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### HeadLines

When I was at university, I looked forward with great anticipation to receiving letters. In days when texts and emails were unknown and telephone calls via a payphone had to be strictly rationed because of cost, the sight of a letter in Cleminson Hall's pigeon holes was a positive delight. I still have the letters my mother sent me and the shorter ones from my grandmother containing the ten shilling postal orders, although we went decimal during my time there and they became fifty pence postal orders, which spelt the difference between relative wealth and abject poverty for me. Now, of course, the correspondence has a different significance; it is the stuff of memories: touching the paper on which my mother had written, remembering her hands and the concentration on her face and her smile twenty five years on from her passing.

Does anyone write letters anymore? Well, of course, parents write to me and I could wish that less of them were asking for holidays in term time and more of them featured praise that could be included in the pride file, but I am pleased to receive well crafted mail, sometimes with a delightful sense of irony or humour even when the main reason for writing is to complain.

I am less than keen on the terse emails and even less enamoured of the back of a utility bill envelope approach, however environmentally friendly that might be.

This week, I have invited students to write to me, proper letters only, to tell me about improvements they would like to see to the school environment or to let me know how they think we should celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the school next year. There are commendations and cash prizes (provided by an anonymous donor) awaiting the best ones received which I will share with you in a few weeks.

It's been a busy time for the school recently: the examination season has dominated but other activities include the Btec performance of 'Side by Side By Sondheim', the Year 7s' visit to the Chilterns, the same year group's first athletic competition, a Sixth Form visit to Hertfordshire University and much more including the whole school gathered in the hall to watch England play Slovenia...without a single lesson missed! We were visited by John Hart from the Specialist Schools Trust who was bowled over by the quality of our Arts provision. He said,

"Just a brief note to thank you for giving me such an interesting time when I visited your school recently. I was greatly impressed with all that I saw. In these challenging financial times, it is really encouraging to see such excellent work and to realise that the arts are safe and flourishing in schools such as yours."

We received Artsmark Gold for the fourth time: a really stupendous achievement for which I congratulate Norma Darby and all the Arts teachers.

In the press, it said,

#### **The Hemel Hempstead School awarded Artsmark Gold**

Arts Council England has, for the fourth time, awarded Artsmark Gold to The Hemel Hempstead School in recognition of the school's commitment to, and excellence in, Arts Education. The Hemel Hempstead School is one of the 1676 schools in England who received an Artsmark Award this year.

Sandra Samwell, Headteacher of The Hemel Hempstead School said:

"I am delighted that the Arts Council has recognised The Hemel Hempstead School's dynamic Arts education programme. Our students have really enjoyed the huge range of opportunities offered by this school, in and out of curriculum time, and I'd like to thank all our staff for their hard work in achieving this award.

This award recognises The Hemel Hempstead School's commitment to providing exciting Arts experiences and their belief in the power of creativity"

But certainly one of the most poignant and exceptional events of the week was the visit of David and Simon Broomfield to speak to our Sixth Form. Serving officers in Afghanistan, former students of the school, their mother a member of staff and Simon recuperating, having been seriously injured in an explosion recently, it was so impressive and enlightening to hear about life at the front as it really is and to try to understand a point of view which we don't see in the media: education at its best.

It has been a wonderful week, so much so that I feel like writing a letter to someone...but then, in a way, these headlines are my weekly letter to you.

**Sandra Samwell, Headteacher**



## ARTS NEWS

### The Show Must Go On

We are now within a few weeks of the end of the school year, and for many students in Years 11 and 13, the end of exams marks the end of lessons. Not in the Performing Arts, however! As I write, Year 11 BTEC students are rehearsing for their Final Major Project in the rooms behind me, while the Year 13 BTEC students produced an absolutely stunning version of 'Side by Side by Sondheim' in the Old Town Hall in the High Street last Saturday night (a review of this will appear next week). Other senior students are still coming in for rehearsals for 'Exposed', the 30 minute-long Dance piece that they will be performing at the South African Arts Festival in Grahamstown next month.

Of course all the other students in the school are still hard at work anyway, both in lessons and in preparation for various performances - especially the House Drama Competition, which will take place on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July in the Hall. This is an occasion not to be missed. The House Captains have written their scripts (the stimulus this year is 'The Plays of Shakespeare') and are hard at work running rehearsals and putting together props and costumes. I know from experience that their plays are irreverent, witty, and often very funny, so we are hopeful that this will be a great evening's entertainment. Some of our Gifted and Talented students in Years 7 and 8 are working with Miss Moore and students from feeder primary schools on The Big Little Theatre's entry in the Dacorum Dance and Drama Festival, which will be hosted again by our school on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 7 pm. Other HHS entrants in this Festival are our GCSE Dance and Drama students, and our two student Dance companies, Reverb and Pulse. More details about this show next week.

Finally, the last two weeks have seen some interesting and slightly different performances. The Art Department put on a magnificent exhibition of GCSE, AS and A level Art last Thursday (a review of this will appear next week), while the Year 10 BTEC students took the courageous decision to perform some of their work during a lunchtime. An audience of your peers is never the easiest proposition, and there were certainly some students there whose attitude was not very helpful. The Year 10 students coped very well and were able to make a mature and thoughtful evaluation of what they had learned and gained by the experience. Finally, an unusual lunchtime concert is scheduled for Thursday of this week - still to come at the time of going to press. Members of staff have been encouraged to take up a musical instrument, partly for pleasure, but also because it is very good to put yourself in the role of the student if you work daily in a teaching institution. Several brave people have now volunteered to perform individually, to show what they have learned over the past year. Expect a review next week!

*Ms Darby, Assistant Headteacher*



## Dates for Your Diary

### \*\*\*Blue Week\*\*\*

- 28<sup>th</sup> Jun – 2<sup>nd</sup> Jul** BIG ARTS WEEK  
**29<sup>th</sup>** Year 7 Maths Puzzle Day  
 Year 11 Book Return, Final Assembly and BBQ  
 Year 8 Parents' Evening for Online Reporting  
**29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>** Year 12 Geography Fieldwork  
**30<sup>th</sup>** Year 9 MFL Exam  
 Year 10 Maths Exam  
 Year 11 Prom  
**30<sup>th</sup> Jun – 11<sup>th</sup> Jul** Year 13 South Africa Dance Tour  
**1<sup>st</sup> Jul** HOUSE DRAMA, 7 pm  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Jul** SPORTS DAY

### \*\*\*Gold Week\*\*\*

- 5<sup>th</sup> Jul** Year 10 Catering Exam Practical  
 Year 12 EPQ students visit to the University of Herts  
 Year 6 Mathland Day  
 Year 6 Parents Information Evening, 7.30 pm  
**6<sup>th</sup> Jul** Year 10 Catering Exam Practical  
 Year 7 BTEC group organised Sports Day  
 Year 6 Dance and Drama Festival  
 Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip Meeting, 6 pm  
 Year 10 History trip Meeting, 6.45 pm  
**7<sup>th</sup> Jul** District Sports Day  
 Year 6 Mathland Day  
**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Jul** Year 11 Sixth Form Induction, 9am –  
 12.30pm  
**8<sup>th</sup> Jul** Year 6 Taster Day  
**9<sup>th</sup> Jul** Years 7/8 Science Club visit to Science Museum  
**SUMMER CONCERT**

## WORLD FASHION SHOW

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July**

**1.30 – 7.30 pm**

**Ticket: Adult - £21/ Students and Under 14 - £14.50**

(Apologies that the Student/U14 ticket price was incorrect in last week's Newsletter)

Student and Under 14 ticket includes Hamburger or hotdog with a cake

A reminder that tickets are now on sale from Student Services for our World Fashion Show event. Alternatively, you may like to purchase your tickets using our online payment facility. Please contact Student Services if you need a log-in.

### **Headstart Celebration Event**

The Headstart Year 11 Achievement Celebration Event took place at the Cassio Campus of West Herts College on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010.

Several of our Year 11 students have been attending West Herts College for the past 2 years and were rewarded for their efforts as follows:

Chelsea Sturges and Kirsty Cowley (Caring for Children), Lily Fender (Hairdressing) and Roshana Ramsay (Performing Arts) were all rewarded for 100% attendance.

Lauren Nicole Sumner (Caring for Children) and Roshana Ramsay (Performing Arts) were given the Most Improved Student awards for their subjects.

The students were treated to an afternoon's bowling and lunch to round off the day.

Well Done!

*Mrs McAndrew, Key Stage 4 Mentor*

### **Diversity News**

#### **Big Arts Week lunchtime activity**

Year 7 and 8 students are invited to sign up at Student Services for a Chinese Paper Art activity which will take place in Art 1 at lunchtime on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June. This activity is FREE of charge but space is limited to 30 students so places will be allocated on a first come-first served basis.

*Mrs Ramnarine*

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**You and your family are invited to an  
International Evening**

**At  
South Hill Centre**

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June, 6.30 – 8 pm**

*Please bring some food from your country to share*

### **House Drama Festival - Thursday 1st July**

This year's final major House performing arts event - House Drama - is to be held next Thursday. Tickets for this event will cost £2 each and are available from Student Services from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June. On the night itself, the event begins at 7 pm in the School Hall and doors open at 6:30pm. As ever, our House Captains have worked tirelessly in preparation for this event and deserve much credit for their commitment and energy.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the evening.

*Mr Mitchell*

### **LOST PROPERTY**

Please may I ask parents to encourage their children to check the lost property area outside Student Services for any items they may have mislaid. Parents are welcome to come along and take a look themselves, if they wish.

At the end of term, any uncollected lost property will be passed to the HHSA to be sold at the next Jumble Sale.

*Matron*

### **PTA News**

Our theatre trip to see Mamma Mia was a fantastic success last night and enjoyed by all.

A huge vote of thanks must go to Kate Bell for organising these events. THANK YOU KATE.

Look out for news of our next trip.

#### **School Uniform**

If you have any school uniform that your child has outgrown will you please consider donating it to the HHSA to sell on. We have our Year 6 taster day coming up on July 8<sup>th</sup> and we really do need some smaller sizes of uniform. Please search through your cupboards and help raise much needed funds. Thank you.

Our next meeting has been scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm in the Library. Please put this date in your diary.

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



# SPORT

## FIXTURES

<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Year 8 District Cup Cricket v Tring (A)
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Year 7 District Cup Cricket v Longdean (H) Year 9 District Cup Cricket v Ashlyns (A) Year 10 District Cup Cricket v Adeyfield (A)
<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July</b>	Year 7 Cricket v Astley Cooper (A)
<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	Sports Day at Jarman Park

## RESULTS

Year 9 Rounders
v Ashlyns won 4-3
v Kings Langley lost 5-6
v Cavendish won 4.5 - 1.5

Another great set of matches! The girls played fantastically, especially in terms of fielding which was much improved. Let's hope this continues next week at the tournament.

*Miss Black*

## Year 7 Inter-Form Football

Well done to Chalfont! They won the Year 7 inter-Form football. Well done also to everyone who participated in this event - it was a very good standard of football. Chalfont beat Nettleden, 4-1.

The event was held on the Astroturf pitch and was held from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June. There were two games each day and every Form took part.

- 1<sup>st</sup> place- Chalfont
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place- Nettleden
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place- Ashridge
- 4<sup>th</sup> place- Pendley
- 5<sup>th</sup> place- Latimer
- 6<sup>th</sup> place- Flaunden

Well done to everyone who participated!

*James Bryson and George Fripp, Year 10 BTEC Sport*

### Gold Letters issued recently:

- Letter 231** Year 9 Change of Mathematics Set
- Letter 232** Year 7 Maths Puzzle Day
- Letter 233** Years 7/8 Lunchtime Activity for Big Arts  
Week
- Letter 234** Year 8 Manga Artist visit
- Letter 236** Year 9 OCR Asset Language Examination
- Letter 237** Year 7/8 Science Club trip to the Science  
Museum

*All Gold Letters can be viewed on our website:  
[www.hhs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hhs.herts.sch.uk)*

### Year 9 Lake District Trip – Payment Reminder

The final payment for this trip was due by 28<sup>th</sup> May. Any outstanding monies should be paid as soon as possible.  
Many thanks.

*Mrs Amamou, Finance Office*

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.

### 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.