

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

9 June 2017

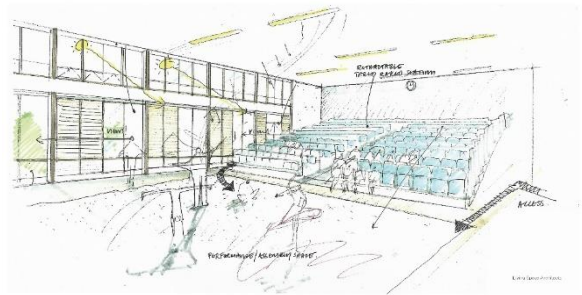
Welcome back to the last half of term in this academic year! I was pleased to see so many refreshed faces following the week's break and I am sure this will bode very well for both the internal and external exam cohort.

We have had some very kind donations for our campaign to build our new theatre in the existing gym area and there has also been keen interest in the development of a Health & Fitness suite for the girls. If you can help us to drive these exciting ventures forward as quickly as possible, we would be incredibly grateful. The brochure you have received in the post and the Maynard website give all of the details but please do give us a call if you would like to chat about any aspect further. These are exciting developments and we really are grateful to all those who are able to support us.

I watched our Twitter feed with great interest over the first weekend of the half term break and was thrilled to see that our robotics teams lifted the UK's only trophy at the FIRST LEGO League Open Championships in Denmark. More on this later, but very well done to them and a huge thank you to Mrs Weeks for her endless practice sessions and to Mrs Burt for acting as 'international' coach!

A highlight of this week was the inaugural Pre-Prep Sports Day that was planned to such perfection that it nestled perfectly between the rain showers and could, despite the forecast, take place outside on Leebourne. The colourful new House banners, a creative array of enormously enjoyable races (especially the Steeplechase!), Pimms, scones and of course the beaming, smiling faces of the girls made for an utterly successful afternoon all round!

As always, there has been lots more going on around the school and offsite so here is the round-up for the week:



Mock Elections votes counted

We held our internal Mock Elections on Wednesday afternoon and, after a great deal of very creative campaigning, it was excellent to see such a large turn-out with 87% of the Senior School casting a vote. That our students are taking such an avid interest in today's politics is really reassuring and particular thanks to all the Lower Sixth candidates for inspiring so many in our community to enter the secret ballot. The results of the votes were as follows:

Conservatives represented by Darcy Wilson - 47%

Labour represented by Lizzie Barbeary- 22%

Green Party represented by Josie Little - 18%

Liberal Democrats represented by Felicity Vingoe - 13%



Rain doesn't stop play at Pre-Prep Sports Day

It was wonderful to see so many parents and supporters at the first-ever Pre-Prep Sports Day and our thanks to you all for coming to cheer the girls on - it made for a wonderful atmosphere.

From the Turtle Egg & Spoon Race and the Rubber Duck Race right through to the Great Maynard House Steeplechase (and not forgetting the Parents' Obstacle Race), it was a fantastically entertaining afternoon enjoyed by all!

Congratulations to all the girls for their exemplary behaviour and great spirit throughout the many challenges! I must also thank Mrs Fabian for all her hard work and creativity, without which such an enchanting and enjoyable event could not have happened.



'This girl can' attitude wows FIRST LEGO League judges



As I mentioned previously, our hugely talented robotics team of Kitty Guinness, Bella Brent, Anna Harries, Miri Cooper Wedge and Anya Hitt (all Upper 4) excelled themselves to bring home the UK's only trophy at the FIRST LEGO League Open European Championship in Aarhus, Denmark during half term.

This is an excellent achievement given ours was the only all-girls team from Europe (and one of only two in the entire competition) amidst the 120 worldwide teams representing a total of 50 different countries. Equally, only five teams from the UK had qualified for the competition so to be one of these was an extraordinary accolade in itself.

It really was a fantastic result to be awarded second place overall for the 'Inspiration in Core Values' category. This section of the competition looks for the team that embodies extraordinary enthusiasm and spirit throughout the FIRST LEGO League experience and we were so excited that the Maynard 'can do' attitude was recognised amidst some very stiff competition from around the world.

"Given our robot was the smallest one there, we didn't really have very high expectations and it was a bit daunting to start with. Compared to the previous qualifiers, this was much bigger with so many more teams covering a huge array of cultures," said Kitty Guinness. "The atmosphere was just amazing and we all spent any free time helping each other and discussing their projects although much was lost in translation with some of the teams who couldn't speak any English! I suspect that all of this socialising accounted for winning our trophy for 'inspiration'!"



"In one of the tasks we had to stand on a table and flip the tablecloth without touching the floor and our lifting and jumping tactics had the judges almost crying with laughter! It was a fantastic weekend and we all really enjoyed this rare opportunity to meet so many other like-minded young people from around the world," she added.

On the back of this unique success, the girls have been invited to act as ambassadors at the FIRST LEGO League International Open Championship, a four-day STEM challenge organised by the Institution of Engineering and Technology that will be held at the University of Bath from 21-25 June 2017.

"The girls should be incredibly proud of these achievements and it is just so special to be flying the flag for women in STEM at these prestigious events and in such successful fashion," said Mrs Weeks, their Physics teacher who has been such an inspirational influence in the build-up to these championships.

Mrs Thorne attends the Palace



The benefits of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme for students is a known fact but it was just wonderful to see Mrs Thorne also reaping the rewards as our in-house manager of all things DofE associated.

Since 1 February 2017, The Maynard School has been a Directly Licenced Centre for the scheme, entitling us to deliver Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards. As such, just before half term Mrs Thorne attended Buckingham Palace Gardens to receive, in person, the School's licence. She is pictured here with two Old Maynardians, Jemima Luxton and Eve Trickett, who were also invited to receive their Gold Awards on this very memorable and special occasion.

Wonderful music news

As one of our very gifted music scholars, it was wonderful to hear that Molly Batchelor (Lower 6) has been selected to sing at the First Night of the BBC Proms in the Royal Albert Hall. Molly, who is already a member of the National Children's Choir of Great Britain, will be performing on this occasion with the BBC Proms Youth Choir alongside the BBC Symphony Chorus and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Edward Gardner.

We understand that the concert will be broadcast live both on television and radio, so please do tune in to support Molly on Friday 14 July 2017! In the meantime, our huge congratulations to Molly and we wish you the very best of luck for such a big musical moment!

We also heard earlier this week that another of our scholars, Dodie Bowman (Upper 5), has gained a distinction in her Grade 8 piano examinations which is terrific news and thoroughly deserved from one so talented. Well done, Dodie!



A truly entertaining Year 4 Beehive visit



The Year 4 Junior School students managed to defy the rather inclement weather conditions yesterday to go on their much-anticipated beehive visit to Princesshay. Rather than regurgitate the details second-hand, I thought I would include Claudia Eveling's very detailed account of the trip:

"All of Year Four went on a Bee Hive visit. We went on Thursday 8th June. It was in Princesshay in Exeter. We went in a secret door and went in a lift up really high! The roof was mostly above HMV, a shop in Princesshay. A man showed us an

observation hive and we saw the queen bee. The queen bee had a yellow dot on her. Each year is a different colour, next year is red, then green, blue, white and then yellow again (editor: so that the keepers know the age of the queen bee). An observation hive is a hive with frames and the queen bee lays her eggs there. The hives carry up to 60,000 bees while the observation hives only carry 1000 bees. In the hive the bee keepers put hornet traps because the Asian hornets come in and eat the bees. After that we went to light a smoker, something to calm the bees. There was lavender in the smoke. When we went back inside we tasted Somerset and Devon honey. I preferred the Devon honey to the Somerset honey. We went because we were learning about habitats in Science at school."



My thanks to Claudia for such a wonderful account and a very big well done for remembering so much detail from what sounds like a fascinating excursion.

Crowds gathered for the Great Maynard Butterfly Release

There was all-round excitement from the Junior School and Pre-Prep one bright, sunny day before half term when the Year 6s released their butterflies into the wild. In the few weeks preceding, they had been watching with enormous interest how their very own classroom caterpillars transform through the cocoon and chrysalis stages into a butterfly.

However, on 'release day' there is always a palpable anticipation felt throughout the Junior years (staff included!) and loud shrieks of excitement accompanied every butterfly to fly the net! It was a truly magical moment!



Junior School Sports Day - next Tuesday 13 June



May I remind parents and guardians that it is the Junior School Sports Day next Tuesday 13 June on the Mount Radford lawn from 10.30am - 3.30pm and, as ever, it would be lovely to see you there!

The MPA will be selling refreshments and don't forget to pack a picnic for the lunch break. Undoubtedly, this will be another truly enjoyable afternoon and I shall be keeping everything crossed that the rain, once again, stays at bay!



And finally, may I wish all of our girls competing in the Devon County Schools Athletics Championships on Saturday the very best of luck and I look forward to detailing how they all get on in next week's newsletter.

Have a lovely weekend!

Sarah Dunn
Headmistress
