

# FARNBOROUGH HILL

EDUCATING THE WHOLE PERSON

## NEWSLETTER



## The Caring Face of Academic Excellence



# “There is nothing like a Dame...”

...As we witnessed at Prize Giving this year when we had the pleasure of welcoming back an Old Girl as our Guest of Honour. Dame Helen Ghosh is Permanent Secretary of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, a position she jokingly likened to that of Sir Humphrey in the television series 'Yes, Minister'.

In a very eloquent speech Dame Helen remarked on the influence of Farnborough Hill English teacher, Mrs Mary Brister, whom she described as 'wonderful', instilling in her students a real sense of rigorous, precise thinking. Mrs Brister taught her students to work on evidence, proclaiming that they should never write an essay without a point and an example. Dame Helen still thinks of this advice whenever she writes a speech. Her main message was inspired by George Elliott's book 'Middlemarch'. This fantastically optimistic story highlights the influence of ordinary people through everyday things.

Mrs Buckle summarised the events of what she called a 'remarkable year for Farnborough Hill'. Academic success, achievements in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and then the outstanding inspection reports had made it a very memorable first year for her. She praised all the staff and students and the whole community for making Farnborough Hill the place it is – somewhere the girls can be happy, successful and take with them a clear set of values that will enable them to make a difference to people's lives.

From l to r: Miss Lizzie Goddard (Gifted and Talented co-ordinator), Helene Raynsford and Mrs Suzanne Hayes (Teacher in charge of Biology), who taught Helene A level Biology and was delighted to see her return to school last Friday.



### Old Girl returns to Farnborough Hill with Olympic Gold

Farnborough Hill was delighted to welcome back Old Girl and Paralympic Gold medallist, **Helene Raynsford**. She became the first woman in history to win the 1,000m single sculls race. Helene shared her memories and photographs from the Beijing Paralympic Games with an enthralled group of girls and members of staff. Helene's display of dedication, strength of spirit to overcome all obstacles and huge talent were inspirational and we look forward to seeing her in school again with a gold medal from the 2012 Games!

### More Olympic News

We were very proud to watch the progress of another Old Girl, **Alex Danson**, who was a member of the Team GB Hockey Squad.

### A lifetime of service

This Community Feast Day was Sr Patricia Wright's 60th anniversary as a Sister of the Institute of Christian Education, an occasion the school was delighted to help her celebrate. Year 10 students decorated the hall beautifully and each form made cards for the Sisters. At Mass we were privileged to witness all the Sisters renewing their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, with Sr Wright and Sr McDonnell making individual vows – Sr McDonnell recently celebrated her 50th anniversary. Fr Hugh Preston's very moving tribute concluded: 'When you look at the Sisters here you have literally hundreds of years of service to the church and Farnborough Hill.' The Sisters' special day ended with an entertainment, devised and performed for them by the Lower Sixth, and tea with the Sixth Form and staff in Lafosse House.





# Girl Power!

Outstanding results at A level saw half our candidates gaining 3 or more A grades. An impressive 66% of all the results were at grade A, with 88% of results at grades A or B. GCSE results were also excellent, with more than a quarter of the year group achieving 9 or more A\*/A grades and 85% of all results at A\* to B.

In fast track English, part of our gifted and talented programme, Year 11 achieved 100% of their AS results at grade A or B, and Year 10 100% of their GCSE results at A\* or A.

In the Year 10 GCSE papers in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, eleven girls scored maximum points (100) on all three papers, while 40% of the year group scored 100 on at least one unit.

We had an astonishing five top marks nationally: **Alexandra Cooper** and **Tegwen Gabb** (AS Level English), **Hannah Shelley** (AS Biology), **Vinaya Srirangam Nadhamuni** (AS Maths) and **Naomi-Rose Alexander** (GCSE Art) confirming just how strong Farnborough Hill is across the curriculum.



This term we hosted the Diocesan Schools' Day for the Diocese of Portsmouth. Over 150 senior staff and governors from other Catholic schools were involved in the one day conference. Rev Dr John McDade SJ, Director of Heythrop College, gave a fascinating and thought-provoking keynote address called "God, Imagination and the Digital Mind". The day ended with Mass celebrated by Bishop Crispian in the Chapel with beautiful singing from our Senior Choir.

## New facilities

The next phase of the St. Anne's redevelopment has been completed and the Art and Design and Technology departments are enjoying their new surroundings. We have two new art rooms, complete with the restored glazed canopy outside, and a new ICT/DT suite.



We now have a bank of 24 laptops for use in the library – ideal for completing prep after school.

## Impressive Inspection

Everyone in school was extremely pleased with both the Diocesan Validation and the ISI Inspection reports which describe Farnborough Hill, its students and staff in the most glowing terms. Mrs Buckle said *'It was gratifying to know that independent assessors came to such positive conclusions based on all the evidence before them.'*

The ISI report praised all aspects of the school. We were particularly pleased to have our pastoral care recognised as *'outstanding'* and our teaching summarised by the phrases *'the staff teach enthusiastically, imaginatively and very effectively'* and *'many lessons are taught to an outstanding standard'*.

Praise was also included for our community links, charity work, extra-curricular programme, learning support and provision for gifted and talented. We are very proud of the students and staff who do so much to make all this happen.



## Teacher's book published

We are proud to welcome the publication of an Art and Design handbook co-authored by Art teacher **Mrs Lin Walker**. The book is aimed at A level students as a guide through the A level process and is endorsed by OCR.

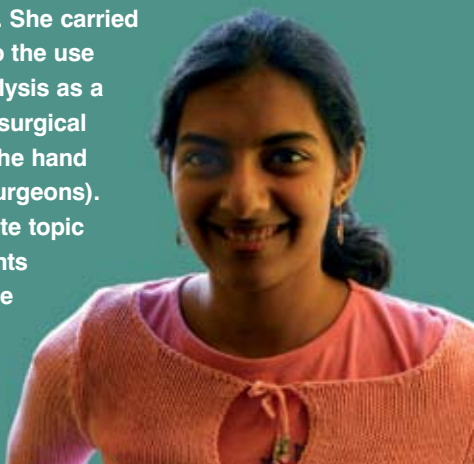


The half term ended with the traditional Inter-House Quiz organised by Mrs Winch-Johnson and her team from Fisher House. As you can see the girls threw themselves into the spirit of the occasion!



## Nuffield Award

During the summer Vinaya Srirangam Nadhamuni worked at the University of Surrey, having been awarded a prestigious Nuffield Science Bursary. She carried out research into the use of kinematic analysis as a discriminator of surgical skill (analysing the hand movements of surgeons). A very appropriate topic since Vinaya wants to study medicine at university and would like to specialise as a surgeon.



### Miss Emily-Jayne Thomson

joined the PE department this term. Miss Thomson is a Farnborough Hill Old Girl and an experienced PE teacher, having taught for several years at other independent girls' schools.



**Mrs Elaine Isaacs** is the new Administrative Officer, following the promotion of **Mrs Claire Deeley** to Head's PA and **Mrs Hazel Martin** to School Secretary.





# NEW LOOK FOR THE SIXTH FORM



*Farnborough Hill and Salesian College Sixth Formers socialising during their joint General Studies programme which takes place every Wednesday afternoon on the Hill.*



*Above: Year 11 enjoying the benefits of the new Sixth Form Common Room and kitchen/cafe for a day. This wonderful new facility provides Upper and Lower Sixth Formers with a pleasant area to meet and relax and has been furnished with leather sofas, chairs and tables, plasma screen TV, table football machine and a new kitchen and eating area.*

## Teambuilding

The Sixth Form had an excellent teambuilding and bonding experience on the Isle of Wight. Activities included high ropes, canoeing, kayaking, trampolining and, most unforgettably, staff and pupil karaoke! They can't wait for next year! Pictured are **Niamh O'Connor**, **Victoria Beynon** and **Elizabeth Nash**.



*Below: Sixth Form and Mrs Buckle at the celebration lunch to open the Common Room.*



## Science Awards



Farnborough Hill won three 1st place prizes in the schools' competition held to celebrate the centenary of Samuel Cody's maiden flight in Farnborough. **Francesca Pipkin** and **Freya-Anne Robertson** won the 'Aviation Picture' section, their prize being a visit to the Farnborough Air Sciences Museum to use a flight simulator. Francesca (pictured) loved the experience of landing planes at Gatwick, Manchester and Chambray in the French Alps, and says 'I had a fantastic time and will remember this experience for the rest of my life'.

## BA CREST Awards

Year 9 students took part in Taster Engineer Experiences during the summer holidays. The girls learnt to work systematically, problem solve, be creative and develop good communication skills, which then qualified them for Bronze Awards from the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Pictured are the girls who took part: Back row (l to r) – **Chloe Metcalfe**, **Hannah Arbuthnott**, **Lauren Edmondson**, **Freya-Anne Robertson**; Front row – **Lucy Chisnall**, **Emily Morris**.



# DRAMA



Year 11 Drama students presented two plays in the Princess Studio: 'Cuba' set in 1962 at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, exposed a world when people really did think next week would be cancelled. The excellent setting with projections helped to emphasise the period and with superb individual performances this was a poignant piece of theatre.

'Will Shakespeare Save Us' was a comic romp through a series of extracts from the Bard's most famous plays as presented by incompetent players to the king. Fortunately the actors got better, the king spared their lives and the audience had a great time!



A level students created an exciting and disturbing Artaudian piece called 'What are you looking at?', with body image as its stimulus. This piece, aimed at exposing our insecurities about our appearance, stunned the audience to silence with its hard hitting message. It was a thought provoking experience with superb performances by **Yvette, Joanna, Isabelle, Lucy and Phoebe** ably assisted by their technicians, **Anna-Louise and Katie**.

## Surrey Heath Young Musician of the Year

**Elizabeth Edwards** played her 'cello in the finals of the Surrey Heath Young Musician of the Year. Elizabeth gave a very sensitive performance of 'Vocalise' by Rachmaninov and the technically challenging 'Scherzo' by Daniel Van Goens was executed superbly. Elizabeth won the string section and went on to win the overall Young Musician prize against tough competition.



During the summer holidays, a group of Year 10 geographers travelled to the Massif Central in France to carry out fieldwork as part of their Geography GCSE course. As well as studying rivers, tourism and urban geography, they also had the opportunity to enjoy some white water rafting and sunbathing on the beautiful Mediterranean coast.



Victoria Beynon, Sarah Wonham, Niamh O'Connor and Tegwen Gabb (l to r) who attended the Senior Mathematics Team Challenge at Royal Holloway, London University.



## National Poetry Day



WINNER

Olivia Ezzard



RUNNER UP

Olivia Scott

## To be or not to be...

The theme for National Poetry Day this year was 'Work' and as usual there were poems at registration, a dressing up competition, a poetry competition and a lunch-time entertainment. A complete list of winners can be seen on our web site.



WINNERS

LVI Ninja Turtles



The Senior Choir and friends made their annual visit to Westminster Cathedral. Mrs Phillips reports 'The Choir sang like angels in the huge impressive building. I am always in awe when I peek round to see how big the congregation is, knowing that Farnborough Hill has such an important role.'

## Think Tank Talks



Local designer with a difference, **Casper Gray**, came to talk to students about his work in the field of sustainable design. Casper explained why it is so important that we aim to live sustainably, highlighting two of the most concerning issues, global warming and the decline in oil reserves. Casper finished his talk by emphasising that the more fun we can have while caring for our environment, the more likely we are to keep doing it!

The 'Aiming High' talk, gave Year 11 students from Farnborough Hill, Salesian College, The Wavell School and Court Moor the opportunity to hear speakers from Oxford and Cambridge Universities talk about university admissions. Farnborough Hill students pictured (l to r) are **Ruth Simmons**, **Katy Nagle** and **Jessica Mabin**.

We welcome a new member of the school community – Mabel, our new new Yamaha C3 Grand Piano. She may be smaller than her predecessor but Mrs Phillips assures us that she has at least three times the personality. Mabel will replace the beautiful but ageing Bechstein, who will retire to the gentler domain of the Grand Salon. Pictured are some of our younger girls admiring Mabel.



## Harvest Festival

At Harvest Festival we were delighted to welcome Miss **Vicky Ferguson**, a Farnborough Hill Old Girl, and four young people from the Step by Step Project in Aldershot. **Adam, T.J., JayAnne** and **Ricky** talked to us about their experiences of being homeless and gave a thought provoking drama about the effects of homelessness on an individual. Students and staff were so generous in their donations that 35 boxes full of goods were taken to the Project.



## Public Speaking

Year 10 public speakers competed in the English Speaking Union first heat. Pictured (l to r) **Dannielle Dhaliwal** was a terrific speaker on the subject 'Public figures should not be judged by their private lives', **Georgina Tate** was an intelligent questioner and **Georgia Peel** was an upbeat and efficient chairman. The next round was at the prestigious Guildford Guildhall where the girls won the Guildford Cup and now face the other Regional Winners in March 2009.

The Senior Team took first place winning the Rotary Shield with **Tegwen Gabb's** excellent speech on 'Weightwatchers', **Elizabeth Nash's** superb Vote of Thanks and **Joanna Belcher's** brilliant Chairmanship. They now represent Farnham Rotary in the District Finals early in the New Year.

Coming Runners-Up in their first competition – The Farnham Rotary for Intermediate students (Year 8) – **Erica Thake**, as Vote of Thanks, **Laura McReynolds** as Speaker and **Priyangka Pun** as Chairman were described by the Chairman of Judges as articulate, charming, with extremely good diction.

## Top of the Form

**Hannah Thrower, Veena Srirangam Nadhamuni, Natasha Widdowson, Hannah Tame, and Francesca Pipkin** (l to r) were semi finalists in the inaugural Top of the Form Science Quiz held at the Farnborough Aerospace Centre.



The annual Farnborough Hill Old Girls' Association (FHOGA) reunion was a huge success. Everyone enjoyed catching up on the news over a delicious lunch, followed by Mass in Chapel and coffee in the Sixth Form Common Room. Pictured is **Rebecca Nightingale** (3rd from right), recipient of the Old Girls' scholarship, helping to greet our guests.



Pictured are our Sixth Form scholars top row l to r: **Phoebe Young** (Creative Arts), **Anna-Louise Vincent**, **Tegwen Gabb**, **Juliet Wou**, **Hannah Patel**, **Katharine Burnett** (Academic) and **Lucy Sparks** (Performing Arts); bottom row **Rebecca Nightingale** (Old Girls), **Elizabeth Nash** (Academic), **Mrs Buckle**, **Alexandra Cooper** (Academic) and **Alice Salmon** (Performing Arts). Not pictured are **Anna Thomson** (Academic) and **Victoria Beynon** (Sport).

