



THE FALCON

The British School, Rio de Janeiro Newsletter

December 2005

GOODBYE 2005!

Welcome to the last *Falcon* of 2005 – a year that has been full of activity and a fair share of well-deserved success. The last two months have been exceptionally busy and, along with all the end of year events and Xmas celebrations, we have the IGCSE and IB examinations and end of year tests as well as the usual daily activities of the school.

The saddest aspect of the end of year is saying farewell to friends and colleagues who are moving on. At the end of November, we said official goodbyes to our Class 11 graduates. Some of the spirit of their graduation is to be found in *The Falcon*. Class 11 was an exceptionally positive, energetic and cooperative group of young people and we are delighted with their ENEM results that have been coming in. We wish them well with their continuing university applications and thank them for their varied contributions to the school over the years.

The end of this term represents another historic landmark for our school. December 16th is the last day for our Recreio unit. The pupils and staff will be leaving there for the last time and joining our new unit in Barra in February. We began in Recreio with just 7 children in February 2003. We now have 140 pupils there. In February, we shall have about 260 children in our new Barra unit. This amazing growth is testimony to both the courageous decision made by the Board of Governors to develop The British School in Barra and to the positive and genuine support given to us by the Recreio/Barra parents. We wish them all success and happiness in their new home in Barra!

We hope you enjoy this *Falcon* and have a wonderful holiday and a great New Year full of yet more challenge and adventure!



Changes to School Calendar

A letter went out to parents last week about next year's Main Dates Calendar. It explained the reasons behind three important changes being made to the school calendar published previously for Term 2, 2006.

The Board of Governors requested that the school management review the current practice of holding normal school days on either Monday or Friday, when holidays occur on Tuesday or Thursday.

This juxtaposition occurs twice next year, both in Term 2. For 2006, therefore, we are giving two additional days holiday during Term 2 and extending the term by three days. There will therefore be an additional school day in the calendar for the second term.

The revised Main Dates Calendar are on page 4. Please destroy your older version!

Christmas Extravaganza

Mr Ralph Woods

Many of you may be surprised that there is an article in this issue of the *Falcon* about an event that was rained off. However, the Extravaganza was not a total washout since despite the poor weather, a large amount of money was still raised for charitable causes in the local community.

A big thank you goes to everyone who made bids in the **Art for Auction** and to all the students and staff, particularly Mr Jonathan, who put so much effort into making the event a success. The total amount pledged was **R\$ 9,797** and the opportunity to see their work displayed was a great experience for the students. The **House Christmas Hamper Raffle** raised another **R\$ 888**, so many thanks to all those who donated products for the hampers or bought raffle tickets.

My final thank you goes to those people who gave up so much time to organize the Extravaganza and who never got to see the true results of their efforts. They know who they are, but I think it is important to mention them here so everyone else knows too. So thanks to Ms Ana Barone, Ms Ruth, Mr Beto, Mr Luiz Claudio, Mr Jonathan, Carla Santos and of course the driving force behind it all, Mariana Albuquerque.

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Life is Like a Five Minute Speech

The British School Graduation 2005

On Friday evening, 25th November, we said our official goodbye to Class 11: the Graduation. As usual, this event was filled with mixed emotions: the joy of celebration and the sadness of departure. This year was a particularly special one for me, having known many of the young people when they joined our Nursery and were three years old. It was particularly joyful in that many of the graduates had just received the results of the ENEM and were able to celebrate their guaranteed entry to university.

This year, with sixty students, we had the largest number of Class 11 graduates in the school's history. I recall the first Graduation in 1992 when we had only seven graduates! I was Head of Senior School at the time and it was also a very special night for the school.

This year group has made very particular contributions to the life and development of the school and I would like to thank and congratulate the students for their efforts and achievements. This is also the time to recognize and thank the parents for their support of their children and the school.

This year, I was allocated five minutes to deliver an Opening Address and, as I thought about what message I could give the students, the idea of "Five Minutes" began to dominate. What follows is an adaptation of what I said.

After over thirty years as an educator, I have finally learned that many people have poor concentration and very short attention spans. For most people their attention span is just a few minutes. And research suggests that the attention span of young people is getting even shorter. (See 1 below) So, British School Graduates of 2005, you were very sensible to allow me only five minutes in which to deliver this speech! (See 2 below)

To help me prepare this "five minute speech", I went to the internet. I searched out the words "Five Minutes". I got 8,113,785 search results. I have read that an internet surfer spends on average only sixty seconds per website. If I were to spend just one minute on each of the eight million plus search

results for the words "Five Minutes" it would take me fifteen years. That's the time it takes to get from Nursery to Class 11 at The British School! We have so much information - and so many distractions - in life that being able to evaluate, select and focus is a matter of survival.

Fortunately, I quickly found just the website I was looking for: 'The Presentation Helper' - all you need to know about making quality presentations and speeches! This had a section called 'The 5 Minute Presentation'.

The website advises that a good five minute speech should be structured into five stages.

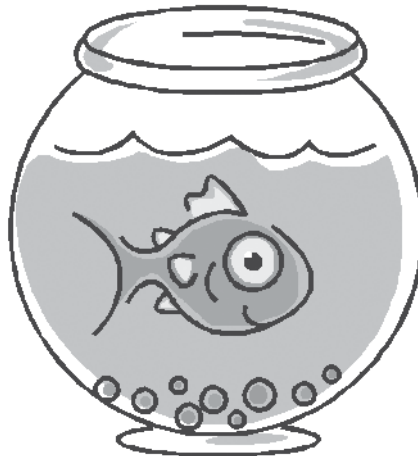
· **Stage 1.** Introduce yourself.

· **Stage 2.** Start with an attention grabber. (Mine was this: "Recent studies have shown that the effects of early exposure to television and the addictive nature of surfing the web can leave a young person with an attention span of nine seconds - the same as a goldfish! (See 3 below) The poor goldfish has the reputation of having an extremely short attention span and very short memory.")

· **Stage 3.** Make One Main Point.

· **Stage 4.** Break down the Main Point into a list of three main concepts.

· **Stage 5.** End on a positive and optimistic note.



The poor goldfish has the reputation of having an extremely short attention span and very short memory.

The website finally advises: "If you can add an element of suspense, so much the better."

My One Main Point is this:

"Life is like a five minute speech: there is so much to do and say but so little time in which to do it. So how do we choose what to do?"

Like the good five minute speech, let's break down this Main Point into a list of three main concepts:

· Know what you stand for, what you value and what you believe in and never compromise on these when you might be under pressure to do so. Have faith in yourself and always test the validity of the information you are given.

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

· Decide on 'Your Own Main Point'. What is your central purpose in life? What are you looking for? Focus – do not be distracted from your goal. You can't do and be everything but you *can* be who ever you want.

· Live your life to the full, value and respect the lives of others and always 'do the right thing' so that, when your life reaches its end, you have no cause for regrets.

And don't worry about the suspense – life will take care of that.

A good five minute speech – indeed, a good life – should end on an optimistic and positive note! So, I've got good news for goldfish! And this is a FACT! Recent research from Plymouth University, England shows that goldfish have memories of three months and they can even tell the time!

Now I've told you that, who and what are you going to believe about goldfish?

British School Graduates of 2005: make the most of your lives, enjoy this wonderful adventure and opportunity with which you have been blessed.....

And, if you ever think you are the smartest one around – or, the opposite, you begin to doubt your own abilities and potential - remember the goldfish. He may or may not have poor concentration and memory – that is for you to decide. However, he's got many other great qualities which get him through life. For a start, unlike many other fish, he's been intelligent enough to stay off most people's dinner plates!

1. A 2004 research made at Washington University, involving a study of 2600 children aged 1 to 3, suggests that early exposure to television may have a negative impact on attention span.

2. For potential speech writers – apparently you can deliver about 150 words a minute!

3. Advice on web surfing: "Give yourself a question, give yourself a goal and write it down. Follow that goal, know why you're surfing..... Because if you don't know why you are doing it, you are going to be pushed around by the most exciting words in a never ending sea of information." (Ted Selker, MIT)

Paul Wiseman

CISACCREDITATION 1995-2005: A DECADE OF IMPROVEMENT...

And now, preparing for the next ten years.

Paul Wiseman - Director

*The CIS Accreditation Preparatory Visit,
Sunday, 4th December to Wednesday, 7th December*

This month, the school hosted an extremely important visit from Mr John Heard, CIS (Council of International Schools) Visitor. The purpose of the visit was to make a broad assessment of the current status of the school in relation to CIS Accreditation Standards and prepare us for the next stage in the cycle of our CIS Accreditation.

The British School started the accreditation process with the first Preliminary Visit in November 1995. A thorough and lengthy "Self-Study" was carried out during 1996 and 1997. During the Self-Study, every teacher, members of the administrative staff, Board members, parents and students participated in committees which reviewed every aspect of the school from Nursery education to financial management. A "Team Visit" took place in October 1997. We were not

immediately accredited at that time and had to work on a number of "areas in need of strengthening" before we could be approved. Eventually, after a lot of hard work – including the acquisition and development of the Urca site - we became an 'Accredited CIS School' in July 1999.

The accreditation process is a ten-year cycle starting from the original Preliminary Visit. This year, therefore, we started the process again with what is called the Preparatory Visit. The Self-Study will start in February 2006 with a large-scale online opinion survey of the school. The Team Visit will take place during 2007.

On Sunday, 4th December, Mr Heard visited the Botafogo and Urca sites. Without people around, it is a good opportunity to check out the health, safety and security aspects of the facilities, as well as the quality of the learning and play environments. In what was a very thorough inspection, we visited every room, bathroom and space on these two sites.

SCHOOL NEWS

On Monday, Mr Heard met the School Management Team in Botafogo and then went on to the new Barra site to review our plans and progress. He then spent the rest of the day in Recreio where he met staff and parents and presented an outline of the accreditation process at a staff meeting.

On Tuesday, Mr Heard was based at Urca. He met staff and students and gave a workshop to a range of staff from across the school and three parent Board members. The workshop was designed to introduce the philosophy and procedures of the Self-Study and examine some of the Standards and Indicators against which we will be evaluating our school. At the end of the day he gave a presentation to the Urca staff and, finally, held a meeting with the Board of Governors.

On Wednesday, Mr Heard was based at Botafogo, again meeting students and staff and presenting to all staff at the end of the day. He also met a group of some twenty parents from across the whole school.

It was an extremely intense visit but everything worked like clockwork. Mr Heard will be writing a report on his visit but he was able to give us the immediate green light to embark on the next ten-year cycle. Although his visit took place at an extremely busy time of year, it was an excellent moment to prepare us for February 2006 when our Self-Study begins. I look forward to keeping you informed and updated during this next exciting phase in the life of the school.

Changes to School Calendar Main Dates 2006, Term 2

Please note that the changes to the school calendar are as follows:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. September 7 th | Thursday | National Holiday |
| 8 th | Friday | Extended holiday (new) |
| 2. November 2 nd | Thursday | National Holiday |
| 3 rd | Friday | Extended holiday (new) |
| 3. December 20 th | Wednesday | Last day of term (this was previously Friday 15 th December) |

The British School - Calendar 2006			
Term 1			
February	Thursday & Friday	2nd & 3rd	Planning Days
	Monday	6th	First day of Term
Feb./ March	Monday to Friday	27th to 3rd	Carnival Holiday
April	Monday to Wednesday	10th to 12th	INSET
	Thursday & Friday	13th & 14th	Easter Holidays
	Friday	21st	National Holiday
May	Monday	1st	National Holiday
June	Thursday & Friday	15th & 16th	Corpus Christi Holiday
	Friday	30th	Last Day of Term
Term 2			
July	Monday	31st	Planning Day
August	Tuesday	1st	First day of Term
September	Thursday & Friday	7th & 8th	Holiday
October	Monday to Friday	9th to 13th	Half Term
November	Thursday & Friday	2nd & 3rd	Holiday
	Wednesday	15th	National Holiday
	Monday	20th	Rio State Holiday
December	Wednesday	20th	Last day of Term

SCHOOL NEWS

Special Educational Needs

Andy Millard, Head of SEN

'If we do what we always do we'll get what we always got.'

C Dickinson 2003

I always try to keep this quote in mind, not because I love changing things but because it reminds me that if we want to make things better we need to question what we currently do and then innovate in order to stay fresh!

So what has been going on in the learning support department this term? The focus of change this last half of term at Botafogo and Recreio has been on improving the individual education plans or IEPs. These outline short term learning targets with specific strategies stating how we will help a child improve and who is responsible for this. They act as stepping stones towards an overall goal for children who need extra support. Parents whose children have an IEP will now be receiving written feedback on how their children are getting on with their targets. They should feel more involved and have a clearer picture of the progress that their children are making. It is only when hard work from learning support staff, the classroom teacher, the child and the parents all comes together that we can see real improvements.

Just as technology is affecting more aspects of our life, it is also becoming a more integral part of the learning support department. We have a school database of standardised scores which is maintained and has been improved by learning support staff. We can now look at all the scores for all pupils and ask those key questions, what are we doing well and what could we do better? In addition, at the beginning of next term all the current systems for recording, tracking and referring children into learning support will be done on the school intranet. This will mean that teachers will be able to share important information about what works well, for example, for a child with dyslexia. This in turn will help children make more progress. Thanks need to go to the ICT department for their support in making this possible.

The learning support department doesn't just look at how best to support children who are struggling with some aspects of learning. We have started working on the area of the gifted and talented or those children who are very able.

Through a series of workshops we have established our school definition of what a gifted and talented child is. You wouldn't usually mention Einstein and Ronaldinho Gaucho in the same sentence but one of the really challenging things we have

been looking at is the different kind of intelligence that Ronaldinho demonstrates when he deftly dribbles the ball past three defenders. Our growing understanding of multiple intelligences will help the school not only identify 'our' Einsteins but also the Oprahs, the Picassos and the Vinicius de Moraes. Our next step will be looking at how to enrich the curriculum and stretch the gifted and talented student's skills.

Throughout this article I have mentioned the planned learning support developments that have taken place and will be taking place at Botafogo and Recreio. The challenge for the school is how to translate this into a real support programme for students at Urca so that we continue to help all children reach their true potential. Timetabling changes as a result of the curriculum review have enabled us to make a start on this. Students will be able to choose Study Support in Class 7 instead of another language. During Study Support sessions they will be assisted in their learning for other subjects and have a reduced overall load by not having to learn in 3 different languages. I believe in having these choices. They enable more students to experience success, encourage students to invest in their learning and increase the quality of learning taking place. There is a long way to go at Urca in developing a real learning support programme but it feels like we are making a positive start.

Lastly, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank those parents who have volunteered their time to listen to children read. Susan Weller, Nicki McAra, Barbara McGregor and Kathy Tellefsen have all been helping to make a difference to children's fluency and understanding in reading. It is especially important that children for whom English is not their first language to have frequent opportunities to express themselves and be heard and I would like to thank them all for taking part in this valuable activity. If you feel you too would like to take part, then please do get in touch with myself or Priscilla.

SCHOOL NEWS

Farewell and Thanks to Mrs Mary Pierce, Head of Library and Information Services

Paul Wiseman - Director

In January 2003 we had the good fortune to appoint Mrs Mary Pierce to the post of Head of Library and Information Services. Mary has proved to be a superb leader, overseeing tremendous development of the libraries across the 2-18 age range and on all three sites. Sadly, Mary will be leaving us at the end of this year.

Mary was appointed with the major and challenging brief to develop library and media services in our expanding school. She has achieved much of this mission with excellence. In the process, Mary has raised the standards, profile and daily use of the libraries to levels beyond our expectations. She has been able to inspire and lead others in giving the school libraries a more central role in the school.

Indeed, the libraries have become very popular destinations for students and teachers and are serving the needs of the users and the curriculum admirably. The libraries are now being seen as dynamic and integral to the whole educational programme. They are attractive and accessible, and play a major role in developing positive habits of reading and information literacy skills among our students.

Mary's brief entails a very close involvement with school heads, coordinators and teachers. In this respect, she played a significant role of liaison and guidance. She has a thorough knowledge of the teaching and learning process and is

completely familiar with information technology as applied to library and information services, being a key source of advice in the development of online resources.

A major task has been to train and develop a team of Librarians and Assistants to daily manage the library services. Indeed, Mary has been very supportive of her immediate colleagues who had considerably less experience and who regularly sought her professional advice and friendly, willing support.

In summary, Mary has redesigned our library and media services to meet the needs of our curriculum, students and teachers. She has played a significant role in the development of a key area of the school over an important phase of its life, giving total commitment to her task and serving us with a high level of dedication. Her contribution to the life of the school has been outstanding.

While Mary has enjoyed her professional life in the school and in Brazil, she has decided that it is time to move back to her home area of Florida, USA with her husband, Bruce. Mary's departure certainly represents a great loss to our school. We thank Mary for her unique and special contribution to our development and wish her and her family all happiness for the future.

Farewells in the Senior School

Chris Blanch, Head of Seniors

As we approach the end of term we always seem to say goodbye to some pupils and staff as they move on with their families or careers. We have several pupils leaving Rio, some staying in Brasil others going to the UK. We wish them well and they know they are always welcome to visit again.

From the teaching staff we say goodbye to Helen Lofthouse and Richard Dolan in the English Department. Helen has been a strong classroom teacher and tutor and apart from being seen in various community players plays, she successfully organised the Poetry Week this year. Richard Dolan has been extremely dynamic in his drive to support the English curriculum development. He has been a highly respected teacher and tutor but the progress he has made as a coordinator has shown many staff what can be achieved when teams work together.

Rebecca Keeley has been another fine example of a highly organised teacher and tutor. She has supported the Geography Department on field trips and has been extremely effective in contributing to the Class 6 tutor team this year.

Ms. Harry Davis as Head of Physics and Head of Year 10 has given much to the school in her short time here. Her calm

manner with pupils, parents and staff is a huge asset in all that she does. Her contributions to extra-curricular events, especially the Duke of Edingburgh expeditions, have been thoroughly appreciated by pupils.

Mr. David Noon is also leaving, having helped out across the school in so many ways. He has been seen as a Laboratory assistant but has helped with the yearbook, school photographs, art support and many, many trips. He too has given invaluable support to the Duke of Edingburgh trips. As these teachers move on to develop careers and new experiences we wish them well and thank them for the support they have given to the school.

Finally, although Ms. Marcia RaquelAbeid is not leaving the British School we should thank her for her dedication to the Senior School at Urca as she now moves on to another post as Portuguese teacher at the new Barra site. Marcia has been extremely effective supporting the second language pupils and this year proved to be a very caring and supportive tutor of Class 7 pupils. So we wish Marcia all the best for January.

SCHOOL NEWS

Farewell to Andy Waite, Lower Seniors Coordinator

Maria Woods, Head of Primary & Lower Seniors

Andy Waite has worked with the Class 5 team now for two years and his presence will be greatly missed by them. Over the two years he has built up good relationships with students and parents alike and has worked together with the Class 5 team to raise the quality and depth of the curriculum and of teaching. Being the father of a 12 year old daughter has helped to give him insight into aspects of dealing with this age group in this school. His contribution has benefited the team and the school greatly.

Andy is moving on to new challenges and experiences and we hope that his time with us has given him opportunities to develop and learn and that he is leaving The British School with good memories and a wealth of experience that will help and guide him wherever he decides to work. Thank-you and good luck, Andy.

PTA REMINDER

Dates for your calendar:

February 15, 2006 at 08:00 - PTA Meeting

March 8, 2006 at 08:00 -AGM of the PTA

Book Week at Recreio

Tatiana Sobral – Infant 1 Teacher

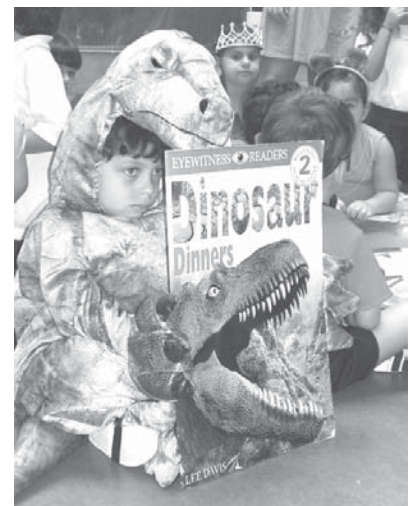
The whole school community at the Recreio Site had a great time during the Book Week at the beginning of this month. The project was organized by the Library staff and all classes from Pre-Nursery to Class 1 participated in a range of interactive tasks that took them all into the world of books and imagination. Special thanks go to Ms. Aline Carnevale, our Librarian at Recreio, who helped and cheered us up during this big event!



Parents and teachers were "Celebrity readers" for a week!



Everyone in school had to D.E.A.R. – Drop Everything And Read – as they heard a special whistle.



The children brought books and costumes of their favourite characters!

BOTAFOGO NEWS

WHO ARE WE?

The Lower Primary members of the Botafogo Management Team

The Botafogo Management Team wondered if you might like to know something more about us, so I would like to introduce you to the Lower Primary team members.

Carol Walton, Head of Lower Primary

I have been in the teaching profession for 33 years now, the last six of these have been in coordination and Headship roles within South America, so I have extensive teaching experience. I was late in becoming an ex-pat, having raised my two sons to manhood, before spreading my wings and taking that step into the unknown. Having said that, I thoroughly enjoy living in South America and feel that I have learned a great deal from the experience. I have travelled to the Amazon, the Falls at Iguaçu and the Pantanal. I am currently in the middle of an M.A. course with Oxford Brookes University in England, leading to a degree in International Education. This only goes to prove that you are never too old to learn! My main interests are in bilingual education and thinking skills; how to increase and improve children's ability to think in different ways to solve problems. I believe that children should have time to explore the world around them in order to enrich their thinking and understanding.

When I am not working, I enjoy reading, films and the theatre and recently took up Arabian dancing!

Bia Sena – Nursery Coordinator

I joined The British School of Rio de Janeiro in August of 1982. My first role was as a Class Assistant for Nursery and Reception in the Brazilian wing. One year later I was invited to join the British wing to be an Assistant Class Teacher for Class 4. Years later, we became a "whole school" and I became a Class Teacher, with experience from Nursery to Infants.

Five years ago we decided to run a full day Nursery. We moved to a new building and I was appointed to coordinate this year group. This was a great challenge and has been a rewarding experience.

Being in this position helped me analyze the importance of early years education and the early introduction of a second language.

In January 2003, I spent a month in Lincoln, at Bishop Grosseteste College, visiting schools and observing British practice. During my visits to UK schools I observed several Science lessons in which the students were deeply involved with experimentation, or hands-on activities that bridged theory to practical application. After studying Experiential Learning, I was attracted to the hands-on approach. There are many activities to be done and guidelines to be followed in order to develop children's skills

- 1- give children the time and freedom they need to explore
- 2- respect individual differences. Since children learn at different paces, all children may not fully understand every concept presented.

I believe that it is important to plan a balanced programme, as well as to take advantage of the 'teachable moment', when something interesting happens or appears and you take the opportunity to develop it.

Ruth Worswick – Lower Primary Coordinator

I taught English in a Japanese High School, in Japan for four and a half years and then in Primary schools in Hertfordshire, England for two and a half years, as a Deputy Head Teacher, before coming to Brazil. I have an M.A. in Comparative Education.

I want the children to be happy and secure in their learning, because I believe that learning can and should be, fun. Children should be learning at the right level for them and should be challenged at every level to help them achieve their potential. I am very interested in gifted and talented children and I strive to turn children into great thinkers.

When I am not at work, I love to travel in Brazil (my favourite places being Foz and the Amazon), read, sail, go to the theatre and keep fit at the gym or walking around the Lagoa.

BOTAFOGO NEWS

Changes for the New Year

Maria Woods, Head of Upper Primary & Lower Seniors

Well, the end of the academic year for 2005 is here and, already, in The British School we are thinking ahead towards 2006. I felt that a fitting way to end the year would be to give parents some information that will be very relevant to them in the New Year.

Next year there will be a change in the Management Team of Upper Primary and Lower Seniors. I will remain the Head of Section but Andy Waite will be leaving us for pastures new. I am sure all that know him wish him every happiness and great success in the future. Many people here will miss him.

Alison Whitney will be moving over to manage Class 4 and Class 5. I am thrilled she is prepared to make this move as I feel she will be invaluable in that role. The role of Class 1, 2 & 3 Coordinator will be taken on by Jonathan Smales and I am certain that he will do an excellent job in this position.

So that you know a little more about all of us, please find some fairly brief 'pen portraits' of the three of us below. We all look forward to getting to know parents of pupils in Class 1 through to Class 5 even better next year.

PEN PORTRAITS OF THE UPPER PRIMARY AND LOWER SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM 2006

Jonathan Smales C1, 2 & 3 Coordinator (Upper Primary)

Jonathan started his teaching career in 1997, after obtaining his teaching degree at Leeds Metropolitan University, which is in the north of England. His first teaching appointment was in a Junior School of approximately 200 pupils. During his time there, he taught Year 3 and Year 4 (Class 1 and Class 2). From there he moved back to London, and taught Year 6 (Class 4) in an inner city school. The school is situated in one of the more deprived areas of the city and it was here that he developed his classroom and behaviour management skills. Upon being offered the post of Class Teacher at The British School, he moved to Brazil in 2001. When he first arrived, he taught Art for Class 4 and 5, and then moved to Class 3, and finally Class 1. From February 2006, he will be the new Coordinator for Upper Primary, Classes 1 to 3.

Outside of school, Jonathan's passions are; "architecture, going to the gym, cars, my weimaraner (Samantha) and the restaurant, Gula Gula! I adore living in Brazil and find the cultural diversity amazing."

Alison Whitney Class 4 & 5 Coordinator (Lower Senior)

Alison studied Geography at Southampton University and, after a few years working on a sailing boat, completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Education. She taught for 4 years in London. Whilst teaching in London she worked with Classes 1, 2 and 3, as well as being responsible for coordinating Mathematics. Alison joined The British School in February 2001 as the coordinator for Upper Primary, Classes 1 to 3. This has been a position which she has found very rewarding. She is looking forward to her move to Coordinator

for Classes 4 and 5 and feels that it will be very fulfilling to continue working with the children that she has known since Class 1. In her spare time she loves going to the beach and reading.

Maria Woods – Head of Upper Primary and Lower Senior

Maria completed a Joint Honours degree in Biochemistry and Electronics in 1986. Whilst at university, Maria studied to become a Secondary School Science teacher for two years but at the end of her second Teaching Practice, decided that teaching was not what she wanted to do! She then embarked on a career as a pharmaceutical sales representative in the area around the historic city of Cambridge in the South East of England. After one year, of essentially quite a lonely job, she re-evaluated the direction of her life and came to the conclusion that teaching was in fact the career she wanted! This time she decided to train to become a Primary School Teacher. Maria completed her Post Graduate Certificate in Education the following year and moved to the county of Hertfordshire for her first teaching post. She worked happily at her first school for four years, teaching both Class 1 and Class 4 age children, and then decided she wanted a change of location.

In 1992 Maria moved to Milan in Italy to teach Art to Class 5 age children and a variety of subject areas to Class 4 age children in the Middle School of the International School of Milan. She loved Milan and stayed there for three years, then returned to the UK for one year, just to 'touch base' with home. Her next stop was Taipei in Taiwan where she worked as the Head of the Primary section at Taipei British School. It

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BOTAFOGO NEWS

(Continued from previous page)

was in Taiwan that she met her husband, Ralph, and together they moved to Singapore in the year 1999. Here Mika, their daughter, was born in 2001. In September 2001 the family moved to Rio and Maria began working as the Staff Development Coordinator at The British School, a role she held until January 2003, when she became the Head of Section for Upper Primary and Lower Seniors.

Since moving to Rio, Maria has enjoyed the opportunities she has had to see various places in Brazil and South America. The family has spent two long holidays driving around the South of Brazil and around the states of Minas Gerais and Esp rito Santo. One of the most memorable trips she has made since being in South America was when she and Ralph were able to walk the Inca Trail in Peru, a truly memorable and breathtaking experience! South America really does have some amazing scenery and history.

All about the Student Council

Giovanna Azevedo, Class 3R

At the beginning of the 2nd term, students volunteered to be part of the first ever Botafogo Student Council. Being a Student Council Representative is a very important job. We representatives are in charge of making the students' opinion about school life be listened to and taken into consideration. As we say, students not only have to be seen, but heard. We representatives took a vote and the most important issues were school food and uniform. We also organized a questionnaire to find out about the students' opinion about the food. Surprisingly, the results were that the majority dislikes the school food. Our basic job is to discuss our opinions to find a final conclusion. As we also say, it's OK to disagree (in a polite way). As time passes, more discussions and conclusions are being made and changes for better as well. I'm from the Student Council and I really like to be part of it. But we also must remember that it's not only about the representative's opinion, it's about ALL students' opinion. We will also be discussing about uniform.

Class 4 Religious Trip

Carolina, Class 4

On Friday, 25th November, 2005 Class 4 took a religious trip to visit and learn more about the synagogue and the Buddhist temple. We had to sort out our groups and my group was Harpy Eagle. We had a little talk with Mr. Victor and he explained to us what the trip would be like before we left the school. We now had got a taste of what the trip would be like. So off we went to our exciting day out.

My bus was the first to leave the school. We were anxious so we made a big mess in our bus. The bus driver left the bus as crazy as a person can be and we went off to the Buddhist temple. When we got there we had a great surprise with the view and the place the temple was settled. Mrs. Lynda said the view would have improved if the weather was better. But it was still excellent.

In the Buddhist temple my first impression was that it was a simple place and not so rich in money. Our tutor lead us to a small room where we would have to leave our shoes. We had to take our shoes off for the simple reason of hygiene because if we had our shoes on we would probably get mud inside on the floor where people meditate. The man who talked to us there was a religious man and he was quite fun. He gave us a talk in Portuguese but then we translated it to English on our

worksheets. The temple was simple and quite straight forward. There were big tables in the front with the Buddha on top. There were many different images on these tables. They were also in different positions. The man said they were different because they came from different places. The colours were basic. There was quite a lot of red and yellow and some golden things although they were not made out of gold. There were quite a few flowers there, they meant something that once exists and then finishes. This was what was happening to us. We had once gone there and now we needed to go.

So we got in the bus and went, and we set off to our next exciting trip. We went to the synagogue. My first thought was that it would be great fun just as it had been in the temple. The way was long, after all we had to go from Santa Teresa to Barra and it was long but it seemed short while we were on the bus having a good time.

Finally, we got there. It was so different from the temple. It was modern compared to the temple. Although it was full of details as opposed to the temple, it was so beautiful. When I saw it I thought, my first impression was right, it was absolutely wonderful! The whole of Class 4 met in a huge room which was at the bottom of the synagogue. We had our snack which was

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mostly junk, and then we had some time to relax in the garden. Five minutes passed and then we went upstairs to the real synagogue. The boys had to wear Kipas before they passed through the door. When we entered the synagogue we got face to face with a man. He would talk us through all our doubts and all the places inside that wonderful place. I don't remember his name but he was a Rabbi. The synagogue looked like this, there were some pillars which had carvings on them, there was a table from which the Torah is read and there was a cupboard which was called "Aron hakodesh", which means sacred place. I was impressed when the Rabbi took the Torah from the cupboard to show us, it was magical and huge! The Torah is a religious book which is read every Monday, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It is read throughout the year.

Unfortunately, it was time to go but it was OK after all that fun. It was the only way to finish that day. We waved goodbye to the synagogue and set off to school! The day couldn't have been better!

Religious Trip

Gustavo O.

All the Class 4 went to a religious trip in the Buddhist temple and also in the Jewish temple. We went on the 25th of November, 2005. The Buddhist temple was in Santa Teresa, and the Jewish temple was in Barra. We had a book to write notes about what we learnt inside the temples.

We all went to school and waited until the bus arrived, at 8:00am. The caimans were divided into different groups because they did not have their own bus. The first temple we visited was the Buddhist one, it took more or less 2 hours to arrive there. To enter the sanctuary we needed to take off our shoes, to show our respect for the God Siddhartha Gotama, in other words Buddha. We needed to sketch a drawing of Buddha in our own book, it was difficult because it had many patterns. There were two men explaining about Buddha's legend. Everybody was interested in the Buddha's circle of life. We learnt many things about him, one of these things was how he achieved his illumination. Finally, the Buddhist trip was over. We donated our money, and lined up in groups, to enter in the bus. It was indeed a very marvellous trip to the Buddhist Temple.

After 1 hour, more or less, we arrived in the Synagogue, in other words the Jewish Temple. When we arrived we ate our lunch. It was very tasty. We needed to clean it all up, because it was very clean when we came there.

Then we went to the garden to play. After this we went to the temple, and after entering in it the boys were forced to put the kippa, in order to respect God. There was an old man which explained to us many things about the Jewish religion. He also showed us a big book, which was a very preserved and most important artefact in the Jewish religion. And this was the end of our religious trip.

Religious Trip

Erika

On Friday 25th November, Class 4 went to a religious trip. First we went to a Buddhist temple then to a Jewish Synagogue. We went in the bus as Houses. As there were just three buses, Caiman needed to split into three.

We first were going to the Buddhist temple in Santa Teresa. During the trip, we saw a little bit of the film 'Beauty and the Beast'.

When we got there, I was surprised as I saw a long staircase. I was tired as we got upstairs. But I had a great surprise as we got upstairs: a great pond. We needed to take off our shoes to get in, and we went to a meditation room. There, the president of the Buddhist temple had a talk with us. We did some meditation, and looked around the place. We also gave a donation. We did our worksheet, and then it was time to go.

I really liked the Buddhist temple, but I thought it was a little bit uncomfortable to sit on the cushions. The benches were far too close to the floor, so it made it uncomfortable. We watched another part of the film as we went to Barra.

When we got to the Jewish Synagogue, we were surprised. The place was not quite, but totally different from the Buddhist temple.

Differently, it had a pool at the front entrance, and the building was bigger than the Buddhist temple. We got to a normal room; a place where there are meetings, could be. We had our packed lunch: a bag of crisps, some sandwiches, a chocolate bar, an apple and a fruit. The normal. As we finished, we went upstairs to the Jewish Synagogue. We entered to see a place completely different from the temple: chairs (comfortable ones), a table where the rabbi read. The place was very big. The Rabbi got the Torah; the Jewish bible, that is read from back to front, and in Hebrew.

We finished our worksheet, and it was already time to go home. I noticed how the day passed quickly, and how it was fun to learn about what different religions do, even if they aren't your own religion. It was really a very fun day!

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My Religious Trip

Bram Wise

On the morning of Friday 25th of November I was supposed to set out on a trip to a Buddhist temple and a Jewish synagogue and well.....that's what happened.

Once I had got to school, Mrs Lynda told all the Caimans to go to Mrs Liana's class and we did just that. She (Mrs Liana) then put us into groups and mine was going with the Jaguars, one of the cool houses! The bus trip was OK but it was so boring and I almost fell asleep.

When we finally got out we had to go up these strange steps supported by a couple of beams that didn't make me feel safe at all. We walked through a small garden that had a dog that was quite friendly but it didn't look it. The teachers said that we had to take our shoes off and sit on the benches but I had to sit on the last one because Mr Victor would translate for me.

From the talk I understood that the reason they had so many different Buddhas was because the different countries had different ideas of what he looks like. The reason they wear orange is because red means death as much as yellow is a sunset or a new beginning and mixed together they make orange.

He told us the story about Siddhartha and his choices of leaving his kingdom and family to find out the meaning of suffering and he sits under a tree and becomes enlightened and becomes the Buddha.

When we arrived at the synagogue, everyone was starving but the lunch was really nice. Mr Victor said there wasn't enough Galak bars for two each and guess what I saw when I was picking up soggy crisps with my bare hands, he was eating his second Galak bar!!!!

The guy that talked to us was not speaking as fast so I understood what he said about Noah's ark and Hanukah and then he explained that when he reads the Torah there are signs that tell him to sort of sing it. We then got to see the Torah but not touch it because it was so sacred and we had to sketch the light above the place where the person reads the Torah and the back door.

All in all it was better than a normal school day for most people I know.

A busy year for the Botafogo House System

Ralph Woods

In the words of John Lennon, "And so this is Christmas, and what have we done?" Well I have to say quite a lot! On the sports front this year we have had two Sports Days, 10 football competitions, 6 dodge ball competitions, a basketball competition, a netball competition, a softball competition, the Class 5 Tijuca Forest challenge and 5 swimming Galas. In the charity cup competition we have held sponsored events for the Asian Tsunami relief effort, raised money for the Pakistan earthquake and Guatemalan landslide victims, raffled Christmas Hampers for local Rio de Janeiro charities, collected rooms full of clothes and toys etc for CELPI and donated a total of over R\$ 4,500, not to mention the students' Matriz project fundraising efforts at the Founders Day Fete. Also this term we had two House Talent shows, won by Julia Altit of Harpy Eagle and Gabriel Centeio of Jaguar.

During the year more than four hundred students have received 25 House Point certificates and twenty two 100 point certificates have been awarded. The total number of House Points earned in the second term was over 23000, with the Term 2 Cup being won by ?????*. The Sports Cup and Charity Cup were both awarded to ?????* this term. The winner of the big one, the overall 2005 House Point Cup was ?????*. Whilst winning is nice, I believe that the students in Upper Primary and Lower Senior get a whole lot more out of the House system than prizes. This is due in a large part to the efforts of the House Captains and prefects, so well done to Gabriel Cohen, Poppy Wilks, Antonia Coury, Renata Ortenblad and all of the Class 5 students who got involved this year. Another group who deserve a big thank-you are the staff. In particular I'd like to single out Mr Victor, who despite stepping down from the position of House coordinator, has always been the first to volunteer to help out all year long, be that keeping goal, refereeing matches or supervising raffle ticket sales. Your input will be sorely missed next year Victor, but at least the new Barra site will be getting a ready made House supremo.

I hope that everyone has a good rest this holiday so we can have an even more active House system at Botafogo next year. I'm sure that the newly elected House Captains for 2006, can't wait to get started.

*** ?????: You will all find out at the final assembly!**

Senior School News

Chris Blanch, Head of Seniors

The end of term two and the end of year should bring a feeling of satisfaction and perhaps relief that we have achieved much of what we set out to do and more. If you have been reading *The Falcon* regularly you would have kept up to date with the events and developments over the last academic year. However, it is perhaps worth mentioning a few of the highlights again.

Back in January we had the IGCSE and IB results. There were some outstanding individual performances at IGCSE although the class performance was consistent with previous years. The IB results were the best yet and we had our first maximum points score. In February we were able to start the term with additional space. The Senior School from Class 6 to Class 11 had increased to nearly 400 pupils, so the addition of the Urbano Santos house made space for three teaching rooms, various offices and an IB study room. Although it is yet to have easy access to the top floor, it has been a very useful addition. At the same time the fire escape going to the top floor has added the necessary safety we need to operate properly. New staff in February also helped get the year off to a positive start. Ms. Ilma Lima and Ms. Cristina Nogueira joined the English Department, Ms. Del James joined Mathematics and has successfully seen Class 9 through their year, and Ms. Beatriz Martins joined the Portuguese Department. Later in the year, Mr. John Jackson also completed the Mathematics team. Internal appointments for Ms. Harry Davis and Mr. Phillip Briggs strengthened the pastoral team. In June we said good bye to Ms. Amanda Woollam, our Director of Music, but have been very lucky to have two talented musicians Ms. Sica Malaguti and Mr. Pedro Carvalho enthusiastically supporting the Music department since then.

What pupils do beyond the classroom often enriches the curriculum and helps pupils recognize its relevance. Events such as the IB Theatre Arts, Antigone, the Music Evening, Get Smart, Poetry Week, Biology Week, Physics week, Africa Evening, the Class 9 and 11 study weekend, October Arts Evening, Witches of Eastwick, Library week, Mathematics Challenge. These, along with the curriculum trips by the Geography, History and Science departments, along with the four different July holiday trips, show how busy teachers and pupils are to organize and participate in such a variety of activities.

Due to the nature of our site, being a sports teacher at the school is very demanding, using a limited range of rented

facilities may affect pupil interest. However, this year we have again seen some truly superb performances. Back in May, the Girls Volleyball took first place in the Little 8 competition. In October at the Rancho Spring Festival, the boys were second in the Basketball, second in Volleyball and first in Soccer. We had eight players named for the All Stars and Patrick O'Khouri and Pedro Pereira named as most valuable players. The girls were not to be outdone, also gaining second place in Basketball and Volleyball and coming third in soccer. Five more All Stars were named and Anna Pereira named as most valuable player. The P.E. Department have been very proud of the attitude and team spirit of our pupils, regardless of the results.

The House system was revolutionised this year with pupils as House Captains taking the lead in the organisation of many events and encouraging participation. The quality of many of the events has been significantly improved and the House Coordinators, Ms. Barbara Labanca and Mr. Rodrigo Machado have made superb efforts to oversee the competitions.

The frustrations of the year should also be mentioned as we should reflect on these and consider how they may be improved. Attendance and punctuality has been a problem in that significant numbers of pupils arriving late or leaving early has affected the learning of others. Belonging to a school requires responsibility towards oneself and others. Group activities and individual learning can be hindered every time a parent decides to make an afternoon booking for their child to go for a medical. Early departures and extended weekends have also affected many Friday lessons. At Urca we place some responsibility on our pupils to communicate with parents. I believe this is part of the educational process. However, it does require some monitoring as it would seem some pupils believe they can choose whether or not parents should see some of the home-school communications sent out. The introduction of the monitoring of parallel recuperação has been successful in alerting us to concerns over attainment but unfortunately we still find some pupils believing that a good performance in the end of year examinations will resolve the problems. We are trying to encourage pupils that continuous learning through good habits is the key to success.

So, as we come to the end of the year, I hope we recognise how we made progress so the lessons of 2005 can be used to make 2006 more successful. -

GRADUATES' PAGE

GRADUATION SPEECHES

Every year the school must say good-bye to the Class 11 students. It is both a sad and happy moment for them, for their teachers and for their parents. Below you will find excerpts from the speeches delivered by the students and teachers that testify to the many emotions felt at this important stage of growth, achievement and change. The full speeches are available on the school's website at www.britishschool.g12.br.

Graduation Class of 2005

(...) I have given some thought to what is most appropriate for this evening. These young people, by being here tonight, have achieved something quite special (and I am not just talking about their punctuality and being on time for a change!) they are completing the final year of The British School. Over the years their successes and their failures have led them to this day. Each of them have their different abilities and talents, many of which will be recognized at the Senior School Prize Giving Evening next Tuesday. If an 18 year old Einstein or Shakespeare or Santos Dumont were sitting amongst them would we be singling them out tonight? Perhaps not and I hope not. I believe we should be acknowledging other qualities today. It is important that we reflect on the past, (I am sure many memories are being shared tonight) as all good Historians will tell you, by understanding our past we can see the way forward.

Chris Blanch, Head of Senior School

To whom it may concern

Letter of Recommendation for the Graduation Class of 2005

(...) It gives me enormous pleasure to have this chance to write a reference for the Graduation Class of 2005, especially as it gives me the opportunity of revenge for all the suffering they have caused me over the last 5 years. I know them well and consider myself well placed to write a reference for them. I have taught some of these students for 5 years and they have spent roughly 700 hours in my classroom. They seem to have come out of it rather well; it is a shame the same cannot be said about me. Others have been fortunate enough to spend much less time in my classroom but I have come to know them well through the House System, the fact that I was unfortunate enough to be their Head of Year in Classes 9 and 11, Duke of Edinburgh trips and a very revealing trip to Russia, Poland and France.

Garry Nash 14

STUDENTS' SPEECH

It's been a long way to Class 11, and it's been a long way to the completion of this speech. There aren't enough words in any language to express all that must be said. É por isso que esse speech vai ser meio misturado. Um pouquinho em português, some of it in English... Porque é assim mesmo que um verdadeiro aluno da Escola Britânica fala, no limbo. And a true British School student is surrounded by support whether that comes from your family, your teachers or your friends.

(...)

Fifteen years is too long a period for each of us to summarise in a few short sentences. The truth is that in some way or another, we have influenced each other's life. The years spent in The British School make up a baggage of emotions that we'll carry from here on. So far, a great deal of our lives has revolved around The British School. There are mixed feelings towards the future, some of us are scared, others excited, many confused and some just want to put it on hold. Class of 2005, whatever your personal thoughts are regarding what is to come, we're sure it will be filled with opportunities and we have everything to be successful. Make use of them. The very best of luck to us all.

Karen Mendlowicz, Thaissa Sá, João Francisco Ribeiro

Discurso de Formatura – 2005

(...)

Agora, sim, podemos encerrar. Pedimos a compreensão dos ouvintes para as várias licenças poéticas tomadas nesta fala um tanto modernista – tanto nos conteúdos, quanto na fragmentação e ousadas coesões. Mas apenas recorrendo ao auxílio da linguagem poética para conseguir falar de tantos seres em curto espaço de tempo. Eles mereceriam muito mais. De todo modo, esperamos que a poesia, que nos amparou agora, nunca deixe de freqüentar suas existências, assegurando uma dimensão de sensibilidade às rotinas frenéticas e pragmáticas da vida moderna industrializada. Que eles sempre procurem realizar a “*difícilima peligrosíssima viagem / de si a si mesmo*”, a viagem da qual falava o poeta Drummond, para que descubram “*em suas próprias inexploradas entranhas / a perene, insuspeitada alegria / de con-viver.*”

Bárbara Labanca e Rodrigo Machado

URCANEWS

UNIVERSITY RESULTS GRADUATES 2005

Below is the list of universities and courses to which the current Class 11 have been accepted. The final list will be published next year when all the students receive their offers and vestibular results.

On the next page, *The Falcon* is publishing the results of last year's Class 11 (2004 graduates), as the list in the previous edition was incomplete.

COURSE	UNIVERSITY	COUNTRY
Economics	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Economics	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Law	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Law	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Languages	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
International Relations	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Psychology	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Business Management	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Business Management	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Communications	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Communications	PUC/ENEM	Brazil
Economics	IBMEC	Brazil
Economics	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Architecture	USU	Brazil
Art	St.Martins	UK
Art	Chelsea College of Art	UK
Art	Camberwell College of Art	UK
Computer Software Engineering	SENECA	Canada
Communications	London College of Communications	UK

URCANNEWS

UNIVERSITY RESULTS GRADUATES 2004

COURSE	UNIVERSITY	COUNTRY
Architecture	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Business Management	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Business Management	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Business Management	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Economics	IBMEC	
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Business Management	IBMEC	Brazil
Economics	IBMEC	Brazil
Economics	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
	IBMEC	
Law	FGV	
	UFRJ	
Architecture	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Economics	IBMEC	Brazil
Law	FGV	Brazil
Engineering	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Engineering	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Geography	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Industrial Design	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Law	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Law	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
	FGV	
Social Science	PUC-Rio / ENEM	Brazil
Fashion	UCAM	
Engineering	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Engineering	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Languages	PUC-Rio	Brazil
	USC	USA
Psychology	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Social Science	PUC-Rio	Brazil
Economics	PUC-Rio	Brazil
	IBMEC	
	FGV	
	UFRJ	
Law	UERJ	
Law	UCAM	Brazil
Fashion	UCAM	Brazil
Journalism	UNIVERCIDADE	Brazil
Drama/Acting	EXETER	UK
Hotel Management	LES ROCHES	Switzerland
International Business	Edinburgh	UK
Environmental Engineering	NEWCASTLE	UK
Art	London College of the Arts	UK
Art	London College of the Arts	UK
Art	SIAD	UK
International Relations	Bradford	UK
Classical Studies	Royal Holloway	UK
Art	New York School of Visual Arts	USA