

Newsletter



No: 1232 www.yarmschool.org | 10th January 2020

Headmaster's Welcome

A very Happy New Year to all parents, pupils and colleagues after what was, I hope, a restorative and joyful holiday. Whilst it seems a long time since we had our end of term events, concerts and services, I want to thank again all those pupils and staff who worked so hard to make the end of term so special. I'm grateful, too, to colleagues who were involved in trips that ran over the holidays and am sure that the pupils gained a lot from these experiences; by all accounts they were a tremendous success.

We are joined by a number of new colleagues this term and it was a pleasure to welcome them to our community this week. Miss Sophie Hussey joins the School as the new Head of Religion and Philosophy. Mrs Anne-Marie Hall joins us in the new position of Emotional Health and Wellbeing Practitioner and will work alongside the pastoral team to support pupil wellbeing. Mrs Lyndsey Wheatley joins us as the new First Aid Lead and will coordinate and support first aid provision across the school. Mrs Sue Burnham joins us as a new Learning Support Tutor.

The Fifth Year are engaged with their mock exams and I wish them the very best of luck. I would remind them that whilst the results of these are important, in many ways their response is more critical and they should use the experience to enhance their approach and preparation for the real exams. It is really important that, if something goes less well than hoped, they try to understand why this is the case and how they can approach things differently, or acknowledge which areas of content require closer focus. In parallel with this process, they will also be considering their A level choices and tomorrow's Open Morning (9.30am-12pm) gives an opportunity for them to meet Heads of Department and discuss their options. I am, as ever, extremely grateful to those pupils and students who give up their time to help - we always receive glowing praise for them from our visitors.

Parents will probably have noticed that we launched our new website at the very end of last term (the address, www.yarmschool.org remains the same). I am extremely grateful to those staff involved in managing this process, but particularly to Lynsey Craig and Beth Henderson who masterminded the process and delivered the project seamlessly. I hope parents agree that, as well as its more modern and appealing aesthetic, the new site is simpler and more user friendly. If anyone does find a glitch or a function that seems to be missing, please do contact ljc@yarmschool.org and we will strive to rectify this.

I would like to respectfully remind parents that the School's policy is that we do not authorise absences during term time for family holidays or similar recreational events. We strongly ask that parents arrange holidays during our lengthy school holidays. The nature of our ethos means that we work very hard during term time and any absence is extremely disruptive to those absent and can also impact the progress of the rest of the class. I do thank you for your understanding and support in this regard.

Looking ahead, alongside the exciting programme of events in the PAA this term, please note that tickets for our forthcoming performances of Miss Saigon are selling fast; you are encouraged to book early to avoid disappointment. Rehearsals suggest that it will be a spectacular, sell-out performance: not to be missed!

I wish everybody a very happy and productive term.

Dr Huw Williams



OPEN MORNING

SATURDAY 11TH JANUARY, 9.30AM - 12 NOON

Our best recommendation is always word of mouth. If you know of anybody who might be interested in joining the Yarm School community then please encourage them to come along tomorrow. We would love to meet them and show them what we have on offer.

German Christmas Markets Trip

A group of forty First and Second Years took part in the Modern Languages Department's biennial trip to the German Christmas Markets in Aachen and Cologne. Accompanied by Mr Fellows, Mrs Addison, Mrs Leary and Mrs Lightfoot, the group enjoyed a visit to the Lindt Chocolate Museum in Cologne and an afternoon boat trip on the River Rhine, which featured a visit from Saint Nicholas. With warm, sunny weather, the Christmas Markets were at their festive finest and pupils made a strong contribution to the local economy! We also had fun with a visit to the Aquana swimming pool complex, with thrill-seekers finding excitement on the Black Hole and Master Blaster flume rides. Travel went very smoothly with our old friend Terry driving the coach again. We are already looking forward to our trip to Berlin next December!

Mr Tom Fellows



Tell me more...Tell me more

Two days into a new term and the Economics and Business department were hosting a Working Lunch.

This time we were delighted to welcome back Helen Danjoux - class of 2018 - who is currently in her second year at Birmingham University studying Economics. As one of the small number of students who opted to read Economics at University without having taken A-Level Maths we were interested to hear how she has found her undergraduate studies thus far. A good crowd of Lower Sixth students assembled to hear how far more essay based the Birmingham course is than Warwick (the theme of our last Working Lunch before Christmas), and we learnt a lot about the wide ranging modules, the maths support, as well as the careers department and the extra curricular side of life at Birmingham.

It was also interesting to hear how Helen's career aspirations are developing, as she hopes to pursue a career with a humanitarian / sustainability slant, rather than the perhaps more common financial markets route of many Economists. Helen kindly followed up her Working Lunch with an extra session for interested members of the Upper Sixth who wanted to seek her advice on exam preparation and revision techniques, and targeting the A* grade.

We are really appreciative of Helen giving up time from her Christmas vacation to assist and support our students and we wish her all the best for the remainder of the year.

Miss C E Rhodes

Footsteps

At the start of the Christmas Holidays, Ella and Jonny visited the Footsteps Youth Wellbeing Project based at Eaglescliffe Medical Practice to present a cheque for £2000 as a donation from the School to support the work of the project.

Earlier on in the term Ella had given a presentation in a whole school Assembly to coincide with World Mental Health Day about the project and pupils were invited to wear something yellow in support during our Non-Uniform Day. The donation comes from money raised by the pupils. Pictured with Ella and Jonny are Dr Smith, who set up the project, and Harry, one of the Project's Youth Representatives.



Footsteps provide support for children and young people's health and emotional wellbeing. Dr Smith said "We are delighted to accept the kind donation to our Footsteps programme. The money raised will go directly towards increasing our counselling provision which is greatly needed to support the young people we have waiting to benefit from support. Again, thank you so much for all the support the School has offered the service from the beginning."

Mr D Woodward

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh News

We have had a number of pupils achieve their Bronze Awards, Ella Ogden, Lochlain Lacy and George Swinbank. Cavan Harland is (at the time of writing) awaiting confirmation of his award. Well done to all these pupils on their hard work. Katherine Henley has finished her Physical and Volunteering sections and Medha Rajeeva has signed off on her Skills and Physical sections.

Caroline Louwrens and Ruth Fletcher have finished their Physical sections and Charlie Bottomley, Finlay Gilraine, James Beck, Matthew Heathcote and Robert Gibson have completed their Expedition sections. Congratulations on these successes so far.

The enrolment process has started for Third Year pupils. To enrol you need to printout the enrolment forms from the email sent by Mr Rye and return these to the School Office. Fourth Year pupils are beginning to start the planning process for their expedition and will need to have fully finished this by Friday 6th March. As this is not a straightforward process pupils are to be encouraged to start their planning early.

Mr M Rye

The History Society

The filthy middle ages?

The History Society met this week to discuss the Medieval era and to what extent the period deserves its reputation for poor hygiene and bad odours. Attendees began by discussing what image they think of when imagining the middle ages. Most imagined a dark period, with few resources to keep clean. We discussed the fact that global epidemics such as the Black Death are heavily associated with the medieval period and the reasons for this. In the middle ages the wealthy would be able to keep clean, but most people would only have one outfit for their entire lives! Furthermore, peasants would often take to local fishing ponds to enjoy a bath, much to the annoyance of the local authorities. However, Historian Dr Katherine Harvey has examined evidence to reveal the fact that the middle ages were not quite as filthy as we think. Most homes in London did not have bathtubs until the early 1900s, so it was only relevantly recently that sanitation methods were improved, for most people. Furthermore, Harvey argues that peasants chose not to wash for different reasons. The medieval mindset was focused almost entirely on religion and how to serve God, and some people chose to live in filth in order to show suffering. Monks in Canterbury were astonished to discover that Archbishop Thomas Becket slept in a hair shirt covered in lice, in order to serve penance. Medieval people also believed that illness was caused by an imbalance of the humours and bathing in water would upset this balance, therefore public bathing was generally avoided. Attendees concluded by discussing why progress over cleanliness and hygiene took so long and by assessing what was really important to medieval people.

The History Society meets every Tuesday at 1pm.

Mr A J Morrison



Reach for the Stars...Follow your Heart's Desire...

A change of day and venue, but still a packed room for another well-received Economics and Business Working Lunch.

This time the speaker was Gamasri Dhawan (class of 2018) who is currently in her second year at Warwick University. An active member of the Warwick Economics Department, she acts as a senior mentor to economics students, guiding them through their first year. Gamasri was also elected as Marketing Executive for the Warwick Women's Careers Society, where her role encompasses creating promotional material for the society while running a subcommittee. She also volunteers with societies such as STAR, (where she teaches English to refugees), and Unicef. Gamasri began her talk by sharing her experience of A-Level Economics and discussing practical approaches she herself adopted to target the A* she subsequently achieved. She spoke candidly of how she displayed resilience, responded to advice, and worked independently. She then spoke about her University course, and how Economics at Warwick differed from Economics elsewhere, by drawing on the experiences of her peers, before discussing her long term aspirations and

how she is aiming to achieve her goals.

It was lovely to see how much Gamasri is enjoying her degree and to hear her speak so fondly of her time at Yarm. We wish her every success in the future and will follow her progress with pride!

Miss C E Rhodes

Friarage Lecture Series

Leading Afghan Public Health Chief to visit Yarm School

Dr Mohammad Haqmal will be joining us on **Monday, 20th January** in the Friarage Theatre. Our guest is a much decorated and highly recognised official from Afghanistan, whose work has been instrumental in improving the lives of women and children in that country. Dr Haqmal was recently kidnapped by the Taliban, who opposed his progressive health policies. He has a fascinating story to share and this should be a popular and intriguing lecture. More information about Dr Haqmal can be found in the Guardian article below.

The event will begin at 17.00 on Monday 20th January and should last about an hour including time for questions.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/23/afghan-public-health-chief-settles-in-uk-after-kidnap-by-taliban>

Rearranged date: Hitler's American Friends

On **Monday 10th February**, in the Friarage Theatre starting at 17:00, we will be joined via Skype by Professor Bradley W. Hart, Professor of History at California State University, Fresno. The lecture should last about an hour including time for questions.

Professor Hart has recently published a highly acclaimed work 'Hitler's American Friends: The Third Reich's Supporters in the USA'. The book won recent praise from the New Yorker and Time magazines. Professor Hart will deliver a talk based around his research and the book and then take questions from the audience.

This talk is directly linked to the GCSE course and we would expect all pupils who have opted for GCSE History to attend the lecture. A letter will be sent home to all pupils in Fourth and Fifth Year about this with a reply slip for pupils to return if they are unable to attend the talk for a particular reason.

The talks are open to parents and friends of Yarm School, to attend please email Mrs Pinkham (ELP@yarmschool.org).

Senior Maths Kangaroo

In December, 9 participants entered the Senior Maths Kangaroo, which is the follow-on round to the Senior Maths Challenge.

This illustrious group comprised James Bell, Abhinav Ramisetty, Atticus Garlick, Dominic Lowe, Keya Shah, Aislinn Kalyann, Pranav Kambalimath, Parul Sinha and William Styles. James, Abhinav, Atticus, Dominic and Keya performed tremendously well each achieving a certificate of merit, with the others receiving certificates of participation. James was best in school with Abhinav (Fifth Year) in second place. Keya and Parul (Third Year) did wonderfully well in this essentially Sixth Form event, but Keya then performed incredibly to occupy joint third place - a truly magnificent achievement - perhaps it is not a coincidence that she is also an accomplished chess-player!

Mr M Pointon

East Africa Trip 2020

23 pupils heading to Kenya and Tanzania in the summer and have been involved in a variety of fund-raising activities recently. The money raised will be used to help the Meserani Project charity that the pupils will be involved in when they visit Africa and also to help fund some additional experiences for the pupils.

The first fund-raising event was the YSA Christmas Craft Fair where the group had a Meserani Room selling genuine African merchandise, organised a raffle and a 'Guess the Massai'. We also staffed the Reindeer Rodeo with the enthusiastic help of Mr Ivey and our students drew in business for the side show games in L3. In addition to this, a number of students led by Mia Mack and Sophie Brining filled a school minibus up with all manor of sports balls and sold tickets to passers by to guess the number of balls. Total raised across all activities came to £1065.

In other events, some of the parents led by Jo Fletcher teamed up to organise a bag2school collection where participants donate old clothes for money- a number of the group brought bags into school raising a total of £250.

During the first week of the Christmas holidays it was great to see many of the group who are going to Africa give up time to raise money for the charity by volunteering for bag packing at Morrisons Teesside Park. The impressive £771 raised will be converted to dollars and our students will purchase books/clothing etc. for the African students they meet in July.

Finally, the bravest of the group took part in the annual sponsored Boxing Day Dip which was held at Marske. Parents and students walked slowly into the sea in a circle before submerging fully and sprinting back to the beach as quickly as possible.

There are a number of events planned this year to raise funds so please save the dates and more information will follow:

- 14th February - Barn Dance
- 18th February - All Night Sportathon
- 20th March - Cinema Night
- 24th June - Race Night

Mr G Ferguson



Hockey

A new development for Yarm Hockey this season has been to enter into the realm of senior men's league hockey. Many of our budding hockey players are committed to school rugby in the autumn term making it difficult to play club hockey- we have therefore introduced a Yarm team in association with Stockton Hockey Club. In the longer term, it will be an outlet for our best players to be stretched and play at a higher level whilst opening up more opportunities for all boys to play the sport at school level.

The opposition is quite often a combination of experienced older men and school aged players which is a great test for Yarm pupils. As things stand at the moment, the group of players (who are made up of mostly Second and Third Year boys) is standing at the top of the league with 7 wins and a draw from their first 8 games.

The latest game was played on the first Saturday in January away to Gateshead Hockey Club. The opposition did have some young players but were also able to field 5 adults, a couple of which have played the sport at a good level in previous seasons. A game that could have gone either way throughout the first half was decided after the first 15 minutes of the second half. Will Ferguson completed his hat-trick with 3 fine strikes after excellent work in midfield from Roman Andrews and Charlie Thompson. The stand out performance of the day came from Man of the Match, Theo Grylls, but the whole squad played well, The third goal, a sweeping full team move from one end of the pitch to the other, was clear evidence that this league is a great step forward for the future of hockey at Yarm School. Final Score- Gateshead 1 v Yarm 3.



Mr G Ferguson