

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

08 March 2019

At last Friday! I am so excited that I'll be off to see the fantastic Senior School production of the Caucasian Chalk Circle for the second time and I can't wait! I had another short glimpse this morning when the cast performed to a packed house of visiting schools and I absolutely loved Wednesday's curtain raiser to the three night run. I can honestly say that it is utterly brilliant – a view shared by all of those who have seen it judging by the rave reviews dominating our social media, not to mention the many emails and comments here at school.

The stark scenery, the intimate seating, the sound, lighting and costumes all perfectly reflect the war era and the sad story of Brecht's 'Grusha', the young girl who sacrifices everything to rescue, and lovingly raise, an abandoned baby but then faces losing him when his real mother returns a few years later. It is so beautifully acted and I can't tell you just how many comments I have had about the sheer talents of the entire cast. For all of Mrs Bellamy's sleepless nights and last-minute nerves, she had nothing whatsoever to worry about as the entire production has been an utter triumph. My enormous thanks to all those very many people who have been involved in putting together this incredible show, particularly Mrs Bellamy, Mr Ganley and Mrs Finnegan (who has worked tirelessly on all the costumes) – it's just another fine example of the inspiration and enthusiasm of a massively successful, thriving and popular Drama Department.

We marked a beautifully historical moment yesterday with the official unveiling of the Exeter Civic Society's blue plaque to honour the life and work of Stephen Simpson who lived here in Tregear from 1899-1912. This was particularly significant for the school as three of his great, great grandchildren attend the school and his great





granddaughter works here – all of whom were able to join in with the celebrations.

Mr Simpson was an incredibly philanthropic man although he is perhaps most celebrated for inventing the ‘coin feed mechanism’ (or slot machine) for prepayment gas meters in 1893-1894. Subsequently, he moved down from Mansfield to work for the Exeter-based firm, Willey & Co Ltd, in producing these, becoming chairman for many years. In total, the firm patented 200 of his inventions and a number of these are still in use today.

Quite apart from that, during the post-war era, Mr Simpson was the biggest employer in the area, bringing hope and an income to a vast number of households. Many of the foundry’s workers came from the poor West Quarter and could walk to work but when the slums were cleared in the 1920s and 1930s the population moved away to modern council housing in Burnthouse Lane. What did Mr Simpson do to help them to get to the factory? He built the Trew Weir pedestrian suspension bridge across the River Exe so they could carry on walking to work. He was also a major benefactor for the reconstruction of Exeter Cathedral during

and after the bombings of World War II. His good work and philanthropy was recognised at the time by the Royal Household who offered him a knighthood but he declined this on the grounds that, “I want to die plain Stephen Simpson”. We are so incredibly proud to honour his memory, on the 65th anniversary of his death, at yesterday’s plaque ceremony.

Moving on to the news, you will notice that this week’s newsletter does not include the full names of all the girls, as we have done in the past. Under the new GDPR recommendations we are no longer allowed to include surnames on any public forums and so, from henceforth, we will have to adhere to these guidelines.

“Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, it’s about learning to dance in the rain.”

Our thanks to all those parents who attended last Friday evening’s Dick Moore talk. This was the culmination of a hugely busy day for Dick who had already taken three very memorable and impactful talks for all of the students in the Sixth Form and Senior School.

The Parent Talk began with Dick jovially introducing the story of his family – educated and successful parents with four seemingly happy sons. But one of these sons, Barney, rocked their world seven years ago when he took his own life as a result of depression. Since that point, Dick has made it his life mission to travel the country (and further afield) delivering these talks to equip young adults and teenagers with the coping mechanisms to cope with the highs and the lows that life might throw at them. Despite the very sad motivation behind these talks, Dick was a fantastically upbeat and humorous speaker with an

unforgettable message – whatever your circumstances, try never to lose sight of all the good things in your life.

World Book Day Celebrations

The Junior School and Pre-Prep looked fabulous in their very many World Book Day costumes yesterday and there were some wonderfully imaginative outfits! Meanwhile, in the Senior School, the Head Girl Team have spent the entire lunchbreak today pacing the corridors, trying to assess which of the wonderful door decorations should win the coveted World Book Day prize. It has been an exceptional year and we wouldn't like to be in their shoes!



Huge congratulations to the Gymnastics Teams

Many congratulations to our three gymnastics teams who competed in the British Schools Gymnastics Association South West Regional Competition last Sunday, where they were competing in the team Floor and Vault competition.

This was only our second ever competitive gymnastics event and a first for all the Senior girls who found themselves competing against some exceptional gymnastics schools which regularly attend the National finals with multiple teams. However, all the weeks and months of preparation paid off and the girls all performed superbly, doing themselves and their coaches proud.

It was an incredible achievement that all three teams finished in the top five within their age bands; the Under 19s and Under 11s





placing 5th in the South West whilst, in the biggest category of 14 competing teams, the Under 14 team finished an almighty 3rd in South West. The icing on the cake to this superb achievement was Zoe winning the individual silver medal having placed 2nd highest individual score!

A massive thank you to the coaches at Exeter Gymnastics Club for their continued guidance and support in training and preparing the teams for this event.

UKMT Intermediate Mathematical Challenge 2019

In February all of the Upper 4, Lower 5 and Upper 5s took part in this year's Maths Challenge and we are delighted to be able to announce some outstanding results.

Special congratulations to Georgina (Lower 5) and Shweta (Upper 5) for gaining the best results in their year group and to top this off, a stunning result from Katie in Upper 4 means that she was placed best in school!

Further exciting news is that five girls have performed so well that they have qualified for the next round; they are Shweta and Katie as well as Hansini (Lower 5), Natalie Co. and Rose R (both Upper 4).

A particular well done to all those who gained certificates, namely:

Gold:

Upper 5: Shweta (best in year)

Upper 4: Natalie Co., Katie (best in school), Rose R

Silver:

Upper 5: Miri, Tina, Anya

Lower 5: Alice B, Lauren, Georgina W (best in year)

Upper 4: Hansini, Lucy

Bronze:

Upper 5: Nicole, Alex, Tilly, Verity, Maryam, Rebekah, Evelyn, Peggy, Emily S

Lower 5: Maja, Charlotte, Isabelle, Madison, Katie P, Alice P, Darcy S

Upper 4: Anna, Natalie Ch., Eleanor

Rosie's winning author visit



Year 6 welcomed author Matt Oldfield to their classroom on Tuesday for a very exciting talk and writing workshop. Matt writes fun footballer biographies for children with his brother Tom, and his visit was won by Rosie (Year 6) as a prize for the Story Explorers competition organised by the National Literacy Trust. The talk was very interactive and the girls asked great questions, such as when were they going to include female footballers (answer – this month, with Kelly Smith!).

Matt gave the girls some great tips about their own writing, such as always to try to finish their stories, even if they don't think they are very good. They will gain a sense of achievement and can always improve their stories afterwards. He encouraged them to enter writing competitions and to write to authors to get inspiration. He finished his talk by recommending that they use libraries to try out lots of different books.

The visit finished with a book signing session, and an enthusiastic round of applause for Matt, and for Rosie for winning Matt's visit! See <https://heroesfootball.com/> for more information about Matt's books.

Cathryn attends Southern India school

During the recent half term, Cathryn (Lower 4) returned to Southern India for a week as part of her family's ongoing support for the Grace Charitable Trust that operates in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, providing education for the children of tribal villages in the jungle.

Cathryn was offered the opportunity to spend a day with the village children at one of their schools. She was provided with a uniform and had her hair styled by a local woman. She then travelled with the children on their school bus. The school she attended was the GRG Memorial Tribal Higher Secondary School whose motto is 'Educate to Empower'. Cathryn attended the English speaking part of the school where pupils are taught totally in English as this is seen as the best way to improve their chances of later employment.



The Indian school year runs to the end of April and so the schools were busy preparing for end of year exams. Cathryn's day therefore included a mock mathematics exam! However, she thoroughly enjoyed the experience and being with girls her own age gaining a unique insight into Indian culture.



Year 4 Double Elephant Print Workshop

The Year 4 girls enjoyed a fun day on Wednesday of creating their own collagraphs of animals in their habitats and then used printing presses to print onto card and fabric. Amanda from the Double Elephant Print Workshop guided the girls through adding layers to their collagraphs and then experimenting with a variety of styles to create different backgrounds. We think the finished items are gorgeous!

Making a music video with The Kaizens

On Sunday the 20 January, members of the Devon Youth Symphony Orchestra (DYSO) were given the unique and exciting opportunity to record a song and music video with a local band, The Kaizens. Alyssa (Clarinet), Thalia (Flute) and Emily (Harp) spent an afternoon with a sound team and camera crew, doing many takes to ensure that the final recording would be the best possible. Timing was key, and the experience demonstrated how important it is to watch the conductor, one of the many skills that the

players were able to develop that afternoon. After waiting eagerly for the finished product, DYSO are very proud of the video and are grateful for this opportunity – the video can be accessed through the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGpteTiHohc>

A treat for all music lovers

Mrs Rachel Smith, our Head of Junior Music is taking part in a performance of Haydn's 'The Creation' in Exeter Cathedral on Saturday 16 March at 7.30pm. The performance features Exeter Philharmonic Choir and the London Mozart Players conducted by Howard Ionascu. In October, the Maynard Senior Choir will be performing the same work, also in the Cathedral. It will be a useful introduction and learning aid for girls in Senior Choir, not to mention a good musical evening. For tickets please visit: <http://www.exephil.org.uk/index.php/tickets> (students are eligible for a 50% discount).

Sports news



The girls have played lots of Exeter Area netball tournaments this week, most of which have taken place in pretty horrid conditions. The Under 16 and Under 14 teams both won (unbeaten in their respective tournaments) and the U13s were runners up, losing narrowly in the final. The U15s probably had the worst of the weather and battled valiantly with some very close games.

** Breaking news **

Hot off the press, Natalie (Upper 4) our Under 14 Basketball captain has just been selected for the England Basketball Squad and we are so incredibly proud to have such talent in our midst. Huge congratulations, Natalie, you truly deserve this and we wish you every luck!



Maynard's Got Talent – a date for your diary



Following last year's truly successful inaugural event, we will be staging a repeat of Maynard's Got Talent on the evening of Thursday 4 April here in the Performing Arts Centre. We are now recruiting acts for this excellent fundraiser, organised by the South Africa Sports Tour girls as part of their sponsorship of a young girl's education in Cape Town. More details will be announced in assembly on Monday and a sign-up sheet will soon be doing the rounds but, rest assured, this is an opportunity to allow absolutely anyone their moment of glory on stage and, as such, makes for an exceptionally entertaining evening!



Good luck to Katie

Best of luck to Katie in Upper 4 who is travelling to Loughborough this weekend to represent Devon at the UK Inter Counties Cross Country Championships. If it is anything like last year there will be lots of mud, spikes the length of javelins and immensely tough competition against some of the country's finest so we wish her lots and lots of luck!

Examination & Careers Information on the school website!

Just a reminder to parents and students that you can access a wealth of up-to-date information about examinations and careers on the school website under the 'Academic' tab.

As external and internal examinations loom onto the horizon exam timetables, JCQ student information, procedures for appealing against internal non-examined assessment marks, information about the new exam contingency date, information about coping with exam pressures, key dates.....can all be found in **Examination Information**.

The **UCAS & Careers** section has a wide range of useful information including: key online Careers resources & links, up and coming Careers events, links to apprenticeships, details about study courses for all age groups and work experience contacts.

Make sure you have a look!



Lower Four 'go crackers'

It's been as busy and productive as ever in the Food & Nutrition room and this week has seen the Lower 4s making gorgeous crackers to their own recipes. As Mrs Finnegan says, they look like wonderful museum exhibits or archaeological finds but we can assure you they are as fresh as daisies and very delicious!

And from our roving correspondent ...

"For too many of us, Lent is a time of giving up. I think what Lent should really be about is not giving up, but reminding us to give. Lent is considered a time to break bad habits, be healthier in terms of what we eat, and for self-improvement. But they all seem slightly self-centred. Lent has become a time where we are very focused on our own goals and personal improvements, and while this is definitely a worthwhile way of spending time, should it be our sole focus?"

Over Lent I've decided to be kind to myself, by being kind to others. I've made doing a small act of kindness to anyone I want my aim for every day. By doing this, I can not only make the people around me happier but also myself happier, as being kind to others makes you feel good about yourself which in turn raises your self-esteem. Instead of focusing my lent on self-improvement directly, I want to do it indirectly while also positively impacting others. I want to do things like smiling at strangers, making people around me feel good about themselves or making other people's lives just that little bit easier.



If all of us decided to do something kind every day, even if it is just over Lent, if we looked after each other, wouldn't life be better for all of us? Although it is so important to be kind to yourself, it is also just as important to be kind to others. The best reward we can receive is the happiness of the people around us."

Lilly Mazer

Have a lovely weekend!

Sarah Dunn
Headmistress
