

GORDONSTOUN AMERICAN FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER
2018

HENRY HOTCHKISS TROPHY

The award this year was presented to an excellent student Declan Hodges who came to Gordonstoun on a full scholarship from Samworth Church Academy. Declan had a lifelong phobia of water, couldn't swim and hated boats and everything to do with them, however after a lot of discussion and with a great deal of support from his friends he managed to get himself on 'Ocean Spirit' where he was transformed. Declan played a leading role in his watch, tackled the most demanding tasks and fully committed himself to getting the most he could from the voyage. All this with a broad grin on his face. When he returned to School he signed up to sail on the most demanding leg of our recent voyage to the Azores. I think that this performance really embodies what Gordonstoun can achieve and is a shining example of how Sail Training can change lives.

Ian Lerner, Head of Sail Training

Upon arriving at Gordonstoun, I had phobias of water, boats and sickness, making STV probably the worst thing imaginable. I was supposed to be going on the very first STV in year 12 but was removed from the list by my housemaster. Instead it was decided that throughout year 12 I would learn to swim and get used to being around water more. I would also frequently have lengthy conversations with various staff to try and improve my mind set with the main aim of at least being able to board the boat in the new school year. As the year went on I underwent one-to-one swimming lessons every Wednesday before supper and continued to improve my mental strength when undertaking challenges. I was scheduled to depart on STV just after my 18th birthday in the September of year 13. Managing to step foot onto the boat was probably one of the hardest things I ever did but words can't explain how glad I am to have done it. I can now proudly say that I completed the voyage successfully, achieving a distinction. STV was one of the greatest achievements and experiences of my life. Being awarded the Henry Hotchkiss Trophy later in year 13 really cemented the achievement for me. It's not only the award itself that fills me with pride but the memories that it holds! It will forever be one of my proudest moments due to the sheer effort and determination that went into the challenge that ultimately landed me with the award itself.



Declan Hodges with the Henry Hotchkiss Trophy

CONNOR ROE RECEIVES KING CONSTANTINE AWARD

In June and July, a widely publicised cave rescue successfully extracted members of a junior football team trapped in Tham Luang Nang Non Cave in Thailand. This was an extraordinary rescue by divers from around the world. OG Connor Roe was part of the volunteer team that freed the boys and their coach after 18 days underground in a rescue which astounded the world. In early September the school was delighted to welcome back Connor to speak to the school about his role in assisting in the rescue of the young students in the Thai cave network. What he and his fellow divers achieved was unprecedented and the whole of the Gordonstoun community is enormously proud of his achievement. Headmaster, Titus Edge presented him with the prestigious King Constantine Award. This is awarded to an individual or group of individuals from every Global Member Round Square School who has/have done unusual and outstanding service work and has thereby supported and promoted the ideals of the Round Square organisation. It was presented to Connor in recognition of the extraordinary resilience and bravery he showed.



Connor Roe



Michael Prendergast

The Gordonstoun community was equally proud of Michael Prendergast in becoming the youngest person to row across the Pacific. Michael took 49 days, 23 hours and 15 minutes to row from Monterey, California, to Honolulu in Hawaii with his three American teammates. During the 2,400-mile journey the crew kept to a pattern of two hours rowing and two hours rest. Michael's United Nations team were the first to cross the finish line of the Great Pacific Race in their boat 'Isabel'. He said afterwards he had embarked on the challenge to raise money for Down's Syndrome Scotland. "I am passionate about raising funds for Down's Syndrome Scotland because of the support they have given my brother Andrew".



Titus Edge and Connor Roe

Thank you letters from Hunter & Trevor Guillen

Dear Gordonstoun
American Foundation,

I was chosen to go to Gordonstoun International Summer School. I feel so lucky to have received the GAF scholarship and been able to visit Scotland and make new friends from all around the world. This was a purely amazing experience for me from start to end.

In the beginning, I was nervous to be away from home for so long, but after meeting some of the other boys in my house, Windmill, I felt right at home. My brother also received a scholarship and was in the same house as me, making me feel even more comfortable. Our House Master, Rory, was very nice to me and everyone else in our house. He helped my brother and I get settled in and ready for our stay.

My first week was spent on the west coast. On my way there I saw giant mountains unlike anything I've ever seen before. Once we reached our destination, we unpacked and received news of what we would be doing. The next day we climbed into wetsuits and my group went down to the bay to build a raft from two canoes. We climbed a rocky mountain in the middle of the bay and jumped off into the freezing salty water. We jumped off a few more times and then went back to the house. The following days we climbed rocks, went on multiple gorge walks, jumped into more cold water, all while having an excellent time with my new friends. On the last day we went on a challenge course using canoe rafts. We had to visit about 10 different locations, then race back to the shore to win. My team came in second, but we still had a blast.

The next part of the west coast adventure was simple, we relaxed on yachts while learning how to sail. My group played card games on board and we got to visit other boats. On the last day all the boats rafted together and everyone jumped into the cold water wearing only a swimsuit!

When we arrived back at Gordonstoun we began our regular activities: technology, art, music, sports, the class of our choice, and some other special

events. In technology I had a fantastic time. In art I made my own shirt with my design on it and learned tips and tricks for creating different art pieces. We decided upon a song in music, and we learned how to play a new instrument. We played "Feel It Still" by Portugal The Man, and I played the piano in the song. I learned different sports and how to play them in sports class, such as rugby, badminton, and cricket. My class of choice was Information Technology. I was taught how to make graphic designs, how to use photoshop, how to code, and the history and possible future of technology. I also went ice skating, go karting, and shopping.

Other Gordonstoun competitions included the lowland games, as well as basketball, football, swimming, and track events, in the interclan competition. My clan, Munro, won the interclan games against the Cameron and Douglas clans. I was pleased to receive the House award at the prize giving.

I had a fantastic time at Gordonstoun, and I wish everyone could go there. I made new friends, marvelled at scenic views, and participated in many fun activities. Everyone was so nice and ensured I had a great stay. I will surely tell my friends about Gordonstoun and remember my time there for the rest of my life.

Very respectfully,

Hunter Guillen



Trevor and Hunter Guillen

Dear Gordonstoun
American Foundation,

Thank you for accepting me to be a part of the GAF scholarship program. It was one of the most enriching experiences of my life. I accomplished and learned so much this summer. I have always wanted to visit Scotland and it was everything I wished for and more.

When I arrived at Gordonstoun, I was warmly welcomed by the staff and was shown to the house I would stay in. I then was introduced to my house master, Rory. At first, I thought the people in my house were nothing like me and we would never be friends. I soon found that I was wrong. I became close to everyone in our house, and by the end they felt like family. I was very different from most of the people there, because I'm American and most of them were European. But that didn't stop me from becoming friends with them all. It was an eye opening and mind broadening experience. I came to realize that my friendships transcend language, culture and borders; I was so much more alike the other teenagers from around the world than I realized.

My trip started by my clan driving to an adventure camp called Kilbowie. I had a good time gorge walking, canoeing, and doing many more outdoor activities. My favorite activity was gorge walking. The gorges were very complex and had many obstructions, which made them so difficult to manoeuvre through. After three days, we drove to a marina an hour away. We boarded the yachts and set sail. The air on the open water was definitely a feeling that I'll never forget, because of how crisp and refreshing it was. The voyage was very calm and relaxed. The skipper and his mate taught us to pilot the yacht. The yacht was very easy to pilot with many people. The west coast was an enjoyable experience.

Once we returned to the school, we started our normal routine. The classes were very informative, and the instructors were very patient and understanding. My favorite classes were sports and technology. I really enjoyed the interclan sports and liked how competitive everyone was. In technology

class I learned metal working, I made a metal airplane with the guidance of the instructor. For my elective class I took Information Technology. The instructors taught us computer programs including python and scratch, also they taught us the basics of photoshop. The instructors made the course work enjoyable, so it felt more like a vacation rather than a summer school.

At the end of the camp I competed in many sports events. My team won the obstacle course as well as most of the track and field events. We won every basketball and football game. At the end of the camp I was happy to see everyone's plays and music performances. At the awards ceremony our clan came in first place.

I loved every second I was there. I feel very lucky to have been accepted and able to attend. I have formed lifelong friendships with my clanmates and had experiences that I will remember my whole life.

Sincerely,

Trevor Guillen

GORDONSTOUN INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Dates for 2019:

Course No. I

Friday, 5 July - Monday, 29 July

Course No. II

Friday, 12 July - Monday, 5 August



For full details contact:

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The Gordonstoun Book of Remembrance

The memorial to those OGs who died in the service of their countries was erected above the Colour Bearer staircase in the late 1940s. The idea of creating a book of remembrance, telling their stories, was first mooted in a letter from John Kemp to Henry Brereton in 1974 after John had given a remembrance address at Stowe School and had seen their book of remembrance. The idea was rejuvenated in the early 1990s by David Byatt and Grenville Johnston, then Vice-Chair of Governors. He passed the material on to David Monteith at the turn of the century who created a digital record of those on the memorial plaques, which can be found at <http://www.gordonstoun.org.uk/gordonstoun-war-memorial>.

The book was finally completed in 2017, 43 years after its inception! It will be housed in a display case at the top of the Colour Bearer stairs in Gordonstoun House. We are extremely grateful to David Monteith and Grenville Johnston, for their patience and tenacity in bringing this project to fruition.

This book, together with the new names added to the memorial as a result of David's research, was 'unveiled' on Remembrance Sunday, November 11th 2018. This followed a very poignant Service of Remembrance in St Christopher's where the reflection was delivered by Commander Catherine Jordan RN (Windmill '93).

Upon leaving Gordonstoun Catherine joined the Royal Navy as a University Cadet Aviator, and after passing out from Britannia Royal Naval College, she read Law at Manchester University and graduated in 1997. Specialising as an Observer, she qualified on both the Lynx Mk 3 and Mk 8, before becoming the first Flight Commander of the then newly commissioned type 23 frigate HMS ST ALBANS.



Commander Catherine Jordan RN

During the build up to the Iraq War in 2003, she regenerated and commanded "Gibraltar Flight" for 3 months before returning to the Ship and completing an Operation Calash deployment in the Middle East. She then undertook Principal Warfare Officer training, graduating as top student for the year in 2005. There then followed 3 short tours as an Operations Officer: firstly in HMS IRON DUKE, whilst also the Gunnery Officer, then with the Combined Task Force 158 in Iraq and latterly in HMS ALBION.

Subsequently selected for Sea Command, she commanded HMS SEVERN from February 2010 to July 2011, during which time the Ship was awarded the Fleet Offshore Patrol Vessel Efficiency Trophy. She then took command of HMS CLYDE in the Falkland Islands for 6 months, a period which included deploying to South Africa for a successful docking period.

Returning to her aviation roots in 2012, she formed part of the implementation team for the Fleet Air Arm Manpower Sustainability Project before being selected for both promotion to Commander and further sea command. In 2014 Catherine became Captain of HMS St Albans and she is now Aviation Chief of Staff.

PALO ALTO DINNER

As you know, the GAF board try to visit different parts of the US so that they can meet up with OGs. As you can appreciate - to keep everyone happy is almost impossible but we will keep trying to visit areas where we know that there are OGs and former GISS students. In April, we visited Stanford University for our meeting and had a super relaxed dinner at a local restaurant with some of our OGs living in the area of Palo Alto. We shall be returning to California in April 2019 and will be holding a reception in New York in October 2019 to welcome new directors and say farewell to Jenny Needham who retires from the board after the October meeting. We will put information out on the GA website and Facebook once details are confirmed as well as emailing everyone.

It doesn't matter that you may not know anyone because by the end of the evening you will definitely have met lots of like minded OGs old and young. It really is like a walk down memory lane. Please join us.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Dear Friends

We are not in a position to support the GAF Scholarships without your help. As you can see from the 'thank you' letters from the scholars - these scholarships have a life long impact on the lives of these young people.

Please, please can you help support this scholarship scheme by donating to the GAF. Please send your donations either by check or bank transfer or through PayPal. These donations are tax deductible and on behalf of the GAF board I thank you for your support.



GORDONSTOUN AMERICAN FOUNDATION

Please support the Gordonstoun American Foundation.

Your generous contributions go towards the GAF Scholarship fund, which enables deserving boys and girls from the United States to attend the Gordonstoun International Summer School.

NAME:

ADDRESS

Email:

I enclose my check for: \$100 \$250 \$500 other (please specify)

Checks should be made payable to **Gordonstoun American Foundation** and sent to:

Treasurer: Ben Laidler, 116 East 62nd Street, New York, NY 10065

or by bank transfer or you can simply pay through PayPal by replying to this email.