

# THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

## 17 March 2017

Earlier this academic year, at an English Department meeting, attention was drawn to a passage in *Landmarks* by Robert Macfarlane, which described the removal of nature words from an established Junior Dictionary and their replacement by words of the virtual world. The deletions include acorn, adder, ash, beech, bluebell, buttercup, catkin, conker, cowslip, cygnet, dandelion, fern, hazel, heron, ivy, kingfisher, lark, mistletoe, nectar, newt, otter, pasture and willow. The words introduced to the new edition include attachment, block-graph, blog, broadband, bullet-point, celebrity, chatroom, committee, cut-and-paste, MP 3 player and voice-mail. The justification for this, according to the editors, is that the junior dictionary needs to reflect the experience of modern-day childhood.

## Great British Nature Day

There was no little dismay about this amongst our English teachers, which prompted them, and the academic Heads of Department, to try to do something about it. The result is that on Monday we will be holding our inaugural Great British Nature Day, an on-timetable enrichment day in which as many lessons as possible take British nature as their theme. English classes will be looking at Tennyson's *The Brook*, and du Maurier's description of Cornish fauna and flora in *Rebecca*; Maths lessons will see our Year 3s studying the symmetry of butterflies; and the wildlife of the Fens is the topic in Year 6 Humanities. Our Foundation classes are going on a nature walk; Science will focus on bees, Engineering will be looking at the types of wood produced by our native trees in product design and Art lessons will encourage pupils to take inspiration from the faces of owls and the swirling flight of starling flocks. Topping off what will already be an exciting and unusual day, a special whole-school assembly, with guest speaker [Nick Baker](#) from the BBC's 'Really Wild Show', will further enthuse the pupils about British nature.

Mrs White, our Director of Studies wrote to the author of *Landmarks*, who is the Director of Studies in English at Emmanuel College, to inform him of how his book inspired us to arrange this special day. She received a warm and enthusiastic response.

'It's a thrill to hear of it, and to see nature taken as seriously – but also imaginatively - as this . . . It's a privilege to me to know that my books might indirectly (and partially) lead to properly mind-changing outcomes like this. It keeps me writing.'

## Sunny Weather

The arrival of warmer weather has certainly brought our grounds to life this week. We are fortunate to enjoy a beautifully green site so close to the centre of Cambridge and much has been done in recent years to attract wildlife to our grounds. I was delighted, therefore, when walking Mollie last weekend, to see that two mallards have arrived on the Jubilee Pond. It is too early to say whether this will become their future family home, but we have been keeping a close eye on them during the week, and so far they seem settled and happy, as you can see from the photos. Given the pond's regal name, we have decided to name our new friends Elizabeth and Philip.

This week's sunny weather has opened up the school fields and it has been wonderful to see the children making full use of the green spaces, particularly at break times. The pupils in Late Stay enjoyed their first sandwich tea of the year in Tom's Garden.

LATE STAY PICTURES TO BE UPLOADED

## Geography and SFPA Quiz

It seems like a long time ago, but last Friday St Faith's held two quizzes. Miss Dow put together a beautifully crafted series of questions which entertained and challenged the pupils (and their parents!) for the best part of an hour after school. Latham (pictured below) won the House Geography Quiz and were presented with the coveted glass globe. Later that evening, the Year 1 parents' team (pictured here) won the SFPA Quiz evening, a most convivial event which nobody seemed to take terribly seriously and proved to be a relaxing start to the weekend. Thank you to our hosts, Gavin and Luncinda Howard, and their co-presenter Jimmy Carnegie.

## Life Bus

More serious matters have been addressed by the the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Life Bus over the past two weeks. All classes have taken part in a series of structured lessons based on personal and social matters such as friendships, healthy eating, anger management, safe use of medicines, alcohol, nicotine and illegal drugs. I know that many of you have taken advantage of the sessions aimed at showing parents how the Life Bus works, and am pleased to hear your positive feedback.

## Sudbury Performing Arts Festival

It has been a busy week for our Speech and Drama students who have been performing, and winning awards, at the Sudbury Performing Arts Festival. Many congratulations to everyone who took part, and well done to the place winners: Juliette B and Anna D (3<sup>rd</sup> in duo acting), Isabella B and Lucy B (also 3<sup>rd</sup> in duo acting), Ioanna M (3<sup>rd</sup> in solo acting), Oscar S (3<sup>rd</sup> in solo verse speaking), Mya DE (2<sup>nd</sup> in solo verse speaking), Charlotte B and Lola D (1<sup>st</sup> in duo acting), Lucy H (1<sup>st</sup> in solo acting) and Anna B (1<sup>st</sup> in solo acting).

## Sport Results

The sports teams have also been busy this week. In addition to the regular house and inter-school matches, several teams have competed in county, regional and national finals. Last Friday the U13 netball team finished third in the National Championships, losing to Millfield in the semi-finals. It was a pleasure for me and Jane to watch the girls play so skilfully and confidently against the best U13 teams in the country. The following day the U13 mixed gym team of Izzy Reimann, Guy Nichols and Nina Lane won the Milano Team Trio National Finals at Stoke – a magnificent achievement! On Monday our U11 boys' hockey team played in the

national finals at Repton School and finished in a respectable 12<sup>th</sup> place, so very well done to them. Three of our rugby teams are playing in the national finals at Epsom College on Sunday, so I wish them every success on what should be a great day. Further details of recent sports events are, as usual, in the index.

## OF Hockey Success

Speaking of sport, this week we have heard that Katie C who left the school two years ago, has been selected to play for the England Women's U16 Hockey team. Katie's mother wrote to me saying:

'The superb coaching and encouragement she received at St Faith's started her on her ambitious path. We are all very grateful.. it is an exciting time for her!'

## Granny Huckle

Finally, next week marks the end of the 'Granny Huckle era'; her last day in school is Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Pat started volunteering in the school twenty three years ago when her grandsons were here, and since then she has touched the hearts of our pupils and staff, through her love and care of the children as well as her passion for helping them to learn to read. When asked about the highlights at St Faith's in their practice interviews with me, the Year 8 pupils have often commented on the help and care Granny Huckle gave to them when they were in Years 3 and 4. As I often say to the children, people don't forget receiving acts of kindness. Many of our pupils and alumni will never forget the compassion and support shown to them by Granny Huckle over the years. She will be much missed and we wish her all the best in her 'retirement'.

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell