

St Margaret's School Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Issue 59 5th March

Our fund-raising this week has involved many varieties of fancy dress and interesting hairstyles: it cannot be dull living close to St Margaret's! Wednesday's PCCE saw many inventive stalls in the Hall, with a huge variety of cakes (and doughnuts!). Several tigers subsequently appeared in first lesson. Some very skilled face-painting was involved! A full report of all our fundraising activities will appear in next week's newsletter.



Our GCSE students' play, *Blithe Spirit*, was truly distinguished and a delightful evening which I was pleased to see whole families sharing. All ages were able to appreciate the humour, something greatly to the girls' credit. Timing is all, in comedy. There were impeccable accents, too. The set, designed by Beth Holdaway, was very successful. In three weeks' time, it will be the turn of Years 7 – 9, with *Daisy Pulls it Off!*

You may be interested to know that we are currently delighted with the successful university offers our Upper Sixth are receiving. St Margaret's is not experiencing the difficulties reported in the press, perhaps due to the detailed advice and support given by Mrs Hutchings and her Sixth Form Tutor team. Offers include Hannah Halden being accepted at RADA (congratulations, Hannah!), and Lannie Churchill, who has offers from all her universities of choice, to read Law.

Congratulations are also due to Hannah Thompson, who has been selected (as one of 25 out of approximately 2,500 young people) to perform *Sweeney Todd* in London in the summer. Very well done, Hannah!

Our Charity Prefects introduced the week, with an informative assembly about *Dream-A-Way* and the *Susanna Twiddy Fund*, for which we collected at our Christmas Carol Service. This week, I feel that it is also important, as a school, to try to send a donation to the Chilean earthquake appeal.

Our third charity, the *Devon Air Ambulance* hope to have a full house on Saturday 17th April, when our Chapel Choir will be performing with the *Wessex Male Voice Choir*. This concert will be held at *St Peter's High School*. *Devon Radio* is also going to record the concert and put it on air at a later date.

We are, as I said last week, enormously grateful for your support, as parents, in providing the extras – the 'icing on the cake', as it were, this time for improving the 'feel' of our Morford building. We will enclose a fuller account of plans and also of the past two years' development at St Margaret's in next week's newsletter.

Finally, I write this at the end of a day containing two very moving occasions. The first, the visit of a Holocaust survivor, Mr Ziggy Shipper. Ziggy's accounts of his experiences in Auschwitz were memorable and gripping. Also, joining St Margaret's on Thursday evening was the Bishop of Crediton. Bishop Bob came to confirm three girls, in St Margaret's Chapel: it is the first time our Chapel has been used in such a way. One girl was also baptised. In contrast to the horror of Mr Shipper's experience, the service sent us away refreshed and invigorated, with both hope and faith for the future, and, especially, for the girls' own future lives.

Sheila Cooper
Headmistress



'enjoying excellence'



Oxford Theology Day

On Friday the 12th of February, three lower sixth Religious Studies students were given the opportunity to go to the Theology Faculty open day at Oxford University. Emily Finch, Lucy Norman-Walker and Jess Ingoldsby, along with Mr Meeke and Mr Finch, set off for Oxford early on Friday morning, arriving in time to register with over a hundred other AS students from around the country. It was here the girls listened to various professors and lecturers talk about studying Theology and the different areas which you could specialise in during the three year course, opening our eyes to the diversity of the subject. We learnt that Theology could be studied on its own, or with Philosophy, or you can now even study Theology and Oriental Studies. It was also very interesting to hear from some current undergraduates, and gain a student's perspective of the course. One of the most helpful things about the day was the question and answer session we had towards the end of the morning talk.

After the morning conference we were put into groups of around 30 students and sent off to various colleges for lunch. We had the pleasure of going to Christ Church College for our lunch, and got to eat in the dining room where the Harry Potter dining room scenes were filmed! After this we looked around the beautiful college grounds, including the smallest cathedral in Britain, whilst being given the chance to talk one to one with some undergraduates.

Our afternoon lecture was given by Nigel Biggar, the 'Professor of Moral Philosophy' at Oxford. In our group of thirty we discussed with him questions such as, "What do we need for a morality?" and "How might we be morally better without a God?" We also looked at some thought provoking quotations from famous theologians, and got an insight into the tutoring system at Oxford. Overall it was a fascinating day and incredibly inspiring!

Lucy Norman-Walker

World Book Day – Book Swap and Competition

On Thursday, 11th March we shall be holding a book swap in the Library during second lunch. If you have any books at home that you would like to swap, please bring them in to school and place them in the chapel. For 20p, you can swap your book for another one of your choosing. Proceeds from the swap will go to charity.

As part of our celebrations for World Book Day last year, we received several excellent entries for the 'Reading In Unusual Places' competition. This year we are launching a competition entitled 'Being Read To In Unusual Places' which should be even more fun as you will need to include someone else in the photograph, as well as having to ask someone to take the photograph!

If you would like to take part in this competition, please submit your entry to any member of the English Department – Mrs Frost, Mrs Hutchings or Miss Kilbride – over the course of the next two weeks. The closing date for entries is Friday, 19th March - the winner will be announced during the final week of term. We look forward to receiving some very unusual entries!

Photos of pupils dressed up as characters from their favourite books



Auction of Promises – still going ahead!!

Unfortunately we have had to cancel the planned live auction event that was due to take place this evening. However we still have many excellent 'promises' to offer you!

On the insert to this newsletter you will find the full list of 'promises' that you can still make a bid for. We are going ahead with our version of a silent auction. Against the list of promises is listed what we consider should be the minimum bid accepted for each lot.

If you would like to make a bid for any lot this is what you should do:

- On the inserted sheet, next to the minimum bid of the lot(s) you are interested in, add the amount that you would like to bid for the lot.
- Complete the section of the insert that asks for your information
- Return the insert in an envelope marked: FAO Mrs Jennie Benham, Development Office

Next week we will publish the insert again showing the highest bid amount made for any lot (with no indication of who has made the bid). You may find you have to bid again, if your bid wasn't the highest, to stand a chance of gaining the lot.

We already have had a few bids on some of the lots as you will see on the insert! The auction will be open until the start of next term – only four newsletters! So get your starting bids in now!!

South West Flute Festival

I was privileged to attend the South West Flute Festival on Saturday 27th February 2010. I went with Miss Highton, flute teacher, on the Saturday and Rhiannon Fuller attended on the Sunday. Paul Edmund Davies gave two Masterclasses and shared many humorous hints on how to improve flute playing for any level of ability. His warm, approachable and professional teaching style was excellent and he was able to make substantial improvements with each student in a limited time. Paul Edmund Davies played a Powell flute which is black between the keys and looks 100 years old. It is actually only 9 years old but his body chemistry eats silver flutes; he thinks it makes him look like he practices a lot!

The afternoon included a flute group session, a chamber choir section and a 20 minute individual flute session with Timothy Carey accompanying on the piano. This was a rare treat and an invaluable experience for any flautist.

Paul Edmund-Davies was principal flute with the London Symphony for 20 years and is currently professor of flute at the Royal College of Music in London. The evening recital was incredible! Timothy Carey played the piano accompaniment for Paul Edmund Davies and together they mesmerised the audience. Timothy Carey embraced us all with a Chopin piano solo. You could have heard a pin drop when they played 'Home Away From Home' by Phil Coulter, which I had brought with me to play and they decided to include in the evening's performance.

The South West Flute Festival was a magical and inspirational event. I must express my gratitude to Kym Burton who organised the festival and Miss Highton, who kindly invited me. Mrs Adele Searle

Confirmation & Baptism

While the Holocaust talk went on in the Hall after school on Thursday, in the Chapel, the Bishop of Crediton was presiding over a service of Confirmation & Baptism. This was the culmination for Maddi, Phoebe & Paige in Years 10 & 9 respectively of a series of classes in which we explored a number of key Christian issues. It required commitment & thought on their part. On the day, it was very rewarding that friends, relations & godparents travelled great distances, in some cases, for a St Margaret's first - a Confirmation & Baptism on school premises.



Bishop Bob's extraordinary presence ensured that an oasis of calm was miraculously created in the heart of the school. Many thanks to the staff & retired staff who supported this event, not least Mrs Swainger who excelled herself once again by making the delicious Confirmation cake

Mrs Frost

'Blithe Spirit'.

I would like to extend massive congratulations to the Year 11 drama girls for their production of 'Blithe Spirit'. It was a fantastic evening, jam-packed with laughter and enjoyment. The girls performed to such a high standard that they gave even Rex Harrison and Margaret Rutherford a run for their money. I was very proud of each and every one of them. Their hard work and commitment really paid off.



'Daisy Pulls it Off'- 19/20th March.

I would also like to take this opportunity to let everyone know that the next production – 'Daisy Pulls it Off', is in two weeks. Tickets go on sale next week, £6 including refreshments. This production has an intense rehearsal schedule, but the girls are committed and working hard to produce a brilliant performance. We are looking forward to seeing you all there to support the girls in 'Daisy Pulls it Off'. This production is full of fun and laughter and, as it is set in an all girls' school, it is a very fitting play! So let us grab our hockey sticks and have a jolly good time!



Claudius Visit

Claudius is a 3 year old Bichon Frise dog and he came to visit on Friday 26th February 2010. Claudius was in school to attend Mrs Searle's (his Mummy) assembly. After being petted and cuddled by many St Margaret's pupils in the Main Hall, Claudius went on to spend the morning with pupils in Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep. He spent time with Mrs Searle in her office and occasionally had a walk around the school gardens.

When it came to lunch, Mrs Searle asked us to look after Claudius (with Mr Farley) whilst she went to collect some lunch. When Mrs Searle came back with her tray of fish and chips, Claudius had to wait until she had finished eating. He lay at Mrs Searle's feet and waited patiently. He was then allowed to eat the little bit of fish she had saved for him but he had to avoid the ketchup due to his fluffy, white fur. Yum, yum!



It was a great day and we hope Claudius can spend another day at our school!

Love you Claudius!

Victoria Boxall-Hunt and Megan Cobley, Year 8

Calendar

Sat 06	10:00 - 16:30	Choral Masterclass with James Davey Yr 9 Maths Masterclass - Exeter University
08/03/10 - 12/03/10		Science Week
Mon 08	16:30 - 19:00	Lower Sixth Parents' Consultation Evening
Tue 09	14:00 - 15:00	U12 EOS Netball (A) - The Maynard School
	15:00 - 16:00	U13 Netball vs Kingsley (H)
	16:00 - 18:00	Full School Council Meeting
Wed 10		Annabel Claridge - Children's Author - Visiting Prep School
	09:00 - 09:30	Eucharist - Yrs 3 - 8
	12:00 - 13:30	Careers Fair - Working with Children & Young People Yrs 10 & 11
	18:30 - 19:30	Parents' Information Evening - French Exchange - Main Hall
Thu 11	09:10 - 15:45	Chemistry Upper Sixth Individual Investigations Day
	14:00 - 15:00	U13 + U14 EOS Netball at St Peter's (2.20 start)
	16:00 - 17:00	Soloists' Concert
Fri 12	13:00 - 15:30	Nursery & Pre-Prep - Celebrating Mother's Day GCSE Music Conference - Birmingham
Sun 14	10:00 - 16:00	Daisy Pulls it Off - Technical Rehearsal