

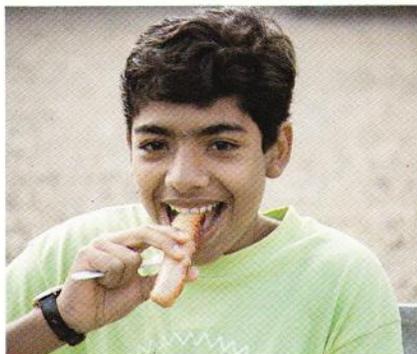
English internationally...



Vacational
Studies®



The Courses



Marcelino (Nicaragua) doesn't mind sticky fingers



'I've got an Elstree dream ...'

RESIDENTIAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES

Vacational Studies Courses have been running for 20 years. We have tried in this time to develop an enjoyable balance between 'vacation' and 'study'. Here is our programme for Summer 1992.

WHAT WE TRY TO DO

Vacational Studies tries to create a totally international Course with students from as many different countries as possible. We avoid accepting a large number of students from any particular country. In this way we try to ensure that English is the main medium of communication among the students. By using English not just as a school subject, but as a living language, we hope our students will realise better its importance and value. When children want to use English to make friends, this element of self-motivation greatly increases their fluency.

This emphasis on the practical use of English is combined with a full sports, entertainments and excursion programme helping young people to learn 'English internationally....'

RECOGNISED BY THE BRITISH COUNCIL

Vacational Studies is 'Recognised for the teaching of English by the British Council' and is a member of ARELS-FELCO (The Association for Recognised English Language Teaching Establishments in Britain) - a professional body, membership of which is granted only after thorough inspection and re-inspections every three years.

RESIDENCE

The Courses are all fully residential. Students eat, sleep and receive classes in the Schools.

THE STUDENTS

We accept boys and girls - near-beginners, intermediate and more advanced students - aged 11 to 16. We also accept a small number of students at 17, normally only if they have been with us before. As they cannot participate in an international community, complete beginners are not accepted.

The Courses are sports-orientated and encourage good social development in a community situation.

STUDENTS WHO WILL BENEFIT

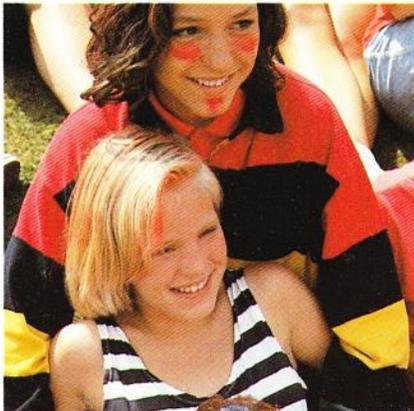
Please make sure that our Course is suitable for your child and that he/she wants to come. Those who will benefit and we enjoy having with us will be internationally-minded, interested in English, outgoing and gregarious. They will also be willing to accept the constraints of community living. We consider it so important that our standards and expectations are understood and accepted that we ask parents to confirm that they and their children have read the rules and that they agree to abide by them. A slip sent with the rules is provided for this purpose.

HOW THEY WILL BENEFIT

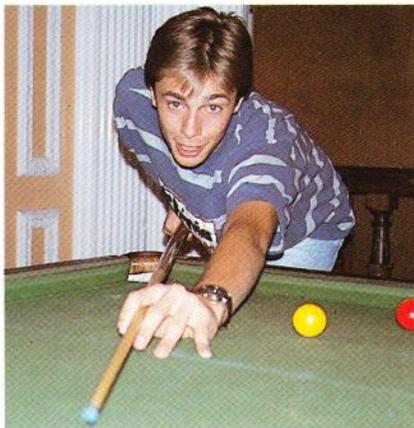
We hope that our students will learn a great deal of English, make good friendships and develop a positive international feeling. As well as formal study, we concentrate on the holiday aspect of the Course. While we try to involve students in all activities, we naturally respect the wishes of those who like to read quietly or be with friends. Over the years, we have built up an excellent reputation with parents and young people all over the world. Many boys and girls spend several summers with us renewing old friendships and making new ones. Most students come to us on personal recommendation. The numbers on the Courses are deliberately kept small so that the staff can get to know everybody and treat each child as an individual.



Francesca (Italy) getting a visit



Tired after cheering for Cheam



Frédéric (Monaco) in pot black at Elstree



Christopher's hair drew admirers from near and far



The Schools

THE SCHOOLS AND SURROUNDINGS

For 1992 we have six Courses at five Schools near Newbury - Douai School, Hawtreys, The Mary Hare School, Elstree School and Cheam School. Newbury is a small country town in a pleasant part of southern England in the hills of the Berkshire Downs. It is 70km. west of London and 45km. south of Oxford. The Schools we use are among the best in the area.

DOUAI SCHOOL

Douai School dates from the mid-nineteenth century with many later additions. It is set next to Douai Abbey in 80 acres of its own grounds and woodlands. It has extensive playing fields which adjoin Elstree School and a range of tennis courts. It has a large indoor swimming pool, a gymnasium and a 'multi-gym'. A planned maximum of 85 students will be accepted on each Course.

HAWTREYS

Hawtreys is a large mid-nineteenth century stately home owned by the Marquess of Ailesbury. It is set in 55 acres of grounds with playing fields, tennis courts, gardens, woodland and open spaces. The classrooms and gymnasium are contained within the main building. It has an open-air swimming pool. A planned maximum of 80 students will be accepted.

THE MARY HARE SCHOOL

The Mary Hare School is a large mid-nineteenth century manor house with many later additions. There are formal gardens and woodland and

extensive grounds which include several playing fields, a range of tennis courts, a gymnasium and a large indoor swimming pool. A planned maximum of 85 students will be accepted.

CHEAM SCHOOL

Cheam School is a late nineteenth century mansion. A particular feature is the sunken formal garden. The School's large grounds with playing fields, lawns and woods, back onto Watership Down. There is a recently built sports hall/gymnasium and a range of tennis courts. It has an open-air swimming pool. A planned maximum of 85 students will be accepted.

ELSTREE SCHOOL

Elstree School is a large eighteenth century country house set in 40 acres of grounds with playing fields, gardens and woods which adjoin Douai Abbey. It has a modern gymnasium and the dining room, kitchens and some dormitories were rebuilt in 1991. There is an open-air swimming pool and a range of tennis courts. A planned maximum of 80 students will be accepted.

All the Schools have swimming pools, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, football fields, sports hall, recreation rooms, colour TV and bathrooms.

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

At all Schools, students sleep in dormitories. Girls are in one part of the house, boys are in another.



Part of Mary Hare - The Manor House



Cheam



Elstree



Douai



CHOICE OF COURSE

The Courses at Douai are of 3 weeks duration. The Courses at Hawtreys, The Mary Hare, Elstree and Cheam are all of 4 weeks duration. Apart from the duration, the only differences are location and dates. The Courses all have the same format. 1992 dates are:-

Douai 1

5 July - 26 July 1992

Hawtreys

7 July - 4 August 1992

Mary Hare

9 July - 6 August 1992

Cheam

14 July - 11 August 1992

Elstree

16 July - 13 August 1992

Douai 2

26 July - 16 August 1992

The Programme

THE TEACHING

A staff of qualified, professional teachers, experienced in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language give 4 classes, each of 45 minutes, every day except Sunday and the weekly excursion day. In addition, there is a supervised 30 minute study period each afternoon. Classes are graded according to age and ability in English. Students are placed first in an 'assessment group'. They are given a brief multiple-choice placement test the result of which is taken into consideration with the teacher's opinion. Students are moved to the 'assessment group' which we consider correct and, after two or three days, these become classes. Class placements are constantly reviewed and students may be moved to more or less advanced classes, according to their performance. The teacher:student ratio is approximately 1:13. Maximum class size is 16. We provide all books and teaching materials. The teaching is by 'direct method'. Both oral and written English are taught and there is an emphasis on conversation practice.



Hiding behind the hairstyles in class at Elstree with Juliet

SPORTS

Sport is an important part of the Course. Our Sports/Entertainments Organiser arranges a regular programme including football, basketball, volleyball, baseball, tennis, table-tennis, swimming, etc. Competitions run throughout the Course. There is also a 5-School 'Sports Day' when five of the Courses meet for friendly competitions in the major sports.

We take all practicable safety precautions - for example, students using the swimming pool are always supervised by a teacher.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We try to create a relaxed and friendly 'family' atmosphere in which young people will feel 'at home' quickly and make good social contacts. There is a variety of activities on the programme - discotheques, films, barbecues, folk-singing, concerts, games, optional theatre visits, etc. The programme is a full one. There is always something to do and students are encouraged to participate.

EXCURSIONS

On the four-week Courses there are four excursions. One is to London for sightseeing and



Cheam chanting. Pieter (Netherlands) chanting at me

their Certificate in English Language Museum Studies, then by boat (subject to availability) to Southampton; the destination for the third excursion is open to discussion by students and staff who will take this decision; the fourth excursion is to 'Sports Day'.

On the three-week Courses at Douai, the first two excursions are as described above. On the first Course, the destination for the third excursion is open to discussion by students and staff. On the second Course, the third excursion is to 'Sports Day'. All these excursions are included in the Course Fee.

SHOPPING AFTERNOONS (Optional Extra)

In addition to the organised excursions above (which are included in the Course Fee), there are optional shopping afternoons which are not included in the Course Fee. There are two optional shopping afternoons on the four-week Courses and one on the three-week Courses. These are in Newbury or another town near the School. We think it safe for young people to shop in these towns unaccompanied by staff, if parents have indicated their agreement to this on the Application Form. This helps young people achieve a measure of independence. Younger students can be accompanied by staff if parents or we so wish. There will be several staff in the town while our students are shopping. Travel is by private coach from the School with accompanying staff. The cost of transport (payable by students if they wish to go) is in the range from £1.00 to £2.50.

THEATRE VISITS (Optional Extra)

'Phantom of the Opera', 'Cats', 'Starlight Express' and 'Les Misérables' - all these smash-hit West End musicals are booked out months in advance. Tickets for all of these have been requested and we will be allocated a limited number. We shall allocate tickets to students so that they can see at least one show of their choice, up to a maximum of three shows. How many shows will be possible depends on the availability of tickets. The cost of each (show + travel to the theatre) will be £20. Parents are asked to indicate the number of shows required and an order of preference for these. £20 for each show requested should be added to pocket money. If it is not possible to provide the number of shows requested, the money will be returned with the student at the end of the Course.

TENNIS LESSONS (Optional Extra)

Tennis may be played at any time, but we can

only. Six one-hour lessons are given in groups of no more than four students. These must be requested in advance on the Application Form. If tennis lessons are taken, a tennis racquet must be brought.

As these lessons are pre-arranged, it is not possible to refund the cost of lessons booked, but not taken. Parents are asked to make sure that lessons are really wanted before booking them.

MEALS

Food is an important part of the Course. Meals are prepared by professional caterers to a high standard. Our specification is for a choice of hot dishes at lunch and dinner and a salad bar comprising about ten different items. Students are encouraged to have as much as they want and if they cannot find anything they like among all these choices, they can ask the caterer to prepare something special.

Here is a typical menu for guidance:-

Breakfast:

- Choice of cereal
- Choice of various breads, meats, cheese
- Jam, marmalade, other spreads
- Tea, coffee, milk, fresh orange juice

Lunch:

- Soup and croutons
- Choice of three hot dishes
- Buffet-style salad bar
- Choice of puddings or fresh fruit

Dinner:

- Choice of two hot dishes
- Buffet-style salad bar
- Choice of puddings or fresh fruit

Before bedtime:

- Hot chocolate and biscuits

Special diets can be catered for. Cold orange juice or other drinks are available at no charge. There is a small 'sweet shop'.

At times throughout the Course, the menu will be varied to include barbecues (spare rib, sausage roll, jacket potatoes, coleslaw dip, crisps, ice-cream, etc.) There will be also a traditional British 'Christmas Dinner' (roast turkey with stuffing, roast potatoes, Brussels sprouts, cranberry jelly). There will also be 'national meals'. If they wish, students from various countries will be invited to help the kitchen staff prepare and serve a meal consisting of dishes from their own country.



The Programme



Breaking the Bank at the Mary Hare Casino

A TYPICAL DAY

08.30	Breakfast
09.00	First class
09.45	Break
09.55	Second class
10.40	Break
11.10	Third class
11.55	Break
12.05	Fourth class
12.50	Break
13.00	Lunch
13.45	Supervised Study
14.15	Break
14.45	Organised sports and games
18.00	Evening meal
19.00	Games, films, etc.
21.00	Hot chocolate and biscuits
21.30	'Club'
22.30	Bedtime (or 22.45)

Pocket money and stamps are obtainable from the Office every day from 13.20 - 13.45 and 14.15 - 14.45.

HOW WE ENCOURAGE THE USE OF ENGLISH

On each Course there are students from many different countries. We try to ensure a mixture of nationalities in classes and dormitories. We aim to stimulate the speaking of English socially in various ways. Members of staff constantly encourage English-speaking around the School. Some also sit on student's tables at meals.

Another 'encouragement' to speak English is the 'English Only Raffle' with a valuable prize for the winner - 'Trivial Pursuit', or similar. Students who have spoken English much more than their own language are, at the end of each week, entitled to one raffle ticket. Throughout the Course, there are also 'English Only' bonus days. If a student is noticeably using English and is not caught more than once using any language other than English on that day, an extra ticket is awarded - a 'bonus'. At the end of the Course

prize. We hope that the prize will be a positive inducement for students to use English.

THE JÖRG WEISE TROPHY AND SCHOLARSHIP

The Jörg Weise Trophy is awarded occasionally for 'an outstanding contribution to the ideals of the Course'. The Trophy was presented to Vacational Studies in 1980 by Professor Dr Eberhard Weise, formerly of Bayer A.G. in Leverkusen, Germany in memory of his son Jörg (1958-1979) who was a student of ours in 1971. For us, Jörg Weise embodies the finest qualities of endeavour and achievement with a completely international outlook.

We are also proud to be associated with the Jörg Weise Memorial Scholarship. The Scholarship is a place on any of our Courses, return air ticket from anywhere in the world, pocket money, theatre tickets and tennis lessons. The recipient of the Scholarship will be the sort of student outlined above who will benefit from attending the Course, but who is unable to apply for a place in the normal way for financial reasons. We welcome nominations for the Scholarship in 1993 which should be sent in confidence, and without informing the potential recipient, to Vacational Studies.

HEALTH

Minor illnesses are treated by our own staff. There is a Matron with a special surgery/sickroom in each School. We also use the services of doctors in the locality. The St John's Ambulance Service provides training for all our staff at the start of each Course in the latest methods of basic first aid and resuscitation. We ask parents to give us full health information on the Application Form.

INSURANCE

Every student is covered by a special Insurance Policy. Details are on the enclosed information sheet. Briefly, the Insurance includes refund of full Course Fees if certified serious illness or accident during the month before the Course prevents attendance on the Course; private medical treatment to the value of £2500; personal possessions and luggage cover to the value of £400; personal money cover to the value of £150; return air fare to the value of £300 if an APEX reservation is lost because of delayed or advanced departure through illness or accident while the student is with us.

There is no extra charge for this Insurance. Every student is automatically covered (subject to the enclosed conditions) when the application is accepted.

RELIGION

The Courses are interdenominational. If parents so wish, we shall arrange for students to attend an appropriate service. Please indicate this on the Application Form. Transportation to and from the church is payable by students.

HOW WE LOOK AFTER STUDENTS

We understand the concern felt by parents when their children are away from home. They are under constant supervision, as far as is practicable, both in the School and on excursions. Our total staff:student ratio of about 1:8 ensures that our students are well looked-after.

In addition to the staff, on each Course there are one or two older, ex-students, 'Staff Helpers', to assist with the sports and entertainments programme.

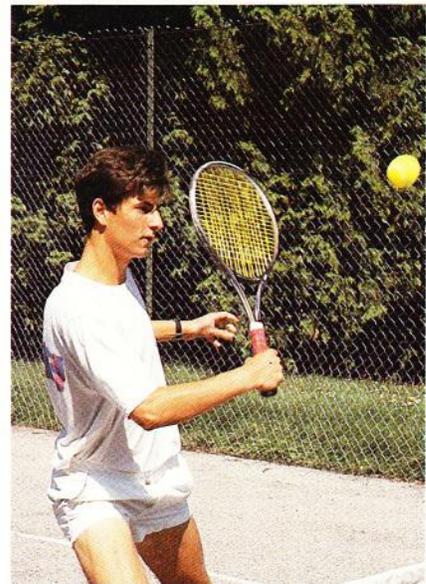
During the Course, progress reports are sent to all parents describing performance in class and also social behaviour. At the end of the Course, all parents are sent a final report and leaving certificate together with a report from the Director on the student's general progress and behaviour.

IF THERE IS A PROBLEM

We shall contact you. Parents must ensure that we have a telephone number through which they can always be reached. If it is an emergency and we cannot reach you, we shall contact the person named in section 8 (our 'emergency contact') on the Application Form. If we cannot contact either of you, we shall assume your authority to act 'in loco parentis' and, in a medical emergency, for example, give consent to appropriate medical treatment. We send students a list of rules and standards of behaviour expected before the Course begins. These are straightforward. Basically, we expect students to respect the buildings, equipment and the feelings of other people and to show good manners.

If a student is correctly motivated (see section on 'Students who will benefit'), there should be no discipline problems. If any should arise, we reserve the right to contact parents and, if we consider it necessary, require that the child be taken home at the parents' expense without refund of Fees.

Rafal, Poland's tennis champion



To Apply

HOW TO APPLY

Answer all the questions on the Application Form and return it to us with (if this is a first application) a letter of recommendation from the school on behaviour and attitude to study. Retain your copy for reference. We shall tell you immediately if the application is acceptable and for which Course. A 'waiting list' operates when the Courses are full.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

To ensure that all our students are well-motivated and keen to participate, we ask that a brief letter of recommendation from the school accompanies all applications from new students. This should mention behaviour and attitude to study. No such letter is needed for students we already know.

WHEN THE APPLICATION IS ACCEPTED

We shall write to inform you of this and include our Invoice for the Course Fees. The Invoice can be settled in full immediately, or 50% can be paid immediately and the balance by the date shown on the Invoice. The place is confirmed when the full Course Fees have been received by us. We shall also request travel details.

HOW TO PAY

Please see the 'Course Fees 1992' slip.

Idun (Norway) gets a call on Telephone Day and everyone joins in



Mary Hare's chant on Sports Day

THE COURSE FEE INCLUDES:-

- residence at the School
- travel Heathrow-School/School-Heathrow¹
- all meals²
- tuition
- the sports programme
- the use of facilities
- excursions
- limited insurance³
- the laundering of clothes⁴

¹At specified times and terminals - see 'Travel'

²Except lunch on excursions, but including lunch on Sports Day

³As described in the 'Insurance' slip

⁴If not sensitive to bulk washing/drying, at your own risk

There are NO EXTRA CHARGES except for optional church, theatre or shopping visits and professional tennis lessons. A small (£3) deduction is made from pocket money to provide indoor board games and records, tapes and CDs for the 'Club'.

THE COURSE FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- pocket money
- optional church/theatre/shopping visits
- travel to and from England

Viktor (Czechoslovakia) in Hawtreys aquatic egg and spoon race



POCKET MONEY

Pocket money can either be brought by students (as a £ cheque drawn on a British bank, payable to 'Vacational Studies Pocket Money A/C') or sent in advance to the National Westminster Bank, 30 Market Place, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5AJ for Vacational Studies Pocket Money A/C 65400100. We recommend at least £45.00 per week. Optional tennis coaching fees and the cost of theatre visit(s) should be added (if applicable). Do not send more money during the Course.

CLOTHES AND POSSESSIONS

Notes and advice on what to bring and other information will be sent to parents and students in advance.



After-Christmas-dinner table-thump at Hawtreys



Sing along with Pedro (Spain)

TRAVEL

It is quite usual for our students to fly alone. For young children, airlines operate an 'Unaccompanied Young Persons' service and look after them. There are many cut-price air-ticket offers - for early booking, for young people, or for travel on particular flights. We operate a collection and return transport service between Heathrow Airport and the Schools on arrival and departure at no charge, subject to the conditions on our 'Travel Details' form. Our staff can meet students arriving at Heathrow Terminals 1 and 2 and check-in students on outgoing flights from Heathrow Terminals 1 and 2 on the stated dates. Our staff are at Heathrow from 12.00-16.00 on arrival days and from 09.30-13.00 on departure days. If flights arrive earlier than 12.00, students wait for our staff near the Information Desk. If flights leave after 13.00, we explain the procedure and take students to wait in the correct area.

When arrival is later or departure is earlier than our stated dates or times, or if the flight is via Gatwick Airport, our standard service cannot be used. We can make special taxi or minibus arrangements on your behalf. We do not charge for making these arrangements, but the cost of the taxi or minibus is payable by the student. (As a guide, a one-way taxi for one person to Heathrow is about £45 and to Gatwick about £55. For two people, the cost can be shared). Special requirements should be indicated on the Application Form and details sent separately.

AT THE AIRPORT

Before travelling, we send an identity badge and luggage tags to ensure quick recognition. Our representatives will carry a large Vacational Studies sign and will meet students at the entrance to the Arrivals Hall after leaving the Customs Hall.

If you do not take our standard collection/return service, but we make other arrangements for you, the same procedure applies.

IF YOU COME BY CAR

Road directions are given after the Schools' addresses. Parents bringing students are asked to arrive at between 12.30 and 14.30. Parents collecting students on the last day are asked to arrive before 11.00.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE SCHOOL

All money is handed in at the Office for safe keeping. Students can withdraw money every day. We keep passports and tickets safely. We cannot accept responsibility for pocket money or valuables not handed to us.

ON THE FIRST DAY

On request, students will be allocated to a returning student who will act as a guide, explaining the layout of the building, the way the Course runs and answering any questions.



Basketball at Hawtreys

SCHOOLS' ADDRESSES AND DIRECTIONS

DOUAI SCHOOL

From London, follow M4 to Exit 12 (Theale). Leave M4 and follow signs 'A4 Newbury' for 9km to Woolhampton. In Woolhampton, turn right after Falmouth Arms at the 'Upper Woolhampton/Douai School' signpost. (Elstree School is 1km along this road on the right). Continue for $\frac{1}{2}$ km. Turn right at 'Main Entrance' sign and immediately left.

Address for students' letters:

Douai School
Woolhampton Reading RG7 5TH.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
Woolhampton 713805 (STD code 0734)

HAWTREYS

From London, follow M4 to Exit 14 (Hungerford/Wantage). Take A338 to Hungerford, then turn right onto A4, through Hungerford and through Froxfield. 5km past Froxfield turn left at signpost 'Burbage 5'. Follow this road for 5km. Turn right at signpost 'Savernake/Burbage'. Continue for 2km then turn left over cattle grid at sign 'Tottenham House'. Hawtreys is at the end of the drive.

Address for students' letters:

Hawtreys
Savernake Forest
Mariborough Wiltshire SN8 3BA.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
Marlborough 870331 (STD code 0672)

THE MARY HARE SCHOOL

From London, follow M4 to Exit 13 (Newbury). Leave M4 and follow signs 'A34 Newbury'. After 1km take slip-road on left signposted 'Curridge/Winterbourne/Donnington', then left signposted 'Donnington'. The Mary Hare School is first on the right.

Address for students' letters:

The Mary Hare School
Newbury Berkshire RG16 9BQ.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):

CHEAM SCHOOL

From Newbury, take the A339 road (signposted 'Basingstoke') for 10km. Cheam School (Front Entrance) is signposted on the right.

Address for students' letters:

Cheam School
Headley Newbury Berkshire RG15 8LD.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
Headley 268803 (STD code 0635)

ELSTREE SCHOOL

See directions to Douai.

Address for students' letters:

Elstree School
Woolhampton Reading RG7 5TD.
Telephone (to contact Course Manager):
Woolhampton 712725 (STD code 0734)

The telephone numbers and addresses given above are only for use during the Courses and only the Course Manager can be obtained on them. During the rest of the year, please use our Newbury Office address and telephone numbers below.

DIRECTIONS BY RAIL

By train from London, leave from Paddington Station. For Mary Hare and Cheam, arrive at Newbury Station. For Douai and Elstree arrive at Reading Station or Midgham Station. For Hawtreys arrive at Pewsey Station. There are normally taxis at Newbury Station. If not, there are taxi numbers in the phone box near the Station. There are always taxis at Reading Station. There are no taxis at Midgham Station. Walk to A4 road, then follow road directions. At Pewsey Station, telephone for a taxi.

VISITS TO THE SCHOOLS

Visits to the Schools outside the Course dates may be made only by appointment through our Newbury Office.

FINALLY....

We have tried to describe the Courses fully and frankly. Please also see the sections 'Unrealisable Expectations' in the News-Sheet. We hope this brochure contains all the information you need to make your choice. Any further details you may require can be obtained from the parents of our past students (the addresses of some of these are on the enclosed list) and the Director. We suggest you contact our parental references as they may offer useful advice.

Our Courses are designed with the benefit of years of experience and we are confident that we can combine the learning of good written and spoken English with an unforgettable and enjoyable holiday.



Hawtreys Cheer Leaders

1991 has seen dramatic events on the world stage. The Gulf War caused many to re-think their travel plans. The Soviet coup attempt made us all hold our breath. The presence of a number of Croatian students at several schools was a constant reminder for us of the plight of their country. We have had students from all the countries involved in the conflicts of 1991. I know that their friends are listening to the world news now with a greater awareness of the human implications of intolerance and armed aggression. I like to think that our students will be sensitized by the international experience they have with us. The Course 'made the world a smaller and friendlier place' said the writer of one of the many letters I have received. 'When you know someone from another country, you get to know something about it, too. That makes the distance between your and his country shorter. I really like the feeling.' This from another correspondent. 'I liked everything about the Course; the lessons, the sports, the excursions and all the people. I also remember well the staff who were excellent. There was a good atmosphere during the Course. A month is too short and I would like to have another month at Vacational Studies. Perhaps next year! I have learned a lot during my stay and my English has made great progress.' 'A wonderful and unforgettable time for me in England'. 'I had a fantastic time. (My brothers) told me what a great time they had, but I did not expect so much fun.' 'Those days, filled with so many deep impressions and emotions will be unforgettable. He enjoyed everything - the teachers, the English study, the possibility to make friendships with children from all Europe, the organisation of free time, the living conditions. At the end of the Course, he had begun to think and dream in English.'

The above, from staff, parents and students, say it all. There are many more, but modesty must prevail....

Elstree 1991



SUMMER 1991 REMEMBERED

An indifferent July was followed by a warm, dry August and a golden September during which these words are being written. The grass remained green and lush, a vivid contrast with the brown scenes appearing on the photos from last year that returning students brought with them. It was almost perfect English summer weather. With almost perfect students? Please read on....

After last year's pilot Course at Douai, we had our normal 80. The enormous help given by Father Dermott, Graham Smith and the Community in the Abbey continued and made everything so much easier. Chris FitzGerald, now a six year VacStuds veteran with considerable and still increasing presence, was in charge with another veteran who showed what he was capable of, David Johnson, assisting. Chris has been appointed Under Master at Chigwell Junior School in Essex, a deserved promotion and a pleasant break after the rigours of the summer. Ever on the ball and keeping me informed of developments as and when they blow up, it was comforting to know that Chris is as fully functioning in the early hours of the morning as he is during the day. Matron, Judith Rigney's calm manner and soothing hand were always ready to cope with whatever medical challenges the students presented her with no matter when they arose. She and her Assistant, Maria Jenkins, made a formidable team. As, indeed, did Sports Organiser, Stuart Keys, and his Assistant, Phil Kefford, along with the hoard of Helpers we acquired - Silvia Abello, Adriaan de Vries, Bart Pereboom and Javier Barreno. Also in the team were the stalwart Clare Higgins, the debutante Sarah Khan, the aquatic Liz Snowdon, the impressive Rachel Bridgeman, the forthright Callum Robertson and the considerable Martin Fraser. The Course play, VacStuds' first foray into Shakespearian territory, was appropriately, the Scottish play, 'Macbeth'. The actors must have played themselves. The students entered into the all-important spirit of the Course and, by and large, confined their activities to those that were on the programme. Paul Leverton and his team from Fairfield Catering made a splendid effort with the food. There was plenty of choice and the quantities were ample. So successful was the Course at Douai and so co-operative are the Community that there will be even more of the Course there in 1992. Please read on....

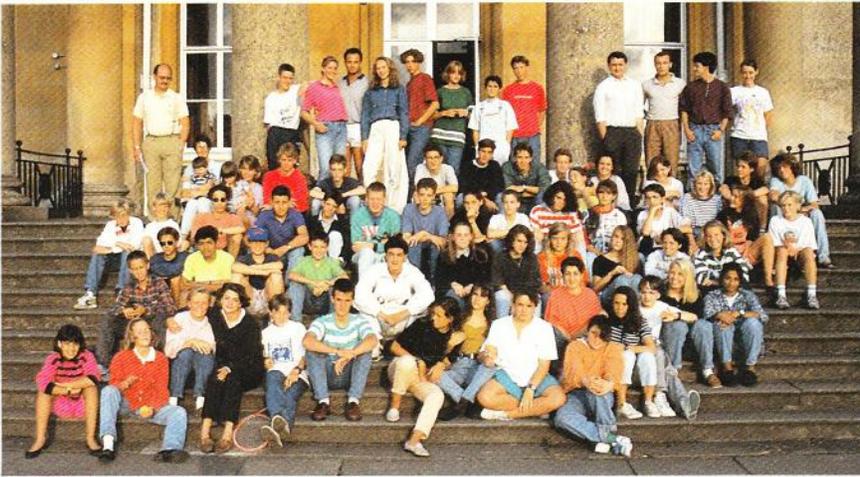
Francis McIvor was back on familiar ground managing Mary Hare. He was much in evidence as the majority of the staff were new to VacStuds. An energetic and high-profile Sports Crew comprising Sports Organiser Tim Colman, his

Assistant Ken James and Staff Helpers Sylvia Halterman, Frédéric Lauret, both first-timers, and old stager Alexander Koch appeared to need little encouragement. They got everything moving - video camera and music centre included. The Folies Bergères made a welcome reappearance and it was good to see the students helping to arrange the programme themselves. They appreciate it more like that. Matron, Teresa Hilton's skills as a mum came to the fore and were especially appreciated by the younger ones. I had hoped to make life easier for her by contracting out the laundry, but I doubt I did so. She and her Assistant, Poppy Sutton, coped admirably. On the teaching staff, Joe Caslin came back for another summer, Rebecca Griffiths and Nicola Rogers came back from two years ago even more experienced and skilled, Alison Payton's calm control was evident, Alastair Luxton was impressive in his first post, Tim Pender - also ACM - and Corinne Wilkinson loved it. I think the students had a great time, too, and most of them fitted into the international community. Just a few national groups clung together throughout and let the opportunities pass them by. All the Schools had the chance to sample Mrs Jean Monger's culinary skills at Sports Day when she catered for 400+. She took it all in her stride. I heard her called 'Mrs Marvellous' which, indeed, she was.



Mary Hare Cheer Leaders

The rebuilding now complete, Elstree now boasts a new dining hall, kitchen and several new dormitories. With so many students returning, it was inevitable that they would have preconceptions about how it would be and saw it as their Course. Several did not realise how they had changed. A few others had hardly grown up at all. Nevertheless, several of the older students showed positive qualities of leadership and were impressive Staff Helper material for future years. George O'Brien headed a largely new staff who realised they were part of a tradition. Sports Organiser, Simon Pastiroff, quickly thought up the entertainments programme with his Assistant, Ben Leyburn. As Staff Helpers we had the serene Rallou Kyriacopoulou, the intensely active Jimmy van der Meij and the inscrutable, tennis-playing Rafal Rachalewski. They all played their part in providing an organised programme that was far more entertaining than some students' alternative arrangements. Matron, Melanie Franklin, coped tirelessly with a particularly demanding job and Emily Salvesen was her resourceful and reliable Assistant. The strong teaching team included ACM John Benkheba back again, Norlene Conway also returning and newcomers Judy Breen, Juliet



Hawtreys 1991

Like several other aspects, this will be changed.

By popular request, Richard Turner returned to run Cheam, ably assisted by Sports Organiser and ACM Jerome Griffin. Jerome was talent-spotted and now teaches full-time at Cheam. I can pick them. Marco (Mark) Bonetti (Bennett) worked his way up through the ranks from student through Staff Helper to Assistant Sports Organiser. He also assumed Australian nationality for the duration. Needless to say 'Aussie Rules' appeared on the programme. Indeed, it was English the Australian way with 'G'day Cobber' variously accented heard from several quarters. Staff Helpers were Julia Schmahl, Albin Ferwerda and Frédéric Pipet. Matron, Beany Beanlands, returned to her favourite stomping ground and did things her own unflappable way, no matter how many twists and turns had to be negotiated. Leona Harrison assisted and advised. The different strengths of the teaching team were put to good use. Returning were Yasmin Ahmad, Jonathan Rowland and John Skepper. Newcomers Julie Griffiths, Lesley Pitman and Howard Bowden completed the line-up. In the main, the students mixed and mingled internationally. For those few who, in spite of a good command of English, remained rooted with compatriots, it was their loss. The catering had its moments. As there were not too many of these, it will change.

Every year there is a Course which is the one I would choose if I had to remain at just one school. This time it would be Hawtreys. With slightly smaller numbers than elsewhere and a very happy group of students, it was always a pleasure to visit. 12 year VacStuds veteran, Chris Gallen had an easy time managing such pleasant people. His ACM, Richard Wijeratne, now in his fifth year decided on a change of scenery and a change of rôle from teacher to Sports Organiser. He certainly showed what he was made of. He was helped by Federico Sanavio who has also made the journey from student through Staff Helper to Assistant Sports Organiser. He and Richard have a sound understanding of what makes a good Course tick. The programme they devised was based on their experience of past Courses in different capacities and it worked. They didn't 'blame it on the sunshine' (although there was plenty of it) or 'the good times' (ditto)

SHs were the ebullient George Saliaris, soon to be studying at the University of Warwick, the vivacious Annemarie van Berkel and Jasper Eenhorst. Matron, Barbara Sykes, was first-class. The domestic and medical sides were well in hand. Catherine Iley was Matron's able Assistant. Returning to the teaching team were tough old hands David Delaney, Richard Ross and Ian Lain (who did the whole six weeks as our 'available teacher' in case we were short-staffed which, in the event, did not happen), joined by first-timers Diane Hacking, Margaret Knight and Colin Creighton. David Edkins of Compass led a happy team of caterers and it showed in their work. This was how we had intended Compass's catering operation to be.

So that our staff are able to carry out basic first-aid and resuscitation, we employed St John's Ambulance's First Aid at Work Unit to teach this at the start of each Course. Everyone took part and all agreed that it was most useful innovation. Christine O'Callaghan provided the instruction and made her lessons on what is a really serious subject, enjoyable as well as informative. We shall continue this as a regular feature.

Tennis lessons were given by Clare Abbot, Liz Fidler and Ivor Meacher. Ivor was our very first tennis coach 17 years ago and has decided to lay down his racquet for the last time.



Cheam 1991

A regular visitor to all the Courses was our ubiquitous Director of Studies, Fred Gooch. It is a great tribute to him that, although he visited every teacher's lesson and made constructive criticism of what he observed, no one had the slightest objection. He combines a shrewd

writing is an acquired skill that comes with time. As our teachers function on the sportsfield as well as in the classroom, time is at a premium, so Fred's guidance and correction in this regard is invaluable. Two areas in particular will be reviewed for 1992. Our textbooks are due for a change. 'Cambridge English' has been with us for four years and is due to be phased out. We shall be using 'OK' as the core coursebook for intermediate students. The near-beginners and upper-intermediate/advanced students will use some of the latest EFL (English as a Foreign Language) publications. At our request, a representative of the British Council visited us in July to advise on our particular needs. I suggested to our book supplier that our superannuated books could be used for teaching English in developing countries. They have devised a scheme for collecting and forwarding them. Our 1987 books are still in print and are used widely in the UK. It is just that we like to be in the forefront of EFL teaching with the latest publications. EFL teachers overseas will be delighted to have such modern teaching material. The other area to be looked at is that of initial placement. Always in the past, we have placed students initially into assessment groups on the basis of their teachers' reports, the length of time they have been studying English and their parents' opinion of their ability. In general, we have not been far wrong and the method of placing students in assessment groups will be retained. Nevertheless, in 1992, students will, during the first teaching day, carry out a series of pre-planned activities which will include all four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) and a piece of extended writing. Their performance will be monitored and obvious misplacements will be corrected. On the second teaching day, a multiple-choice test, appropriate to the assessment group's level, will be given. This test will be marked on a template. Classes will then be selected based on all these criteria. As always, we shall try to be sensitive to other factors and to a student's linguistic development while with us.

We have also looked at ways of encouraging better written English. Although we have the 'English

Only' raffle and prize, there is nothing yet to reward the student whose folder is well-presented. This will be remedied. In 1992, we shall inaugurate a prize for the best folder at each School. The prize will be a remarkably beautiful boxed writing set incorporating a design of the Ashanti tribe

A charity which has benefited from the Courses for some years is 'Childline'. Chewing gum fines go to them. This year, gum-chewers contributed £130 to their worthwhile cause.

Another peripatetic visitor was my Personal Assistant, Mark Brooke-Webb. His multi-tone Fiat was a familiar sight up and down school drives. An excellent helper and a tireless worker, he was even allowed to lay hands on my computer, a privilege never before granted. In a period when I am constantly on call, Mark took much of the pressure off me. Understandably, he did not wish to be photographed....



Douai 1991

SPORTS DAY

After some rainy days in the week, Saturday 27 July was clear, dry and eventually hot. Some visiting parents were able to share with us the remarkable hysteria that has become part of Sports Day and, maybe, its main attraction. Organisationally, as it is held at Mary Hare, the burden falls on the Sports Organiser there. Tim Colman (instantly recognisable as he was painted with our logo) took it all as a challenge and thought through how the day could be made more enjoyable. Gone was the basketball, for example, tucked away from the main action in a gym which rapidly became an inferno and contributed to heated disputes over refereeing decisions. An innovation this year, which may become a tradition, was Cheam's arrival procession, a dramatic, red, banner-waving, chanting crocodile. The strong colours contribute so much to a School's profile on the day that I cannot allow Douai, subtle in silver-grey, to continue to be eclipsed. Douai's new colour will be orange.



Douai Cheer Leaders

Considering that 400+ students are gathered together in a competitive spirit and in a state of high excitement, behaviour was generally good. There was an element of over-competitiveness, sometimes from the adults as well as the children, but the impression that comes across

curdling than it is. I, of course, have the advantage in knowing everybody there. For the staff, the perception is different. It is a sea of unknown faces making vaguely threatening noises.

Catering for the enormous number was in the capable hands of Mrs Monger. Her buffet spread was a sheer delight. This brings me neatly on to one of the central aspects of the Courses....

CATERING

With budgets three times the size of those given at normal boarding school and a comprehensive

specification including continental breakfast bars, choices of several hot dishes and a varied salad bar at lunch and dinner, combined with a menu plan and recipe book all carefully planned ahead, we had high hopes. The eventual success - or otherwise, of these plans depends on personnel, however. At Douai, Mary Hare and Hawtreys, committed professionals led the catering teams and liaised effectively with our Course Managers. To ensure that we have the same level of co-operation and expertise at all the schools, I shall personally choose the Caterer at every school. This will be done with the same care I exercise over the choice of Course Manager. I shall eventually get the catering about right on all the Courses. Nevertheless, as I sat at Douai's final dinner watching a girl wrinkle her nose in distaste and prod with her bread roll a chilled Vichyssoise that would not have been out of place in the best restaurants in the world, I realised that that we can never, never win....

THE 'NOTES'

This is what the rules are euphemistically called. We have always relied on the co-operation of students and staff to help us ensure that our multinational community functions harmoniously. Our students are at an age when some of them will seek to explore how far they can go before authority stops them. Some of them will learn from their mistakes. This is part of the developmental process that takes place on the Course. As their mistakes are made at our expense, however, we claim the right to intervene. Our students quickly realise that Britain is a society without identity cards. We do not have to carry them and, indeed, they do not exist. Alcohol and tobacco products, for example, are on open sale for adults in any supermarket and can be bought by anyone not looking obviously under-age. Such freedom is a temptation for some young people, fortunately just a tiny minority of our

the removal of anyone buying or trying to buy such products. The 'Notes' will be more specific about what we do not permit.

THEATRE TICKETS

Visits to famous West End musicals are very popular with our students. The only way we can get tickets direct from box offices at the standard price is to book months ahead. The problem is that, even requesting ticket allocations a year in advance does not mean that we get them. Often our request is scaled down and some theatres take time to decide on allocations. I am requesting tickets for several shows in 1992, but as I do not yet know what tickets we will receive, the decision as to who goes where will be made when the students are with us. Parents will choose a maximum number of shows and allow for this in deciding the amount of extra pocket money to be sent. We charge the actual cost to us of the ticket + travel. There is no 'mark up'. Students choose which show or shows they see, depending on what tickets are available. If insufficient tickets are available, the money sent for theatre tickets will be returned when the students leave. We shall ensure that, as far as possible, everyone wishing to go to the theatre will see at least one show.

3-WEEK COURSES

These return for 1992 at Douai.

PROGRESS REPORTS

These were revised to a multiple-choice format which hard-pressed staff trying to combine the demands of the classroom, the sportsfield and the duty day found an improvement. Nevertheless, they are written after just a few days and are the teacher's initial impressions only. They are only intended as a guide to how the teacher thinks a student has performed up to then. Further acquaintance and the benefit of colleagues' observations during the Course may mean that the Final Report gives a different slant. This will be made clear in an accompanying letter.

PAYMENTS THROUGH THE BANK

Once again I repeat my request that banks transferring money to us are asked to debit all charges to the remitter. Please ask the transferring bank to include the charge made by our bank for receiving money from abroad. This is about £6, but your bank will be able to calculate the exact amount. Please do not just add a notional amount for charges.

EUROCHEQUES

These are special cheques with 'EC' on them. All Eurocheques over £200 are subject to heavy



bank charges. We do not accept these. Cheques for £200 or less are subject to no charges at all. We can accept these. So while we cannot accept a single Eurocheque for £250, for example, we can accept two Eurocheques - one for £200 and one for £50. It all seems rather odd, but these are the rules here so we might as well take advantage of them. We cannot accept foreign personal cheques with the currency crossed out and £ Sterling inserted.

POCKET MONEY

The balance that must remain in the account will continue to be £20.00. The subscription for the 'Club' will be raised to £3.00. This will enable Staff Helpers to buy compact discs. All the Schools were given new music systems this summer with CD players. We shall again ask parents to send a cheque for pocket money, not cash. About 20% of parents complied with this wish. Some, no doubt thinking that we keep the money in a drawer and give out a £5 note every day, send the whole amount in low-value £ notes which we spend ages counting. We can accept Eurocheques for pocket money provided no cheque is written out for more than £200. We suggest £45 per week pocket money + the cost of theatre ticket(s) and tennis lessons.

LAST MINUTE INFORMATION AND MEMOS

Everyone must have noticed that I become more computerised every year. As my desktop publishing skills increase, so will the number of memos. I hope these are helpful reminders. Very few parents sent faxes to their children this year, or wrote to them at my address.



Mary Hare 1991

THE TELEPHONE

As most Schools now have payphones that use phonecards, in 1991 I relaxed the rule on students' use of the telephone. It was not a good idea. Just two examples may suffice to illustrate my point. A student could not find where to hang her clothes. She phoned her father. He flew over the next day. The girl was away on a trip to London. She had, of course, found where to hang her clothes. Another student saw the Matron because she had a spot. She phoned her parents to give them the news. The parents arranged for an interpreter to phone me in great agitation as they thought she was under the surgeon's knife in hospital. There are few benefits in unlimited

towns they visit on shopping trips. Nevertheless, students will be allowed to use the payphone at the school - with the Course Manager's specific permission and only between 21.00 and 22.00 in the evening. This means that the only activity it will coincide with is 'The Club'. 'Telephone Sundays' will continue as before.

GIOTTO IN NICE - EASTER 1991

This get-together fell victim to the travel fears engendered by the Gulf War, but nevertheless 15 people came to Nice and enjoyed a full programme organised by Stéphane and Franck Lobono. This included a 'Monaco Panoramique' sightseeing tour by helicopter. I have not experienced a flight quite like it. The 1992 Giotto get-together will again be in Nice and will coincide with the annual meeting of the Jörg Weise Association. Several of us are in both organisations, so we shall not have to choose which to attend and I shall not have to commute half way across Europe to perform the trick of being in two places at the same time. I am keen that there should be links between Giotto and the Jörg Weise Association as there are great similarities between them. It will give members of each the chance to experience what the other is like and, who knows, maybe they will see that, while the emphases are different, they are both about contact across frontiers.

Information about the JWA/Giotto Meeting in Nice during Easter 1992 will be sent out in January 1992. Anyone not receiving information can contact me.

I spent Christmas compiling the 1991 Giotto Book. It was published and mailed in the early part of this year. Work will start on the 1992

Book this autumn. It will include only those who have given me new or updated information. This is a gentle reminder to those who have forgotten.

THE JÖRG WEISE ASSOCIATION

Six students came to us this year on Scholarships under the aegis of the Jörg Weise Association. We accept such students only when we have full documentation on them and are sure of their suitability for the Course. Last year, we had assistance from American Airlines in flying students over. This time, it was Lufthansa which extended its help to us. All the Scholarship students were excellent and, as most came from countries we do not usually have students from

The JWA had its Annual Meeting in London. Dr Weise, Tilman Ehret (the current Chairman) and I thought it appropriate that the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Association should take place in the country where it all started. It has come a long way. The JWA now sends students on Scholarships to Courses other than our own. The Oxford Study Centre and Concord College generously offered places. The Jörg Weise Association has published an information card detailing its activities. Anyone wishing to have a copy can write to the Secretary, Claire van Beek at Maliebaan 77a, NL-3581 CG Utrecht (tel: +31-30-340.391).



Elstree Cheer Leaders
STAFF HELPERS

These posts are much sought-after. Most of our 'SHs' are excellent young people for whom I have the highest regard. Nevertheless, I understand that, over the years, a significant minority have identified with the students rather than the staff and, in various ways, taken advantage of the trust we place in them. The number of Staff Helpers will be cut back to one or, exceptionally, two at each School. This should make it easier for Staff Helpers to feel part of the staff common room, rather than a small group whose near-adulthood and foreignness give them more in common with each other than their position gives them with the other staff.

UNREALISABLE EXPECTATIONS

Those who know our work will understand the importance of this paragraph - and why it is important for those sending children to us for the first time. We do what we can to encourage students to learn and use the Course to advantage. We do our best to look after them. We make no other claims. We cannot force a child to integrate. While we provide encouragement, they must help themselves. They will find others who speak their language and they may be tempted to take the easy way. They may come with friends from home. We cannot keep friends apart when they are at the same School. They must decide to broaden their international horizons, mix and use English. Parents make requests, but we reserve the right to place students in what we consider to be appropriate classes and dormitories. The Course is a communal experience. Individual freedom is restricted. Our school buildings are boarding schools - not hotels. Accommodation, wash-rooms, etc. are shared. Our schools become co-

for their use are sometimes needed. Clothes storage space may be limited. All sorts of compromises have to be made, but for most young people this is part of the fun. What we provide and the parameters of what we permit are in our literature. We act on the assumption that parents and students read it all.

A PARENTS' COURSE?

Just a thought. Several parents have mentioned to me that they would like the chance to brush up their English and envy their children the opportunity they have. This has made me think about the feasibility of a Course specially for parents. While the thought of a Course for students in their 20s fills me with horror, all the parents I have met have been interesting, charming and mature people. I often wish they could meet each other just as their children have met. If it happened, the Course would have a very different format and be in a school building with single and double rooms. If this paragraph arouses interest, I may well use my newly-acquired desktop publishing skills to send out a questionnaire.

AFTER THE COURSE

It is an extension of my work to give help, advice and information - so please feel you can contact me on anything to do with Britain. No charge! Education in its broadest sense is my field. Several students of ours receive full-time education in Britain, so by all means let me know if you are thinking along these lines. I deal in contact and communication across frontiers, not just summer courses....

MY THANKS

...to the vast majority of parents who co-operate so well with our work, who prepare their children before they come, who spend hours naming clothes, going through the 'Notes', booking flights that arrive and depart at the right times - and then leave it all up to us. This is all we ask. No doubt the few who telephone my office repeatedly on Sunday afternoons insisting in unknown languages on speaking to their children, who fax greetings and expect these to be taken to the school within the hour and who, by not thinking of the needs of our community, take up our time and energy with trivia will not have read this far to recognise themselves - probably because they not have been sent it....

To those who have entrusted me with their children and to those who have shared this trust as my staff, I give my appreciation and thanks.

Ian G. Mucklejohn - Autumn 1991

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ian Mucklejohn - who, as the Director, co-ordinates the Schools - was born in London. He is a graduate of the University of London with an Honours Degree in English Language and Literature. He has had many years experience in teaching. He is the founder of Vacational Studies.



Hawtreys 'blaming it on the boogie'



VacStuds on legs - Tim (Sports Organiser) on Sports Day



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The Elstree pyramid moments before collapse



Staff Helpers Chorus Line