



Dear Parents/Carers

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008

### HEADTEACHER'S SPRING NEWSLETTER

As term 4 comes to an end after only 26 school days, I find myself writing to you again.

At the end of term we say goodbye to Miss L Garcia-Insua. Miss Garcia-Insua has "held the fort" for us in Science since Christmas as our new Head of Science, Mr D Hamilton, was unable to join us from his current position as Head of Physics at TWGGS until term 5. I should like to record my thanks to Miss Garcia-Insua for all her work with us and wish her every success in her future career. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr D Seabrook for all his help as he stood in to lead the Department over the last six months or so, and the rest of the Department, both teachers and technicians, who have all helped try to minimise disruption.

We have had a number of new members of staff join us in the last few months. They are all most welcome:

Mr J F Draper	Science teacher (maternity cover)
Mr J Fiveash	Audio-Visual/ICT Technician
Mrs P Gray	Humanities Administrative Assistant
Mrs J Jones	Administrative Assistant (School Office)
Mr P Machin	Caretaker
Mr N Soni	Science teacher
Mr P Wheeler	French teacher (maternity cover)

This may be the last newsletter before GCSE and A-Level examinations. It is most certainly the last one before the Year 9 SAT tests. I would like to end my introduction to the newsletter by wishing all our students well with their studies and these important examinations.

Yours sincerely

J G Harrison  
Headteacher

### SCHOOL FUND

Those parents/carers who kindly donated to the School Fund this year and gift-aided their donations may be interested to know that the School has made its first claim to HMCR to recover tax to the value of £5,333. All students will benefit in some way from this welcome additional income.

In addition to supporting many of the school trips, visiting theatre companies, etc., the Fund also financially supports regular activities such as School Clubs, fuel for the minibuses, entry fees for competitions both



academic and sporting. It also covers the cost of the hire of the filtered water points for students around the School and pays for prizes at awards presentations and for the production costs of the School Magazine, as well as many other items too numerous to list.

The School is very grateful to those parents/carers who have donated to the School Fund this academic year. Any parent/carer who has not so far donated and would like to consider doing this is asked to contact the Finance Office at the School for donation forms.

*John Harrison*

### **KIRLAND-ROWELL SURVEY**

Thank you to all those parents, students and staff who completed and returned their Kirkland-Rowell survey questionnaires. Over the last two years, the results of our first survey have played a major role in shaping the School Improvement Plan. As a direct result, by the end of this academic year a number of exciting developments will have come on stream. Every student in the School will benefit from improvements in ICT, enhanced accommodation will make lunchtime a more pleasant experience and there will be more space provided for private study. One of everybody's highest priorities in 2006 was to improve our PE facilities. The first phase of improvements, the draining of the school fields, will be completed before September. Meanwhile, the Governors continue to work hard to provide the School with an all weather pitch.

The results of the most recent survey should reach us before the end of July and I hope to include a brief summary in my final newsletter of the year.

*John Harrison*

### **HOUSE ASSEMBLIES**

This term saw the successful delivery of our first round of House Assemblies. Each set of house captains, aided with some very professionally designed PowerPoint presentations, spoke energetically and enthusiastically to their house on a number of items including their current position in the house league tables, their chosen charity and forthcoming house competitions. Attention was also drawn to an exciting opportunity for students to design their house logo. Each house is running a competition to find the best logo to represent their house. Once selected, the winning logo will become the recognised logo for the house. Students were also signposted to the house notice boards that each house now has to keep all students informed on house events, competitions, staff membership and progress. In addition to this the School has an overall house notice board which tracks the progress of the houses each term.

I would like to congratulate the house captains for their continued hard work in establishing the house system this year and encourage Year 12 students to apply for these positions when the current house captains leave. It is a valuable leadership opportunity that you may not be able to afford to miss!!

*L Baker, AST*

### **NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL LIBRARY**

A busy week for the Library began on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March with **World Book Day**. Displays of new books, quizzes and competitions were available in the Library and all students received their £1 book token for the book of their choice. There was also an air of anticipation about two events following soon after.

The first of these was the **Storyteller visit** on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Boys from Years 7 and Year 8 enjoyed a visit from **John Harris**, the only full time professional storyteller in the country who works exclusively with children and young people. He visits schools and libraries all over the country, telling stories from around the world – everything from ancient myths and legends to something that might happen tomorrow. In four hour-long sessions in the Drama Room, John told stories of Orpheus and Eurydice, Beowulf and Grendel and some true tales from his own experience. The boys were suitably enthralled and delighted by the performances, revelling in the suspense and descriptions of monsters meeting a gory end!

The second event was the culmination of several months of "hard reading" by a group of 39 students who took part in the **West Kent Schools Themed Book Award**. This is the second year of the scheme and TWGSB took part for the first time. The award has been set up to encourage and promote reading for pleasure in school. Students in two age groups, Teen and Young Adult (roughly KS3 and KS4/5) read and discussed five books on the theme of "Journeys". The students voted for their favourite book and the winning titles were announced at an awards ceremony held at the Queens Hall Theatre, Cranbrook School on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March. "Elsewhere" by Gabrielle Zevin won the Teen category and the Young Adult

section brought a dead heat for “Round Ireland with a Fridge” by Tony Hawks and “Life of Pi” by Yann Martel. This result was very well received by all present and the entertainment of a steel band, bookshops and two guest speakers made a very special evening for everybody. This has been a very rewarding project for all involved and I think this comment from one of our boys sums it up. “I would just like to say what a wonderful time I have had on the reading journey. Quite a few of those books, like Elsewhere, I would never have picked up and I have enjoyed every one of them. Thank you so much for getting me involved”.

*S Marchant  
School Librarian*

### **NEWS FROM THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

All of Year 7 have been reading for Readathon, raising money through sponsorship for Click Sargent Cancer Care and the Roald Dahl Foundation. This year, we have run it as a House competition, and the house which raises the most will get the points. The Library generously sponsored the boys who borrowed books during Readathon week. We are still waiting for final totals and hope that the boys, their families and friends have been generous.



The whole of Year 9 attended a theatre workshop which looked in detail at ‘Much Ado About Nothing’, especially the set scenes for the SATs. The boys had an excellent opportunity to become involved with the play, working alongside the actors and they were very enthusiastic about this as a learning experience.

*G Welford  
English Department*

### **“BATTLE OF THE BANDS ‘08”**

West Kent College’s Battle of the Bands was this year held at the Royal Victoria Hall in Southborough on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March and attracted an audience of some 150 people. The evening was recorded and filmed by West Kent College students and there should be a DVD available soon.

“JAB” (including Jack Stookes from Year 12, Ashley Smith and Billy Stookes from Year 11 and Matthew Passmore from Year 10) came third in the competition overall and Billy Stookes was given the Best Drummer award.

“VEX” (including Oliver Etherington in Year 8 and Tom Evans in Year 9) also did very well, especially considering they were up on stage first – always a daunting task. They performed confidently and sounded great. At the end of the evening Oliver won the award for Best Keyboard Player and Tom the Best Bass Player award.

All in all, TWGSB was well represented and the students did their School proud.

You may be interested to know that JAB are currently 6<sup>th</sup> out of 70 in the Tunbridge Wells Forum's competition "The Stable", where the top bands from all over the south east enter, and they will play in the next round on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

## **SALSA CLUB**



The Salsa Club started last October and it is a place where pupils learn how to dance Latin American dances which include salsa, merengue, cumbia, and other rhythms from Latin America at lunchtime every Friday.

There has been great interest in this Club and three eager members of the Club from year 8 participated in the 'Dance and the Movies' Performance at the Royal Victoria Theatre in Southborough. This event was organised by the Tunbridge Wells School Sports Partnership and took place in February.

The participants were Callum Baker, Oliver Bream McIntosh and Christopher McCarthy who conquered the stage and received not only cheers from the public but also congratulations from all the participants as they did an outstanding performance with Passion (a salsa routine).

The pupils were asked if they would take part again next year and they said, 'We have enjoyed this experience and definitely we will participate again next year.'" They also said that it has given them more confidence to appear in front of the public.

*J F Mason*

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

Parents/carers of students planning to enter Higher Education in September/October 2008 might wish to remind themselves of the following points.

- If you live in Kent and are applying for HE entrance in 2008 you should have received the relevant forms and guidance.
- If not, your son/daughter should see Mrs K Hollins or Mr W M Kern as soon as possible.
- If a student is taking a gap year, you should not apply for financial assistance this year. You will need to apply to your Local Education Authority during the next academic year.
- If you live outside of Kent you will need to obtain the relevant forms and guidance from your Local Education Authority.
- All the forms, etc are available on line and the form can be completed electronically as well as in paper form.

### **Two Key Dates:**

1. 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008: for those parents who are not providing financial information. (This tends to be the majority.)
2. 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008: for those parents providing financial information.

**Note:** Applications are made before your sons/daughters have finally accepted a place in August. It should include their main offer/choice/CF hold. If they then go to another course you need to let the relevant Authority know. This ensures that they receive their first payments at the start of the term and not much later.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) is an excellent site for more advice. The section on **Parents>Money Matters** has lots of good advice and links to other relevant websites. The Parents section also has areas relating to how parents can assist their children during examinations and what their sons/daughters should expect on arriving at university for the first time. The Student section contains a useful budget calculator.

*W M Kern  
(Assistant Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form)*

## **MEDIA STUDIES OSCAR AWARDS CEREMONY**



The Year 13 students have had a very productive term. They planned, filmed and edited a music video for Advanced Production coursework and the standard was the highest that we have seen. This unit is worth 20% of the final A level grade and the students worked tirelessly to complete to deadline. There was real collaboration between groups and we were very grateful for the number of non-media students who volunteered their time to appear in the videos, particularly those from the Music Department. The music videos were screened at a very glamorous 'Oscar Awards Ceremony' attended by over 200 staff, parents and students. The students really rose to the occasion, enjoying a 'red carpet' moment on arrival (with many thanks to Mr Mason and Mr Jenkins as the doormen) and greeted by Music Technology students playing their own composition. Once the videos were screened, awards were given out for a variety of categories, voted by a panel of staff and external judges, presented by Mr Harrison. The principal awards were:

Best Editing – Rob Allen, Nat Twiggs, Josh Windels  
Best Direction - Harry Staniforth, John Clark

Best Special Effects – Emily Saich, Ed Thorn, Dan Byrne  
Best Performance – Dan Stoate, Nick Rich  
Best Video – Matt Stringer, Sammy Lingham (TWGSS)

A DVD of the students' work and a video diary from the Oscar Ceremony will be available for the students next term. We will also be exhibiting photographs taken by our resident 'paparazzi'; Ben Headon, Alex Mitchell-Hewson and Lawrence Eagling. Our thanks extend to the Year 12 students involved in the lighting and stage management, filming crews and all staff who contributed in making it a very special evening for the Year 13 students in their final year.

*C Fernandez  
Head of Media Studies*

### **VISIT TO THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE LIBRARY**

This term the Year 13 students have also visited the British Film Institute Library in London to carry out research for their independent studies over two weeks. This was a fantastic opportunity; the reading room was closed for us for the morning and the librarians supported the students in searching and reviewing resources from a variety of journals, publications and books specifically focused on their individual hypothesis. After a morning of studying, the students enjoyed some R&R at a West End cinema, viewing 'There Will Be Blood'.

*C Fernandez  
Head of Media Studies*

### **PUPILS ENJOY ELECTRONICS EXPERIENCE**

From 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March, twelve pupils of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys enjoyed a unique learning experience at Harper Adams University College, Newport, Shropshire.

The four-day residential course began with an introduction to Analogue and Digital Electronics, with practical activities. This was followed by a solder and keep workshop and presentations on Electronic and Electrical Engineering, where students were able to learn more about career prospects within the industry.

A design and make challenge formed part of the course allowing the pupils to explore new ideas with guidance from experienced professionals from industry. Projects included building a buggy using sensors and remote control to negotiate a circuit in a race against time. Final testing of the projects took place on the last day. As well as working on the projects, students developed life skills such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, time management and social interaction.

The main objective was to inspire and encourage young students to consider a career in electronics. The content had both practical and theoretical elements. Innovative thinking, presentation skills and planning were an integral part of the course – key skills that students don't often get chance to explore fully in their school environment.

Spokesperson Claire Ford from the Trust commented, "This four-day experience is designed to give students an opportunity to take a hands-on approach at learning the skills of an electronic engineer. It is really encouraging to see so many young people showing so much enthusiasm and ingenuity. By demonstrating how exciting and rewarding the world of engineering can be, we hope to play a part in ensuring the stream of talent considering a career in the industry keeps coming."

The Electronic Engineering course is run by the independent charity, The Smallpeice Trust, as part of an ongoing programme of residential courses designed to help young people learn and develop skills in engineering, design and management.

Founded by Dr Cosby Smallpeice in 1966, the Trust has grown tremendously over the past 42 years, helping thousands of young people find a successful career in a multitude of disciplines within the industry from marine technology, robotics, and motorsports engineering, to nuclear engineering, biomedical engineering, and nanotechnology. Over the last 12 months, a total of 8,019 students have attended a Smallpeice Trust activity.

The programme is predominantly delivered through subsidised four-day residential training courses designed to stimulate interest in engineering while providing work-relating learning through live projects with engineers from a variety of industries. Introductory one-day in-school curriculum enrichment activities are also available to suit school timetables. These are supported by leading industry, educational and professional bodies that help promote, develop and successfully deliver the activities.

Students, parents/carers or teachers wishing to find out further information, please visit the website: [www.smallpeicetrust.org.uk](http://www.smallpeicetrust.org.uk) or telephone The Smallpeice Trust on 01926 333200.

*Press Release from The Smallpeice Trust*

## **NEWS FROM THE MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT**

This has been a term of such fantastic achievement by individual students, teams and whole year groups that it is difficult to know where to start.

However, special recognition as he approaches his final term at the School must be given to **George Coulon** (13S), who has featured regularly in these newsletters over the last two years. George has been progressing through the rounds of the British Maths Olympiad, and recently came fifth in the Final Round. This is an absolutely brilliant achievement that we are all very proud of.

Year 11 Top Sets recently took part in the **UK Intermediate Mathematics Challenge** and achieved a record number of Certificates. Our top performer, Edward Miller, has been invited to take part in the Maclaurin Olympiad, which could lead to a Cambridge Summer School. In addition, William Bracey, Matthew Bullard, Nicholas Cane, Chris Davies, Nathan Durrant, Anton Ebbage, Ian Reynolds, Oscar Scott and Phil Tremenheere have all been invited to represent the UK in the European Kangaroo, a Maths Challenge held simultaneously in twenty-six countries. Well done to you all!

You may recall that Manav Mehta and Liam Morris (both Year 9) won the National **Jaguar Cars “Maths in Motion”** Christmas Grand Prix, winning prizes for themselves, the Department and the School. That was described as a “fun race” with literally hundreds of cars taking part in one race. The UK Championship is the “serious race” of the year, with cars having to qualify for the right to take part. After their First Round Heat, Manav and Liam have been given a place in the Final, without having to take part in any subsequent qualifying rounds. This is the first year that we have been allowed to take part in the competition, previously restricted to schools with Mathematics Specialist Status, so to win one national competition and qualify for another final at the first attempt is an amazing achievement. The Final will be held in June at the Heritage Motor Centre, when Manav and Liam will need to work against the clock and opponents to find an optimum race set-up and pit-stop strategy for a car on an unknown circuit and varying weather conditions. Well done and good luck!

Some pupils (and parents) in Year 8 have been asking about our own TWGSB Grand Prix Competition, and why it has been restricted to Year 9. We are encouraged by their interest and want that to continue. The issue has been partly a cautious approach on our part in our first year of providing this extra-curricular activity (funded by the PTA), wanting to ensure that we could provide a full experience to all pupils involved. This would not be possible with too many pupils. With typical entries of 20 cars per race from Year 9 over the season as a whole, we think the numbers have been about right. However, it has always been our intention to offer Year 8 a race experience via an Inter-House Competition in Term 6.

Michael King and Cameron Smith (both Year 9), Callum Baker (Year 8) and Alexander Hill (Year 7) recently took part in the Regional Heat of the **UKMT Team Maths Challenge**. Thirty teams took part in what was a most enjoyable and active day of mathematical problem solving. On arriving they were given some warm up questions to prepare their brains for the competition! The first challenge involved the whole team working together to solve ten mathematical problems. They then worked in pairs, combining their answers to solve a rather challenging cross-number puzzle. After lunch, the competition continued with a head to head challenge against another school, each student taking it in turn to find the rule connecting two numbers and subsequently finding the next missing number. The final challenge was the relay race. Working in pairs, each pair took it in turns to answer a question. Once a question was finished one student had to run to the

teacher to get it marked and then take the next question to the other pair. Although the competition was extremely fierce, our team performed very well indeed and finished the day in sixth place. Well done to all!



*(Report by Dr D Orme)*

Congratulations to James Stone (7E) who was our successful entry to the Spring **Maths in Kent** Competition.

All of **Year 8** will be taking part in the **UK Junior Mathematics Challenge** on 1<sup>st</sup> May, and will then be preparing for their **Mathematics Exams** on 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May. Similarly, **Year 7** have their Exams on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**Year 9** should be working hard for their SATs on 6<sup>th</sup> May. All returns for the Booster Classes and the optional purchase of a Revision Guide should have been handed to Miss Connell by now.

As these examinations approach, any Key Stage 3 pupil in need of extra help should remember the **Maths Clinic**, which is available on Monday and Thursday lunchtimes, and where very capable sixth form students willingly give of their time to help.

The Department are running A-Level Revision Classes for Modules Statistics 1, Core 2 and Further Pure 2 during this holiday period, with others, including GCSE, happening during the May holiday. Students should have signed up by now, but a few spaces may remain - contact Mrs Harris.

*G Young  
Head of Mathematics*

### **FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2008**

From 25<sup>th</sup> February Fairtrade Fortnight took place all over the country. In Tunbridge Wells a banner went up to mark the event. Lots of schools in Kent contributed to the banner, including our School. Sam Aylard, Ryan Bunce and Rob Brown of 10F spent a number of lunchtimes in the Art Department designing and painting the letters 'A' and 'D' for the banner, which would eventually say 'FAIRTRADE'. Everyone who was involved was very happy with the result. The boys would like to say a big thank you to Mrs Buttery and Miss Bush in the Art Department for their support and help with this project.



## KENT'S FUTURE FOOTBALLERS

The following came into School recently. I must stress that we do not know the Company and cannot vouch for them. However, I have visited the website and the event seems very well supported by the Tunbridge Wells Schools Sports Partnership, the Kent County Football Association and several football league clubs. The event runs during the summer half term.

*“Do you have what it takes to become a Future Football Star? Why not let the scouts decide from professional clubs such as Chelsea, Charlton and Crystal Palace to name a few! For more information or to book your place, visit [www.msporti.com](http://www.msporti.com).”*

*John Harrison*

## NEWS FROM THE PE DEPARTMENT

Another very busy term of extra-curricular activities draws to a close and the School has had a notable amount of successes during this period:

### Football

Congratulations to the U14 Football squad who reached the last 16 of the National Cup. They were unlucky to lose on penalties (4-3) to John Hampden School having drawn 3-3 after extra time.

### Rugby

Our U14 Rugby squad reached the final of the District Tens Emerging Schools Festival at Bromley in March, and have played some excellent rugby this year. Well done to all our rugby squads who have achieved notable performances against strong Rugby Schools such as Skinners, Rochester Maths and Ravenswood to name but a few.

### Golf

Three players from this School were chosen to represent Kent at U18 level against Middlesex on 2<sup>nd</sup> April at Hever Golf Club – Tony Brown, Seb Allen and Reece Hinton (with Tom Griffiths as reserve). At the time of writing the result is unknown but congratulations to these students on their selection for the County.

### Cross Country

Boys from this School recently participated in the Mayor of Bromley's U13 Race and the team came a creditable third (out of 16 teams) overall. Joe Newsome finished in second place and there were other very good finishing times.

Josh Bentham in Year 10 is continuing his cross country season with Tonbridge AC who recently won the Kent County Championship race. His Tonbridge team also came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the South England Championships whilst he was in the Kent Schools team that won the English Schools race.

## Important Information for the Summer Term 2008

**Cricket** will be our main summer sport for Games lessons for Years 7-9, and **Athletics** will be the main focus in PE lessons. Pupils should bring school PE kit for both lessons. For those pupils who have them, cricket whites may also be worn for Games lessons in Key Stage 3.

Parents should also be aware that we are placing pupils in a PE detention if they regularly forget their kit or miss too many PE/Games lessons. The detentions are for all age groups and will take place on Thursday evenings from 3.45 pm to 4.45 pm. Students must bring school PE kit to the detention and will be taking part in vigorous physical activity. Failure to attend the sessions or bring kit may result in a Saturday morning detention. Parents/carers, please ensure your son is well prepared for his lessons. Many thanks.

*K Downing  
Head of Physical Education*

## YOUNG ENTERPRISE FINALS NIGHT

This event is being held on **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School**, starting at

6.30 pm for 7.00 pm. All achievers will be present for final sales of products and to present their companies to a panel of judges. The winner will progress on to the County/Area Finals in May. Please support this event.

*R H Jenkins*

*Head of Economics/Business Studies*

### **CHARITY BOOK COLLECTION**

We are hoping to support a charity in term 5 with a book collection. If you are having a spring clean over the coming break, please don't throw out any books. We will have a good home for all types of books, pens and pencils and other stationery items. More details to follow very shortly.

### **AND FINALLY ....**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April is a Staff Training Day and School will therefore be closed to pupils.

School resumes after the two-week break for everyone on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April (Week 1).

*John Harrison*