

May 2007

Dear Parents

Although the first half of the Summer Term is inevitably busy with examination preparation and with the actual GCSE and AS examinations, our girls and staff have once again found time to participate in a wide range of other activities. Girls of all ages have enjoyed visits to galleries, museums, theatres and conferences, have attended lectures in school and have undertaken field work; many thanks to all the staff who have made these events possible. It was also a great pleasure to meet the 170 JAGS Alumnae who attended our Annual Reunion Lunch on 12 May.

The JAGS Annual **History of Art Lecture** held at Dulwich Picture Gallery on 25 April was a great success. Mr Christopher Riopelle, Curator at the National Gallery, speaking with passion and great knowledge about Renoir's landscape painting, ensured a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Many congratulations to Emily Sinclair (Year 13), who has been awarded the **Painter Stainers' Art Prize** and attended a special ceremony at the Painter Stainers' Hall on 4 May. Twelve pupils from JAGS had work selected for the 17<sup>th</sup> annual '**Young Art**' exhibition in aid of Cancer Research UK. Over 6,000 entries were received and 576 art works were chosen for this fundraising exhibition at the Royal College of Art. Special congratulations to Alexa Prichard (Year 12) who won the London Sketch Club Prize, Laura Osborne (Year 12) who won second prize in the GCSE category and to Louisa Prodgers (Year 9), commended in the 11-18 category.

Many congratulations are also due to Kaushiki Singh (Year 10), who is one of only three students in the country to win a two-week scholarship to study on a **GCSE Spanish course** in Madrid during the summer. She will stay with a Spanish family while studying at International House. Well done to Maisie Richardson-Sellers and Sunanda Gupta (Year 10) who have both been awarded places on the **Salters' Chemistry Camp** at the University of Sussex in June.

We have participated in a wide variety of **sporting fixtures** already this term, with some notable successes in rounders and tennis matches. Meanwhile, our **U16 Hockey team**, superbly captained by Katie Rose (Year 11) began with a victory over King's School, Warwick, which gained them a place in the semi-finals of the National Plate Competition. Sadly, although they played very well, they lost the match against Newport Free Grammar School, Bishops Stortford. They are our most successful hockey team in recent years and we wish them well next season. Twelve JAGS girls ran in the **London Mini-Marathon**, congratulations to Philippa de la Rosee (Year 9) who came 3<sup>rd</sup> in her age-group, Katie Snowden (Year 8) who came 4<sup>th</sup> and Julia Wedmore (Year 10) who was placed 8<sup>th</sup>. Our **Junior athletes** have had a very successful start to their season, the Year 7 and 8 team won the Southwark Schools' Competition and go forward to the Regional round after half-term. The intermediates were 2<sup>nd</sup> and have to wait to see if they have enough points to qualify. JAGS **swimming** success also continues, with a well-deserved team victory in the Allyn's Trophy. Well done, too, to the 22 Year 12 girls who have gained their **National Pool Lifeguard** qualification and to the 15 girls who have recently passed the JAGS Senior **Tennis Coaching** Award. Our Year 12 **Community Sports Leader** candidates have also been very busy running tournaments for local primary school pupils.

This half-term pupils from Years 7-9 took part in the annual **Junior Inter-House Music Competition**; the standard of entries was high; the girls enjoyed themselves and gained points for their house. The best entrants performed in a very successful evening concert on 17 May. The competition concluded with the ever-popular **Form Song Competition** on the last afternoon before the holiday. Congratulations, too, to all the girls who have achieved such good results in their **Associated Board Music Examinations**.

Our Junior Play this year was *Aladdin* – an enchanting musical performed from 22-24 May with verve by our very talented young actresses. Congratulations to the performers and the director, Jeremy James Taylor and many thanks to all the staff and senior girls who made this production such a great success. Well done to all those who achieved such high standards in the recent **ESB Speech and Drama Examinations**.

JAGS and JAPS undertook their **Walk to School Week** early this year, to avoid a clash with JAPS trips' week. In the Senior School we managed almost to double the numbers of pupils who walked or cycled to school during that week, achieving 43% of the total participants; bearing in mind the large numbers of girls who travel from some distance by Foundation Coach, public bus or train, this is a significant achievement. Many Year 10 girls have also been undertaking strenuous exercise this half-term, with two **Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions** being completed at weekends, in spite of unfriendly weather. We are awaiting news of the final total from our recent **Drink Water Week**, where pupils and staff were sponsored to drink only water in support of the international charity WaterAid; £1,445 has been collected to date. A special thank you to all the girls and parents who supported us.

The Good Schools Guide has recently presented Awards to JAGS for A level Critical Thinking and Government & Politics; this follows our Award for A level Italian last year. Well done to the staff and girls involved.

We have just begun to participate in an adolescent counselling pilot, run by Redthread: trained youth counsellors are available for confidential one-to-one appointments at school in the lunch hour or after school twice weekly. May I take this opportunity to remind parents that when our dining hall and classroom project begins at the end of June there will be restricted parking on-site and no facility for dropping off within the grounds at the front of the school. We would also welcome your assistance in ensuring that your daughter comes to school in the correct uniform, which is smart, clean, not torn and conforms to regulations. Good quality second-hand uniform is on sale the first Friday in every month from 8.00 to 8.30 a.m.. Please would Blackheath parents also note that there will no longer be a late coach to Blackheath from outside JAGS, all girls must get the shuttle buses at 5.35 p.m. to Dulwich College and there change onto the Blackheath coach.

Next half-term is very short, but I do hope to see you at our annual Jazz Evening on 22 June, the Foundation Commemoration Service in Christ's Chapel at 7.00 p.m. on Friday 29 June, followed by drinks in the Dulwich Picture Gallery, at Founder's Day on the afternoon of 30 June and at our Founder's Concert on Tuesday 3 July at 7.30 p.m.. Details of all these forthcoming events can be found on our website [www.jags.org.uk](http://www.jags.org.uk).

Thank you for all your support.

Yours sincerely