



The Hemel Hempstead School

News

7 November 2008

HeadLines

In this week's assemblies, I have taken remembrance as my theme. As in previous years I ask you to read the text of the assembly as we approach the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 90 years after the end of World War 1:

Remembrance Assembly 2008

The 90th anniversary of the end of the Great War is a significant date to look back and remember with pride the sacrifices hundreds of thousands of British soldiers made. 90 years on from the so called 'Great War', should we move on? Why do we remember?

War was declared on 4th August 1914 and 'war fever' promptly ensued. In a rush of patriotic fervour, and spurred on by the now iconic posters of Lord Kitchener, the first weeks saw 750,000 eager young men rush to 'take the King's shilling'. Recruiting offices around the country were swamped.

The general feeling of the public was that the war would be short – it would 'all be over by Christmas'. No one could have imagined then, in those golden days of late summer, that the war would last for over four bloody years and the total human cost to Britain and the Empire would be 3,049,972 casualties, including 658,705 dead. Neither could they have known that the world they knew would vanish during the war years.

This year, when the British Legion announced their campaign to plant thousands of poppies, a 'Flanders Field' of poppies, at the Menin Gate Memorial at Ypres, the oldest man in Britain, Henry Allingham, was 112 and the remaining survivor of the original members of the Royal Air Force. As a member of the Royal Navy Air Service (RNAS), he saw action in the Battle of Jutland, the war's largest naval battle. Henry was in the thick of the battle. As an Air Mechanic First Class, he repaired and recovered aircraft that had crashed behind the trenches, working to keep the pilots flying.

The horror of Passchendaele haunts Henry to this day. He remembers the mud filled trenches and soldiers standing in two foot of rat infested water for up to a fortnight at a time. Shot in the arm, he was one of the 250,000 casualties during the battle. The bullet passed straight through him, and after being bandaged he was sent out again to the front. 'I just got on with it' he recalls.

Henry Allingham, at 112 years of age, said: "These hellish memories of war are ones I'd rather forget. But never my comrades. Never the men who gave their everything." During a visit to a war cemetery in France, he was quoted as saying, "All of us must remember them, always."

The Hemel Hempstead School has a roll of honour which you will find above the entrance doors of PA1. It commemorates former students who died in World War II. The school is also involved in a 'Hemel at War' project and I think that what Alex Brook, our Deputy Head Boy, has to tell us today answers the question 'Why should we remember something which happened so long ago? Isn't it time to forget?'

"A few of the members of the Hemel At War project went to interview war veterans at the local British legion centre a few weeks ago. I was shocked and awestruck by the story I was told by a veteran called Ken. You will hear many heroic stories during the course of the remembrance celebrations but this story struck me in a way no other story of World War II has done before. This story will remain with me as I heard it first hand from Ken, the veteran who lived through the war and experienced things we could not imagine. The fact that I was listening to it first hand, I think, is the main reason why it had such an effect on me.

Ken joined the army on the 1st March 1938 because his local army barracks had a very good billiard table. However, when the war broke out in 1939 he was sent to France with the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) to hold back the advancing German forces. His squad was one of the last out of France as they were appointed to the defensive shield that was set up around the Dunkirk beaches. After the evacuation of Dunkirk had finished and the boats had taken home as many soldiers as they could, his squad was left alone in France to make their own way home, so they travelled to a port further along the coast of France where he boarded the last destroyer leaving occupied France.

After making it back to England Ken was then sent to Malta where he participated in the defence of the island during the siege of Malta, and for his efforts during this campaign Ken received the George Cross. After the siege of Malta Ken was sent to North Africa where he became part of Churchill's commando squad whose objective was to capture a small set of islands just off the coast of Turkey. On the way to the islands the commandos' boat was struck by a sea mine and sank. Ken escaped from the boat, plummeting 40 feet into the water to escape the sinking wreckage, but he had to swim for five hours before being rescued by a lifeboat.

Ken, however, made it to the intended islands and took part in the Battle for them. During this intense fight Ken was captured by German forces and taken prisoner and, as a consequence, sent to a hard labour camp in Leipzig, Germany. He escaped from the prison camp one rainy night, he and his friends making their way to the American front lines, only travelling at night. When Ken arrived he was cared for by the American field medics, but as he became weaker, severely ill he was sent back to England for further medical help.

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On arrival in England Ken was immediately placed into an army hospital to recover. However his injuries and experiences, such as the labour camp, were severe and were preventing a full recovery. The doctors decided to take a sample from his lung to investigate why. When they did this they found diesel oil from the boat that sunk, in the bottom of his lung. After intensive treatment Ken made a recovery back to full health. This story shocked me, the fact that one man and many of his comrades went through so much for their country and for us. We should always remember.” Alex Brook 13A

On the black marble of the tomb of The Unknown Warrior which stands at the west end of the nave of Westminster Abbey are inscribed the words: ‘They buried him among the Kings because he had done good toward God and toward his house’.

These words from 2 Chronicles commemorate the unknown war dead. They ask us to remember the sacrifice of those who died without recognition – in unmarked graves.

‘Lest we forget’ is a phrase associated with the wearing of the poppy. We wear it to show that we remember the sacrifice of those who gave their lives and thus we are proud to wear the poppy.

John McCrae’s poem ‘In Flanders Fields’ illustrates this point poignantly:

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae is remembered for what is probably the best known and most popular of all the World War 1 poetry. An experienced war doctor, Colonel McCrae spent seventeen days treating injured men during the terrible battle of Ypres in 1915. He described those days as ‘seventeen days of Hades’.

Moved by the death of a former student who had been killed by a shell burst, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, Colonel McCrae wrote ‘In Flanders Fields’. Inspired by the profusion of wild poppies he could see in the nearby cemetery, it took him twenty minutes to write the fifteen-line poem.

‘In Flanders Fields’ was very nearly never published. Unhappy with the poem, Colonel McCrae threw it away. Fortunately a fellow officer retrieved it and the poem was published in Punch in December 1915. Sadly, John McCrae did not survive WW1; he died from pneumonia whilst on active duty in 1918.

Last week’s news was full of highly paid BBC presenters who abused their positions of power and trust by insulting a 78 year old much loved and respected public figure and his granddaughter. Hidden away on other pages of the national newspapers was the story of 24 years old Matthew Croucher. Lance Corporal Croucher triggered a trip wire attached to a grenade in Afghanistan. He dropped to the ground and laid across the grenade in order to take the whole blast and protect the three soldiers with him. The chief of defence said “He acted to save his comrades in the most certain knowledge that *he* would not survive.” Matthew Croucher was blown into the air but his bag, crammed with equipment, cushioned the explosion. His three comrades were safe – and alive – because of his act of valour. He is one of twenty living recipients of the George Cross, awarded for acts of gallantry.

Last week reading about Matthew Croucher put things into perspective for me. Seen against the silly antics of trivial people, it exemplified the essence of the human spirit – which we remember with pride and awe and gratitude this week.

“At the going down of the sun and in the morning – we will remember them.”



Sandra Samwell, Headteacher



arts colleges **House Dance Festival – Monday 10th November**

The first major House event of the school year – House Dance – is to be held this Monday. Tickets (£2) are selling rapidly and are still available from Student Services every break and lunchtime. There is a slight change in the timings of the event. **House Dance will now start at 7:15pm** rather than 7:00pm as previously advertised. This change was made to ensure that all participants could attend in good time. It will still take place in the Main Hall. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Mr J Mitchell

**HEADTEACHER'S
COMMENDATIONS**

For Excellent Work in French

Priya Odedra 10F

For Excellent Drama Performance

Emma Green 12C

Louis Bransgrove 13N

Michael Deane 12P

Luke Wartnaby-Lamb 10P

Library Notice

A huge thank you to Year 13 parents who donated over £200 worth of books to the Library at the recent Parents' Evening. Your generosity is very much appreciated. The books are currently being processed and will be on the library shelves available for loan by the end of next week. Thank you.

Mrs E Krajewski, Librarian

To All Year 9 Students from the Music Dept.

On Tuesday, 11th November Year 9 Options Carousel and ADAD Theatre Group will be taking place. Students who have a music lesson timetabled for that day must attend their music lesson.

Thank you

Puzzle of the Month

Well done, there were many correct answers this month but the two lucky winners were D'Arcy Monk 7A and Jake North 7P. They had the solution below...

Call the baby's weight b , my weight m and the nurse's weight n . Then we know $b+m=78\text{kg}$ $n+b=69\text{kg}$ and $m+n=137\text{kg}$. Adding the three equations together gives $2b+2m+2n=284\text{kg}$ so dividing both sides by two gives us $b+m+n=142\text{kg}$.

They both need to come to the Maths office at a break or lunchtime to collect their prizes.

This month's puzzle is below. Why don't you have a go; you never know you might win!

Right Angle

Quadrilateral can have four right angles. What is the largest number of right angles an Octagon (8 sides) can have?

Good Luck.

Miss C Bandle

Miss Akeroyd's Year 11 Citizenship classes

Later this month Miss Akeroyd's Year 11 classes are due to consider the issue of teenage pregnancy. As this is a Citizenship lesson, it will not be focused on sexual behaviour itself but on discussing the responsibilities of different agencies such as the government, schools, parents and individuals in addressing the issue. Should any parents wish to discuss this lesson further with me please contact me at the school.

Miss R Akeroyd

Careers News for Year 11

The West Herts College prospectus will be available to collect from Helen Ewers, our Youth Connexions School Adviser, at the Year 11 Parents Consultation Evening, and can also be picked up by students from our Careers room. The Oaklands College prospectus will follow in the next couple of months.

Dates for Your Diary

*****Gold Week*****

10th Nov HOUSE DANCE 7.15 pm

11th Nov Year 9 Options Carousel Day
Theatre ADAD visit to Year 9

13th Nov Year 11 Parents Consultation Evening
Year 12 General Studies Day

*****Blue Week*****

17th Nov West Herts College Open Evening for
Post-16 courses at Cassio Campus 6pm

17th and 18th Nov Year 9 visits to Tate Gallery and
Globe Theatre

18th Nov Years 12/13 Maths Lectures in London

20th Nov Year 8 Parents Consultation Evening

21st Nov Race Night – Honduras trip fundraiser

Calendar update:

Christmas Concert - Friday, 5th December

Christmas Carol Service - Tuesday, 16th December

PTA News

JUMBLE SALE

This is tomorrow at 10am. If you can help we would love to see you there from 9am.

If you have any jumble you would like to donate you can bring it along on Friday evening or Saturday before 9.30am.

Thank you

Our next meeting will be on Monday 1st December at 7 pm in the Library. Apologies for the change of date from 17th November. We would love to see you there.

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

SPORT



FIXTURES

Mon 10th Nov

Year 10 English Schools Basketball v Parmiters (A)

Tues 11th Nov

Year 7 Netball @ Astley Cooper

Year 8 Netball @ Adeyfield

Year 10 County League Basketball v Ashlyns (H)

Weds 12th Nov

Years 8, 9 and 10 Dacorum District Football Teams v St Albans Schools (A) 2.30 – 4.15 pm

Thurs 13th Nov

Year 9 Netball @ Astley Cooper

Year 10 Netball @ Adeyfield

Year 8 County League Basketball v Longdean (A)

Year 7 and 8 Girls Basketball v Bridgewater (H)

Sat 15th Nov

Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 Football v Marlborough venues TBA

RESULTS

Year 11 District Cup Soccer v JFK drew 0-0

Year 7 English Schools Soccer v Stoke High, Ipswich won 2-1

U18 County Cup Soccer v Freman College won 4-1

SPORTS NEWS

Netball News

The weather was unkind to us again on Sunday at the Watford Netball League. In the first round of matches Shelley 4 met Watford Premier 3. They left the court with some happy smiles on their faces, having won 31-18, with some fine play by Amy Berloth. At the same time, Shelley Juniors met Connexions Ice with Shona Berloth moving from defence to shooter, and Katie Ferguson giving strong support; they came off the court with a good win of 40-31.

The next game on was Shelley 6 versus Dacorum Youth 4. Sadly, Kathryn Tyne had a bad fall, and had to leave the court, but with some fine centre court play by Sarah Kinley and Becci Armorgie, they held the game to a credible 15-26.

The next round saw Shelley 5, all ex HHS pupils, meet Connexions Vipers. Debra Blake, mum of Molly, went on court as Goal Defence, since some players were on holiday, and helped them to a great win of 26-21. Everybody was delighted with this result. Well played everybody.

Mrs K Worrell, MBE

Gold Letters issued recently:

Letter 54 Year 13 Religious Studies Trip to Whipsnade Wild Animal Park

Letter 55 Year 11 Mock Exams

Letter 56 Ecuador Trip 2009

Letter 57 Year 13 A2 English Lit Conference

Letter 58 A Level History Visit to Germany



Cycling to school

If you wish your child to cycle to school please request the appropriate application form from Student Services. On production of the completed form and sight of a Herts Road Safety/Cycling Proficiency Certificate a cycle permit will be issued. Students who do not have a permit should not be cycling to school.