



The Abbey



Gateway

14 January 2022

Shoebox Scheme - Abbey interludes - Algorithm Week

Music Concert



On Saturday the Clarinet and Wind Ensembles visited St Mary's Church, Shinfield to entertain the local people in the area with a range of music.

The Wind Ensemble played an exciting rendition of the Star Wars Theme as well as Summer Nights from Grease and Rock Around the Clock by Bill Haley. The Wind Ensemble includes clarinets, flutes, oboes and saxophones, all played by members of the lower school.

Following the Wind Ensemble, the Clarinet Ensemble began by playing the Finale from Gran Partita, a classical favourite of the audience.

Next was Araña de la Noche which provided a great contrast and we finished the concert with Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen which the audience instantly recognised!



We all enjoyed playing very much and are looking forward to hopefully returning to play again next year.

Louisa and Katherine

Heads: Connected

Open to possibilities

2022 - the beginning of a new year. An overarching sense of hope seems to be the theme amongst us all as a school community. The blank page of possibility as we turn over a new leaf and face a fresh start; an opportunity to reimagine what could be, whilst perhaps questioning the status quo.

It has been suggested that at least a quarter of people typically start the year by making at least one New Year's resolution.

[Read more](#)

Rhythmic Gymnastics



Congratulations to Julia, Lower IV who finished in 2nd place in her age group at Prima RG Grand 2021 Rhythmic Gymnastics Competition in London. The event was held before Christmas and it was a fantastic achievement in her category: Level 0, one routine with a ball.

Many thanks to Mrs Burn for helping review Julia's routine with the ball before the competition.

For weekly events and reminders, please go to your [My School Portal account](#)

This week's Heads Connected: [Open to possibilities](#) by Nisha Kaura



Sporting Stars

A great start to the New Year for Upper II and Lower III students with wins already this week in netball against Highfield for the older teams, netball against Cranford House for the Year 5s and football against St Joseph's for both year groups.

It's fantastic to be returning more fully and safely to competitive sport and for the after school training sessions to be paying off!

Two Upper II students have also been having some success recently in cricket as well – possibly, dare I say, somewhat more so than the England squad out in Australia?!

Following a Berkshire trial programme across the autumn, Aanya and Livia have impressed the coaches with their standard of cricket and their commitment to improving their skills. They have been selected into the Berkshire U11 Hub programme for 2022 involving winter and summer training prior to matchplay and potential selection for the County Performance Squad.

Both are looking to join Finchampstead CC, enjoying stepping up to hardball cricket.

Aanya especially enjoys batting and practises at home in the drive (watch out for your windows, neighbours!). Livia loves fielding, is setting her sights on future top-level captaincy and would encourage others to take up the sport as there is "so much to learn and lots of different techniques". They both enjoy watching on the TV with their dads and practising with them too.

Both students are all-round keen games players. Aanya especially enjoys hockey and tackling for the ball; and Livia is an aspiring netballer who shone with her interceptions in the U10 fixture this week. The skills across all these games are



transferable and it's great to see them taking up new sports. Good luck!

Mrs Orr

Shoebox Scheme

Our Lower IV students have taken part in the Rotary Shoebox Scheme which sees shoeboxes delivered to those in need in Romania, Ukraine and Moldova. They have filled their boxes for a variety of people; children, teenagers and the elderly, and the contents of the boxes consist of toys, sanitary items and stationery.

The Rotary Shoebox Scheme has delivered over one million boxes. A massive well done to all the Lower IV's who have contributed.



Taekwondo

Congratulations to Ranaya in Upper III on attaining a blackbelt in Taekwondo prior to the Christmas break. Here is what she had to say:

"I started Taekwondo at five years old, and now at 11 years old I feel very proud for having achieved my black belt.



"The black belt exam itself was very nerve-racking, and the master who assessed us had to travel all the way from Korea!

"It was such an amazing achievement and experience - something I had been aiming to get for over 6 years!"

Nature Explorers

On Monday morning, the Reception children enjoyed exploring our new unit of inquiry, thinking about how we can appreciate the natural world by learning about living things.

We spent time in the Knell House garden, going on a discovery walk to find living things in our own environment and sketching some of the natural things that we saw around us.

Our classroom activities included sorting natural and manmade objects, identifying minibeasts, exploring nature books and some lovely role play.

DofE Award Achievements

Over the past couple of weeks the following students have achieved Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. Very well done to all!

Silver:
Hannah
Emily
Teagan

Gold:
Karen
Jessica



A Level Art Exhibition

On 7 January, the Art department had the joy of sharing and celebrating Lara Channon's A Level portfolio of work.

She was awarded the highest honour grade last academic year within her Fine Art course. Now thriving at the University of the Arts London studying Animation, it was a pleasure to welcome her back and see how she is progressing beyond The Abbey.

Lara's final outcome titled 'Morals: Little Red Riding Hood' (a reimagined interpretation of the children's narrative) took the concept of graphic novel composition mixed with highly skilled portrait work in biro pen. Lara then skillfully weaved mixed media techniques such as brusho ink, photography, photoshop and animated software and media.

We are pleased to share that Lara's artwork will be on display in the senior school reception for an additional two weeks and welcome you to come and visit. Congratulations, Lara, and we wish you every success as an animator in the future.

The Art Department



Korean War Veterans

On Saturday 11 December we had the opportunity to meet with Korean War Veterans, who were invited by the Reading Korean School (RKS). RKS have been coming to The Abbey over a period of time to teach us about Korean language and culture.

It was a very enriching experience as we are studying the Cold War in History. It was really amazing to be able to talk with those who were actually present instead of simply reading from a textbook.

We got to hear all about their personal experiences, which really shed a new light and a new perspective on the war, and the veterans themselves were lovely people who were completely ready to indulge our curiosity.

We asked them many questions about the war which they readily replied to with their unique experiences. For example, one of them told us how he had to bury himself deep into the ground in order to stay warm

due to the harsh winters in Korea. Another one of the veterans actually could not tell us all that much as he did a top secret government job which was really cool!

We learnt about the respect that they harbour for the country and the respect that the country has for them, as they had been invited back to Korea by the government.

In a really sweet moment, one of the veterans presented the Reading Korean School with a statue of two brothers who fought on opposite sides, one North and one South Korean. The veterans believed it would mean more to the school and help them learn about their heritage.

Overall, it was a really great experience and we were surprised that not more people came - it was really informative; the veterans were lovely and we all got kimbap!

Vaanini and Cristina, Upper VI

Abbey Interludes Recital

This week saw the return of our Abbey Interludes Recital after what was an incredibly busy but exciting autumn term.

We had a wonderful variety of instruments performing this week and each student delivered a phenomenal performance.

Participants of this week's recital were Katherine (clarinet), Natasha (guitar), Sophie (voice) and Elena (violin). This event is open to all students at the Senior School, regardless of whether they receive instrumental lessons in school or not, and is organised with the sole aim of encouraging and supporting our musicians to become more confident performers.

Application forms can be collected from the music department.



Meet the Peris: Sophie Roseveare

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: Sophie Roseveare

What instrument(s) do you teach?
Violin and Viola

When did you discover your love of music?

I started learning violin when I was 4 years old, but I only realised what music was all about a few years later when I was given a cassette player (yes I'm that old!) and a shoebox full of classical music tapes. I listened to them non stop and I was so sad when they wore out and the tapes unravelled!

What advice would you give to young musicians?

Like any complicated skill it takes time, work, patience and perseverance to become good at playing an instrument. It is a long term project but the rewards are huge and will last your lifetime so don't give up. Not only do you get the experience of practising, achievement and performance, but you can also gain a hugely enjoyable hobby and emotional outlet that is so valuable in whatever life brings. It is not surprising that a good number of high level sports players, scientists and professionals learned to play an instrument to a high level when they were young.

What is your favourite piece of music and why?

Sinfonia Concertante by Mozart. This is a piece for Violin, Viola and orchestra and the two solo instruments' melodies weave together in a beautiful, heartfelt conversation. It was my favourite tape in the shoebox, and in that recording the



violinist was a famous player called Iona Brown. By coincidence many years later I was part of an orchestra conducted by her brother.

What is your funniest musical moment?

Years ago in Hong Kong I was hired as one of the backing players for a visiting Korean pop star. The concert was packed with screaming fans throwing flowers and clothes onto the stage. An item of red underwear landed on my violin while I was playing!

What is your most memorable musical moment?

I have fantastic memories of playing music in groups with friends. I love the social aspect of music and how it brings people together, even if you don't speak the same language.

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

I would go back to the 1800s to meet the composer, violinist, violist and guitarist Niccolò Paganini and beg him to be a little more sympathetic when writing music for people without his incredibly long fingers!

Algorithm Week

This week has been our very first Algorithm Week in Junior School! Lower I-Lower III have taken part in some active assemblies with Digital Leaders crossing an obstacle course blindfolded and giving instructions to our Robot, Mrs Walton.

Computing lessons have been focused on teaching the concept using Micro:bits, Lego and Blue-Bots, and we set students the challenge to spot algorithms around them - on their way to school, in lessons across the curriculum, during clubs and at home. It has been fantastic to see the students excited about programming and making links with computational concepts all around them, not just in the Computing Suite.



At the end of the week, some of the students reflected:

"In Maths we did partitioning for multiplication; we had to use an algorithm for the method." Yashasvee Upper I
"It's helped me understand more this week - there's tons of things to spot: making tea, swimming. They all have a sequence or patterns." Elizabeth & Jinxin Upper II

"I learnt that algorithms are everywhere, not just in Computing." Anvi Lower III
Mr Stevens & Mrs Walton

Regional Biathlon Success

On Saturday a number of students from The Abbey competed at the Regional Schools Modern Biathlon Championships.

Araliya from the Junior School competed at the Midlands regional and did superbly - winning both her swim and run to gain the title of regional champion overall. Well done, Araliya.

The Senior School students competed in the South and South East regional qualifier and all did amazingly in extremely wet conditions. Esme came 43rd in the U12

age competition, Susie, Riya, Shumeng and Matilda came 19th, 18th, 13th and 9th in the U13 age category and were the 4th team.

Lauren and Holly competed as U14's and came an excellent 5th and 8th overall. And in the U16 age group Maya finished in a superb 3rd place in both run and swim and then also overall getting the bronze. Carys, who was competing up an age group, won the run and swim and overall title of regional champion! A fantastic achievement.

The top 3 at each regional event will automatically qualify to compete at the National Schools Modern Biathlon Championships in March and the remainder will be added onto a nationally ranked list. A qualification threshold will then be set and successful individuals will be invited to enter the finals. We will be notified of this hopefully in the next week but well done to Carys, Maya and Araliya who have already automatically qualified.

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 Deanna Wren from the Before and After School Club

Music:

Nightingale - Demi Lovato

This is a very calming and soothing song that would be good if I was to become worried or anxious.

Happy - Pharrell Williams

This is a happy and upbeat song for lonely or sad moments.

Cover Me in Sunshine - P!nk

This is a really sweet song featuring P!nk's daughter, Willow, and it's a heart warming song to listen to.

So What - P!nk

This is a song that shows that it's ok to be let down by others, and it shows a rebellious side to P!nk which in a way symbolises that loving yourself is the most important thing.

Salute - Little Mix

This is a very nice upbeat and powerful song that to me shows that the right people will be there for you and that loyalty is very important. The lyric 'If you're with me, lemme see your hands. Stand up and salute' is my favourite line of the song.

Who You Are - Jessie J

This song shows that low mood and upset affects all people, even those with money or fame. Jessie wrote this song not long after she moved on her own to the USA and she was expressing how she felt lonely and lost.

Big White Room - Jessie J

This song has a similar reasoning for the one before but Jessie wrote this one when she was struggling with physical health problems as a child. She was in a children's ward and the child across the room from her didn't survive their surgery. Jessie wrote this song as a way to explain her feelings of loss. I think that this song would help me when I become lonely or if I feel like I need a song that's a ballad.

Skyscraper - Demi Lovato

This song is a ballad but the lyrics are so empowering.

Book:

Staying Strong 365 days of the year - Demi Lovato

This book has a page for everyday with an inspirational quote on it so this book would hopefully help me to gain strength and courage when things get tough.

Luxury items:

A photo album filled with pictures of people and memories that I have. I think it would be nice to be able to look at this when I'm lonely or scared.

German Mini-Christmas Market

Abbey Junior School and Senior School students experienced some German pre-Christmas magic at the craft and food market organised in school on 14 December.

Though no substitute for our traditional Lower and Upper IV trip to the atmospheric town of Aachen - cancelled due to Covid-19 of course - the Charity Reps raised a fantastic £360 for Reading educational charity TLG (transforming lives for good) and it was a lovely way for students to celebrate the end of term.

As well as Bratwurst, hot chocolate and Glühwein (alcohol-free, of course), there were stalls selling hand-made craft items and authentic German Lebkuchen and Stollen, ably baked by Frau Byrne, German assistant Sandra and our team of Lower V German students.

The quad was festively decorated by the Art Department and Charity Prefects and the work for sale from our Artists in Residence, Kristin Rawcliffe and Emily Kelly, was a particular highlight.

Maths teacher, Mrs Roberts, brought in just a few of her collection of almost 250



wooden Nussknacker (nutcrackers) to show; sadly they were not for sale!

It was a joy to sing German carols in the open-air and my thanks go out to Sixth Form German students Tiggy, Hannah and Jessica who helped students try out their German when ordering their Bratwurst!

Let's hope that, this time next year, we will be reporting back on an actual trip to the German Christmas market in Aachen.

Mrs Seabrook Moore

