



HeadLines

First of all, before launching into any reflections on Easter, I would like to exhort all the students who are fast approaching examination time to make the most of the opportunity for study and revision. We are running Easter classes in school next week for Year 11s and 13s and we trust that many students including the targeted or chosen ones will avail themselves of the chance to improve their prospects of success in GCSE or A levels. May I thank the staff who are giving their time to ensure that the programme happens. We look forward to more brilliant results in the summer.

In my Easter assemblies this week, I have veered as far away from the obvious Lent themes as possible and used a budgerigar as my starting point!

Perhaps some of you have read about the opera that premiered in Berlin last week. Written by the great Michael Nyman, composer of the superlative 'The Piano' score, 'Sparkie: Cage and Beyond' centres on the unique talents of Sparkie Williams, pet budgie of Mattie Williams, who could speak more than 500 words, some of them in nursery rhymes, most in complex sentences. He made records, he spoke in different accents and he said 'Sparkie's tired out' when he didn't want to talk any more. If you go to the British Library site and listen to a recording of Sparkie, you will probably think it is a joke or a fake; an April Fool that some demented person made up to amuse themselves. As believable to some of us as a stone rolled away from a tomb and a crucified man coming back to life.

No doubt, I would count myself among those who would say 'Someone created those tapes. That's no budgie'. Except for one rather important point. My grandparents lived next door to Mrs Williams in Forest Hall, Newcastle. As a child I was privileged to hear Sparkie and see his lime green feathered presence in person. It is one of the most incredible things I have ever heard.

Sparkie and Mattie were devoted to each other and his talents were as much to do with loyalty and love as anything else. In my Easter assembly, I refer to the lack of loyalty shown by two particular men for different reasons: Judas and Peter. One betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver and one denied knowing him to save his own skin. In reflecting on the Easter story, we reflect on the realities of human emotions and frailty but we are also asked to imagine the unimaginable. In one moment the image of a man, alone and suffering on the cross disturbs us and in the next moment we are asked to put aside our doubts or jettison our views of reality in order to believe that death is not the end and that the resurrection is possible.

My text for the assembly has been: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' And whatever our beliefs and wherever our faith is centred, that sentiment has a currency for our times. Tradition has it that Peter was able to recover from his weakness and become a man who would live out St John's words in practice. Legend also has it that Judas made no such recovery and could not live with himself. A gauntlet is laid down for us. But here the imagination falters.

Sparkie stars in the opera based on his short life. Admittedly, taxidermy has more to do with his appearance than longevity or resurrection, but as a stuffed exhibit, he reminds us that truth can be stranger than fiction and the seemingly impossible can happen. The voices of Mattie and Sparkie resonate across the years.

Just as the words with which I ended my assemblies this week strike a chord with their hope of life everlasting. The prolific hymn writer Mrs Alexander wrote 'There is a green hill far away without a city wall...' in her 'Hymns for Little Children' whilst nursing her sick daughter. It resounds with stirring phrases: 'he died that we might be forgiv'n, he died to make us good' or 'we may not know, we cannot tell what pains he had to bear but we believe it was for us he died and suffered there.' On one level, the indoctrinating words of a Victorian Sunday school, but on another level the soundtrack of a childlike faith in the Easter story. A school should be a place of hope and optimism for the future and possess a culture where our spirituality and religious traditions can be explored.

I wish you all a very peaceful Easter break and look forward to welcoming all our students back at The Hemel Hempstead School, safe and sound on April 21st.

Sandra Samwell, Headteacher

HEADTEACHER'S COMMENDATION

For Commitment to Charity Fundraising:

Charlotte Berg 13P, Charlotte Williams 13P, Amy Brooks 13F, Jenny Tucker 13P, Amelia Haynes 12N, Charlotte Dibley 12F, Aimee Spriggs 12C, Gemma Mohajer 12C, Bethany Desborough 13P, Zoe Wills 13P, Larissa Gillings 12F, Rosie Prestedge 12N, Emma Saunders 12L, Joanna Sykes 12N, Natalie Richardson 12F, Rozeena Asmat 13F, Jessica Kershaw 13F, Rosie Hutton 13C, Emily Hutton 13A, Edward Janes 13N.

For Outstanding English GCSE Coursework:

Samuel Carter 11L, Dean Huxley 11L.

For Contribution to Easter Assembly:

Gareth Whalley 10C, Chelsea Sturges 10C, Gavin Kitchener 10C.

For Service to the School:

Adam Amamou 9A.

For Winning the Year 10 District Football Cup:

Graham Green 10P, Alex Dukes 10L, William King 10L, Adam King 10C, Peter Downes 10A, Daniel Cottrell 10F, Samuel Strude 10L, Jake Territt 10C, Carl Richardson 10P, Luke Wartnaby-Lamb 10P, Alex Calver 10F, Bradley Penhallow 10L, James Moss 10L, Luke Marsh 10N, James Storkey-Jewiarz 10A, Courtney Hart 10N.

For Excellent Work in English:

Owen Lloyd 7L, Elouise Kimmance 7N, Shivam Modhwadia 7N, Francesca Ellis 7N, Tara Self 7N, Wilfred Steptoe 7N, Paige Minns 11L, Karl Hobbs 11A, Andrew King 11F.

For Excellent Work in Mathematics:

Sophie Kinley 7A, Keziah Buckley 7C, Frederick Atkins 7C, Lauren Nicell 7F, Isabel Briggs 7F, Thomas Baldwin 7F, Eve Murrell 7F.

'Blood On Your Hands' by Zachary Farrell

"This war is a farce" said Captain Jack,
as he slammed on the table the plan of attack.
"The blood and guts of my men will lie on the floor,
Their voices will ring out no more, no more,
I hope you're all proud you ignorant men,
While you're sound asleep in your cosy little den,
My soldiers will die one by one,
On zero hour after the bombs,
My soldiers will march strong, tall and proud,
And each will be shot and fall to the ground,
And on your hands will be their blood,
For it was not the Germans who got them stuck in the
mud,
It was the leadership with their naïve plans,
That will be the ones with blood on their hands."

Zachary Farrell was inspired to write this poem after the Year 9 History visit to the Somme on 20th March.

ROAD SAFETY

As you are probably aware, there is major road/building work being carried out on the Leighton Buzzard Road at the junction with Moor End Road, resulting in the pedestrian crossing being removed. For students' safety they must not cross the Leighton Buzzard Road at this point but must either use the pedestrian crossing opposite Cemetery Hill or the underpass at the roundabout.

Mrs N Darby, Assistant Headteacher

The European Week of Astronomy and Space Science

The University of Hertfordshire is hosting a week of lectures. There will be four public lectures, one on each evening Monday 20th to Thursday 23rd April. They will be held in the Weston Auditorium, de Havilland Campus, Hatfield, Herts AL10 9EU at 7.30 pm.

The lectures are free but tickets are essential. For more details visit: <http://publiclectures.feis.herts.ac.uk>

Library Notice

The Library will be closed on the first day of next term. It will reopen at 8 am on Wednesday 22nd April.

Mrs E Krajewski, Librarian

Maths Puzzle of the Month

Congratulations to our March winners Philippa Carr 10P and Cat Wilcox 9F. Please come to the Maths Office for your prizes.

Solution to March Puzzle:

First, take the chicken across and leave it there...

Go back alone...

Take the fox across....

Leave the fox and take the chicken back...

Leave the chicken and take the corn across...

Leave the corn with the fox and go back alone...

Finally, take the chicken across.

April Puzzle

Four people have to cross a bridge. It's very dark and they only have one flashlight. They cannot make it across without some light. No more than two people can cross at a time.

Phil can cross the bridge in 1 minute.

Karen can cross in 2 minutes.

Stinky can cross in 5 minutes.

Bubba can cross in 10 minutes.

How can they all get across in 17 minutes?

All entries should be submitted to your Maths teacher by 30th April 2009.

Mathematics Stars of the Month for March

Year 7: James Kime 7C, Amal Janason 7N, Matthew Pinkney 7F, Max Green 7P, Olivia Pinnock 7P, Peter Darvell 7A, Mith Nesarajah 7N, Maddy Wood 7F.

Year 8: Matt Shipton 8N, Tim Wright 8F, Dominic Holmes 8F, Amy Dowse 8C, Zoe Littlechild 8L, Megan McKenzie 8F.

Year 9: Lia Pritchard 9L, Elissa Benedetti-Smith 9N, Georgia Buck 9F, Sophie Hatchett 9L, Charlotte Blair-Smith 9C, Amber Townsend 9A, Alice Masterman 9F.

Year 10: Lucy Harding 10F, Courtney Hart 10N, Zoe Brook 10F, George Smith 10F, Toby Dickman 10F, Marie Gorton 10L, Yana Fawcett 10P, Chris Veall 10N.

Year 11: Graham Taylor 11P, Amy French 11F, Coco Alainia 11A, Rikki Khan 11P, Matt Church 11P.

Well done to all the Maths Stars for March – keep up the good work!

Miss L Jackson, Mathematics Department

PTA News

Fundraising

Please see our entry on the school website under 'News and Events'.

Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350), email s.stallworthy@sky.com

TESCO and Sainsbury's Vouchers for Schools

A reminder that we are collecting the Tesco and Sainsbury's promotional vouchers. Please hand them in to Student Services. Many thanks.

Gold Letters issued recently:

Letter 175 Easter Revision Sessions

Letter 176 Year 12 Geography Skills Mock Exam

Letter 177 Year 13 Final Report

Letter 178 Sixth Form Arrangements Summer Term

Letter 179 English Easter Revision Sessions

Letter 180 PE Gifted and Talented Photo Shoot

Letter 181 Year 9 Key Stage 3 Assessment

Letter 182 GCSE French and German Oral Exams

All Gold Letters can be viewed on our website:

www.hhs.herts.sch.uk

School policies can be viewed on our website under 'about HHS/School Policies'. If you require a hard copy of any of the policies please get in touch with the School Office.

S J Samwell

Sickness/absence line Please will all parents contact us daily if your child is sick, going to be late in due to a medical appointment, or is absent for any other reason. Please call our sickness/absence line on 01442 390103 by 9am if possible.

SPORT



FIXTURES

Week beginning 21st April 2009 – No fixtures

Tues 28th April – Years 8/10 County League Athletics, Meeting One, Jarman Park

RESULT

U15 Soccer District Cup Semi Final v Ashlyns won 3-1

U13 County Cup Basketball FINAL v St Columba's College WON 62-51

U14 County Cup Basketball Final v St Columba's College lost 99-50

U12 Soccer District Cup Final v Kings Langley lost 5-0

U15 District Cup FINAL Football v Cavendish. 2-2aet, WON 4-2 on penalties

U12 County Rally Basketball v Longdean lost 6-2

v JFK won 10-7

v St Columba's College 'B' drew 6-6

Year 8 Girls Basketball District Tournament

v JFK won 20-4

v Kings Langley won 16-2

v Tring won 22-4

v Bridgewater won 22-2

Year 8 Girls District Basketball Champions

SPORTS NEWS

Student Achievement

David Lloyd 10N plays for Harpenden Colts Admirals U15 Football team. On Sunday 22nd March David made his 100th appearance and received a certificate recognising his achievement. David is also going on tour in April to Holland with the team.

Miss E Bevan, Learning Leader: PE

Dates for Your Diary



Gold Week

20th Apr INSET Day (school closed to students apart from those invited in to complete work or to attend 'catch up' lesson)

20th - 28th Apr Year 10 German Exchange students here

22nd Apr Year 10 Catering Exam

23rd Apr Year 13 Drama Exam

Year 10 D of E Bronze Parents Information Evening,
Sixth Form Study Centre, 6 pm

26th Apr Years 12/13 Honduras training, 3.30 – 6.30 pm

Year 10 D of E Bronze Competency, 10 am–4 pm

Blue Week

27th and 28th Apr Year 11 Art Exam

28th Apr The Young Shakespeare Company performance to Year 9

Year 12 General Studies Day

29th Apr Year 11 Drama Exam

Sixth Form Prom

30th Apr Year 10 Catering Exam

Years 7/8 Junior Maths Challenge

Year 8 Geography visit to Docklands

Year 12 Drama Exam

County League Athletics, 3.30 – 6 pm

1st May Year 8 Geography visit to Docklands

Reminder: The PSHEE day originally scheduled for Tuesday 21st April will not be taking place; the usual Gold Tuesday timetable will be in operation.