



Note from the Principal

It has been an extraordinarily busy few weeks since the last Newsletter, with a host of achievements to record. Our musicians are to be particularly congratulated on some stunning performances on the Big Band night, alongside Mr. Ward's Innovations Orchestra, and a fabulous Lent concert at which choral and instrumental skills of the highest order were on display. Inter-House Elocution too provided its traditional mix of culture and entertainment. Well done to all who took part and winners County House in particular. Well done also to GCSE and A-level Drama specialists for recent outstanding productions. Thank you to all who parents and others have attended these events. Most prestigious was the BBC School Report event in which Year 8 students, ably led by Mr Baldock, recently took part. They were a real credit to the School. (Read more on page 7). On a more down to earth note, we continue to benefit from our newly-gained Academy status and are looking forward to improved facilities in the very near future. Thank you all for your support and patience over the last few months. We are looking forward to imminent improvements to our IT capacity, website and remote access facilities all partly as a result of the recent conversion. Enjoy the read!

Year 7 competition goes off with a bang

Last term the year 7 geographers were given the opportunity to create their own volcanoes as part of our 'Restless Earth' topic. Boys across all four classes took what they'd learnt in class and at home about the structure of volcanoes to produce a range of incredible models. We took some examples to 'erupt' outside and afterwards each class voted for their favourite using criteria we'd previously decided upon. Mr Norgaard and I were also able to select our favourites.

The winners were:

- Oliver Scott, Charlie Fletcher (7C)
- George Malone, Seb Young (7E)
- Will Taylor, Andrew Smyth, Oscar Cullura (7S)
- Philip Tower, Neil Patil (7W)



The models are now on display in G2 and many parents and students have commented on their realism and quality. Fantastic effort year 7!

Mr Nicholas and Mr Norgaard.

Geography A Level Lectures

The Geography Department organised for three external speakers to present to sixth form geographers from local schools on specific AS and A2 topics to help them in the run up to their examinations. About 120 pupils attended the three lectures which were supported by the Royal Geographical Society and the Humanities Specialism.

The British Red Cross Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction Advisor, Robert Roots discussed the need to help vulnerable populations prepare for disasters to reduce the risks that they face, focusing a year on from the earthquake in Haiti. Dr Clare, a lecturer in Advanced Manufacturing at the University of Nottingham, investigated the rise of the emerging superpower nations and in what ways western

nations can negotiate and maintain their current trading dominance. Peter Durante, a former trader and strategist at Shell, and who now acts as a consultant on energy and environmental issues to industry, government and NGOs worldwide, revealed the current energy dependency of the west and what realistic renewable energy mixes are feasibly and technically available today.

Feedback from Reading School geographers and from other schools was hugely positive with a view to continuing hosting external lectures next year.

Mr J Norgaard, Head of Geography



House Competitions – Cups and Shields

Every year, the school holds a prize-giving ceremony for boys to receive trophies for their contribution to the Cockhouse Cup house championships. This is a major opportunity for the whole school to get together and encourage achievement in extra-curricular activities and to thank boys for their participation.

Over the years, cups have been generously donated by ORs and parents, including one which is engraved *Putting the Shot – Presented by G. W. O Price O.R.* and dated 1956. If you would like to donate a trophy (cup or shield) then below is a list of Cockhouse Cup competitions for which we do not yet have an appropriate award.

Please contact Eve Canniffe (ecanniffe@readingschool.reading.sch.uk) if you would like to donate one of the trophies below.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Colts Rugby | Bridge | Junior Chess |
| Colt Football | Junior Football | Colts Tabletennis |
| Colts Cross-Country | Junior Basketball | Colts Badminton |
| Senior Hockey | General Knowledge | Senior Tabletennis |
| Junior Hockey | | |

Book Club learn Ninja Skills from Best Selling Author, Chris Bradford

The Reading School Book Club joined in with Berkshire Book Festival this month to meet Chris Bradford, author of the Young Samurai Series. But this was no ordinary event. Instead of the expected author wearing a suit and tie, we were met by a ninja in full black attire, face covered, who claimed to have kidnapped Chris Bradford.

He then demonstrated some of his Samurai sword skills and read from the first Young Samurai book while acting out the moves. Finally he tested the ninja skills of those there with a series of tasks, such as riddles, stealth and courage. (The courage test involved drinking genuine ninja sweat!) Henry Irvine of 9S proved to be naturally stealthy, so Mr. and Mrs. Irvine, watch out!

At the end came the surprise revelation that the ninja was actually none other than Chris Bradford himself and he took time to sign books, answer questions and pose for photos.

As with all good Education Library Service events, we left with some free grapes, and the boys also bought posters and books and took a memorable sense of danger from the day.

Mr E Mayhew





Music News

Music has featured prominently in the school calendar recently with a series of highly successful and popular concerts, each demonstrating extremely high standards of performance and showcasing an undoubted wealth of musical activity currently enjoyed at Reading School.

Our Year 7 & 8 Evening Concert on Tuesday 15 March featured over 30 boys, each playing solo pieces to a good sized and appreciative audience. Junior School proved an excellent venue, with its generous acoustic qualities and outstanding Yamaha C2 grand piano for the boys to enjoy. A wide range of instruments and styles were featured, enabling our younger boys to experience the thrill of live performing, regardless of experience level or musical background.

The Students' Lunchtime Organ Recital on Friday 18 March showed off two of our finest young organists, Cameron Ward and Richard Parkinson. Audience members were treated to a varied programme of organ music, demonstrating the versatility and

tonal quality of our superb, 2-manual pipe organ to best advantage.



Our joint jazz concert on 21 March, 'Big Bands @ Big School', will be remembered as an evening of quite unprecedented musical entertainment, involving both Reading School Jazz Band, and the Innovations Jazz Orchestra. The audience of almost 100 were delighted by a contrasted programme of swing, rock 'n' roll and jazz numbers, designed to show off the full capabilities and strengths of each band. The evening culminated with four 'joint' pieces where the two groups combined to play as a unified ensemble, directed alternately by Mr Aspden and Mr Ward.

Without doubt, the musical climax of the term, and indeed the academic year, was our Lent

Concert on Wednesday 30 March. Hailed as Mr Aspden's farewell concert, before leaving in the summer to become Director of Music at the Cathedral School, Llandaff, the evening featured major contributions from Reading School's premier ensembles. A memorable 1st half in the school chapel climaxed with a performance of Karl Jenkins' 'Armed Man: A Mass for Peace', delivered by the school choir. After retiring to Big School, the Senior and Junior Orchestras, Guitar Ensemble, and Jazz Band all took part in a most memorable conclusion to the concert, including a complete performance of Mozart's 'Lucio Silla' Overture. A collection of almost £450 was taken in aid of the charity, 'Help for Heroes', and the concert was supported by uniformed representation from Reading School CCF.

Hearty congratulations to all boys involved!



School Photograph

You should now have received your order packs for the recent school photograph which have been sent home via your sons. All ordering should be handled by post or online direct with Gillman & Soame and all information can be found in the pack. Please do not send orders into school and please also note that orders must be received by 17th May otherwise you may incur a late charge. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs Canniffe on email: ecanniffe@readingschool.reading.sch.uk.



Berkshire Book Awards 2010

This term, the Reading School Book Club have been shadowing the Berkshire Book Award, which seeks to find the most popular children’s book in Berkshire as voted for by Year 7-9 students across the area.

Particular credit went to Amin Al-Hussainy (8C) and pupil librarian, Soham Bandyopadhyay (10C) for reading all six books on the list, which included Rick Riordan, The Lost Hero, Darren Shan, Birth of a Killer and Jacqueline Wilson, The Longest Whale Song.

The winner this year was *Shadow Wave*, by Robert Muchamore from his *Cherub* series. The series – now 14 books long – is about an undercover organisation, which trains children as spies on the assumption that they will not be suspected. Recently, the Reading School LRC published its most popular ten books for issue and Muchamore made up all ten.

Ironically, just like last year, *Shadow Wave* was the least popular option among the Book Club, who would have preferred *Skulduggery Pleasant: Mortal Coil* by Derek Landy to win. Matthew Hankins (9S) championed *Skulduggery Pleasant* to win in our voting and here is his review of my personal favourite on the list.

Mr E Mayhew



Review of Derek Landy’s *Skulduggery Pleasant: Mortal Coil*

Well, Derek Landy has done it again! *Mortal Coil* is the fifth book in the *Skulduggery Pleasant* series and continues his theme of action, adventure, magic and a small twist of humour. After five books, a series usually fizzles out and dies, but kudos to Derek Landy for managing to keep *Skulduggery Pleasant* fresh and exciting. For those not familiar to the books, they revolve around the characters Stephanie Edgley (a rebellious teenager) and *Skulduggery Pleasant* (a walking, talking skeleton). Throughout the last four books, Stephanie has been fighting against evil demons to make the world a safer place. But now she must face her greatest enemy: herself. As she realises she is the one who will destroy the world, she frantically tries to stop herself without her partner, *Skulduggery*, realising what she has found out. Terrified by the thought of him losing faith in her, Stephanie goes to extremes to make sure no-one knows...

Mortal Coil is a brilliant book which enthrals and inspires any who read it. The brilliant addition of a new character (*Tessaract*) makes the plot even better and, after a bit of conflict (*Edward Clennet*: “I can’t remember any of it so it must have been bad”) we all agreed it was a worthy winner.

Looking forward to the next one!

Matthew Hankins 9S

New Reading Station Concourse

A new Reading Station concourse is being developed alongside Network Rail’s multi-million pound upgrade of rail lines into Reading. In order to build the new station which includes a large pedestrianized area, Station Approach – currently used by buses, taxis and cycles – will be closed. This means that roads around the station need to be re-configured with bus, taxi, cycle, coach and drop off facilities in the area re-organised. Road and bus routes in Reading will change from 18th April and we would like to draw this to the attention of students and parents who use buses that go via the Town Centre. Information about this can be found on www.reading.gov.uk/station.



Student Achievements

Congratulations to the following students for their individual and group successes:

Tadeusz Ciecierski-Holmes who has been successful in reaching the British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships organised by Pentathlon GB.

Our AS and A2 Theatre Studies students who all achieved a grade A in their practical examination in March. A notable achievement!

Jonathan Davies, 11E, who represented England in the Home Countries International Schools' Cross Country match in Northern Ireland on Saturday 26th March. Jonathan came third overall.

Karman Bhullar (7S) has won third prize in the vocal competition of the musical show/solo category of the Festival of Music and Arts held in March 2011. Karman performed the solo from the show *Oliver Twist*, by Lionel Bart.

UK Mathematics Trust Team Maths Challenge Regional Final

Congratulations go to Alfred Wong (8E), Christopher Pegrum (8S), Laimonas Ruksnaitis (9E) and Roy Zhang (9S) for their victory in the Team Maths Challenge held at Furze Platt School on Thursday 10 March. Not only did they demonstrate considerable ability and enthusiasm for Mathematics but they worked together superbly well. They can all look forward to another full day of Maths when they attend the national finals in London on Monday 20 June. Good Luck boys!

National Schools' Chess Championships

On 14th February, the Reading School chess team won their regional zone final to qualify for the last 16 knockout stage of the National Schools Chess Championship. Over the three matches, Roy Zhang, William Foo, Daniel Noel, Robert Starley, Ben Vandersluis, Philip Archer-Lock and Alfred Wong played in the team and all scored at least 50%. The zone consisted of 9 schools from Berkshire, Hampshire and Buckinghamshire who played in a knockout competition.

In the first round, played on 18th January, we were drawn against Yateley Manor who we beat convincingly, 6-0. The next match was much harder, as we were against Eton College who were looking for revenge after we had beaten them both in a friendly and in this competition last year.

On paper, they were the slightly stronger team but nevertheless we played excellently to win 4-2.

This meant that we were through to the zone final, against Wellington College, who offer chess scholarships and have won the National Schools Chess Championship for the last two years. There was no doubt that we were the underdogs - their board 3 was higher graded than our board 1 - but we were the slightly younger team so, due to the age handicap, only needed 3/6 to win. Each game was close and after an hour of play everyone was still playing. Then the first games finished - wins for Philip and Alfred on boards 5 and 6. This meant that we were 2-0 up and only needed one point to win. However, with only 15 minutes of the 2 hours left, we got our first losses on boards 3 and 4, making it 2-2. This left only Roy on board 1 and William on board 2 still playing with very little time left on the clocks. Unfortunately, Roy made a mistake in time trouble to lose a drawn end-game but William played impeccably to win his game when his opponent ran out of time. This meant that the final score was 3-3 so amazingly we won the match and are now through to the national stage of the competition.

Having won our zone, we were against Llandaff Cathedral School from Cardiff in the last 16 of the National Schools Championship. They fielded a very young team, so we needed 4/6 in order to win the match. We started well with a quick victory on board 6 for Philip Archer-Lock. Next to finish was board 4, where, after holding off a strong attack, Robert Starley fought back with a successful counterattack which led to mate. Alfred Wong had been a piece up for a while and converted well on board 5 to give us a 3-0 lead with the top 3 boards still playing, and all in unclear positions.

The decisive game was on board 2, where William Foo had the initiative and played well to win a rook from his attack, giving us the last point we needed. Daniel Noel on board 3 was a pawn down but managed to win a piece to turn the game in his favour, while Roy Zhang played very well on board 1 to draw a very difficult position after his opponent missed a winning move. This meant that the final score was 5.5 - 0.5 to Reading so we are through to the quarter finals, against Dr Challoner's Grammar School.

By Team Captain Robert Starley



OR, David Liptrot wins prestigious national award

University of Bath student David Liptrot has won a prestigious national award for significant research he completed during a placement with leading pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca at Charnwood in Leicestershire.

David, who is in his final year of study for a Chemistry degree, was presented with the 'Placement Student of the Year' award by national company RateMyPlacement.co.uk at a presentation ceremony in London.

He impressed judges with work he completed in the medical chemistry department of AstraZeneca Charnwood, conducting synthetic research to improve the access to compounds of potential therapeutic interest.

David said: "Finding new drugs is often very time consuming and can cost a great deal of money. The research I did at AstraZeneca involved looking at very small compounds that make up drugs, and finding ways to improve how quickly and how many of these compounds are created.

"This allows faster and more drug screening, so effectively increases the number of potential drugs that can then be studied and reduces the time taken and the overall cost of producing new medicines."

Steve Roser, senior lecturer and placement officer at the University of Bath, nominated David for the award.

Steve said: "I was very impressed with the commitment David showed to his work at AstraZeneca. Placements are a fantastic way for our students to obtain industry experience and apply the skills they learn during their degree studies. Placement research also gives a number of our students the opportunity to publish a research paper.

"During his time at AstraZeneca, David was involved in four research papers and has a fifth on the way, a remarkable number for an undergraduate student. His research has had a great impact in the Medicinal Chemistry Department at AstraZeneca Charnwood, and

all those who have worked with him have been very impressed by his achievements."

Bryan Roberts, Senior Research Chemist at AstraZeneca, who supervised David during his placement said: "David was very enthusiastic and motivated from day one and this has been contagious amongst the research team. He is clearly one of the best students we have had and this is reflected by his level of achievement during his time with us.



"David displays all the key attributes required in conducting successful research and we really hope that he will decide to pursue a scientific career either in academia or industry."

The Department of Chemistry at the University of Bath is recognised for offering strong placement opportunities. David's tutor Mike Hill said: "Our placement scheme is one of the most wide-ranging and long standing schemes in the country. In any one year we send over 60 students on placements and each student is assessed, with the results forming a component of the student's final degree.

"I am a Bath Chemistry alumnus myself and my placement was one of the most worthwhile and significant experiences of my life. I think the same holds for the majority of our current graduates, David included."

David added: "I am thrilled to have won the award for Placement Student of the Year - I chose my degree course based on the reputation of the placement opportunities and feel that spending a year in industry was hugely beneficial to me. I now plan to continue my studies and will begin a PhD next autumn."



Year 8 students interview Nick Clegg

It was probably a first - a coalition of students taking on one half of the government's coalition.

In the grand surroundings of the Cabinet Office, Plumstead Manor students in red jumpers joined the dark-blazered boys from Reading School round a table with Nick Clegg. On the agenda was long-term unemployment, the alternative voting system, military action in Libya and changes to secondary education.

The question that brought the loudest laugh came from a persistent Matthew, from Reading School. What should we be doing to contribute to the Big Society and what do you personally do?



After Mr Clegg appeared to answer the first part, but not the second, Matthew refused to let him off the hook.

"That's a very good question," Mr Clegg said, before gathering himself and detailing the contribution he makes as Sheffield MP.

Other personal and probing questions came thick and fast: do you take public transport to work? (no, I have a driver); why, as a smoker, are you proposing moving cigarettes below the counter (my personal habits are not to be recommended); why were your university fees paid for when ours probably won't be (It was the Conservatives' decision, not the Lib Dems)?

Ali, also from Reading, posed a question Mr Clegg may have already asked himself once or twice: How do I become prime minister?

The advice was "don't pin all your hopes on it - go for it but don't become too obsessed".

Students also learned Mr Clegg favoured English over maths, and would rather listen to classical music than hard rock.

This article is featured on the BBC's School Report website. Twenty Reading School Year Eight students took part on the March 24th BBC News School Report Day itself, while four students (Joe Grimmett, Matthew Songer, Matthew Hunter, Ali Fleming) represented the team in the Nick Clegg interview at Westminster.





Climate Week 2011

As part of Climate Week 2011 a number of key stage 3 geographers took part in the Climate Week Challenge on Monday 21st March. This was a national event run in partnership with Tesco and EDF energy and presented the students with the challenge to 'develop a green idea to save money or make money'.

Working in four teams comprising a mix of year 7s, 8s and 9s, the boys came up with four distinct and innovative ideas:

- The Hydro Electric Power (HEP) in Water Pipes Team proposed that with Thames Water already having a network of 31,000 km of piping, the installation of mini turbines in the water pipes themselves would generate electricity by taking advantage of the mains pressure. Team members included James Woolaghan (7E), Tadeusz Ciecierski-Holmes (8S), Ed Clennett (9B) and Jamie Terry (9E)
- The Government Grants for Solar Panels team proposed 100% grants for the installation of roof solar panels to UK residents. The electricity generated would be used by the household and 10% automatically contributed to the national grid. Team members included Philip Tower (7W), Christopher Pegrum (8S), Divyansh Dixit (9A) and Andrew Fisher (9B).
- The Greener Reading Team proposed a branded Greener Reading 'recycled' shop selling green initiatives and energy saving items and would pass their profits onto the creation of a wind farm in Green

Park, the idea was to progress this to other towns and cities. Team members included Harsha Dintakurti (7E), John Perry (8S), Robert Clark (9A), James Messer (7S) and Harry Marshall (9E).

- The RuBisCO Team proposed a using spray version of the RuBisCO enzyme, which has already be shown to scientifically absorb CO₂, on replaceable car and lorry exhaust filters and so target the 22% of the total CO₂ emissions that road transport is currently responsible for. Team members included Nikunj Paliwal (7W), Peter Youssef (8C), Henry Irvine (9A) and Stephen Munck (9E).

The presentations that accompanied these ideas were delivered with confidence and each demonstrated a very high level of environmental and scientific understanding. A judging panel comprising the Head of Humanities, the Head of Key Stage 3, the Gifted and Talented Coordinator and the Head of Geography used the Climate Week guideline criteria to score each idea and the result was very close. However, it was decided that the 'HEP in Water Pipes' idea was the winner and this was entered into the national competition for Key Stage 3 students. The way in which the students worked together to develop innovative and feasible ideas was commendable and all that took part in the event should be congratulated.

Well done!

Mr C Nicholas

Public Speaking Competition – winners of Regional Finals

Congratulations to Edward Wise, 11C Speaker; Nikolai Ciecierski-Holmes 11S Chair; George Prove, 10W Questioner. The team will now be in the National Final at Goodenough College, Mecklenburgh Square, London, 12 noon on Saturday 7th May. We'd love you to support, if you'd like to join us there! (But please let me know for catering/seating purposes.)

Our title for the National Final is "Africa needs trade, not aid" – exciting! If you have thoughts on this, do let us know ... Ed will be working hard over the Easter holidays to research and write his speech and all comments are useful.

The Regional Final was held in the stunning headquarters of the ESU, which is Dartmouth House in Mayfair. The National Final is at Goodenough College, Mecklenburgh Sq. Public speaking is blossoming in Reading School. Over the past two terms we've had 42 boys take LAMDA examinations, and 26 of those were Bronze, Silver or Gold Medals. Next term we have more exams, the year 7 training day and our new Public Speaking/Debating Society begins after the May half term ... watch this space! And if you'd like to e-mail me about any aspect of public speaking at Reading School, please do so at streetsahead@aol.com.

Mrs P Williams



Consultation on new Year 7 Jacket from 2011

We would like to consult with existing and new parents regarding a proposed change to the School's Jacket and Trousers. If the Governing Body decide to proceed with this change, it would only impact new boys entering Year 7 from September 2011 and would then filter through for new entrants thereafter. Sportswear International have prepared a quotation for a new Year 7 suit jacket, complete with embroidered school badge. I set out below the difference in costs between the old and the new garments.

| Old: | | New: | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Jacket | - £67.40 | Jacket | - £22.50 |
| Trousers | - £30.25 | Trousers | - £12.50 |



We would welcome your comments on the new items this evening, in writing. Boys have viewed the new jacket and have generally given positive feedback. The rationale for changing is twofold: a) it is cheaper and therefore less of an outlay at difficult time for everyone financially; b) the School badge is a means of identifying the school to which the boy belongs, which is particularly helpful if they are involved in any form of regional or national event. Please note that the new jacket is machine washable. Please find a photograph of the proposed new jacket for your consideration.

We see the Stars! We hear the rolling thunder!

A team from Reading School CCF has won first place in Exercise "Rolling Thunder", the national cadet signals competition hosted by the headquarters of the Royal Corps of Signals at Blandford Camp during the weekend of 18-20 February 2011. Our unit entered this competition for the first time last year and achieved the runner up position so we arrived at Blandford with high hopes ! The competition was attended by nineteen cadet units from all parts of the UK and teams were required to negotiate a series of stands testing theoretical knowledge and practical skills in all aspects of cadet signalling. There was also a march and shoot, the shooting element taking place on the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer (DCCT) at Blandford. The Reading School CCF team tackled all the activities with great enthusiasm and impressed the organisers of the various stands with the quality of their teamwork and understanding of the tasks set. At the end of the competition, F/Sgt. Joseph Greenwood was awarded second place nationally in the individual leadership category for the second year running and the team as a whole achieved first place. This is a fantastic achievement for the cadets concerned, reflecting not only their performance on the day but the hard work that they have put into their training throughout their time in the Signals section of the CCF. Throughout the weekend, the cadets impressed everyone with whom they came into contact with their enthusiasm and bearing and were excellent ambassadors for our CCF unit and the School as a whole. The team was led by F/Sgt. Joseph Greenwood - the other members were F/Sgt. Maxwell Phillips, Sgt. Charlie Hayward , Cpl. Andrew Coombes and Cpl. Jonathan Munns. Capt. P.F.E. Hurst accompanied the team throughout the weekend.



Winners of Exercise "Rolling Thunder" 2011. L to R- Brigadier T. J. P. Watts, Signal Officer-in-Chief (Army), Cpl. J. Munns, Cpl. A. Coombes, F/Sgt. M. Phillips, Sgt. C. Hayward, F/Sgt. J. Greenwood.



Reading School Golf Day

We are pleased to invite parents to our inaugural Golf Day. We do hope that you will be able to play at Sand Martins Golf Course on 19th September. Please feel free to invite friends, colleagues and clients to what we are sure will be a wonderful day and a great chance to enjoy the company of friends old and new.

All monies raised will be in aid of the School's Development Fund. Sand Martins is a superbly maintained 6232 yard course opened in 1993. The format will be a 4 ball better ball team stableford (best two scores count) played off 3/4 handicap. There will be a shotgun start with golfers arriving for bacon butties (or a vegetarian alternative) and coffee at 12.00pm. There will be on course competitions to test your mettle with prizes to be won as golfers go round. The overall team prize will be premium golfing clothing/equipment for each team member. Following the golf, there will be a late two course lunch with a raffle and auction. The competition is open to any combination of golfers. The team entry fee is £240 and includes bacon butties before play and lunch after.

If you have any questions or require any entry form, please contact Caroline Beard at cbeard@readingschool.reading.sch.uk or telephone: 0118 9015600.

