



As Easter is very late this year, we have made the most of a long Spring term and the girls in Year 11 and the Sixth Form have been able to complete their examination courses, with time left for revision and past paper practice. A number of departments have taken the opportunity of **Study Days**, here or in central London, to consolidate and extend the girls' knowledge and allow them to hone their skills. For example, Politics students listened to advice from the Chief Examiner; English students explored 'Dr Faustus'; Latin students attended a Virgil lecture day; Classical Civilisation students enjoyed a day on Homer's 'Odyssey'; Biology students had a practical study day while the Chemists enjoyed their **Chemistry in Action**; Sixth Form RS students discussed Religious Literacy and French students took advantage of an AS conference day in London.

Spring is a time to look forward. The Sixth Form have been considering what happens next. All of Y12 went to the **UCAS Higher Education Convention** at Olympia, and 40 girls had places at an Oxford and Cambridge student conference at the Emirates Stadium. There have been university open days and subject-specific courses. Y12 linguists were impressed with their opportunity to hear from European language translators and interpreters at a 'Careers in Languages' conference. Sixth form Design & Technology students had an illuminating conference day hearing about careers in the built environment in Science and Technology, including science on the high street, in sport, in weather and in sleuthing (how crimes are detected, accidents investigated and mysteries solved). Others enjoyed a day in the company of entrepreneurs at the 'Women in Leadership: Breaking the Mould' event.

Visitors to school helped the girls to plan for student finance and gave valuable insights about gap years, including voluntary work in a city primary school, working for Morgan Stanley and applying for an internship with DeLoitte. Alumnae know very well how it feels to be on the threshold of choosing options. We welcomed alumnae Molly Dalton to talk about a year in industry and Syma Cullasy to talk about working with Crossroads charity. From further afield, former Head of Spanish, Maria-Anne Moore, discussed opportunities to work at her charity Mundo Feliz in Peru. Y13 Angharad Seaton described her experience of helping with a building project at the charity's base in Cusco last summer. JAGS girls choose fascinating Gap year projects and there's a strong connection with alumnae visiting and working there; this, however, is the first time we have had a current pupil working in Peru during the summer holidays.

The world seems more accessible nowadays, but we do not take for granted, however, the efforts involved in organising trips abroad. Our Modern Foreign Languages departments have been busy arranging for girls to immerse themselves in the cultures of their countries.

In a combined trip to **Vienna** at half-term, the German and Art History departments shared an



appreciation of art and architecture and sampled music at a Vienna-themed concert. At the **O2 Arena** pupils studying German in Years 8, 9 and 10 enjoyed German music of a very different kind, sampling current trends in German pop music in an interactive exhibition organised by the Goethe Institute.



Pupils sampling a range of German music at the O2 Centre

Students of Italian were very impressed by their visit to the **Royal Opera House** to see a new production of 'Aida'. **Y12 Japanese students** plunged into role as assistants to top professional chef Atsuko, learning the intricacies of pleating exquisite Japanese dumplings amongst other things. You can discover Japan in London, as Y10 realised on a day's visit to shops and businesses.

Y12 Spanish students visited the **Brindisa warehouse**, a company that imports fine Spanish food. They were enchanted by the stories behind each product, like the farmer in his 80s who produces the best salted almonds using a machine of his own invention in his garage. Sixth Form Spanish students also spent a busy long weekend in March exploring **Madrid**, its University, museum and market.

Other visits have enhanced pupils' learning in different subjects. Y11 focused on **Jewish North**

London for an RS study day, Y8 enjoyed especially the Princess of Wales Conservatory at **Kew Gardens** with



the Geography department and Y7 went on a **Physics trip to the National Maritime Museum and Royal Observatory**. Liberal Studies Art students from JAGS and Dulwich College had a rare opportunity to discuss their ideas with artist Albert Potrony from Tate Modern. JAGS is linked with a school in Portugal through

Tate Modern's Turbine-generation project, exploring cultural issues through the language of art. We were delighted to hear that some of the JAGS group's work has been selected for a virtual online gallery at the Tate Modern website:

www.turbinegeneration.tate.org.uk/gallery. Y11 pupils visited the South London Women's Art exhibition at Dulwich Library. The Sixth Form found the Symposium of Artists talking on the creative process at the Institute of Education very interesting. Y7 enjoyed trips to **Dulwich Picture Gallery**, the **National Gallery** and **Tate Britain** as part of their Civilisation Course. Politics students heard a relaxed Gordon Brown give the John Harvard Memorial lecture. Five of our Y10 pupils, who are army and air force cadets outside school, were pleased to spend time with alumna, Jessica Beattie, to discuss life in the services and her experiences as a First Aider in Iraq. Y7 spent a day in the company of Roop Singh, a **Sikh storyteller** whose vivid description of his father's arrival in England was matched by the brightness of his orange turban. The girls whirled through a series of



practical workshops on meditation, dance, chapatti-making, sari and turban tying, and learnt lots about the Sikh customs and culture.

We have also continued to link up with other local schools in the well-established **Southwark Schools' Learning Partnership** and groups of girls have enjoyed several events this term: Y8 took part in an Environmental Day, Y9 in an "Inspiring Futures" workshop day and Y11 attended a presentation by Newnham College, Cambridge.

Looking into our past, Y11 had a sobering reminder of the impact of the Holocaust from survivors who share their testimony with us each year. As they grow older it becomes more poignant and important for us to pass on the messages. National Holocaust Memorial Day was marked by the visit of some Sixth Formers to a ceremony in central London. The launch of the **Holocaust Education website**, planned with the help of government and international organisations, will do much to make the history more accessible to young people. Head of Sixth Form, Vikki Askew, was a key advisor in its creation, and ideas were piloted with JAGS girls. The History and Politics departments attracted knowledgeable speakers here to enrich pupils' learning in many areas. Y8 tried out for themselves **English Civil War battle techniques** with a member of the Sealed Knot. Older girls heard Dr Michael Lynch on the Russian Revolution, Elisabeth Crawford, author of 'The Women's Suffrage Movement', Dr Eleanor Newbigin on Mahatma Gandhi and the politics of Indian nationalism, and Ian Hunter on serving with the Black Watch in India, 1946-8.

The Medical Society speakers gave Sixth Form students pause for thought. Dr Charlie Easmon discussed with them careers in medicine, Professor Gospar spoke on Paediatrics and Immunology and Professor Gautel on heart and skeletal muscle disease. A nurse who had returned from working in **Haiti** spoke to geographers about the impact of the earthquake. A former addict spoke to Y10 about drug addiction, another about self-esteem and healthy eating as part of the PSHCE programme. Y11 focused on **Life Skills** revision. We are immensely grateful to outside speakers, often parents or former parents, alumnae or local residents. It is very helpful to our pupils to broaden their perspective. Our evening seminar for parents on **Adolescent Issues**, led by a JAGS Governor, was well supported and enthusiastically received.

The talk by **Camila Batmanghelidjh**, in support of our JACMC campaign, 'The Terrorised and terrified: Teenagers in Britain', was a great success and very well attended by members of the wider community as well as JAGS. She spoke passionately and informatively about her own work with Kids Company and the psychology and brain chemistry which lies at the root of the problems of Britain's most damaged and vulnerable children and young people. A fuller report of this event is on our website at www.jags.org.uk/jacmc.

Performances from Drama students in their practical examinations this term have been confident and flamboyant and as usual the audiences responded enthusiastically in the Q&A sessions following each public showcase. The A level groups worked on inventive adaptations of Maupassant's 'The Necklace' and Edgar Allen Poe's 'Masque of the Red Death', two ambitious and impressive ensemble pieces.



The AS groups took an Artaudian approach to two of Angela Carter's works, using every space within the theatre. 'The Bloody Chamber' and 'Nights at the Circus' ensembles drew us into their grim games, startled, moved and made us laugh. Congratulations to these highly impressive design and performance students who achieved the top of the top band marks. The GCSE exam classes chose sequences from 'My Mother Said' and 'Blue Remembered Hills' and ingeniously wove the large group performances together, defining characters with great precision.

The girls also benefit greatly from seeing professional performances. GCSE and Sixth Form Drama students greatly enjoyed the Kneehigh Theatre Company's physically expressive version of 'Red Shoes' and the popular ghost story, 'The Woman in Black'. The Dance Club were privileged to see the witty and eccentric new ballet production of 'Alice in Wonderland'. The English department took trips to see 'Julius Caesar', 'King Lear' and 'Macbeth' and Y9 experienced a genuine spine-tingling thrill watching a performance here of Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Tell-Tale Heart' and H G Wells' 'The Red Room'. Sixth Form students from JAGS and Dulwich College explored Wordsworth's writing in the evocative setting of his homes and gardens at Rydal Mount and Dove Cottage in the **Lake District**.

The Readathon, the UK's national sponsored reading event, provides a stimulating focus for recreational reading and makes money for seriously ill children. This year JAGS raised £2,809.45 - the largest amount by us in the last 10 years! 7J achieved the largest class total: £824. Author Cathy Hopkins was a popular visitor for **World Book Day**. Y8 enjoyed her tips on writing and hearing her read from 'Paparazzi Princess'.



7J contributed £824 towards this year's Readathon

A first for JAGS was hosting the **Cicero competition** here on a Saturday in March. This is a world-wide event which unites Sixth Form students with a passion for the study of Classics. It involved translation and a cultural test, this year on 'Jason and the Argonauts', with live video conferencing around the world! Y8 pupils, Madeleine Capstick, Rhapsody Yells, and Isabella Woods, with Elissa Day, Isabella Morris and Grace Rogers, worked extremely hard to prepare for the **London Latin Reading competition**. They read a scene based on Virgil's story of Dido and Aeneas with great enthusiasm, conveying the emotion of the scene, as well as perfecting their pronunciation. Sarah Thornton, Y13, read one of Horace's Odes, in a tricky metre. Her performance at the competition was superb, justly winning first place in the section.

In the regional round of a national **French debating competition**, held in Sevenoaks School in March, our Y13 girls debated in French against 6 other schools on controversial topics such as the increase in university tuition fees. They got through to the semi-final where they took part in a heated debate on whether or not French parents should be allowed to smack their children.

Our **Mathematicians** enjoyed taking part in the Hans Woyda competition. We were also delighted to learn our results from the **Senior Maths Challenge 2010**. Over 65,000 pupils from across the UK sat the challenge: the top 6% receive Gold, the next 13% Silver and the next 21% Bronze. Our girls were awarded 23 Bronze, 14 Silver and 3 Gold certificates (Claire Fretwell, Lauma Kalns-Timans and Abigail Richards). Abigail also received 'Best in School'. A team of 4 girls from Years 8 & 9 represented JAGS in the Regional Final of the **United Kingdom Mathematics Trust Team Challenge** at the City of London School. They worked brilliantly as a team and were a credit to the school, placed 4th out of 24 teams - an excellent result. Congratulations to Claire McHale, Ana McKellar, Akua Crankson and Rhapsody Yells. 284 girls from Y9-11 participated in the **Intermediate Mathematical Challenge 2011** and were awarded 77 Bronze, 59 Silver and 17 Gold Medal

certificates. Well done to them and to Sian Evans, 'Best in School'. The top scoring 500 pupils from each year group across the country were invited to take the Olympiad papers; this year Sian Evans, Alice Guillaume, Claire McHale, Rita Otto and Daisy Tyrer qualified to sit the 2 hour paper. The next 1,500 top scoring pupils from each year group were invited to sit the European Kangaroo paper; Eleanor Evans, Frances Higgs, Ana McKellar, Mair Dew, Emma Mittelman and Helina Berhane qualified to sit the paper. Congratulations to all of the girls; we are expecting the results to arrive during the Easter break.

In the **British Biology Olympiad Competition** (for Y13) Bronze medals were awarded to Antonia Milner and Emma Van Oss; Emma Gattenio was highly commended, and Lucy Benson and Raveena Bhondi were commended. Well done!



Congratulations also to Y13 artist, Delphina Schneider, who attended the Painter Stainers' Company Prize Day to receive her £100 award, and to Amber-Lily Fraser who has won joint first prize, chosen by the Rector of the Royal College of Art, in a schools' competition. A number of other girls have had their work chosen to be exhibited there in the Young Art exhibition in May. Well done.

The wonderful **music** here always makes our spirits soar. Walk through the Holst Hall any day and you find groups or soloists in rehearsal and we have enjoyed a great variety of concerts. It is not just the standard of the performance work but the ambitious pieces played that so impresses the audience. Music scholars from Y7-Y13 recently played horn, oboe, viola, cello, bassoon, trumpet and voice in an informal concert. There were informal concerts for pupils of visiting music teachers, too, and another to give the String Sinfonietta, Bel Canto and the Concert and Chamber Orchestras a chance to show their considerable skills. The conviction and enthusiasm with which the Y7 choir sang 'Not While I'm Around' from Sweeney Todd was palpable. Every concert gives less experienced players a chance to grow. The adjudicator at this term's **Piano Festival** spoke highly of the quality of the playing. **The Wind, Brass and Percussion Festival** was an evening packed with fun and talent. We take for

granted that all instruments are available for girls to play here, but it sometimes surprises others that we have so many brass players. Our large Wonderbrass group was selected for the prestigious **Rotary Youth Makes Music concert** at the Royal Festival Hall, a magical opportunity for them. Our **Recorder Festival** also involved players from local primary and secondary schools. We invited our near neighbours to come to the **Chamber Music Concert**, our final instrumental event of the term. **JAGS Choral Society** excelled itself in a stirring performance of Verdi's 'Requiem', joining forces with Eltham and Blackheath Choral Societies and Orchestra under Mr O'Hara's confident baton in the Blackheath Halls.

We certainly have athletes with exceptional talent and stamina here at JAGS. They were undaunted when they had to race in the English Schools' Cross Country Finals in Northumberland on Saturday 26 March, and swim and run in the National Schools' Biathlon on Sunday 27 March at Crystal Palace, the other end of the country; they scooped lots of medals. In the **English Schools' Cross Country** our intermediate team came 1st, becoming the National



Champions team (Grace de Rome, Natasha Sinha, Georgina Hay, Fiona Basham, Ashleigh Campbell and Eleanor Evans), and our Junior team came 5th (Victoria Picken, Hannah Webb, Breagha Campbell, Isabella Barber, Phoebe Campbell, Catriona McSorley). Some of the team hot-footed it back to London to

take part in the **National Schools' Biathlon Championships**, where Breagha Campbell, Y7, and Natasha Sinha, Y9, won their individual competitions, both becoming individual National Champions. Our Y10 team won 2nd place (Grace de Rome, Sophie Parkes and Ellen Mirchandani) and our Y8 team won 5th place (Victoria Picken, Matilda Craddock and Sophie Noton). Many congratulations to the girls for exceptional individual and team performances.



Well done, too, to the Junior A and Intermediate A teams who both won the **Southwark Cross Country Championships**. The Junior B team also finished in a creditable 3rd position. Our Junior and Intermediate teams also won the **London Schools Cross Country Championships**. 11 girls were chosen to represent Southwark in the London Championships and the Years 7 and 8 teams both won. Special congratulations to Victoria Picken (1st in Y8), Breagha Campbell (2nd in Y7) and Hannah Webb (3rd in Y8).

Congratulations to the U15 hockey team who won the **Surrey Hockey tournament**. They were outstanding and thoroughly deserved their win. Our U16 Hockey team won the **Surrey plate** competition before half term. The U12 Hockey teams also played extremely well in the **Surrey championships**. The A team had 3 rounds of penalty flicks to decide their final position of 4th in the County. Congratulations to the Year 8 7 a-side hockey team, winners of the **Battersea Tournament**, who reached the semi-finals of the **South of England competition**, having finished as runners-up in the Surrey Championships.

Our Y7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 **Netball** teams played extremely well in the **Surrey Finals**. The Y7 team were runners-up. Congratulations also to the Y7 & 8 swimming squads who qualified for the **London League swimming finals** and finished 4th. Congratulations to the Y7 swimming team who won the **London Schools' championships** at Lady Eleanor Holles.



Some of our pupils have achieved outstanding individual successes beyond school.

Congratulations to Katie Snowden, Y12, recently made the Sports Person of the Year at the Wandsworth Sports Awards. Katie won this award having won the National U20 400m title, the SEAA U20 400m and

800m titles plus finishing in 2nd place in the 800m at the English Schools' Championships. She also represented Great Britain and was 6th in the World Olympic Trials in Moscow. Well done to Sophie Parkes (Y10) and Bryony Gill (Y13), who have been recognised as Talented Young Athletes in the Lewisham Sports Awards, while Natasha Sinha (Y9) was selected to represent Greenwich as one of their special talented athletes. Congratulations to Sophie, who represented GB in her first Tetrathlon on 5 March, achieving a personal best in her swimming and to Natasha, who competed for London in the 44th International Swimming Championships in Geneva and won 2 silver medals and 2 bronze, narrowly missing out on 2 golds. Congratulations, too, to Sophie Lewis-Ward who won a staggering 12 medals at the Kent County U13 swimming championships. Well done to: Rhianna

Madden-Hansle and Francesca McClymont, Y9, qualifiers for the National Indoor Sportshall Athletics Finals with their club, South London Harriers; Verity Thomas, Y10, who competed for Thames Rowing Club in the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships; Emma Rosier, Y8, who has been selected to play for Surrey U13 hockey; and to Yemisi Sofolarin, Y9, who came 2nd in the shot putt at the Kent County U15 championships.

Interhouse hockey, netball, swimming and art competitions were keenly fought, as usual, points being added to the annual totals for the House Shield. The Houses take their fund and awareness-raising seriously, and charity events create an excited buzz around the whole school. Around Valentine's Day, **Clarke House** put on a fabulous lunchtime concert of love duets and ensembles and the staff excelled themselves in mimicking artists as diverse as Elvis and Take That in aid of St Catherine's Hospice. The **Desenfans House** charity event in aid of Trinity Hospice surpassed itself in the originality of its acts, including a 'Macbeth' to end all 'Macbeths', and a magician's disappearing and reappearing act involving twins!

In addition, we have made and distributed 1000 origami birds and worn Japanese-themed own-clothes to raise awareness and funds for the people of **Japan**.



Some of the beautiful paper cranes, a symbol all can appreciate, are now 'flying' from the newly-planted Japanese cherry blossom trees in Green Dale, an initiative endorsed by Southwark Council. As part of Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, Sixth Formers organised a huge **Alice in Wonderland Tea Party** for the Eve Appeal charity, and raised funds for this



summer's **Romania** trip. We are proud of the unique personality each annual **Multicultural Evening** has, thanks to the indomitable spirit of the

Sixth Form organisers. At this year's 'Olympia' event

it was wonderful to see over a hundred pupils from Y7-Y13 enjoying the fantastic fusion of cultures represented at our school from across the world in music, dance and drama and even cuisine. We finished on an interactive high with a 40-strong jive group. Thanks to the generosity of parents and local businesses who donated food and raffle prizes, the event raised £1700 for the charities Whitgift SNAP and Make A Wish UK.

Community Action projects continued to occupy many this term. The **Saturday Literacy Scheme** mentors and



pupils alike enjoyed dressing up and worked as crazy combinations of book characters - Superman and Tigger, Horrid Henry and Alice. In groups, the children invented encounters with marvellous villains, and imaginative ways of outsmarting them in a fantasy land where tree trunks are green and leaves are brown, the grass is glitter and it rains candy. We held training sessions for working with

autistic children and an Activenture assembly for Years 11 and 12. Our links with the community grow ever stronger. The **Gospel Choir** performed at Christ Church, East Dulwich, to support a Saturday Fair Trade Breakfast event. They were magnificent and everyone admired their discipline, enthusiasm and talent.

The activity doesn't end when term finishes. Y13 have just set off on a **Geography Field Trip to South Wales**. Having run a Practice Bronze **Duke of Edinburgh's Award** in the Chilterns this term, Mr Luttick and Mr Davies will be leading more expeditions during the holidays: a Silver expedition in April and a qualifying Gold expedition to the Lake District. A number of groups are travelling abroad in the Easter

holidays. 24 girls from Y9 will be exchanging life in London for life in **Sèvres and Versailles**, enjoying a range of cultural activities organised by the French families from Lycée de Sèvres. Good wishes, too, to those on the Y10 Exchange trip to **Montepulciano**, with sight-seeing in Florence, Siena and San Gimignano; to those on the Y9 & 10 Exchange trip to Bergisch-Gladbach, **Cologne**; and to those on the RS trip to **Amsterdam**, which should be a memorable experience for Years 11,12 and 13.

There are two important community music events during the holidays at JAGS. On Sunday 10 April at 6.00pm, the **James Allen's Community Orchestra** is playing a concert in the Holst Hall. Local musicians will be playing works by Sibelius and Dvořák in support of Dulwich Helpline. Everyone is welcome. In addition, the **South London Youth Orchestra** runs its Easter Course from 11-14 April, with three orchestras from beginners to advanced.

We look forward to seeing girls, parents, and friends at our flagship **Choral and Orchestral Concert** involving JAPS and JAGS choirs and the **Symphony Orchestra** at 6.00pm on Sunday 8 May, at St John's, Smith Square. The Choirs are singing a wide range of repertoire, followed by two movements of Mozart's Bassoon Concerto, featuring Harriet Doble, Y13 Music Scholar, and Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5. Tickets can be booked from St John's Smith Square only. Box Office: 020 7222 1061.

Please see the separate letter which contains formal information about matters such as school rules and fees. We trust you will all have a refreshing Easter break. Thank you for all your support.

Marion Gibbs



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