

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

6 September 2019

It has been a joy to welcome everyone back this week and I am delighted that all the girls have settled into the school routine so effortlessly and quickly. It's wonderful to have the corridors reverberating again with excited chatter and for the school to feel alive once more after the summer break. That said, however, the School Business Manager, Mrs Gardner, and her support team have been crazily busy over the summer making further improvements to our site which are outlined below.

We welcome four excellent new teachers who you will no doubt get to know very quickly and I must make particular mention of all the new girls who have joined us and already seem to be so fully immersed in Maynard life. My thanks to all the students and staff for making everyone feel so welcome and for showing them the ropes. We really are a friendly bunch and the fact that everyone seems so happy and relaxed already is testimony to the very warmth of our community.

Following our fantastic A-level and GCSE results over the summer, again consolidating our long-standing position as the leading independent school in the South West, I trust this will be another enormously successful and fun year both academically and in terms of the very many extra-curricular activities on offer. As ever, if there are any areas that you would like to know more about or if you have anything that you would like to discuss with us, the door is always open so please don't hesitate to contact us. Likewise, we are always particularly keen to hear more about your daughter's achievements and news to share amongst our community in assemblies, tutor time or, indeed, within this newsletter, so please do keep in touch.



In the meantime, here's to a happy year ahead!

Summer site improvements

It has been a busy summer for our Estates team and outside contractors who have spent the last few weeks updating and renovating various areas of the school. We are thrilled with our new floor in the Performing Arts Centre, four classrooms have been given a massive make-over and what was once a staff office has now been renovated to create an area known as 'The Hub' which is open to anyone in need of a friendly chat or just a little time-out for some peace and quiet.



In addition, we have replaced the windows in the Junior School (with tinted glass to stop the glare of the sunshine) and elsewhere installed two new fire escapes. All this on top of all the usual grounds maintenance and not forgetting, of course, the new one-way system for visitors to our site. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has helped pull this all together in such a short timeframe!

Staff news

We extend the warmest of welcomes to our new staff members, namely: Suzie Bean, who joins us from Colyton Grammar School. She joins the English Department where she will also act as our new Literacy Coordinator.

Andrew and Tessa Wood, a husband and wife team who previously taught at Dane Grammar School in Kent but have recently returned home to Devon. They will teach Physics and Chemistry respectively.

Matthew Hoile who joins us from Pinhoe Primary and Wellington Prep School and will be the form teacher in Year 3.

We are also delighted to welcome back both Lora Jones, my PA, and Anna Briscoe in the English Department, both of whom have been on maternity leave.

Record breaking LAMDA results



The Drama Department are celebrating some remarkable LAMDA results; we had a 100% pass rate with 95% of the girls gaining Distinction - this is most rare and really hard to achieve, especially in the higher grades. A very big well done to all of the girls and a special thank you to their teacher, Mrs Leonard, for all her hard work and expertise. All certificates will be coming home with the girls over the coming week.

A new harp for the Music Department

After several years of Maynard girls learning the harp outside school, we are delighted to report a new addition to the Music Department. During the summer the school acquired a new Camac Hermine 34 string levered harp that can take students through to ABRSM Grade 8. We hope this will make life easier for anyone wanting to learn the harp or who wishes to consider trial lessons and will mean we have an instrument on site that can take part in ensembles and concerts.



Elsewhere on the music front, we were delighted to hear about Natalie and Evie's summer rehearsals and concerts with the National Children's Choir of Great Britain. "It was great to spend time with other musicians. We learnt a huge amount about singing and developing our voices".



Equally, the Senior Choir have wasted no time in starting to rehearse for their forthcoming concert with the ISCA Ensemble in Exeter Cathedral and could be heard singing Haydn's Creation on the first day of term. The concert is raising money for HospiceCare and should be a fantastic event. Tickets are already on sale and a discount is available for parents by using the code ISCAMAYNARD*19 when booking online by visiting www.iscaensemble.org.uk or use the direct hyperlink:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/exeter/exeter-cathedral/haydn-the-creation-exeter-cathedral-2019-joanna-leach-celebration-concert-for-hospiscare/2019-10-19/19:30/t-mqaxjp>

Tickets are also available at Exeter Visitor Information Centre or via telephone on 01392 665885.

A fascinating author visit

Unfortunately, the end of term followed shortly after a fascinating author visit so we share with you now the official report, as it was such an exceptional occasion it would be a shame not to mention it!

During the last week of the summer term, the Upper 4 had a real treat when the author Alex Wheatle MBE visited the school to talk to the girls about his life and writing. Alex had a difficult start in life, and he spoke about his time in care and his youthful misbehaviour with real pathos but also a great deal of humour. He told the girls how books turned his life around when he was at his lowest point, and described his excitement at seeing his own first book on sale in Oxford Street. After writing several books for adults, Alex is now the author of five books for young adults, partly inspired by his own experiences as a young man. One of these books, Crongton Knights, has recently been dramatised for Pilot Theatre and the play is currently touring the country.





Alex is also a poet and DJ known as brixtonbard, and he demonstrated his skill in rapping to great applause. He read out extracts from his books to his very attentive audience and then returned to his fascinating life story, relating how he was reunited with his best friend from the care home after 20 years, and with his mother and father. His charismatic personality and enthusiasm made the hour fly by, and many girls bought copies of his books and had them signed by Alex.

We are very grateful to David Marston and his education outreach team at the Budleigh Salterton Literary Festival for funding this visit. This year's festival takes place from 18 - 22 September and more details are here: <https://budlitfest.org.uk/budleigh-salterton-literary-festival-programme/>

National swimming success for Emma

Huge congratulations to Emma in Lower 4 who competed in the Belgian National Swimming Championships during the holidays, gaining a silver medal in the 100m backstroke race for 12 year olds. This is a remarkable achievement at a top level competition and is richly deserved.

Well done, Emma!



Onwards and upwards for Natalie's basketball career

Having played out her final Under 14 tournament as captain of the national squad during the summer, Natalie in Lower 5 continues her rise up the basketball ladder. Next weekend she is looking forward to captaining the Under 15 England squad at the Georgia Jones Invitational Tournament in Manchester, no doubt the first of many, and we wish her lots of luck for this pivotal moment in what promises to be a very illustrious sporting career.



News from the summer's equestrian events

It has certainly been a summer of great success for all our many equestrian girls and well done to them all for each of their individual achievements:

Isobel in Upper 6 had previously qualified for the National Pony Club Show Jumping Championships in Cheshire but, unfortunately, this was cancelled so a South West Championship was arranged last-minute by Bicton Arena to take its place. This turned out to be a truly competitive affair and congratulations to Isobel for her excellent place in the 1m class.

Sophie in Lower 5 performed brilliantly at the National Tetrathlon Championships in Warwickshire at the start of the holidays. Competing across the four combined disciplines of shooting, running, swimming and riding, Sophie finished in 49th place against the very best competitors covering the whole of the UK and Ireland.

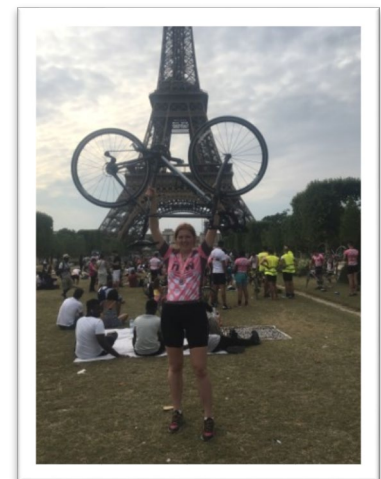
Congratulations also to Anya (Lower 6) who became the national champion at the British Riding Clubs Horse Trial Championships in Oxfordshire. This is an incredible achievement, particularly as she had been side-lined at this level for several weeks at the start of the season whilst she concentrated on studying for her GCSEs.



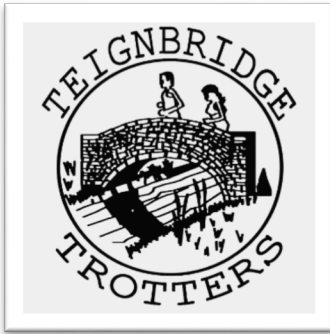
Alumna completes 230-mile charity cycle ride

We are delighted to report that Old Maynardian, Ellie Ramsay, successfully completed her 230-mile charity bike ride from London to the Eiffel Tower at the start of the summer holidays, raising more than £1250 for Breast Cancer Now.

This is all the more remarkable given Ellie had not completed any cycling prior to the event and had only minutes before the start to learn how to use the gears on her hire bike. As her mother says, "I just think all the DofE Awards and Ten Tors Challenges she participated in over the years stood her in good stead."



Enter now for the Newton Abbot Ladies 10k!



Entries are now open for the Newton Abbot Ladies 10k on Sunday 29 September, an event which Miss Williamson (Head of Geography) is helping to organise. Held at a superb venue off the A381 it boasts a lovely, scenic course with beautiful views and little traffic. Fifteen to seventeen year olds run for free and it would be wonderful to also have some Maynard representation within the Under 18 year old age group as well.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.teignbridgetrotters.co.uk/our-races/ladies-10k>

The Mount Radford lawn

As many of you are probably aware, a planning application has been submitted by Burrington Estates to build seven houses on the Mount Radford Lawn, an area formerly used by The Maynard as a playing field for the Junior School.

A strong argument for keeping it as a playing field is the fact that it is not 'surplus to requirements'. The National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England have a policy of not allowing development of playing fields which are not surplus to requirements.

Could we ask you to take a moment to write to Exeter City Council to voice your opinions on this proposed development? The easy way to do so is via the Neighbourhood Association website www.slna.org.uk where there are links to the relevant council webpages.

The views of previous users of the Mount Radford Lawn are vital to our arguments to try and prevent this communal 'green' area becoming a housing estate. All comments have to be submitted by Thursday 19 September and we thank you in advance for your support with this.

Second-hand uniform shop

If you wish to visit the second-hand uniform shop please contact Lynn Drake in the School Office, via office@maynard.co.uk.

We have also now set aside an area for lost property items and will be encouraging students to check here first for any lost jumpers etc, again by asking Mrs Drake in the Office. Any named items which are found will be returned to the relevant form tutor.



Wellbeing Presentation Evening – Wednesday 25 September



Having become the first school in Devon to achieve the Wellbeing Award for Schools, we feel the time has come to share with our parents and supporters all the excellent initiatives, both old and new, that we have in place to ensure the health and happiness of our entire school community. As such, we will be hosting a Wellbeing Presentation Evening here at school on Wednesday 25 September to which you are all warmly invited. Formal invitations will be in the post next week but please do reserve the date!

Proceedings will start at 5.30pm with canapés and bubbles followed by a formal presentation from Matthew Loosemore, our Assistant Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead. We look forward to seeing you there.

And finally ...

For the safety of all our students and staff, may we remind you that there is no vehicular access to the school site between 8am and 5pm each school day. Please can everyone also take heed of the new one-way system, with the entrance now off Denmark Road, up the drive and exiting onto Spicer Road. It is vital that we all adhere to the new system to prevent accident and injury.

Have a lovely weekend!



Sarah Dunn
Headmistress