



# HIGH MARCH SCHOOL

Ledborough Lane, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 2PZ

Headmistress: Mrs S J Clifford, B.Ed. (Oxon), M.A. (London)

## **CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2008**

A soldier from the Second World War, Alan Potter, has the following memory from his time being held prisoner in a German prisoner of war camp in Austria in 1944, when the prisoners were having their own Christmas concert.

*'We happened to be singing Silent Night – this to me is quite dramatic – somebody called out: "Stop! Listen". So we all stopped and we listened and we heard from the German barracks they too were singing Silent Night. That was an incredible thing for us – it shows that – scratch the skin of any nationality, there is a human being under that skin that's the same, in a sense, to anybody else. That was a very human sort of a moment I thought.'*

As I write this newsletter, I plan to share this story with the girls in Upper School in our final Prayers, after telling them about the origins of the carol, Silent Night. I am sure that you will agree with me that the spirit of Christmas, the prayer for peace on earth, is powerful and can bring wars to a halt at least for a short time, reminding us that we are all God's children, brought together on the earth to do the best we can for each other. Only selfishness and thoughtlessness keep us apart.

### **Christmas Celebrations**

It has been a pleasure to welcome so many parents, grandparents and friends into School over the past two weeks as our community has celebrated the advent of Christmas. As you would expect, the children have hardly been silent or peaceful, as in the carol, but they have certainly celebrated with excitement and gusto!

The children in Junior House excelled themselves with the performances of their Nativity plays. It was lovely to see the Year 2 pupils dancing, as well as singing this year, and the Year 1 children spoke clearly and acted with charm. This was also true for both the Reception and Nursery children who gave delightful performances.

Last Friday we enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch, courtesy of our caterers, The Brookwood Partnership. In the evening the pupils in Upper School hosted a truly memorable Carol Service at St Mary and All Saints Church in Old Beaconsfield. For many, this signals the start of the festive season as we remember the birth of Jesus through carols and readings. In his final words, Reverend John Wynburne mimicked one of the judges on the popular television show, "Strictly Come Dancing," by describing the service as "fab-u-lous" and I cannot think of a better way to summarise the service for anyone who was not able to be there!

This week has seen the children arriving at School in party clothes as they participate in their Christmas parties. Glitter has been in abundance throughout School as the children have made Christmas cards and decorations.

My thanks go to our hard working and committed staff who have been behind all of these events and who have striven to ensure that the children have had a wonderful time at School this term, both inside and outside the classroom.

### **Academic News**

Once more I am delighted to report excellent results in this year's County 11+ examinations, with 79% of our candidates being awarded a place at a grammar school. This compares exceptionally well with the overall countywide pass rate of 31%. I am sure that all of our school community will wish to join with me in congratulating our Year 6 pupils who have all worked so hard. Whatever the outcome of the testing process, we appreciate that every child gave of her best and we are very proud of them all. Many Year 6 pupils are still working towards their entrance examinations to various independent schools and we wish them well in these tests which will take place in January.

### **The Christmas Fayre**

Thank you to everyone who was involved in this year's Christmas Fayre. I am sure that everyone who attended will agree that there was a wonderful atmosphere, with plenty of activities for both adults and children to enjoy. The total has changed over the past week and I am pleased to announce that the magnificent sum of £5,013.69 was raised. Of this, £632.45 will go to the NSPCC and £44.05 was raised by the Junior Road Safety Officer Stall for the Hedgehog Society. The balance will be added to the Swimming Pool Fund. We are extremely grateful to all of the stallholders and to every parent who contributed to the Fayre in any way.

### **CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING**

#### **Christingle Celebration at St Michael's Church**

Reverend Camilla Walton has asked me to thank everyone who attended the Christingle Service and gave so generously to the candle money box collection. St Michael's Church raised £630.15 for The Children's Society, £231.35 of which was collected by High March pupils.

#### **Thistle Day**

The House Captain and Vice House Captain of Thistle House, Caroline Aspland and Charlotte Way, are to be congratulated on their excellent organisation of the Thistle House charity fundraising day which raised £320 in aid of the RSPCA. The children always enjoy coming to School in mufti and the accompanying theme of odd accessories proved to be very popular, particularly in Upper School. There was a range of activities for the children to participate in and the following girls were prize winners:

Animal Costume Parade:

1<sup>st</sup> = Rosie Burling (dressed as a pig!)

Sara Lones (dressed as a cat)

2<sup>nd</sup> Clare Merrick (dressed as a dog)

3<sup>rd</sup> Maddy Speed (dressed as a bee)

Shoot the Hoop – Katie Sanders

Design Your Own Animal Competition – Francesca Owen

## **NSPCC**

On Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, our two NSPCC prefects, Sophie Edwards and Amber Leech, held an NSPCC National Number Day in Upper School which raised a total of £82. There was a disco at lunch time and a Number Quiz. The competition was a treasure hunt for numbers which were worn by members of staff. Once detected, the numbers had to be used to answer Maths questions. A number of girls got all of the answers correct and so the winning names were drawn out of a hat as follows:

Winner: Isabel Avery

Runners up: Anna Barlow and Taylor Highsted

Retiring collections in aid of the NSPCC were held at our Junior House Nativity plays and these raised £316.80. At our Carol Service the collection raised a total of £662.64, with half going to the Church funds at St Mary and All Saints and the remaining half to the NSPCC.

Including the takings at this year's Christmas Fayre, this means that a grand total of £1,362.57 has been raised for the NSPCC this half term.

## **Children in Need**

Thank you to everyone who supported our mufti day in aid of "Children in Need". The children always love to come to school in their own clothes, although several parents have commented to me that they are very grateful that we have a school uniform as trying to choose the clothes to wear proved to be rather challenging in some households! The Nursery children enjoyed decorating their Pudsey Bear biscuits and pictures. I am pleased to report that we raised £289.70 for this worthwhile cause.

## **Shoe Box Appeal for the Samaritan's Purse**

Mrs Kaul would like to thank everyone who donated a shoe box. We collected 133 boxes in total and these will be distributed to needy children around the world.

## **Postage Stamps**

Mrs Kaul has also asked me to remind you that she will be delighted to receive any used postage stamps that you might have. Christmas is the best time of year to do this, with the additional post that Christmas cards bring.

## **Recycling News**

Pupils in Year 5 have enjoyed making and designing their own fashion accessories using recycled materials this term as part of our entry into the Accessories category for 9 to 11 year olds in the Bucks Recycled Clothes Show: RESTYLED 2008. This took place in the Civic Centre in Aylesbury on November 27<sup>th</sup> and many schools from all over the county took part. The secondary schools provided the garments for the Catwalk Show and junior schools entered the Accessories Category.

For the second year we are delighted that High March took first place which went to Evie Vennix for her wonderful shoes, complete with shoebox! Second and third places went to other schools, but Ayesha Chaudhry's bag and Georgia Lee Dickson's sunglasses were highly commended. Other finalists were Chloe Arora, Katie Burling, Madeleine Chapples, Violet Hatch, Alice Ingham Halshaw, Lizzie Lawley and Francesca Owen. Well done to Mrs Bissett and to all of the Year 5 pupils who took part.

## MUSIC REPORT

### Year 6 Carol Singing

It has now become a High March tradition that the girls in Year 6 visit some of the older members of our community to sing carols. It is hugely appreciated by our local senior citizens and each year I receive many letters of thanks which are full of praise concerning both the behaviour and the musical ability of our pupils.

Mr Elliott writes:

*On Thursday, 4th December, the girls of 6C visited the Thursday Lunch Club, which is held at the Curzon Centre in Beaconsfield under the auspices of the Beaconsfield Community Association. Having walked through the streets of Beaconsfield armed with carol sheets and an electronic keyboard, the girls sang popular carols and Christmas songs to the obvious delight of the senior citizens present. The girls' enthusiasm proved to be infectious, and the audience proved to be in increasingly good voice as the proceedings progressed! Mr. Pell, the Chairman of the Association commended the girls for their splendid singing, and in particular the soloists who sang so beautifully. Afterwards the girls were treated to some chocolate bars, which were undoubtedly very well received!*

Mrs Edwards writes:

*On Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 6F travelled by minibus to Alde House, a residential home for the elderly, in Penn. The girls were welcomed by the Matron, Mrs Vi Bassam and sang a selection of carols and Christmas songs, accompanied by Mr Elliott on the electronic keyboard. The residents and staff were delighted by the girls' singing and enthusiasm and some of the residents joined in! The whole experience was heightened by Mr Elliott's anecdotes and a few impromptu solos. After the mini concert, the girls were treated to squash and jaffa cakes, before chatting to the residents, including Harold, who is over a hundred! Mrs Bassam thanked the High March girls for giving the residents such a super start to their Christmas preparations.*

### The Marlow Music Festival

This year High March Voices stole the show at the Festival and were awarded the gold medal and the Mayor's Cup. Particular congratulations go to Alexandra Baldwin who won the Bel Canto Cup and performed in the Prize Winners' Concert. Girls at High March were also very successful in many of the individual classes and congratulations go to all those who took part. The following pupils achieved a gold, silver or bronze medal:

Name	Instrument	Medal
<b>Year 6:</b>		
Caroline Aspland	Singing	1 Silver
Alexandra Baldwin	Singing	2 Gold, 1 Silver
Kate Fallowfield	Flute (group)	1 Silver
Jane Gill	Flute (group)	1 Silver
Genevieve Harvey	Singing	1 Bronze
Annabel Streete	Singing	1 Bronze
Gabrielle Woodward	Singing	1 Bronze

**Year 5:**

Isabel Avery	Flute	1 Bronze
Anna Barlow	Singing	1 Bronze
Katie Bowen	Flute (group)	1 Silver
Katie Burling	Flute (group)	1 Silver
Imogen Deighton	Singing	1 Silver, 1 Bronze

**Year 4:**

Sophia Bradshaw	Singing	1 Silver
Rebecca Maguire	Singing	1 Bronze
Yolanda Quartey	Violin	1 Silver
Yolanda Quartey	Singing	1 Silver
Susannah Taylor	Piano	1 Bronze
Imogen Yates	Singing	2 Bronze

**Year 3:**

Selin Whittick	Piano	1 Bronze
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**SPORTS REPORT****NETBALL FIXTURES**

Miss Bettis writes:

	<b>Played</b>	<b>Won</b>	<b>Lost</b>	<b>Drawn</b>
<b>U9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>U10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>U11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

It has been a great start to the Netball Season for all of our teams. Every squad did exceptionally well at the Chesham Prep tournaments, bringing back various medals and certificates. The Under 10 squad have shown some superb netball within matches, proving to be 'unbeatable' as they are yet to be beaten by another school!

The usual rain and cold weather that comes with the Autumn term was soon upon us and unfortunately some matches had to be cancelled. Most have been rescheduled for next term. Both the Under 11 A and Under 10 A teams have attended tournaments this term, with more ahead. All teams should be proud of their progress and success so far this season.

**Chesham Preparatory School Tournament for Under 11 A, B and C**

Having done exceptionally well last year at this tournament the squad was determined to go out and play their best. The A team came up against some very strong opposition and they won 3 matches, lost two and drew the last. This saw them finish 4<sup>th</sup> in the tournament. The B team played well in their section, again facing some tough teams, but they managed to keep focused and finished 4<sup>th</sup>. The C team worked well together and displayed excellent movement on court. With hard work and determination they finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. Well done to all of the girls who took part.

### **Chesham Preparatory School Tournament for Under 10 A, B and C**

Without knowing they would be the strongest squad of the term, our Year 5 teams did remarkably well at the tournament. The A team won 4 out of 5 games, narrowly losing 1 – 0 to Berkhamsted and finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the tournament. The B team played very well, winning 2, drawing 2 and losing 1. They also finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in their tournament. The C team really stood out in their tournament displaying some excellent shooting and defending. They were unbeatable, winning 5 games and drawing the last. The C team came first in their group, winning a gold medal.

### **Chesham Preparatory School Tournament for Under 9 A, B, C, D and E**

Twenty Six Year 4 girls went to compete in the tournament this year. The Under 9 A team won 3, drew 1 and lost 1 game to the eventual winners, High March B team! The A team finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and received a silver certificate. The B team were outstanding, winning all of their matches and finishing in first position. High March were on form and the C team won 2, lost 2 and drew 1, finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> – a High March podium!

In the second tournament, Under 9 D and E teams played just as well. The D team won 3, drew 1 and lost 1, finishing 1<sup>st</sup> and bringing home a gold medal. The E team were up against some tough opposition, but did exceptionally well considering they had not had much training together. They lost three and won 1 finishing 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Manor Preparatory School Invitational Tournament Under 11 A**

It was a long drive to Abingdon on a Saturday morning, accompanied by a lot of rain! The Under 11 A team performed exceptionally well all morning, beating some very talented teams. They got off to a great start, winning all of their games in the first round. They beat St Gabriel's 3-1, St Hugh's 10-0, Our Lady's Abingdon 11-1, Manor Prep 7-2 and Princes Mead 5-2. The team whizzed through to the semi final where they met Headington Preparatory School. The Headington team were a lot tougher than first thought and had excellent shooters. The ball was passed up and down the court with both teams scoring at every opportunity. After half time Headington stormed ahead and won 5 – 2. Headington School went on to win the tournament and so the girls were not too disheartened, having lost to the overall winners!

### **St Hugh's School Invitational Tournament**

Hoping for dry weather, the Year 5 A began their journey to Oxford to play in the tournament on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November. The girls took to the courts to meet their first opponents, Ashfold and they drew 0-0. The next game against Cheam followed suit and ended 1 – 1.

The team concentrated on improving their passes and shooting. It soon paid off with them winning the next two games. They beat Beechborough 3 – 0 and Our Lady's Abingdon 3 – 0. The final game was against Chandlings. It was a tough game and ended in a well deserved 1 – 1 draw.

The team were extremely excited to hear that they had made the semi final round. They faced Manor Prep A and knew it would be a tough game. Both teams started strongly and managed to score at every chance. The final whistle blew and the score was 2 – 2. It all came down to a golden goal situation where Manor Prep took the lead 3-2. We narrowly missed out on making the final.

Well done to all of the girls who have been involved in the Netball squad this term. I am confident that the next half of the season will be just as successful.

### **SWIMMING FIXTURES**

The Swimming Squad has continued to train hard at their weekly sessions on a Monday evening. Attendance is always excellent and we have had some good swimming results this term.

### **ESSA, Division 10, 2008, Primary Individual Championships**

Many congratulations to the following girls who participated in the ESSA, Division 10, 2008, Primary Individual Championships:

#### Year 5

Alexandra Taal	12 <sup>th</sup> Backstroke race	21 <sup>st</sup> Breaststroke race
Anna Barlow	13 <sup>th</sup> Breaststroke race	25 <sup>th</sup> Freestyle race
Alice Ingham-Halshaw	35 <sup>th</sup> Freestyle race	

#### Year 6

Henrietta Lowen Cooper	4 <sup>th</sup> Backstroke race	14 <sup>th</sup> Breaststroke race
	11 <sup>th</sup> Butterfly race	6 <sup>th</sup> Freestyle race
	8 <sup>th</sup> Individual Medley race	
Sophie Edwards	19 <sup>th</sup> Breaststroke race	22 <sup>nd</sup> Butterfly race
	25 <sup>th</sup> Freestyle race	

### **Junior Panagraphics Swimming League 2008 to 2009**

Members of the High March Swimming Squad have been entered by Mrs Sanders for the Panagraphics League. The members of the league are Berkhamsted Collegiate, Chesham Prep, Haberdashers' Aske's, Heatherton House, The PNEU at Rickmansworth, the Royal Masonic and St Helen's Schools. Running parallel is a league of boys. We have had two galas to date. The first was held at The Royal Masonic School in Rickmansworth and the second at Berkhamsted Collegiate School. After competing in the first gala, High March was placed second in the league table and we are still awaiting the results of the second gala. Well done to all the girls who took part.

### **Davenies Gala**

On a more relaxed level, High March competed against Davenies School, who were our guests at their own pool! The boys were marvellous and beat our girls in all age groups. However, a fabulous, enjoyable and very noisy time was had by all.

### **Books for Schools**

The Sunday Times Free Books for Schools scheme begins in the New Year. Tokens can be collected from The Times and The Sunday Times from January 11<sup>th</sup>, and School can use them to claim free books from a list of 170 great titles compiled by Times Newspapers and Scholastic Book Clubs. Twelve tokens will be printed every week and books will be available from just ten tokens and so please do collect tokens for us as it won't take long to fill our library shelves with some great new titles.

### **High March Social Group**

For many of us the Christmas season started at the end of November with a very friendly and relaxed brunch at Loch Fyne. It was a wonderful opportunity for parents across the School to mix with each other and enjoy a delicious cooked breakfast at a leisurely pace.

The High March/Davenies disco was the highlight of the social calendar this term. This eagerly awaited event has proved so popular that both schools have been inundated with requests to repeat this on a more regular basis! As a result another disco will be held at High March next term and tickets are already selling quickly!

The Social Group Committee members, led by Mrs Michelle McLellan and Mrs Wendy Nash, work so hard to support the School and they are to be congratulated and thanked for all that they have done for us this term. This includes running the Social Group stall and the raffle at the Christmas Fayre. Future plans include a new format for the annual Quiz Night and an Easter Bunny Party for Junior House pupils next term.

### **Swimming Pool Project**

Many parents have commented about the progression of our building project and I am delighted to furnish you with an update from Chris Ball, the Contracts Manager at R. Durtnell and Sons Ltd:

*We are pleased that works, which commenced on 22 October 2008, are progressing well and in the course of excavations we have removed 1,750 tonnes of soil from the site. Within this large hole we are currently forming the pool substructure. The rear changing room floor has now been constructed.*

*We anticipate that the wet and cold weather has delayed us by half a week and we shall be starting the steel frame structure later in January 2009.*

*We are delighted with the co-operation and enthusiasm shown by all people associated with High March School whilst we carry out these tricky building operations.*

High March is investing £900,000 in this project and, as you know, we are looking to raise a further £200,000 largely through social events and other fundraising initiatives such as "Buy a Brick". The current total raised, including the Christmas Fayre and the sale of bricks, is £17,747.23. If you would like to purchase a personalised brick which will be laid on the pathway leading into the swimming pool, please do contact our Registrar, Mrs Sue Dunster. We currently have outline plans for a special event on Saturday, March 21 and so please do keep that date free, and a further event will be a concert involving many of the children in the summer term.

### **Calendar Dates**

I would like to draw your attention to the blue termly calendar that accompanies this letter. You will notice that there are some dates included for the summer term 2009 and I would like to remind parents that **the following dates are compulsory events** that pupils are expected to attend:

**Saturday June 13, Junior Sports** in the morning for pupils in Reception and Year 1

**Saturday June 20, Senior Sports** in the morning for pupils in Years 2 to 6

**Friday July 3, Prize Giving** at 2 pm for pupils in Years 3 to 6

I would politely request that you avoid making any commitments on these dates as it is very upsetting for both the children and staff when they are unable to attend an event that they have been preparing for. Should there be an unavoidable reason why your daughter cannot attend any of the above events then you are kindly asked to write to me directly explaining the reason for your daughter's proposed absence.

One further date for your diaries is **Saturday, June 27**. Tickets are selling fast for our **Moulin Rouge Ball** on this date, but a few tables are still available. For those parents new to High March, we hold a Ball every third year. Held in the grounds of the Hall Barn Estate, by kind permission the Honourable Jenefer Farncombe, this is a fantastic event – one not to be missed! If your class has not organised a table yet, I would encourage you to do so as I can guarantee that a fabulous evening will be had by everyone who attends.

**School Office opening hours during the holiday will be:**

Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 and Friday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 from 9 am to 12 noon

I shall be in School on some of those days, but if I am not there when you call the member of the office staff on duty will always know how to contact me, if there is anything important you would like to talk to me about during the holidays.

Finally **Mrs Rosemary Chapples, Mrs Belinda Avery and Mr Michael Chapples** and their families join me in thanking you all for the beautiful cards that you have sent us and in wishing you all in return a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a New Year that will be very happy.

**Mrs S J Clifford**  
**Headmistress**