



The end of the Autumn Term has been extraordinarily busy and I do hope that you and your daughters will have a very good Christmas holiday. I trust that even those girls returning to examinations in January will manage to enjoy some time for relaxation. As ever, many exciting events have occurred since my October letter.

JAGS girls have continued to participate in a number of very successful **trips** at home and abroad. I must apologise for omitting the French department's half-term trip to Montpellier from my last letter; it was a great success, as were those to Barcelona and Berlin. More recently 43 girls enjoyed a four-day trip to the German Christmas Markets in Aachen and Bonn. They also much appreciated the opportunity to view other parts of these two cities.

Other parties have visited the Natural History Museum, a Sikh temple, the Tower of London, various art galleries, theatre performances, including Year 9's visit to *War Horse* at the National, and lectures. Many thanks to all the staff who have given their time to organising and accompanying these trips.

Many **outside speakers** have visited us to talk to girls of all ages on a wide variety of subjects. We were delighted to welcome once again a group of Holocaust Survivors, whose testimony deeply moved our Year 11 pupils. As part of the 'Peers in Schools' programme, Baroness O'Cathain came to give a talk to Y12 and Y13 Politics students about the work of the House of Lords. They were very interested to hear about the relationship between the Commons and the Lords, the Committee work of the House and some of the bills currently under debate and scrutiny. Baroness O'Cathain responded to questions with frank and insightful views.



Many congratulations to Katie Carpenter who attended a special AQA awards ceremony in November and learned that she was the **A level Student of the Year** (from 330,242 candidates nationally in all subjects) based on her results for A level Drama and Theatre Studies. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Coker (Year 13) won four awards at the **Excitec Science Fair** at Imperial College for

her outstanding work, using mathematics skills in a public health setting, on the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, as part of a Nuffield Science Bursary project at Brunel University. She was presented with an Excitec Platinum award for work done at degree level one standard and prizes for the best

use of mathematics in a project and the best presentation of a project, and the Mu Alpha Theta award from the University of Oklahoma for the most challenging and creative use of mathematics to solve a problem.



Well done to the 16 girls who have recently completed their **Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award**: Florence Ashworth, Rhea Bhadresha, Josey Bright, Gillian Britton, Rachel Efrat, Katrina Ferron, Gayle Griffiths, Angharad

Kolator Baldwin, Roshni Mahtani, Abigail Miles, Isobel Parker, Krupali Patel, Pooja Patel, Mariam Rela, Clare Thomas and Cora Thomas.

The **Music Department** has had a very busy half-term. The Autumn Concert on 5 November featured the school choirs and many of the junior instrumental ensembles. The concert included the first complete performance of *Three Imaginary Scenes* by Raymond Head, who was in the audience, and finished with combined ensembles playing music from Handel's Music for the Royal Fireworks accompanied by party poppers in the church

and fireworks outside. The Senior House Music performances were as colourful and impressive as ever with a huge range including classical pieces, solo singing, Chinese traditional music and a lively performance of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*. The end of term saw the 20th birthday concert of the JAGS Choral Society who performed with the Symphony Orchestra and Whole School Choir and Holst Chamber Choir. The evening was a fitting celebration with some breathtaking and monumental performances of Bruckner and Dvořák as well as some beautifully subtle singing in two unaccompanied pieces by Janet Wheeler and Gustav Holst. Our musicians have also been busy performing for the local community at the West Dulwich Fair, in local old-people's homes and at the Borough Market Frost Fair.

Our next musical event will be the **JAGS Community Orchestra** concert on Saturday 5 January at 7.30 p.m. in All Saints Church, Rosendale Road. The concert will feature another chance to hear Victoria Harrild, last year's Year 13 Music Scholar who is now studying at the Royal Academy, play Saint-Saëns's *Cello Concerto No. 1* as well as Dvořák's *Eighth Symphony*. This concert is in aid of Dulwich Helpline; please do come and support us.

JAGS held a **special Science Week** in early November. It included Einstein demonstrations to Years 7 and 8, a special whole school Science Week Assembly and lunchtime sessions on 'Messy Chemistry'. The Biology Department arranged for pupils in Year 7 to meet exotic bugs, from Giant Millipedes and Leaf Insects to Scorpions and a demonstration of Birds of Prey to Year 10 included a Bald Eagle and a Barn Owl (pictured).



Many congratulations to the **Drama Department** on their absolutely stunning production of *The Love*

of the Nightingale by Timberlake Wertenbaker. The acting, movement, set and costumes were all first-class and the audience was held enthralled from start to finish. Special thanks to the Directors Ms Adie & Mrs Macfarlane. Well done, too, to the JAGS girls who performed with such spirit and sensitivity in the world premiere of *Upstart Crows*, a play about the life of Edward Alleyn, at Dulwich College in November. Please look out for JAGS girls in the special BBC New Year's Day production of Noel Streatfield's *Ballet Shoes*, Lucy Boynton is playing Posy and a number of other girls will be seen dancing.

We were delighted to welcome Mary MacRae as our guest poet for JAGS **Poetry Night** in December. The standard of the girls' compositions was as high as ever and they were delivered with great wit and aplomb – well done. We are hoping to produce a special 20th anniversary anthology of the best of JAGS Poetry later in the school year.



The **Mathematics Department** has also had a good half-term. Sixth Form mathematicians sat the Senior Mathematics Challenge in November and 11 Bronze, 8 Silver and 6 Gold certificates were gained. Congratulations to Katherine De Rome, Jasmine Helme, Nicola Ingram, Sotiria Manou-Stathopoulou, Jessica Szekely and Lucy Trinder for their gold certificates. Nicola also received the Best in School Certificate. Our Hans Woyda Maths quiz team has had a good term, winning matches against Eltham College and Langley Park Boys' School, and narrowly losing to Colfe's. They were ably captained by Jessica Szekely (Year 13). The other members of the squad were Nicola Ingram and Rosie Patchett (Year 12), Katrina Ferron (Year 11), and Maria Young and Lauma Kalns-Timans (Year 9).

The **Art** department continues to produce work of outstanding quality. This year's Year 13 A level Coursework Exhibition was most impressive; the

girls mounted the work themselves and included a vibrant range of works in different media. There will be a **JAGS Art Exhibition** at the Pavilion in Dulwich Park, from 22 January to 17 February 2008, providing a chance for the wider community to appreciate the girls' work. It is an exhibition of a selection of past GCSE work and tickets are not required, just come along.

Our **DT** Department's last year's GCSE work has been chosen by AQA as A* grade exemplar material and is being used in their training packs. Congratulations to all concerned.

The **PE Department** have had a most successful term; we have played over 100 matches and fielded 173 teams. This half-term has been exceptional in local, regional and national competitions. Our swimmers continue to excel: well done to the Intermediate and Senior Relay Teams who have qualified for the nationals in Sheffield in February. The U13 and U16 teams came first in the London Schools' competition and the Seniors came second in their category. Many congratulations, too, to the Junior and Intermediate teams who both came first in the Southwark Schools' Cross Country championships. The Intermediate cross country team took part in the National Schools' competition in early December; they ran with strength and determination through a very wet and muddy course. We came 6th in the country and Katie Snowden (Year 9) had a fantastic race and finished 4th individually out of 170 girls. Congratulations to the squad: Katie Snowden (Captain), Amelia Coe, Emily Watson, Quinta Pusey, Katharine Higgs and Miranda Frizzelle. The U16 Indoor Hockey Squad captained by Hattie Robinson won the Surrey County Championships in a thrilling final against Kingston Grammar School, which went to "sudden death" penalty flicks! The U16 Indoor Hockey team now go on to the South of England Championships on 6 January. Meanwhile the U12 and U13 netball teams have qualified for Surrey finals in March.

The **Parents' Association Christmas Quiz** was, once again, an evening full of fun and a tribute to the hard work of our Parents' Association Committee. It was a great pleasure to have Henry Kelly as our quiz master. We owe much of our success as a school to the continuing support of our parents, for which we are most grateful. Parents of girls in Years 7-9, especially, should make a note of our next **Parents' Internet Safety Seminar**, which is to be held in the Lecture Theatre at 7.30 p.m. on 16 January. In

these days of fast-changing technology it is vital that parents remain well-informed and vigilant.

As usual JAGS girls have been involved in many **community action** and **charitable fund-raising** events this term. Our Environmental Task Force, consisting of girls from across all years, has been meeting on a weekly basis and looking for areas where we can encourage staff and pupils to 're-use' and 'reduce'. Mrs Grant is currently driving a reduction in energy use and has established a group of monitors to regularly go around the school looking for 'hotspots'. The group is also investigating how to reduce other kinds of waste such as plastics. Two of our Task Force members, Adele Fraser and Rebecca Howard (Year 8), have put forward proposals in a bid to become 'Climate Change Champions'. We will soon find out if they have made it to the finals in January. Our new project this term has been the work at *Inspire*, a Saturday supplementary school on the Aylesbury Estate in Peckham, where Year 12 girls have mentored children aged 5 to 16 in English, Maths and Science. This is a very exciting link which we intend to pursue further, as its organiser, Beatrice Nambuya, is very keen to make use of our girls' talents and enthusiasms in the creative and performing arts. Three Year 12 girls this term have joined the Youth Advisory Group on National Citizen Service. In the holidays, girls will be helping Kids Company to prepare for their Christmas day party for 800 children who otherwise would have no celebration. We are also holding a toy collection at school for the party. Next term, we are beginning a new venture in intergenerational art at Dulwich Picture Gallery, in which our sixth form girls will work with the outreach workers at the gallery to encourage elderly people to visit the gallery and to become involved in art themselves. We have maintained our links with Romania, with a visit by the Schools Inspector who enabled us to set up the summer project in Brasov. Radu Chivarean came to see some of our projects, including *Inspire* and our own Literacy Scheme, and will be reporting back to the education authorities in Romania.

I am delighted to inform you that the new Dining Room and Classroom Building Project is progressing well and is on schedule for completion for the start of the Autumn Term 2008.

All good wishes for a happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Marion Gibbs

Reminders for Parents

Our Parents' Association would be grateful for any items of **unwanted uniform** to put into our uniform sales; our stock is extremely low and anything you may be able to send would be very helpful.

May I remind you once again about the necessity for girls to come to school looking smart with their **uniform** in a good state of repair. In particular, skirts should be of the correct length and in this cold and wet weather girls should be wearing coats (black or navy), scarves and sensible shoes, not ballet shoes. Individual letters are being sent home, but please help us by ensuring that your daughter is suitably clad. Make up, nail polish and jewellery (other than a simple religious symbol) are also not permitted in school.

A number of problems seem to be arising in connection with **travel to and from school**. Firstly, may I remind you that you should not park on the area outside the school reserved for coaches, nor in a way that blocks local residents' access to their driveways. Secondly, **Red Post Hill** will be closed completely to traffic just North of the station from some time in December until at least May 2008 as the railway bridge is being rebuilt. Undoubtedly traffic chaos will ensue!

May I also remind you that arrangements for collection of your daughter after school should be made with them in the morning before they leave home. The School Office can only pass on emergency messages, contacting girls in different parts of the school late in the day is a time consuming and difficult process

Reports are enclosed for girls in Years 7, 9 & 11 whose parents have not been invited to a Parents' Evening this term. The girls have already read these reports through with their form tutors and discussed their progress.

Our **new website**, meeting the latest DDA standards, is now live and we hope that it is an improvement on the previous site. It incorporates all areas of the school, JAPS, JASSPA, our Alumnae and the Sports Club, and with many new features should be a constant port of call for all our parents, prospective parents, pupils and others associated with the school.

Once again we will be selling **Spring Bulbs** in aid of the hockey tour to South Africa. Some of the proceeds will go towards buying much needed kit and equipment for two local primary schools in Cape Town we are supporting. An order form is enclosed. If you would like to purchase any please return the order form with payment (cheques made payable to JAGS) together with your daughter's name and form to the PE Department no later than Friday, 18 January. The bulbs will be delivered at the beginning of March. There will be a prize for the top individual fund raiser.

Key Dates

Monday 7 & Tuesday 8 January
Staff Days

Wednesday 9 January
Term begins

Saturday 12 January
Entrance Exams

Wednesday 16 January
Parents' Seminar Internet Safety

Thursday 24 January
Year 7 Parents' Social

Monday 4 - Thursday 7 February
ISI Inspection

Half Term Holiday
Monday 11 - Friday 15 February