



The Abbey

# Gateway

12 November 2021



Peri Profile - Taekwondo - Artistic Swimming

## Abbey Interludes at Christ Church



performance of Country Dance by Weber. The recital was brought to a close with the foot-tapping Bye Bye Blackbird arranged by Bennett, played by Emily (Lower IV) on the soprano saxophone.

We are very proud of our scholars who rose to the occasion with professionalism, and the recital was well received by an appreciative audience.

We would like to thank Christ Church for their hospitality and look forward to our next recital there in the Spring, which will again be open to the public.

**Ms Bilkey**

On Wednesday this week, five of our music scholars performed in the inaugural lunchtime recital which was held at Christ Church, Reading.

Lily, Upper V opened the recital with a sparkling performance of the first movement of Sammartini's Concerto in F on the recorder.

This was followed by a beautiful rendition of the Sarabande from Grieg's Holberg Suite from Emma (Upper VI).

Next we had a reflective interpretation of Bach's Arioso on the cello, contrasted by Tamaras' (Lower IV) vivacious



## Heads: Connected

### Powerful principles and difficult questions

A week ago today thousands of young people marched through Glasgow in a demonstration to campaign against climate change.

There was much frustration with COP26: Greta Thunberg declared it an obvious failure, 'a two-week long celebration of business as usual and blah, blah, blah' from the bubble of those in power.

[Read more](#)

## The Last Post



Many thanks to Emily (Upper III) who gave a very moving rendition of both The Last Post and Reveille as part of our Remembrance Day commemoration.

Emily is one of our music scholars, having only joined the School this September, and her performance had both gravitas and poignancy.

For weekly events and reminders, please go to your [My School Portal account](#)  
This week's Heads Connected: [Powerful principles and difficult questions](#) by Will le Fleming



## Meet the Peris: Anna O'Brien

The Abbey Music department is very fortunate to be supported by a vastly experienced team of peripatetic teachers.

In this feature, we get to know one of them a little better:

**Name:** Anna O'Brien

**What instrument(s) do you teach?**  
Saxophone/ Flute

**When did you discover your love of music?**

My parents gave me a small keyboard when I was a young child and I would sit with my dad and work out how to play my favourite tunes.

**What advice would you give to young musicians?**

Listen to as much music as possible. This will help develop your own playing style.

**What is your favourite piece of music and why?**

I love playing Dreams of You by Dave McGarry as it really gives the sax player an opportunity to display the rich, velvety sound that the instrument is capable of.

**What is your funniest musical moment?**

Making music should be fun so it goes without saying that a musician should encounter many funny moments. An unexpected, unintended squeak never fails to make me laugh.



**What is your most memorable musical moment?**

Travelling to Holland with my saxophone quartet to play for the Dutch Neurosurgeons Anniversary Dinner. We were booked after the organiser heard us busking in Amsterdam. A great experience!

**If you could meet any composer from any point in time, who would it be and why?**

Duke Ellington because he was such an influential jazz composer whose works have played a huge part in my musical education.

## Taekwondo

Last weekend, Samar Chana in Upper II competed in the Taekwondo UK Open.

She won a silver medal for sparring in the under 10's women blue belt competition, and was one of hundreds of people competing across the two day event.

Samar is now working towards her red stripe on her blue belt and is hoping to win gold in her next competition. Good luck.



## Upper I Mini Exhibition

Upper I have concluded their first PYP Unit of Inquiry with a mini exhibition to display their Roman projects.

Having researched three aspects of Roman Life, students shared their newly found knowledge in an impressive variety of ways including: board games, models, replica weapons, comic strips, posters, mosaics, videos and interactive presentations.

Mrs Hammond



## Green Park Challenge



While many of us were tucked up in bed on Sunday morning, a number of Abbey families were out running the Green Park Challenge - a 3km event prior to the Reading Half Marathon.



It was a fun run open to all the family, from serious athletes not wanting to do the full 21km, to total beginners wanting some fun, getting fit and often raising money for charity.

Awesome running once again from Carys (Lower V) who stormed through the field of 420 runners to be the first female as well as placing fifth overall in a time of 9.59 minutes.

Under 11s had to be accompanied by a running adult so there were no excuses but to enjoy a great family morning, and start the day together!

A couple of the Junior School entrants did mention that they had to wait for their Mums and Dads! The results made Araliya (Lower III), the fastest Junior School



runner, finishing 2nd in the Under 10s race, and 72nd overall - and she was a bit ahead of her dad!

Ria in Lower I was also in the top 3 in the Under 7s and was raising money in support of the local First Day Children's Charity. Another fantastic achievement.

Congratulations also to Jasmine, Maya and Laasya from the Senior School, as well as Avika (Lower I), Jojo (Lower Prep) & Janki (Lower Prep) from the Juniors who all finished strongly and ran very well.

I know many staff and students have already returned to the weekly Park Runs that have recently recommenced and are a great way to get fit in a positive,



welcoming and inclusive environment either locally or further away if visiting friends. There's also a competition coming up soon to design the Green Park Challenge T-shirt for next year that everyone wears on the day. Does anyone want to have a go at being creative for the competition?

A final well done to Miss Turton, was also there, running the Reading Half Marathon. She commented that it was great to be back at an event that felt like a return to normality, with support from crowds along the 13 mile route, as well as seeing Abbey students having a good time. Mrs Canniffe and Mr Hawkins also took part in the morning. So well done to all competitors and vocal spectators!

Mrs Orr

## Abbey Correspondent

I remember the day when I approached Mr le Fleming, just over six months ago, and I voiced my ideas: a school newspaper and a radio station within the Abbey Senior School. The idea of having these channels at the Abbey popped up in my mind during one evening while I was reading.

It was not long before I received a response (just before the summer holiday 2021) from Mr le Fleming that the newspaper and the student radio/podcast would be fully supported. I felt that this project would add even more to our sense of community and the experience available within the Abbey.

I now have the privilege to share with you that the 'Abbey Correspondent' and 'Abbey Podcast,' run by students for students, is now coming to us! Please keep your eyes peeled for the very first edition that will be aired for the first time this term.

At the present time, as it's still in the early stages, we have a small number of students from different year groups working on ideas and we meet on a weekly basis. To be a sustainable idea, the newspaper will be accessible and promoted online initially. We would like to start small and with steady steps, gradually expand our Abbey Correspondent, from just being an internal publication to becoming an international magazine in the years to come.

The students partaking will be a fixed team that has a first-hand say in what appears or doesn't appear in our newspaper - we're looking to make it count! We would love to have someone from every year group, so please don't hesitate to get involved. It is an opportunity for the whole school to interact. I hope that lots of students with a love for writing will get in touch and make our 'family' even more united.

Key roles have been made such as an editor and the editorial team run by sixth-formers. Information about how students apply to be in the editorial team will be sent via Google Classroom. On behalf of the Journalism club, we think that launching the Abbey Correspondent is a great idea for lots of reasons, with students having the opportunity to write articles.

Coming up with new ideas is difficult and presenting those can be even more of a challenge. If you want to get involved, try to make sure to 'frame' the ideas in a way that will be beneficial to that environment.

I was so pleased and happy to get a response and to see these ideas come to life. Thank you, Mr le Fleming and the Leadership Team. We also appreciate the IT and Marketing Departments, and to all the staff involved for their support. Thank you too to the Sixth Forms Students and for taking the lead with this new project.

Grace W, Lower IV

## PGL Football Weekend



Last Friday, members of the Under 14 Football squad headed off to PGL Liddington for a weekend of Football coaching and PGL Outdoor Adventurous Activities.

They started the weekend with PGL sports which included relay races, tic-tac-toe competitions, tarpaulin volleyball and a very competitive game of end ball.

On the Saturday and Sunday mornings, the students received three hours of football coaching from FA qualified coaches. Here they were able to develop their individual skills and team work.

There were quite a few new little tricks learnt as well! In the afternoon sessions, students participated in Aeroball, Giant Swing, Zip Wire and a Challenge course. A fun weekend was had by all.

Miss Venning



## Art Scholarship Tea Party



This week saw the launch of the Art Scholarship Tea Party. It was a wonderful opportunity for us all to finally unite as scholars after much disruption over the last year.

The event enabled us to introduce our new members to our existing team, as well as thank our staff who were also part of the scholarship process. We enjoyed a range of fun activities such as our two minute 'ice breaker' tasks which tested good communication, using our art terminology, teamwork and interpretation skills.

The outcomes of cucumber sandwiches and teddy bears were all so unique and expressive. We also began our 'importance of visual arts' discussions, which we aim to extend across our Gateway articles in the near future.

Thank you to the arts team for all their hard work in preparing this exciting and fun event, as well as our scholars and staff, who were all round good sports. See you next year for more cake and celebrations!

Mrs Barrett

## Diwali at Juniors



shared with us how they celebrate Diwali which was fascinating.

Aleeza and Sophie, Upper I

We learned that rangoli patterns are made with bright colours and that Hindus make them with coloured powder. We learned how people celebrate Diwali and we enjoyed finding out how our classmates celebrated.

Jianing and Nawal, Upper I



As well as Diwali being celebrated by so many of our families at home last week, students at the Junior school enjoyed learning about the Indian festival and sharing their experiences with each other. Indian dancing, rangoli patterns, traditional costumes and storytelling were all enjoyed by the girls.

We learned that there are five days of Diwali. We also designed colourful rangoli patterns. In RE we learned the story of Rama and Sita. Students in our class



## Getting To Know You: Desert Island Discs



This weekly feature gives us all a little insight into The Abbey staff, and our next Desert Island Disc 'castaway' is Dr Beaver - SENCo.

### Music:

**'Sisters are Doin' It for Themselves' by The Eurythmics.** I would need a gentle reminder if I were alone on a desert island!

**'Lighter Shade of Pale' sung by Annie Lennox.** Can you see a theme here? I could listen to Annie Lennox all day even if the songs can be downbeat.

**'Invisible' by Alison Moyet.** A fellow Essex girl. One of the few people that I still go to see live now and who I follow on Twitter.

**'Isn't it Ironic' by Alanis Morissette.** It makes me chuckle because hardly anything in the song is ironic! Played it over and over in younger years thinking that it was ironic.

**'Namesto koga roza cveti' by Vlado Kreslin.** Translates to something like, instead of you flowers bloom, Slovenian folk rock is definitely an acquired taste but the strong Prekmurian dialect does it

justice. Reminder of my second home and being at University in Ljubljana.

**'The Nutcracker Suite' by Tchaikovsky.** Again reminders of University in Moscow and crying at the beauty of the ceilings at the ballet instead of the actual ballet or music. I can laugh about it now but probably linked to eating cabbage and potatoes for months on end!

**'Betty Grable' by Neil Sedaka.** My Dad only had 2 8 track cassettes in the car when we went on family holidays so I think I knew this before I could talk. We bought him the CDs when they were invented and I now have them in the car.

**'Rockin' all over the World' by Status Quo.** It has to be the Quo. I collected Status Quo albums as a teenager. I thought I was cool?! Now it would be useful to listen to and headbang to dry my hair which would be extremely long and hopefully sunbleached, not grey, on the island!

### Book:

The book is tricky as I read constantly. I suppose I am not allowed my kindle? I would like something in a Slavic Language as I am passionate about keeping those languages alive within me. I think the longest book and one that I would never get bored of, as it has so many layers, has to be 'The Bible' but in Russian, that would keep my mind stimulated until another coconut fell on my head!

### Luxury item:

The luxury item is tricky as being on a beach with the ability to swim all day is heaven to me. I would say a framed photo of my whole family.

## Upper IV Swanage Thoughts



Following on from the report in last week's trip to Swanage, Juliette in Upper IV reports on her trip experience.

'On the first week back after half term, UIV got the opportunity to go on our first residential trip to Swanage in Dorset for 4 days. It was a great experience! We were all faced with activities that helped us learn new skills and challenged our abilities.

We made great memories during this short period of time. I enjoyed spending time with my friends while also having the opportunity to become friends with the people in my house during the group assigned activities.

Although it was a cold November and some tasks proved difficult, everyone was still enthusiastic and determined to challenge themselves.

One of the highlights of my week was when we went fishing and I caught the catch of the week! Cumulus Outdoors provided us with many other unique experiences such as a RIB boat ride, climbing up the high ropes and air rifle shooting.

All of us had a great time on the RIB ride, where we got to explore the coast of Swanage, see Old Harry and even get to drive the boat ourselves. During the high ropes course, many of us were frightened, but everyone managed to face their fears and had a great time in the end. Thank you to the teachers and staff who helped organise this fantastic trip!

## Artistic Swimming

Cara in Lower V won a gold medal for Reading Royals in the Swim England Artistic Swimming Virtual National Age Group Championships 2021 13-15 years category.

She scored 66.3000 for her routine to a cover of Forever Young and was delighted with her performance. Cara said: "I was not expecting it, honestly – I'm just really happy with my performance.

"I have been working on the routine since May. I did not have that much pool time during that time so I did a lot of walk

throughs to make sure I kept developing my solo skills.

"I have always loved the original version of the song I chose, Forever Young.

"Me and my coach decided to have a look if there was any nice cover versions and we found a choice I immediately loved.

"Just find the music that makes you feel really excited to swim to and makes you feel really special and really helps to express yourself."

## Sailing Mentoring

We are looking to nominate any Junior Sailors (aged 7-14) to receive six months remote mentoring from professional sailor, Hannah Diamond.

Please contact Mrs Orr (orrni@theabbey.co.uk) to explain why you should be selected for this amazing opportunity.  
Mrs Orr