

WINDLESHAM HOUSE SCHOOL CHAPEL

Remembrance Sunday 2003 had even greater significance than usual for the pupils and staff of Windlesham House School. It was felt that this was an ideal occasion on which to dedicate a new window in the east wall of the school chapel (the chapel is, in fact, "orientated," somewhat unusually because of its location, to the north). This is a splendid addition to the beautiful building, one with a long history of its own, as it now is located in its fourth home. It began as the church attached to what is known as Carfax Tower in the heart of Oxford, where it had been used over the centuries by, amongst others, William Shakespeare and John and Charles Wesley. Street widening in 1896 threatened the tenth century St Martin's Church until it was rescued from demolition and bought by the then Windlesham heads, Charles and Grace Scott Malden. It came to Sussex, stone by stone, timber by timber, at a time when the school was in Brighton and has journeyed since then with the school, first to Portslade and arriving finally at Highden in the 1930s.

The new window was installed to commemorate the working lives of Charles and Elizabeth Ann Malden, joint heads of Windlesham House from 1957 to 1994. Virtually all the close family of Mr Malden, who, sadly, died only three and a half years into his retirement, was able to attend the act of worship, seeing for the first time the magnificent work of art. It was the creation of award-winning local architectural glass designer, Mel Howse, whose studio is at Hambrook, near Chichester. Her wide experience in the ecclesiastical field and the immense care she took through twelve months of thoughtful work enabled her to bring the project to completion wonderfully well.

Ms Howse sought to capture something of the spirit of Charles Malden in terms of his ingenuity, high standards and quiet Christianity. The design includes his favourite Celtic prayer and the kindness and strength of this prayer have been combined with some Christian symbols that connect with the land and sea of Sussex and of Cornwall, the family home. The design includes a bird, or spirit, which may be interpreted as a dove of peace or the Holy Spirit, a progressive image moving through the window. It is very clear that this provides a fitting and truly uplifting inspiration that will enhance the worship at Windlesham House for generations to come.