



Priory School of Our Lady of Walsingham
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Dear Parents

29 September 2023

The Christmas term is now in full swing. Rehearsals for Beauty and the Beast are sounding very good, and sport got off to a great start with our S1 girls crushing the Bay Academy 15 – 1 in netball. The S2 girls lost a well fought match at the same fixture and were unlucky not to finish as victors. Miss Mildenhall said that all the girls were amazing and that we have a bright season ahead. More of this and other fixtures will appear in this week's Sports Report, which is produced by Mr Byrne with help from the Sports Department.

As alluded to last week, our new Heads of School have now been appointed. Our Head Girl is Maya Bennett and Milo Barnes is Head Boy. Not only will they lead the team of ten Prefects, but Maya and Milo will represent the pupil body internally, represent the school externally, help to instigate change, and very importantly, act as role models for all Priory pupils. Please join me in congratulating both Maya and Milo. On the topic of Prefects, they played a significant role in the success of our Senior School Open Morning, held this Wednesday. We had a busy three hours with lots of families visiting to see what Priory School has to offer, and all of them commented on how well our Prefects represented themselves and the school when leading tours. Pupil leadership and pupil voice are hugely important, and I am very proud of our Prefects, School Council, Eco-Council, Heads of House, Sports Captain, Junior School Monitor and more. Indeed, many of the best ideas for change come from the pupils, and I strongly encourage more pupils to share their opinions and ideas on school improvement. Even as I was writing this Newsletter, a group of S4 boys came to see me about setting up a basketball club, which I am sure will get off the ground.

The Eco-Council Bulletin will be published soon, and this edition is on the topic of coral reefs and their importance and future. During the week commencing 13 November much of our curricula will be delivered through the medium of 'saving the seas'. As a follow up to last week's Eco-Council discussion, this week's topic was 'lionfish', a carnivorous fish which consumes vast quantities of young (commercial) fish such as snapper and grouper, as well as other fish which protect the coral reefs from excessive algae growth. Experts are carefully studying these invaders to better understand their role in, and potential threat to ecosystems, as well as the threat that lionfish pose to key reef and commercial fish species.

Very sadly, I must inform you of the recent death of Otton Hulacki. Otton was 101, and was it through him that the Polish Saturday School was founded, until a combination of Brexit and Lockdown closed it down. Otton leased us the Polish Field and was our guest of honour at the Queen's Jubilee Party, when he came with his wife and daughter. He was also the driving force in the Blyskawica Society in Cowes. Otton was an extraordinary man, the living embodiment of Poland's indomitable spirit and a treasure house of stories. He is possibly the last surviving member of the Polish Armed Forces in WW2, and quite ironically, was born in a Polish pre-war town called Lwow – now Lviv – which is now of course in the Ukraine. He remembers coming back from some outing in September 1939 and sleeping by the roadside, only to be woken by the rumble of Soviet tanks coming into Poland on 17 September 1939 to divide the country with the Germans. Otton's funeral will be in Cowes and we will send flowers in Polish colours on behalf of the school community.

Returning to school matters, an email should have dropped into your inbox inviting you to take part in a lift sharing scheme for Priory families. Please take a few moments to read it, as the scheme may ease your day and improve the Island environment in the process. I still remember some of the environmental benefits of Lockdown, not least the clarity of the water around our coastline.



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Reports

1. Tues 26 Sep S1/S2 Girls Netball Match, The Bay C of E School
2. Wed 27 Sep Senior School Open Morning
3. Thurs 28 Sep S5 MAST Studios 'Metamorphosis', Southampton
4. Thurs 28 Sep Y5/Y6 TAG Rugby Tournament, Wootton Recreation Ground
5. Fri 29 Sep Mufti Day & Cake Sale (Parkinson's Disease) amount raised £317.50
6. Fri 29 Sep Y5/Y6 Mixed TAG Rugby Tournament, Ryde School

Future Dates & Events

1. Tues 3 Oct Tuesday Talk 'Career at GKN Aerospace' (Mr Craddock)
2. Wed 4 Oct Presentation on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (Mrs Wellbelove)
3. Thurs 5 Oct S5 Geography Fieldwork, Ventnor
4. Fri 6 Oct Prize Day & Thanksgiving Service, St Mildred's Church (11.00am)

Achievements

Mai MacKay (S4) – 2nd Spot for Ryde Coastal Four Rowers in South Coast Championships

<https://www.islandecho.co.uk/2nd-spot-for-ryde-coastal-four-rowers-in-south-coast-championships/>

David EJJ Lloyd
Principal