

— A Student Newspaper —

THE HIGH SOCIETY

Friday, 20 January, 2023



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CREATIVE ARTS

ALL THINGS SWIMMING, INCLUDING NATIONAL FINALS!

Our growing AHS swimming squad has had a number of galas this year already.

Both A and B Swimming teams have been competing well at the fiercely competitive Wycombe League Galas at Wycombe Abbey.

We have had our first friendly gala of the year at Pipers Corner School and the English Schools Swimming Regional Relay Championships, at Woodside Pool. It was here that our Junior and Inter teams qualified for national finals at the London Aquatic Centre on Saturday 19 November. Mrs Arber and I met 10 excited swimmers at the iconic pool for what is always an incredibly exciting event.

To qualify at this high level is such an achievement, considering several of those qualifying are swimming specialist schools or schools with their own pools and opportunities to train regularly together. Especially amazing therefore, is a qualification in 15th position nationally. All 3 teams (junior freestyle, junior medley and inter medley) produced fearless swims, improving their qualifying times, a real achievement when swimming in this iconic Olympic 50M pool for the first time.

Our A-Team were also back in action the other week, competing against several schools at Wycombe Abbey.

Well done to Amelia, Emily, Orla, Olivia, Beth and Evie (from the junior team) and to Verity, Megan, Charlotte and Fin (inter team). We are proud of you all and looking forward to the challenge of next year's qualification already!



Written by Mrs Carey

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

Having not had a joint production at AHS since 2016, we knew going into this that our 2022 show had to be big - it certainly did not disappoint!



The cast included over 70 students from AHS and AGS, who came together to put on the most fantastic production of Disney's High School Musical; seen by more than 1000 audience members.

The process began with students auditioning via video 'self-tapes', much like professionals in the West End, and coming in for call-backs to decide who they would play in our final cast. We were overwhelmed by so many fabulous candidates and even managed to double cast 6 of the principal roles. Rehearsals got underway in the new school year, and I'm sure many of you will remember hearing the cast belting out the songs during practice every Wednesday and Friday in the main hall.

Before we knew it, we were into November and looking forward to the set and costumes arriving and putting the finishing touches to the dance numbers, choreographed by students in Year 13. On 16th November, we welcomed an audience of 120 Year 6 students from Bedgrove Junior School who were dazzled by the performance, giving the cast a final boost of confidence before going onto opening night and 3 packed performances.

We could not have put on the show without the hard work and dedication of the cast, technical crew as well as all of the staff that gave up their time to support the production. The only question is...what show shall we do next?

Credits::
Ewan, Finlay, Deanne-Alexa, Isabel, Isaac, Bow, Hattie, Aadya, William, Liam, Charlotte, Lara, Stanley, Aymen, Akshaya, Lottie, Kate, Sujatro, Yi-Toong, Hannah, Nathalie, Phoebe, Dylan, Hannah, John, Felix, Nusaiba, Christopher, Anushri, Lottie, Avani, Hannah, Fin, Kelly, Enya, Isla, Emily, Ella, Agastya, Kate, Chloe, Shaiuresha, Itansan, Charlotte, Aika, Amelia, Megan, Grace, Thoshini, Krithika, Iris, Freya, Keneshaa, Dominic, Evaelle, Vivienne, Hannah, Beth, Kathyana, Megan, Faith, Kanisha, Padmasri, Lily, Joselyn, Amelia, Ashane, Navya, Dheeptha, Oscar, Sadhvika, Alana, Zara, Maya, Thannista, Isabelle, Annie, Anna, Nethuli, Krissy, Maewen, Caitie, Kate, Imogen, Millie, Hannah, Tabitha, Emily, Vee, Thomas, Ben, Reuben, Seth, Anthony



HUMANITIES

STUDENT SUCCESS - HIRAH



Hirah Khalil in 9C recently entered the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition and received a gold award for her powerful essay about an influential figure. Hirah came across the competition purely by chance, and what began as a casual venture soon became a very promising and thought-provoking piece. The QCEC happens annually to celebrate the commonwealth countries, and entries are received from 26 commonwealth countries all around the world.

One of the 4 topics to be written about last year was to write about an influential person. Hirah chose to write her piece about former prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Her essay is essentially a first-person piece about a girl who is inspired by Margaret Thatcher but also covers important historical events such as the Falklands War.

Margaret Thatcher was a big inspiration to Hirah whilst writing this essay due to the countless topics surrounding her, some of which are very controversial. Winners of this competition had the chance to meet Camilla, Queen Consort. As a gold award winner, Hirah received a personal email with feedback on her essay and a gold award certificate. Hirah recommends this competition to other students considering it, saying it is a great opportunity to develop your writing skills.

Here is the essay:

One path; a bigger purpose

I was only your age when my father had set out to the Falklands, It was the late Spring of 1982, a pleasant morning with a gentle breeze coming through my window frame. I had risen from my bed, put on my blue cotton dress with a pair of brown suede boots, and I set out to greet my family for breakfast. The atmosphere was unusual as the warm, mellow faces were replaced with stingy ones.

Alas, my father was not present when I came down that morning. My mother had her tedious face on, when she told me of the change in government and the decree of the Falklands; there was a melancholy tone in her words. I had never seen her so distressed. Later that evening I marched into town to investigate. Margaret Thatcher, a name I had never heard of, considering my young and witty age, had been the front page of the newspaper articles.

I asked the local seamstress, who was my sister, about her. 'A milk snatcher' she replied, now how one can steal milk had eluded my mind. I had decided to read the paper for myself. 'The Iron Lady' declares war on Argentina' as to who she was - I had no clue. 'The Iron Lady', a name so headstrong I was intrigued to learn more. A woman loved or hated there was no inbetween. The most successful Prime Minister or a Betrayer of the North. Admired and feared - but definitely cheered for the Falklands War. She is the one who sent my father away.

Who is this woman who has so much power? A grocer's daughter, a caring mother, an authoritative figure and a Prime Minister. The first WOMAN Prime Minister. There were jeers in the Chambers - She is a woman what can she do? We need somebody strong! A figure yet destined for fame and greatness and much controversy. 'This lady is not for turning' answered clearly the jeers. 'This lady is not for turning' answered clearly to the Monarchs. 'This lady is not for turning' answered clearly the fears.

That day had changed my life forever, A woman representing her country in political affairs had created the inevitable. Albeit she was a determined persona. An eluded mind : she stood for her beliefs - to prove wrongdoings and convinced them she was right. A bull with kind eyes, one could say. 'Pragmatism had been the order of the day', she had created pragmatism. How can a grocer's daughter become Prime Minister? Let me tell you...

To grow like a rose between the cracks of a street, she had driven herself to believe and strive for her true purpose. All had looked down on her, she was only a shopkeeper's daughter, they would all look at her and laugh. But she would look back. She would look back at her studies and gain Head Girlship, she would look back at her studies and gain a place at Oxford University, 'the big red'. She had proven to society she was capable of achieving honour and respect and much more. She took it upon herself to reach the top, change society, change the world. She married a noble businessman, gained authority, gained respect and became the Education Secretary.

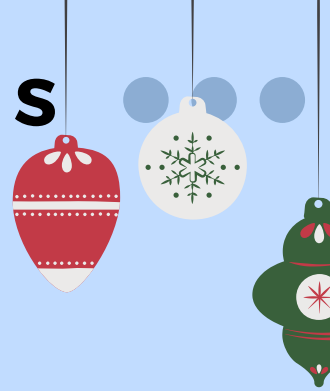
She did not conclude there, no. She intended to change the world for good and set out a clear vision. She became the leader. A leader of virtue and ethics. It was she who had sent my father, and it was she who would send him back. I discovered one path could lead to a bigger purpose and to find one's true path is never facile. To dream of a brighter future is only accomplished when you strive to make it so. One voice can change the world - not with humility and defeat but with honour and courtesy. As Franklin said 'Do not delay tomorrow what can be done today'.

I had learned that lesson well, her path inspired mine and I too became a voice for change. The world you live in today, the freedoms you take for granted, your opportunities for your future arose because we accepted the baton she handed over.

Dear children, adamant minds and biased people won't change until fundamental ideas change, it is sweet mother nature and she is listening.

Change one path; change the world.

Written by Scarlett, 10S



B O P P A R D S C H O O L T R I P

The yearly trip to Boppard has returned after a break due to Covid. The trip is always enjoyed by students and staff alike; providing attending students with an opportunity to practise their speaking and listening skills whilst enjoying great food and the atmosphere of authentic Christmas markets.

Students also made lots of new friends with people in their year who they hadn't had the opportunity to speak to before. The Year 9 students found that the journey, although long, was pleasant, and they were greeted by comfy rooms.

This trip is mostly popular with those intending to take German GCSE, but is a great experience for all Year 9s. The Christmas markets feature beautiful lights and stunning ornaments, and "are great fun to look around with friends." Other highlights include ice skating and the chocolate museum (of course!) alongside the music museum which is home to one of the largest collections of mechanical instruments in Europe! All the students would thoroughly recommend this trip.

Written by Beth, 13F



FRENCH DEBATING COMPETITION

Before arriving at the competition, the team undertook research based on the motions in order to strengthen their arguments. The students were assessed on variety, quality, clarity and organisation of ideas alongside spontaneity, fluidity, ability to convince during the strife, quality of language, cultural references and team performance.

The debate ran in three rounds and discussed the following motions: work is essential to live happily, adverts create artificial needs and world overpopulation is a myth.

Teams were drawn shortly before the event and the team's assessing (those not in the debate) were awarded up to 5 points for an outstanding/very convincing victory, down to 1 point for a crushing defeat. Leonie said the competition was a fantastic experience and was glad Mrs. Aston alerted them to it, she also added that she thinks this experience will help develop her personal statement.

Written by Beth, 13F



STUDENT-ORGANISED STUTTGART EXCHANGE

Prior to the Berlin trip, two Year 13s, Jess Chandler and Rowan Chantrey, organised their own student exchange to the German city of Stuttgart. Since one of them had kept in touch with their GCSE exchange buddy, the trip was incredibly easy to organise and flexible with timings. This trip was unlike the usual exchanges done by AHS and AGS, as it was fully coordinated by the students and there was no accompanying teacher.

The students spent 5 days at their German link school, which had not broken up for half term. They spent time in various lessons, and also attended all the clubs their exchange did regularly, such as choir or theatre club. The Y13's stayed with their exchange at their house, which was a thoroughly enjoyable experience that immersed them in German culture. One of the students stated that she was glad that she went without the school and teachers, as she spent a lot more time speaking German.

It was often difficult for them to understand the different dialects and accents and was very different from the Berlin trip, but the students overcame the challenges, and it was overall a very beneficial experience for their German education.

Written by Scarlett, 10S

YEAR 13 TRIP TO BERLIN

Last October, five Year 13 students went on a four day trip to Berlin. This is a trip done annually for Year 13s, following on from their Year 12 Berlin unit, and is a joint trip with AGS. Whilst there they visited many sites including the Reichstag, the Alexanderplatz and multiple monuments commemorating different murdered minorities.

However, the highlight of the trip for them was when they visited the Jewish Museum, which was “so impactful” and which brought many of them to tears. It was not an ordinary museum, it provided an in-depth experience with the architecture and design of the museum incorporated. One Year 13 said they could spend hours in there. They also had lots of free time to explore the city on this trip, which allowed them to see many parts of Berlin. This trip is also enriching to the A-level curriculum.

During the trip, each Year 13 had prepared a presentation for a different monument. When they visited their specific monument, they would guide the other Year 13s through the experience. This gave them a chance to be both a tour guide and a student. They massively recommend this trip to any lower years considering it due to both its educational value and due to its relaxed, fun nature.

Written by Scarlett, 10S





SCIENCE



BIOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

Biology Symposium is a research-based debate and discussion club, open to anyone from Year 10 and upwards. Every Tuesday, from 1:45, we get together and discuss anything from silly facts to exciting new developments in Science.

An interesting topic recently was extreme survival. We spoke about life-saving leeches and the soldier who took 30 pills of methamphetamine (and, somehow, lived!). Often, these discussions can take an unforeseen turn, so there is a chance to research during the session. We've also discussed organ donation and new developments in stem cells, as well as the possibility of designer babies.

When we began running Symposium, our aim was to make a club that could run without us. We've begun the transition into student-led sessions – our first few being a look into the ethics of bringing back extinct animals, led by Thannista and a debate on obligatory vaccinations led by Zainab. If you're looking for a chance to start a conversation on something you're passionate about, this is your chance!

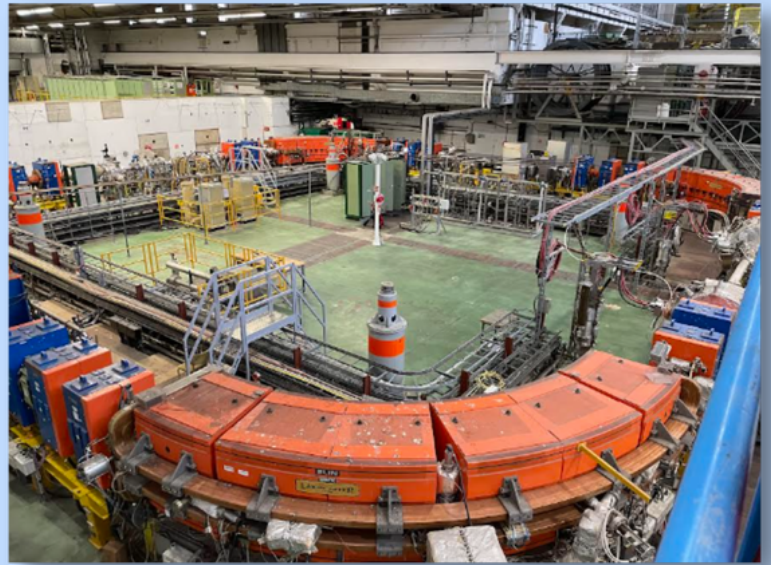
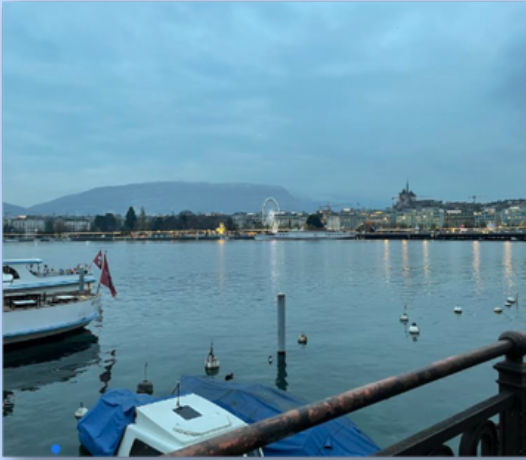
Our door is always open to new biologists, so please feel free to join the discussion on Tuesday in S5!

Google classroom code : **wmnhzix**

Written by Sarisha, 12H



CERN TRIP



A group of Year 13s flew to Geneva on the 1st of December for a trip to CERN. CERN is the European Organization for Nuclear Research; an organisation that operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world, it holds the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) which is the largest particle accelerator in the world.

The site sits on the border between France and Switzerland. The group had several talks and presentations, including a talk about what is currently going on at CERN: for example, using the LHC to learn about dark matter. They also attended a talk about the universe (what is made up of and how it was created). Students were given a tour allowing them to look at the facilities when they got to see the LEIR (Low energy ion ring) which accelerates some of the particles before they are accelerated in the LHC. After that, they then went back to the hostel and were allowed to explore the Christmas markets, buy food and explore the city with its beautiful Christmas markets. On the final day of the trip (the 3rd of December) students also visited a nearby museum and had a lovely walk around a lake.

Written by Beth, 13F

SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE IN LONDON

In November, Year 13 A-level Psychology students attended a conference in London, including myself. Each talk was led by specialists in that area - with one of the talks being delivered by the author of the textbooks we use in class!

The first talk was "Science - what's the point?" led by Cara Flanagan, followed by Mike Cardwell's talk "Bad science". Both of these provided us with thinking points that could be applied to our studies back in the classroom. For example, we learnt that journals are biased towards publishing research studies that have significant findings, which means we don't always have the full picture.

After both of these talks, we had a talk about "Crime - how can we solve it?" by Dr Tochukwu Onwuegbusi which linked in very well with the topic we'd just finished - Forensic Psychology. This was followed by Dr Lucie Clements' talk about "Dancing - Science and Performance" which was very well delivered and even included us getting on our feet and dancing!

Following lunch we came back for, in my opinion, the best talks of the day. The first was delivered by Oliver Meech, "Magic it's all about Psychology". For one of the demonstrations, two of our students went on stage for a chance to win £10 - however, they were unsuccessful and beaten by the power of Psychology. In another task, I volunteered to go on stage and had to pick a playing card. Body language and facial gestures gave the magician subtle cues as to whether I was lying to his questions about the colour and suit of my card. It turns out that apparently I'm not as good a liar as I thought!

Andrew Newton gave us a talk titled "Hypnosis - is it real?". Amongst the volunteers was an AHS student and one of our Psychology teachers, Mrs Jayatillake. He was able to get the volunteers to do all sorts of things, for example, getting them to take off a shoe and use it as an oxygen mask - leaving us laughing and in shock at how powerful hypnosis really was.

The conference was the perfect mix of educational and enjoyable and I thoroughly enjoyed attending.

Written by Yi-Toong, 13C

WHOLE SCHOOL

AHS FUNDRAISING WEEK



As per our school's annual tradition, AHS' Fundraising Week was a hit and the 2022 event was no exception! Every year, AHS holds a fundraising week in December to raise money for the year's charity of choice; this year, the school is raising money for the Rosie May Foundation.

The main hall was jam-packed with excited students for every one of the three programmes; The Pantomime (this year the teachers performed Charlie and the Chocolate Factory), Teacher Karaoke and A-Factor.

The performances were absolutely fantastic, with both teachers and students involved to put on great shows and help raise money for a good cause. This year the Staff Karaoke was won by our esteemed Science department, and the top three for A-factor include BBM+1, The Bollywood Dancers and BSL - very well done to our winners and all of our competitors, you were all amazing!

A special thanks to the tech crew and all the teachers and students who helped put this year's fundraising week together and provided everyone with some Christmas joy and entertainment. Can't wait to see what we put together next year!

Written by Akshaya, 11A



CAREERS FAIR

In November, AHS had the wonderful opportunity to host a careers fair for the students of the school. This was a great opportunity for students to learn more about careers they were interested in, but also to explore new options.

Whilst Year 9 and Year 11 had some lesson time to have a look round, other years could go to it at lunch, taking a feedback form with them on the different careers available. There were employers from all different backgrounds, from design to medicine, from the police force to the Performing Arts.

Thank you to all the teachers involved in putting this event together and hopefully this can become a frequent AHS event!

Written by Scarlett, 10S



MOCK COP27



"Closely following the end of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, on the 23rd of November, Aylesbury High School hosted our own Mock COP27. Students from the Royal Latin School, Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School and Aylesbury Grammar School were invited to participate; a total of 80 students took part in the event. The students represented 16 different countries and spoke passionately about the environmental issues each faced.

They then debated how to advance climate action in one of four key areas: oceans, forests, energy or cities - whilst bearing in mind the socio-political challenges and economic limitations their country faces. To wrap up the event, students stepped down from the roles of their representative countries and brainstormed actions that they could take to promote sustainability within their own schools.

Students engaged in mature and articulate discussion throughout the whole morning, guided adeptly by co-hosts Amitha and Daphne, and other student volunteers. Thank you to everyone who participated!"

Written by Arya, 12G