Hughes crushed our opponents with a combination of precision and out right aggression. Junior golf, led by Captain James Boyle, won a very tight semi-final (well done Charlie Craddock!) and then defeated Loveday three matches to two in the final. In senior golf we made the final but lost to the strong East team. In athletics we had a number of winners but our lack of talented athletes in all events saw us take up our traditional position of fourth. In the senior croquet we won one match and lost the other. Unfortunately our scores (balls through hoops, I think?) was not good enough to make the final.



Our senior cricket team was weakened due to Jack Austin and Andrew Goudie both being unavailable due to an exam. We pushed the eventual winners Loveday in the semi final but their strength in the bowling saw us not make enough runs. In the play off against Cubitt a more relaxed approach was adopted. Unfortunately this did not work though our tactics and celebrations gave the spectators excellent value for money and quite a few laughs. Junior cricket, captained by Tom Subba-Row, was held together by the outstanding batting of Michael Burgess. We lost the semi final and then played Cubitt in the play off and lost in a bowl off!

In both tennis competitions we came fourth. Tom Forster and Dave Jameson were superb in the number one position but were up against some quality players. Our junior team consisted of three tennis players and nine others; our spirit was high though our skill level was not.



On the penultimate Sunday the annual House Charity Day was held. Six teams in fancy dress walked twenty kilometres through the local country side. (Imagine meeting a group of smurfs or boys dressed only in nappies along a country path. That is what some of the local walkers faced!) After brunch they completed a number of team orientated and physically demanding challenges. The money raised is going to the TLC charity which supports abandoned babies in Johannesburg. It is a charity that Marion (our Matron) has worked at over the last few years. How much money we have raised I don't know as yet; I will be able to tell you next term. If you have any cheques, please make them payable to Cranleigh School







The current lower sixth were put in total control of the Music Evening held on the last Wednesday of the year. This was held in our back garden with a huge stage being constructed, lights and a powerful sound system. All credit to Owen Quant, Callum Ewing and Tom Grafton on their organisation; it was a night that exceeded all my expectations. Musically there were many highlights; George Griffith's singing and guitar playing, Jon Hobbs' own composition on the piano and Tom "give me an audience" Hollister playing the xylophone. But everybody's favourite was the lower sixth singing (??) and then their dance routine to the YMCA with large cut out faces of me and Peter Kemp, capped off by Luke Butler impersonating Ed Burnett in a very tight pair of short shorts! Absolutely brilliant! The techies, Will Greenhalgh and Henry Harrod, assisted by the school's techie guru Mark Jenkins, did a fantastic job; so professional! My thanks to those parents who attended.



The Anne Ashman Cup is awarded every year to a boy in the house based on the criteria of “deserving of recognition for overcoming difficulties, good citizenship or a positive attitude to self-improvement”. This year’s winner is Sam Sutcliffe. Sam joined North two years ago and has taken up every opportunity to involve himself. Within the house his talents in many different sports have been most beneficial. He also supported the younger boys and that earned him incredible respect. Finally in DT this year he designed and made a huge water sculpture feature which he then donated to the house. It now resides in Leas’s Garden (the name given to the paving area) and has proved to be unbelievably popular in the recent hot weather.



From a house perspective, this year has been one of my most enjoyable and I want to mention the two house leaders. Captain James Dear and his Vice Captain Nick Haigh have shown mature leadership, thorough organisation, total support for the house and were truly respected by all the house staff and boys (they also knew where my beer fridge was!) They were both presented a house shield at the final assembly; a rare event which was utterly deserved.

Next year's leaders will be Zeno Agnew-Davies as Captain and Callum Ewing will be the Vice Captain. The Butts representative is JJ Bee and Chapel Warden is Luke Butler.



When we return after our summer break I will be able to update you all on my situation regarding my move to Australia. Rest assured you will be the first to know. Many of you have said some kind things and that has meant a great deal; unfortunately I cannot see every one of the boys through their time in North; that would mean I would never leave!

Have a great summer holiday.

Yours sincerely,

John

