



SPRING 2015 ISSUE 7

# Et Cetera

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

# Contents

PAGE 3

SHAKESPEARE REINVENTED  
As You Like It

PAGES 4 and 5

LEARNING EXPERIENCES  
Winter Warmers  
On View at the Science Museum  
Baroness Julia Neuberger  
Poetry by Heart

PAGES 6 and 7

EXTRAORDINARY  
A Painter's Progress  
English National Ballet

PAGES 8 and 9

THE EXTENDED DAY  
Off Piste in Austria  
House Sports  
A View from Iceland  
... and From Snowdon

PAGES 10 and 11

EXQUISITE DINING  
Michelin Starred

Editor's Notes

Cover shot:  
Her Royal Highness the  
Duchess of Cornwall

## HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

The start of the year can be hard work: cold, dark and with a strong sense of so much to do before we can anticipate success. A telephone call from First Story, the literary charity with whom our students write novellas and poetry, to ask whether we would host a visit from their patron HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, was very warmly received. What an opportunity for our students to experience part of the history of our country. With the aid of Clarence House staff and exquisite guidance from Lady Elizabeth Arnold, the Deputy Lieutenant for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, I hope that we delivered an enjoyable visit. Charming, engaged, modest and so warmly interested, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, was able to see a range of lessons and meet many young people. With the press lights everywhere, our photographer managed to capture her joy. We aimed also to conquer winter blues with our annual staff Shakespeare production in aid of charity and this year with our first attempt at comedy 'As You Like It'. As a member of the audience I watched six performances and each was a veritable treat and an opportunity to witness others' talents. Some of our students have danced with English National Ballet and Mr David Chappell's AS Art group are currently putting together a portfolio of stunning art, worthy of a gallery. We have begun a series of intervention events to support students' learning as the countdown to examinations begins. The choir have embarked on their rehearsal schedule for our first Spring performance, this season singing some Renaissance madrigals superbly directed by Nicholas Robson. University offers are flooding in and they are demanding ever higher grades. We have applied to be a prestigious teaching school (the equivalent to being a teaching hospital) and we continue to receive visitors from across the country who come to seek advice on how to replicate our success. In the midst of all of this success and acclaim I know one thing for certain: it is all about hard work and hard work is good for us. Success is better than rest is an enduring mantra for us. This is my fifteenth year as the Head of Holland Park – what joyful work. It is always a pleasure to meet people from our local community and as this term closes I had the very great privilege of hosting Sally Clarke, of Clarke's Restaurant and Shop, who was delightfully warm and generous. There is much we can learn from such a successful business. I enjoyed our conversation about attention to detail: two different walks of life but I think a similar outlook. I strongly suspect I have discovered another inspiration for our school.

MR COLIN HALL, HEAD



A splendid performance of *As You Like It* was produced prior to the half term break; our annual 'Shakespeare Reinvented' spectacular. More polished than ever, more performances than ever, and in receipt of the highest acclaim to date. Members of the Leadership Team and a range of other colleagues, under Mr Colin Hall's and Mr David Chappell's skilful direction and production, entertained and delighted students, parents and friends of the school with their modern 'Kensington versus the countryside' take on one of Shakespeare's most enduringly popular comedies. Mr Nicholas Robson, a consummate actor in a Paul Smith floral shirt, presented a wonderfully romantic, charismatic Orlando; the perfect foil to Ms Alex Pugh's feisty performance as Ganymede and love-lorn Rosalind. Newly cut turf, olive trees, Colefax and Fowler tents, colourful bunting and a Land Rover, created a magical Forest of Arden, whilst witty segments from our very own 'Caught in Kensington',

our remake of 'Made in Chelsea', and superb comic timing from Mr Daniel Seed's Touchstone, had the audience rolling in their verdant seats. Ticket sales raised a considerable sum for The Royal Marsden Hospital. Our thanks to all those colleagues whose hard work brought this production to fruition and to everyone who supported it by attending performances. HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, who happened to be visiting our First Story writing group, was treated to a preview and we had barely wished her farewell, only to find our friend Katharine Kent (HRH The Duchess of Kent) arriving for the matinee performance. We are deeply privileged to find ourselves the beneficiary of her time and interest. Students in Year 7 and 8 were privy to special performances by way of preparing them for their summer term English studies.

MS AMANDA REDFEARN, DEPUTY HEAD



## WINTER WARMERS

One day we will all be old! Bridging the gap between the old and young was one of our reasons for responding to the request to work with Age Concern. Art Aptitude students made full use of their creative talents at a local and national level in January to raise the awareness of the community. The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation, working in partnership with Age UK, launched a design brief for students to design and make draught excluders to encourage understanding of the dangers faced by vulnerable older residents in the winter months. The competition was judged by the Design Museum. A myriad of wonderful designs and textiles were displayed and admired. Emma Geidt of The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation acknowledged our students' talents and their exceptional skills at the event, saying 'Thank you so much for all the trouble you took in organising the Winter Warmth event at Holland Park last week. I think that everyone who visited the school was overwhelmed by the professionalism of the students' work, the care and imagination that their work revealed and by the warm welcome and delicious tea that we were all given'.

MS AMANDA REDFEARN, DEPUTY HEAD

## ON VIEW AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

What drives your desires for the foods you love? Is it the colour of your spoon, the food your mother ate while pregnant, the trillions of bacteria that dine with you, or the little known 'second brain' in your gut? Our students have collaborated with the Science Museum to produce imaginary products that are now displayed in one of the museum's special exhibition spaces. 'Cravings' is a major exhibition that will run for the remainder of 2015 and would not have been possible without our school. Ten Year 10 students were asked to identify the food items they can never turn down. After they created their menu of irresistible food, they then discovered the science behind their urges. Once armed with the cutting edge scientific research into their cravings, they participated in experiments before writing warning labels to be placed on an imaginary product of their own. These were then printed and will now be viewed by the millions of people visiting the exhibition.

MR DANIEL SEED, DEPUTY HEAD



## BARONESS JULIA NEUBERGER

Insightful, clever, accomplished, wise, reflective and charmingly confident - what an experience to listen to such intellect delivered with grace and humility. Our students and staff were privileged to listen to and meet Baroness Julia Neuberger on a chilly January Tuesday. We were treated to an hour of piercing eloquence and political subtlety. Speaking with students about her work in the House of Lords as a campaigner for the elderly and on her work in broadcasting and public engagements, she presented a powerful dissection of the current bill for assisted dying. She spoke with passion and pragmatism about necessary political compromises and responded to questions thoughtfully, clearly and carefully. It was a wonderful experience of optimism and assertiveness and an example of the lucidity and articulation it takes to shape public policy. Students were the beneficiaries of a fascinating insight into the complexity of decision making at the highest level. The Baroness was a potent role model for all our students. There were lessons to be learnt about equality of opportunity, justice, kindness, tolerance and just how far we all have to go to be this good! One will remember this event for sometime, not only for the above, but because it was all delivered with modesty and a clear declaration that there are always other views.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON, DEPUTY HEAD



## POETRY BY HEART

Edisher Kipiani, one of our accomplished Year 11 students, represented the school in the central London final of the *Poetry by Heart* Competition, a national competition held annually with a focus on performing and reciting poems. This prestigious competition, conceived by former poet Laureate Sir Andrew Motion, challenges students in Years 10 to 13 to recite from memory three poems selected from the *Poetry by Heart* anthology. Edisher recited, *Thoughts of Phena* by Thomas Hardy and Wilfred Owen's *The Show*, to great acclaim and ended the competition with a touching rendition of *The Death Bed* by Siegfried Sassoon. Edisher chose these poems to recognise recent centenary commemorations of the start of the First World War. He impressed a panel of judges with the most rigorous of criteria and expectations, achieving a 'runner up' placing at the final stage of the event.

MR JAMES CURTIS, LIBRARIAN





## A PAINTER'S PROGRESS

'Attention to detail' is a hackneyed term, an over-used term but it is, when people truly apply it, the difference between excellent and exceptional. Hanging, still in process, in Thorpe Lodge is a 4m long canvas. It is a self-portrait by Phoebe Ingleby, realised as part of her AS Art portfolio (Phoebe is in Year 10, studying AS Art two years early). It is an arresting, stunning piece of fine art, grand in scale, rendered with delicacy and painstaking detail. We had the pleasure of offering Sally Clarke a viewing on her visit to the school (her own appreciation of Art is well documented). As she viewed it, Mr Chappell listed all the things that needed to be improved and described Phoebe's utterly ruthless self-criticism. This is attention to detail and will doubtless lead to exceptional achievement in the summer. The exquisite gathering of Art in Thorpe Lodge is all the more so because almost all of the AS students are not yet in the Sixth Form. The quality of painting and drawing draws a gasp: the execution of paint and rendering of light makes one wonder if one is

not in a Finals exhibition. Breaking the mould are Sarah Bagheri's triptych (pictured), Iris Cousin's 'shrine', Hena Pasic's life size group portrait, Rose Norris' non-representational exploration of 'human traces' (she has a whole room to herself for her work!) and the Pre-Raphaelite, Sophia Ellis. Mr Chappell is a perfectionist. Matilda Wickham's A\* pencil drawing (exhibited in our foyer) is, I suspect, going to be joined by others. Given Phoebe's 4m canvas, we might need to raise the roof! There will be a summer exhibition and we are very much looking forward to mounting it and inviting an open viewing. We have refrained from asking our friend Celia Birtwell to a preview so far for the pleasure of anticipating her response to the finished work. What is happening in Thorpe Lodge is 'attention to detail': the sort of attention to detail that we hope might lead to The Ruskin School of Art in Oxford or direct entry to the Royal College.

**MR GREG SMITH**  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

Leaving my baby daughter each morning of February half term to come to school was a bit of a wrench but the reward of seeing our students thrive in a partnership with some of the world's finest dancers made it bearable. Our ongoing and long-standing partnership with English National Ballet has previously seen students performing at The Royal Albert Hall and in Shanghai, China. Most people might think a joyous departure from the world of examinations and coursework would be a Saturday lie-in, or a cosy early evening, safely tucked-up. Our Dance students have a rather different ideal: a world première of Dance Journeys: *Perfect Disorder*, an original work inspired by William Forsythe's *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* performed as part of English National Ballet's Modern Masters programme. The work is being staged at

Sadler's Wells Theatre, the highly prestigious and world famous venue that showcases the most current and exciting choreographers working in dance today. Dedicated students have been rehearsing weekly on Thursday and Friday evenings since January alongside the English National Ballet youth company for a curtain-raiser performance in which they will share the stage with the main company. Leyla Saatova (pictured here) was one of the students involved. Accompanied live by English National Ballet Philharmonic Orchestra and dancing to an original score, the performance promises to be an unforgettable experience for performers and audience members alike.

**MR SIMON DOBSON**  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## OFF PISTE IN AUSTRIA

Forty five Holland Park students, descending Hirschkogel Mountain each morning, might be a noisy spectacle, but nothing could detract from the spectacular view of the Alpendorf ski region the students were treated to. The students, accompanied by all colleagues from the Physical Education team, set off for Austria on Friday 13th February for a week's skiing. With enthusiasm and anticipation, they ascended the first gondola to meet their ski instructors, and experienced four hours of instruction each day. Students made some considerable and indeed, remarkable progress, moving from the novice and beginner's group into the intermediate and further into the advanced group. The weather felt like skiing on a summer's afternoon and the view was breathtaking from every angle. After the students rested in the afternoon there were a variety of evening activities to keep them entertained. These involved a pizza night, traditional Austrian pin-bowling and watching a professional ice-hockey match at the local indoor arena. At the end of the week awards were given to

Freddie Terry, Year 10, and Ivy Webb, Year 9, for their virtuosic and advanced talent on the snow. Special awards went to Chelsea Evans, Year 9, and Zack Kaminski, Year 8, as the most improved skiers of the week. The trip was a marvellous experience and this was largely owing to students' outstanding attitudes to the physical demands of lengthy unrelenting skiing and their personal endurance and tenacity. We look forward in anticipation to the next proposed ski trip to Folgardia, in Italy during February half term in 2016.

## HOUSE SPORTS

If going on to represent Holland Park in our many sports teams is defined by talent, representing one's House might be better defined by enthusiasm. In football, netball, hockey and swimming, students have taken the plunge and willingly with great sportsmanship and humour. The results of House performance are as follow: Boys' Football, Baker and Seeley are joint winners; Girls' Netball is won by Chappell; Boys' and Girls' Swimming is won by Anderson; Boys' and Girls' Basketball is won by Seeley. Come on Bennett House...!

MR LUKE FULLER  
LEADER OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION



## A VIEW FROM ICELAND

Fifty one intrepid A-level Geographers braved the blizzards and sub-zero temperatures of Iceland for four exhilarating days during the February half term, accompanied by their teachers. Students were rewarded for their patience on the long journey to this exciting destination by a wonderfully warming and invigorating soak in the geothermally heated waters of the Blue Lagoon within just one hour of landing. The geothermal water in the Blue Lagoon originates 2,000 metres below the surface and on its way to the surface, picks up a range of silica and minerals, before emerging at a soothing 38°C (100°F). Perfect for a relaxing and re-energising bathe. From our Reykjavik base we were able to make an array of visits such as that to the Great Geysir which erupts to an astonishing height of 30 meters every 10 minutes. We travelled to the Thingvellir National Park where the edge of the two tectonic plates can be seen to move apart from one another and also to the beautiful south coast of the country where a range of dramatic volcanic landforms and black sand beaches captivated the group. A trip

of a lifetime for all and most privileged insight into aspects of the natural world most people can only wonder at remotely. I hope that the visit will inspire future geographers for university. The record number for Year 13 students proceeding to read geography belongs to the 2013 cohort. We will see!

MR MICHAEL CROW  
DEPUTY HEAD

## ... and FROM SNOWDON

There is something bracing and exhilarating about the precarious ridge, vast emptiness on either side, that takes one up the less well-trodden route to Snowdon's summit. It is an exhilaration we were pleased to bestow on students recognised for achieving exceptionally in our annual Vivo reward trip. Kindly supported by the Holland Park Trust it celebrated students' outstanding achievement and contributions to school.

MR GREG SMITH  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## MICHELIN STARRED

The difference people make! What a joy to have now our own school chef - Marcio Alves. Some months ago Mr Northover said to the Leadership Team, 'have you met the new chef?'. We grimaced; our history of school food has not been good but what a difference Marcio is making and now he has helped our students reach national acclaim. Three students were selected to compete at the Young Chef of the Year 2015 held at the T.A.S.T.E restaurant in Ealing's Hammersmith and West London College. Taban Rooster, Year 10, won the prestigious competition with her Michelin starred menu. Marcio trained and supported Taban

throughout the competition. Students were asked to cook a starter and a dessert from ingredients costing no more than £7. They had 60 minutes to prepare their two courses. External judges Councillor Mercy Umeh, Mayor of London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham and Garry Phillips, Principal & Chief Executive of Ealing Hammersmith & West London College marked students on the nutritional quality, appearance and presentation, aroma, taste and texture of their food. Taban designed a chicken roulade stuffed with fresh tarragon & pork sausage, rocket & reduction balsamic and a tonka bean panna cotta with orange cake and cherry coulis for dessert. Utterly delicious and the well deserved winning menu.

MR GREG SMITH  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

## AND WE DID NOT CAPTURE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS

### DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Rucksacks, methylated spirits, ropes, tents, under-vests, water bottles and Mr Mitchell's bobble hat – have we got everything for the expedition? Oops, we forgot our leader the impeccably suave Mr Ball. Duke of Edinburgh weekends are so important that Mr Seal has grown a beard for them much to the chagrin of Ms Pugh who thinks he more handsome without! D of E, as it is called, has never been more successful and it is a tribute to our students' physical and mental strength that they relish these challenges. With students working at Bronze, Silver and Gold, the scheme helps our students achieve certification which is highly prized by employers and universities. Climbing Mount Snowdon is no mean feat but doing it collaboratively with fellow students and with teachers builds life long bonds. The raw country and the magnitude of mountain spaces serves as a wonderful contrast to urban life. Who knows, such experiences may launch some student to life as a vet in the Dales or to a rural medical practice in The Lake District. Our students are warmly appreciative of their teachers' warm gift of weekends and holidays given over to this work.

### SET TEXT SATURDAY

Down the drive they came: several hundred students for Set Text Saturday! There were Dickensian dresses and the floor in 4.3 was covered in soil. If Year 7 and 8 were having fun recreating the past with their English teachers, then The Sixth Form were limbering up for some high quality intellectual debate. 'This is not a romantic comedy' asserted Mr Hall about Jane Austen's 'Pride and Prejudice': 'but of course it is' opined Ms Pugh. Mr Robson added a carefully moderated compromise position. Entering Ms Oxtoby's Year 13, she threw down the gauntlet straight-away. 'Well I bet you can't answer this question' she said to Mr Hall and Mr Robson. She waited for the answer – which came! The exciting thing about Set Text Saturday is that it provided an opportunity for wider literary debate and offered students an opportunity to develop their confidence in discussing literary merit. The day brought not only teachers but the school's Librarian – Mr Curtis who had the task of going to every group and offering a reader's view. As with so much that happens at school, it happened on a Saturday.

### THE HPS TRUST

Currently, the Trust is spending £130,000 each year on projects at Holland Park. This year we are delighted to announce that with the generous support of the Trust, two highly successful projects - the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and 'Supporting Science' - are also being supported. The Trust's investment in physical fitness training, outward-bound equipment and camping gear is now paying dividends as seen by the success of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. 'Supporting Science', a major Trust initiative that launched in September, is benefiting students and teachers. It links the science department with Imperial College, some of whose PhD students willingly share their knowledge and expertise. Intensive weekend 'Learning Experiences' at Flatford Mill have been continuously supported by the Trust over the years. The residential centre we use in Suffolk will see two residential courses take place later this year – one in science and one in maths. Some eighty students will attend these academically valuable courses this year. We are, as ever, hugely grateful to the Trust and patrons for their generosity and support.

### LIGHT NIGHTS:LONG DAYS

If there are traffic jams out of London or over crowded trains on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday then Holland Park teachers will be in them. For many teachers, their term does not end until midway through the holiday. That is because they and several hundred students will be beaver away preparing for the summer's examinations. Mr Wilson's algebra, Ms Pugh's model essays, Ms Halfpenny's lists, Mr Seed's equations, Mr Seal's statistics, and Mr Robson's quotations, will be standard fare. Essential to the success of August is spring sacrifice: students who relinquish an evening out, in exchange for redrafting work or learning information, will prosper. All the announcements about changing examination regimes point to everything that we have predicted: harder tests, unpredictable and more rigorous questions, higher marks needed. So, school is open for holiday business: there is not a moment to waste and school is determined to offer every support we can. Perhaps that is why we've been dubbed 'the school that never sleeps'.

Designed and produced by  
HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL