

the avenue

autumn 2015

From the Head

On a bleak and blustery December afternoon, I am watching the brave visitors who have ventured out to view the 'Whole Earth' exhibition on the Avenue. It seems appropriate that this thought-provoking display, produced by university students and environmental experts, should have been mounted in gales and rain, the tail-end of the violent weather which has afflicted Cumbria and the North of England so badly this year. The year 2015 is drawing to a sober end, with the refugee tragedy of Syria, the outrageous attacks on ordinary people around the world such as those in Paris, the warnings of the Climate Conference and the real evidence of climate change in our country.

Yet the real message of the 'Whole Earth' exhibition is the hope that the younger generation will be able to look at the world differently and find solutions to the manifold problems of the environment and the sustainability of modern lifestyles. Our students have been weaving this into their studies across the curriculum this term and some very interesting work has been done. The future will call for new perspectives in the sciences and economics; an inter-disciplinary approach will become the norm and we must equip our students as well as we can. As a school we are thinking of further ways in which we can contribute to a sustainable future and I have been impressed at the way our staff and students are taking this on board. We were privileged to have a Buddhist monk visit



us in Assembly recently to tell us about his lifelong commitment to living simply.

Twice this year we have been able to collect some furniture from a company which was refurbishing its premises and disposing of many really good quality chairs, desks and tables. We have made use of this and, as a gesture of thanks, have raised money to donate to a charity of the company's choice. I was recently delighted to be presented with a student initiative to refurbish and enhance our bicycle sheds, mostly with recycled material, to encourage this healthy and enjoyable form of transport to school.

During the recent Inspection, the inspectors commented many times on the excellence of the students here; they were impressed at their confidence, their willingness to challenge and question and their awareness of issues which affect others, not just themselves. This is demonstrated daily in the way in which the students interact with each other, with staff, show prospective parents around the school, help out in

boarding and act as ambassadors in so many different ways that daily remind me what a pleasure it is to work at this school.

It has been a very busy term, as the pages of this edition will show. I hope you will enjoy this reminder of all that has been going on over the last few months and as ever, I am indebted to the parents for their unflinching support of all that we do in school. We are now looking forward to Christmas and our annual celebration of Christmas Words and Music. May I take this opportunity to wish you all the best for the festive season and a peaceful and happy 2016.

Anna Chaudhri



Christmas Words and Music

Christmas Words and Music was once again a true celebration of the season with performances and readings from pupils throughout the school, which delighted all who attended.



Time Flies When You're Having Fun

Can it really be Christmas already? It seems only a moment ago that we were all assembled in our newly pressed uniform and clean shoes (me included) in the warmth of the September sun for the beginning of term, eager to get started, full of anticipation for the term ahead. Well, it's been a busy one. Not only have we been working hard in class, but Years 5 and 6 have visited the North Norfolk coast for a week, Year 3 have been to Grimes Graves and the Quaker Meeting House in Great Bardfield, Years 1 and 2 have been to London to visit St Paul's Cathedral and the Tate Modern, whilst Nursery and Reception have been to Hatfield Forest and to the theatre to see 'The Gruffalo'.

Our new swim squad have been training in the early mornings for our first inter-school swim gala, our runners have done really well in various cross-country events and our netball and football teams have been out playing against other schools.

Our string players were fortunate enough to attend a masterclass headed by Nicola



Benedetti, and our choir took part in a giant Friday Sing. Reading competitions, poetry recitals, and Reading Tea Times have kept us all busy whilst the School Council and our House Captains have been busy leading by example and helping to make our school an even better place to be. Meanwhile, down in Key Stage 1 preparations for the Nativity 'Are We

Nearly There Yet?' were gathering pace, as too were those for the Nursery Nativity. Both were memorable occasions, and as the last notes of the songs fade, and the aroma of roast turkey emanates from the school Dining Room, I can truly declare Christmas has begun. Happy Christmas to you all.

Sally Meyrick

Harvest Festival at Friends'

The Junior School once again entertained parents and pupils with their colourful collection of Harvest songs and performances. From pizza to harvest rainbows, green tomato chutney to woodland poetry, the children's celebration had it all. The Senior School held a non-uniform day while the staff supported the effort with their 'bake a cake for break' sale. The proceeds from both of these went to the Alex Ruffell Memorial Fund, which supports a school in Chidobe, Zimbabwe. It was a pleasure to welcome Sue Ford back to Friends' and present her with a cheque for the fund.

We also continue our association with Cambridge charity, Jimmy's Night Shelter with both the Junior and Senior School donating pantry essentials during Harvest. Thank you to parents and pupils for your generosity.

Pictured: Libby, Kamal, Sophie and Byron presented the cheque to Sue Ford for the Alex Ruffell Memorial Fund during Assembly.



A London Adventure for Years 1 and 2

Years 1 and 2 ventured to the capital city as part of their Geography topic on towns and cities. Comparing London and Saffron Walden, they based their visit around the River Thames and learned about the importance of it now and back in 1666!



They also visited the Tate Modern and saw some wonderful sculptures and paintings which triggered great interest among the children, as did the trip across the Millennium Bridge to St Paul's Cathedral. They enjoyed a tour of St Paul's Cathedral, focusing on The Great Fire of London. The children spent a truly memorable day taking part in practical activities along the way, which all added to their learning experience.

Alex Peirson – Essex U10 Player of the Season

Congratulations to Alex who received the award for Essex U10 Player of the Season at a school assembly in October. Interested in the game since he was six years old, Alex has been playing for Dunmow Cricket Club for the last four years and Essex for the last two. He is also a valuable member of the school team.

Alex was named winner of the award after recording 211 runs in six innings, scoring two 50s and achieving an average of 42.2. Nick Down, who presented the award from Essex Cricket, commented, "Alex worked particularly hard in training and took on board all the advice and guidance he was given. He showed terrific skill and attitude to establish himself as a stylish but also gritty left handed opening batsman."



Poetry by Heart

Special guest Tony Mitton joined the Junior School's Poetry by Heart Celebration, which involved children from Reception to Year 6. There was a wonderful selection of performances including Reception's I Am Special, before some dragons flew from Year 3 into the Watson Hall with their contribution. Daisy Armitage delighted her audience with a performance of T.S. Elliot's Jellicle Cats and Alice O'Callaghan confidently recited Allan Ahlberg's poem, The Grumpy Teacher.

Tony Mitton brought a further touch of magic by reciting his own poetry and presenting prizes to some very lucky children. He also kindly presented a gift to the school - his new book for our Library!



Plenty of Room on the Broom

Broomsticks which flew amongst the trees of the Forest School, along with Halloween witches and unusual creatures (portrayed ably by Sixth Formers, Matthew Richardson and Byron Dean) captured the attention of pupils, ranging from Nursery to Year 6. It was a special Halloween Spooky Reading Tea Time for pupils and their parents with story telling and activities in the forest. Older children acted as guides and helped the younger ones with their activities.



Nursery and Reception loved making mud potions, Years 1 and 2 created magical broomsticks and Years 3 and 4 wove a giant spider web before making jam-jar lanterns to light the way to the fire circle. While soup and crumpets (blood and brains) were gobbled up in front of a warming fire, a long-haired stranger in black (Resident Drama Assistant, Robert Pepper) continued the entertainment and regaled The Hairy Toe, a traditional American poem.

A week in North Norfolk for Years 5 and 6

September saw Years 5 and 6 travel to North Norfolk for a week-long residential trip at the Aylmerton Field Centre. Staff from the Centre led our pupils in a wide range of activities, which included team building, orienteering and studying different habitats. They also learnt about the seaside town of Cromer and the local crumbling coastline. As always, the highlight of the trip was the visit to Blakeney Point and walking across the salt marshes through the mudflats, before taking a boat trip to see the seals.



Reading Tea Time in the Junior School

Sporty Reading Tea Time

It was an afternoon which saw exercise and reading combine beautifully at the Junior School's Sporty Reading Tea Time. Years 3 and 4 (and some a little younger too) were enthralled and charmed by Chris Clayton-Smith's reading of Pirates Don't Play Cricket. Our Junior School PE teacher also challenged his audience to some gentle brain training and explained why exercise is so important for our wellbeing and learning. The children had a wonderful time and left inspired to both read and exercise for their health.



Year 9 Visit to Parliament And The Royal Courts of Justice

As part of their Citizenship and PSHE education programme, Year 9 travelled to London to visit Parliament and The Royal Courts of Justice. They were lucky to see both the House of Lords and the House of Commons and also got a taste of what it may feel like to be a barrister! Wearing wigs and gowns, they took part in a mock trial at the Royal Courts of Justice – a fantastic experience for our Year 9 pupils.

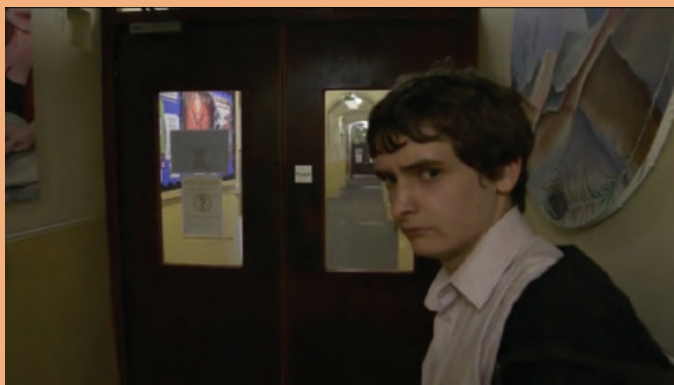
Byron Dean Makes Shortlist in Film Festival

Byron Dean, a Sixth Former and member of the Quartet, made the shortlist with his film 'Purgatory' in the ShortReel Cambridge Student Film Award.

During the summer, student filmmakers of all ages in Eastern and Central England were invited to submit a short film in any genre and style as part of the Cambridge Film Festival. Byron heard about the Film Festival's Student 'ShortReel' competition through Rob Pepper, Friends' Resident Drama Assistant, an experienced and avid filmmaker.

Byron loves to tell stories through different mediums; performing on stage as different characters, writing scripts and also short stories. He is studying drama at A Level and has been actively involved in school plays and productions since he started at Friends', but it doesn't stop there for Byron. Outside school he is part of the casting agency "YAC" (The Young Actors Company), which teaches actors how to perform both on stage and in front of the camera. Being part of the company's 'Screen Academy' for several years has allowed him to observe how film production works.

Instead of being solely in front of the camera, Byron was keen to try his hand at directing. What emerged was an emotional but subtle short film. Congratulations on making the final four – a fantastic accomplishment Byron!



Quaker Pilgrimage

Sixth Formers, Josh Garwood and Max Brusis, along with staff members, Philip Dant and Bidy Vousden, journeyed north for the annual Quaker Schools' Pilgrimage, the 'Fox Trot'. Following in the footsteps of George Fox, they took in North Yorkshire and South Cumbria, learning more about the origins of the Quaker faith alongside a number of students from the other Quaker Schools.

Millie wins Young Chef Competition

On Thursday 3rd December three of our students faced a culinary cook-off at the district final of The Rotary Young Chef Competition. Charlotte Ebbens, Flora Turnbull and Millie Beynon competed against students from Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport and SWCHS in the hope they would make it through to the next round of the competition. The task required each student to plan, prepare and present a healthy and nutritious meal for two people in 90 minutes, at a cost of no more than £10. They were also required to create an attractive table setting. Congratulations to all three of our students for producing an array of fantastic dishes, but it was Millie's Chicken and Pea Risotto served with a parmesan crisp and her 'Heart Filled with Love' (a brandy snap basket filled with whipped cream and fresh berries) which the judges decided was a winning menu! A fantastic win for Millie who will go on to represent the school in the regional final in Ipswich on Saturday 27th February.

A Sixth Form Focus Bowles' Rock

Bowles' Rock, an outdoor activity centre, once again provided our Lower Sixth students the opportunity to get to know each other and bond as a group while participating in a range of tasks and challenges. The weekend also encourages teamwork and leadership skills while allowing students to face and overcome a number of personal challenges. Activities on offer included rock-climbing, bouldering, Jacob's Ladder, the Leap of Faith, dry slope skiing, a night walk and a variety of problem solving tasks. The group showed very quickly that they were able to tackle challenges and work together as a team.



Motorwise

This term Lower Sixth students also attended Motorwise, an event hosted by Uttlesford Safety Partnership that educates 16 to 18 year olds about road safety, driver responsibilities and the law. Students had the opportunity to drive a car under the guidance of an instructor from a local driving school and attended sessions on the law, the dangers of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol, car maintenance, advice on buying a car, staying visible to HGV drivers, and the effects of speed on braking distance.

Junior School Sport

The Junior School have again been busy with a range of sporting fixtures this term. The U11 football team had a brilliant start to their season, scoring a feast of goals in their first game against Bishop's Stortford College. At the final whistle it was a resounding 9-7 win for Friends'.

The girls have played some excellent netball this term with both the U9 and U11 teams only narrowly losing to Dame Bradbury's. The U9s did particularly well as, for most of them, it was their first ever netball match. Well done to the U10 team who had a great match against Dame Bradbury's to win 11-0.

Cross Country continued to be a highlight on the Junior School's sporting calendar with four teams representing Friends' in the District Cross Country at Newport.

Year 3 girls, Year 4 boys, Year 6 boys and Year 6 girls all ran extremely well with the Year 6 girls finishing 1st overall out of 13 teams. A brilliant effort. We wish them the best of luck as they go on to represent Uttlesford in the County finals next year.

This term also saw Friends' Junior School invite both Howe Green House and Dame Bradbury's to compete in their first inter school swimming gala. In what was a very close and tightly contested gala, FJS swim squad swam extremely well, with individual wins from Cecily Hannam (25m Butterfly), Lewis Webb (25m Butterfly), Charlie Corpas (25m Backstroke), Stirling Dempsey (25m Breaststroke) and Alice O'Callaghan (25m Breaststroke). We finished a close 2nd, only 9 points behind Dame Bradbury's and 7 points ahead of Howe Green.



GCSE History students on their Battlefields trip to Northern France and Belgium

Rise of the Phoenix

Congratulations to Anna Berdyguzhina whose work, 'Rise of the Phoenix' has been selected for exhibition at the Lloyds Register Gallery from 11th February to 11th March 2016 and then at the RBA's annual show at the Mall Galleries from 17th March to 2nd April 2016. This is the sixth consecutive year that artwork from Friends' School has been selected for these prestigious exhibitions.

The RBA president and his fellow council members deliberated long and hard over which pieces to select as 55 NADFAS Societies submitted 348 art works from 89 schools. They said, "As you can imagine narrowing the field to just 22 was a challenge!".

We are delighted for Anna and thank our local NADFAS Society for their help and support in promoting the art of our students here at Friends.



The Benedetti Sessions – BBC Ten Pieces

Friends' School string and woodwind players from across the Junior and Senior School were treated to a range of fabulous workshops and a performance led by world-renowned violinist, Nicola Benedetti and orchestral conductor, Ben Gorman. Our musicians fully engaged in listening to and performing a range of music from Shostakovich's '10th Symphony' and 'The Lark Ascending' by Vaughan-Williams, which is part of the BBC Ten Pieces, an educational initiative to engage young musicians with classical music. It was a fantastic experience for our musicians who enjoyed the opportunity to perform alongside the six other schools who attended.



The Annual Old Scholars v First XI Football Match

Fifteen Old Scholars made the journey back to Friends' to play the school's 1st XI earlier this term. Despite being without a few of their more experienced players, the 1st XI started off the better side and passed the ball well, looking to attack at every opportunity. An early goal got the game off to an exciting start but the Old Scholars struck back quickly to level the match. James Morris netted soon after with an assist from Dougie Whall, but again their lead was brief as a fine strike by Matt Simper took the Old Scholars to a 2-2 deadlock at half time.

The match continued to be a competitive affair but long-range strikes by Matt Simper and Jaunté Campbell-Cole sealed the game for the Old Scholars who won 5-3. Thanks to Nick Batcheler for organizing a great day of football and to the Old Scholars for taking the time to come back to school for the day!



Girls' Hockey

Our girls' hockey teams have made a fabulous start to the season with victories all round. The U15s won 2-0 and the U13s won 6-0 against St Mary's and Bishop's Stortford and the U16s beat St Mary's, Cambridge 3-0. A brilliant way to begin the year.



Rugby

The U15 rugby team played their first game of the season against a slightly older Stoke team but it was great to see Callum Morgan-McDermott and Thomas Mutali lead from the front and receive good support from Rafiq Aliasgarov and Alex Cowell. They defended valiantly throughout the match, well done!

The U16 team began their season in September against a well-drilled Stoke College side, but Friends' continued to display last season's fantastic form and played with skill and determination. Tries from Nathan Gibbs, Sam Fuller and the match winning score from Thomas Wong gave the team a well-deserved win.



A Bumper Harvest at the Junior School

Pupils returned to school after the summer break to see a bumper harvest of fruit and vegetables, a result of their planting project in late June.

Kate Richardson, Eco Team Leader said, "The beds were built in early June by our maintenance team and the children got on with eagerly planting various fruits and vegetables. They have all been amazed and delighted at the abundant produce that has grown over the summer."

The raised beds have been a very important addition to the enrichment programme offered at the Junior School. Education outside the classroom is an essential part of learning and also valuable in personal development. The beds are being used across the whole school, in their gardening club, eco team and cookery classes. Part of the enrichment programme is about transforming food culture; making healthy, tasty and nutritious meals the norm for all to enjoy and reconnecting people with where food comes from, teaching them how it's grown and cooked, and understanding the importance of well-sourced ingredients.

Thanks to Ridgeons for kindly donating the materials for one raised bed per class so each year group could be involved. It is brilliant we can now offer our children the 'fork to table' experience.



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