

**Dates for your diary**

- **31 May-4 June**  
Half Term
- **14 – 18 June**  
Year 7 exams
- **22 June 5.30 pm**  
Henry Morris  
Community Trust  
AGM
- **28 June-2 July**  
Yr 10 GCSE MFL  
Speaking Exams
- **3 July**  
Leavers' Ball
- **6 July**  
Yr 6 Induction Day
- **7 July**  
Yr 6 Induction Eve
- **8 July**  
PSHE Day
- **12 July**  
North v South  
Athletics Evening
- **13 July**  
Fast Forward  
Conference
- **14 – 16 July**  
Yr 7 Normandy trip
- **15 – 17 July**  
Whole school  
production
- **20 July**  
Yr 8 Celebr8 Eve
- **22 July**  
End of term

Dear Parent

Has there ever been a busier half term? I would suggest not. We have been interviewing, seemingly for weeks, to ensure that the College is staffed with high-calibre colleagues for September, with a great deal of success.

I am sure you will share my personal pleasure that our new Deputy Headteacher is none other than the exceptionally-talented Mr Russell, who succeeded at interview against a national field last week. He has my warmest congratulations and my confidence that he will continue to contribute significantly to the forward momentum of the school in his new rôle.

***Year 11 depart...***

... only to return again to take their GCSE examinations ...

However, we held our annual celebration of the contribution of our oldest year group to school on 14 May when they took their leave of us to launch themselves on what we hope will be an intensive period of revision for their forthcoming public examinations. We are nothing if not optimists and have accepted assurances from some of those who are not girls that they really do intend to work during their study leave. 'Honest, Miss ...'

They left wonderfully well and impressed all of us in the process. Their friendliness, their joie de vivre

and their ebullience have made them a pleasure to work with.

My warmest thanks go to Mrs Bucklow who has done a wonderful job of supporting Year 11 to achieve their best, just occasionally in spite of themselves. It was a very emotional day for her as she took her leave of her Year 11s and prepared to introduce her new Year 7 group to the College next half term. She's been practising looking down rather than up, as there will be a significant downward shift in height between her two cohorts.

Year 11 have my thanks for their astonishing kindness and generosity to all of us and for all they gave us during their five years at the College and my best wishes for their examination success.

***Sawston Fun Run***

The College campus was the focus of community activity on 9 May when 1100 competitors took to their heels to run the 7.5 kilometres – yes, we've gone metric – that comprise the Sawston Fun Run. Congratulations go to Georgina Schwiening who won her category (under-16 girls) and was also the first woman to cross the finishing line and to Zuhair Crossley who was the first boy.

The Sawston and District Rotarians deserve praise for their organisation of such a mammoth event year on year. I am also very grateful to my

colleagues who pitch in in a wide range of ways to support, not least Mr Holloway, whose brain-child it was 25 years ago. He ran it – not literally – for 15 years before passing the baton to the Rotary. It has already raised a third of a million and attracts more and more runners every year, a thought for my retirement, perhaps ...

### ***Sawston Youth Drama's 'Hairspray'***

What a wonderful show it was! Mark Long and his amazing team which includes Miss Haworth, our terrific Music teacher, turned in yet another marvellous production. The cast of 51 SYD Juniors from Years 7 – 9 turned in some astonishing performances. There's no doubt that SYD will continue to blossom with so much talent making its way through the school.

Watch out for the next production – SYD 7s this time round – of Alice in Wonderland on 9 and 10 July, a fitting way to end the company's dramatic year.

### ***Congratulations***

*Amy Rouse*, Year 10, is the focus of BBC attention at the moment. Following in her father's footsteps she has had huge success in sheep dog trials and is currently competing at open national standard, pitting her skills against world championship contenders in the under-21 category.

Amy is being filmed in school in early July for the Christmas broadcast of 'One Man and his Dog'. She should be very proud of her success, as are we.

*Max Holden*, Year 7, has had a very successful year. A talented cricketer, Max was voted County Cricketer of the Year in 2009. Last week, he went on to win further honours when he notched up 116 runs playing for Cambridgeshire against Suffolk and

then 58 runs against London schools, despite his playing in the under-13s, a year above his age group. For his exceptional achievement, Max will receive a county cap. He has our best wishes for his continuing and developing success.

### ***Those Currans ...***

Many congratulations to *Tom Curran*, former pupil, who will be gracing our screens in the coming weeks as he contends for the 'Britain's Got Talent' award with his band, 'The Arrangement'. He's a young man about whom we will hear more, I have no doubt.

Tom's sister, *Suzie*, entranced us all with an outstanding performance at this year's Pop Idol competition to take the title for 2010. Suzie didn't only sing wonderfully, she invested her performance with wistfulness and warmth. Congratulations go also to *Robbie Moss*, runner-up and to *Eloise Long* who came third.

This year's competition, organised by Mr Holloway, raised £250 for the Haiti appeal. Representatives from SOS Children's Charity joined us on the evening and were delighted by the generosity of the audience who added a further £100 to the amount we were able to donate.

And then there's *Jonathan Curran*. Jon was selected to participate in the 'Striking Together for Bronze' percussion project along with *Luke Bucklow*, *Nicholas Cowling*, *Lauren Hill*, *William Hopper*, *Alex Manders* and *Joe McCrae*. This pioneering and exciting project is the first of its kind in this country and enables percussion students of all abilities to come together and form a very large scale percussion orchestra performing a wide variety of repertoire including specially commissioned material.

Following the success of earlier smaller scale Striking Together projects, 'Striking Together for Bronze' has been awarded an Inspire Mark, the badge of the London 2012 Inspire Programme, a programme that recognises innovative and exceptional projects that are directly inspired by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Our pupils had the honour of meeting Lord Sebastian Coe when he visited the area to launch the project. We will publish the resulting photograph in our summer term Fountain magazine. I am looking forward enormously to seeing our pupils striking together when the project has its grand finale at the Corn Exchange on 4 July.

### ***Arts news***

We were privileged to be able to host a visit from the renowned Chinese artist, Chen Hong, who was at that time the artist in residence at the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Chen Hong taught our pupils to do fish painting. Their finished work was quite stunning.

Those of our pupils who are learning Mandarin spent their lunch hour with the artist, practising their acquired skills. They discussed his hobbies. When he revealed that he was also a singer, he sang for them. Amy Fallon, herself a splendid singer and Pop Idol 2008, returned the courtesy and sang for Chen Hong.

I am very grateful to Lesley Morgan, our Arts Development Manager, and to the Fitzwilliam, for making such an enriching experience possible.

We're also very grateful to one of our parents whose very generous donation made it possible for us to frame our pupils' art work and display it very professionally in the Walnut Gallery. Please do pop in and have a look next time you're passing. I'm sure you will

be impressed by their skills. My thanks go to Miss Tite and to Mrs Lanzrein for all they do to encourage their pupils to excel.

### ***Henry Morris Community Trust – an invitation***

As you know, we formed a trust last November to build capacity for the school with the support of our partners. We will be holding an annual general meeting for the trust and hope you will want to join us for light refreshments to hear about the trust's focuses and future plans. You are, therefore, cordially invited to come to the Walnut Gallery (in the cloisters off Fountain Court) at **5.30 pm on the 22 June** and join us in a celebration of this new facet of the school's work.

We are planning to launch the trust with something of a fanfare when we invite 140 primary pupils from Icknield, Stapleford, Babraham and Shirley primary schools to join us on 13 July for our Fast Forward conference. With the help of some 20 volunteers, parents and friends of our schools and of one of our trust partners, National Education Trust, the children will have a day focused on the 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum and their own aspirations for the future. I will be in touch with adult participants shortly after half term to confirm the details of the day. It promises to be very exciting, not least because of the participation of Brian Moses, the performance poet, who will be working with the children on the day.

### ***The inspector calls ... again ...***

Just when we thought it was safe, here we go again. Ofsted has been inspecting our English Department this week. Just as their colleagues are canoeing down the Ardèche and the big top's going up on the field for Year 9 activities, the English Department was under the Ofsted focus. Still, there's always chocolate.

We will let you know the outcome of the inspection next half term, but we're confident it will be very good because of the calibre of the teachers in this excellent department.

*... and again ...*

We had an inspection, too, although they called it a 'thematic review' of our extended schools' provision last week. Yes, it really was a very busy week. This focused specifically on the 'varied menu of activities' that we provide for our young people beyond the school day. The inspector who evaluated our provision pronounced ours the best of any (of the 120 schools) he had inspected and graded us 'advanced' in every category.

This is a tribute to my colleagues who offer such wonderful extra-curricular activities to our pupils, but also acknowledges the amazing work of Tara Hebditch, our Extended Schools' Coordinator. Tara has expanded our extra-curricular activities exponentially since she started with us. She surveys our pupils and those in our primary schools annually, determines what they would like to do, then finds a way of putting it in place.

Because of her tireless efforts, we are able to offer activities such as pottery, cookery, street jazz, fencing and this term, 'Bill and Ben's Gardening Club' and 'Soft Sculpture'. Do check out the activities brochure on our school website for the full menu. Tara has my unreserved thanks for making such diversity of opportunity possible.

***Home Access Scheme – Free computers for low-income families***

Some of you will know about the 'Home Access' scheme, a government drive that helps low-income families who currently lack access to a computer and/or the Internet to get online at home. It provides a grant to

eligible families enabling them to choose from a range of approved packages. The grant is a significant one and can cover a computer, one year's Internet access, service and support. Broadly speaking, families are likely to be eligible if they have a child on free school meals in Key Stage 2 or 3.

If you think you might qualify for the grant, contact the Home Access Scheme by telephone on 0333 200 1004 or visit the website of this Government-funded organisation at [www.homeaccess.org](http://www.homeaccess.org). My advice in the current economic climate would be to do so quickly!

***Tragic news***

You may already have heard of the death of Alasdair Mounsey, one of our former pupils, who died last week at the tragically young age of 17 from a subarachnoid haemorrhage. Staff and pupils have been paying tribute to Alasdair this week and remembering him as a young man who brought much joy into their lives. Our thoughts are with his family at this very sad time.

Alasdair's funeral takes place at 2.00pm on 2 June at St Mary's Church in the village and will be followed by a reception at the College for friends and family. For those of us who are unable to attend because we will be out of the country, there will be an opportunity to celebrate his life in a memorial event here at the College before the end of the school year.

***Finally***

As we move into half term, for some of our pupils, school has taken on something of a carnival atmosphere. We have the Big Top on the field, providing a base for Year 9 pupils who are enjoying a wide range of activities while their peers are in France. As I write, they are learning circus skills in

the lead-up to a display later today. Year 8 are heavily involved in a week of thematic projects – the sound of African drumming permeates the school. For Years 7 and 10, of course, it's school as normal, while Year 11 swelter gently in the examination halls as they sit their GCSEs - as I said, a very busy week.

I hope that the weather holds for the forthcoming half term break and that volcanic ash allows you to come and go as you choose and to spend time catching up with family and friends.

June Cannie  
Principal