



From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

The final fortnight of the term has been an opportunity to acknowledge, celebrate and reward a huge range of achievement throughout the school. Prep School and Lower School Prize Giving Ceremonies last week took place against the backdrop of the Prep School Art Exhibition which transformed the sports hall. Our thanks to Mrs Higgs and her colleagues who have been preparing for the display for much of this academic year.

The Prep School ceremony was also an opportunity to say goodbye to Miss Denise Lempriere who is retiring after 33 years of truly dedicated service to the Prep School. Universally popular and respected by pupils and parents alike, Miss Lempriere has been the guiding force behind the prep school for most of the period of its existence. She leaves with our best wishes for a long and enjoyable retirement.

We also say farewell to Mrs Sarah Redman at the end of this term whose conspicuously successful career as Head of the Pre-Prep and Nursery has seen the significant expansion of that section of the school. Her leadership has generated a succession of outstanding inspection reports for the PPN and we will miss her enormously when she moves on to the new challenge of a consultancy role this summer.

Colleagues departing the senior school at the end of this year include Mr Andrew Corstorphine and Miss Louise Lechmere. Both move on to senior roles in other independent schools next autumn and will be greatly missed. Mr Jonathan Chuter will also be departing, with a view to spending more time with his young family, having revived the fortunes of the RS and Philosophy department in the course of the last six years.

Year 7 pupils were amongst the first to visit the all new Leathersellers' Hall in Bishopsgate last week. They had an opportunity to see first-hand the Will of Abraham Colfe, having been welcomed to the Hall by the Master and Wardens. Their day continued with a visit to the Guildhall and the Bank of England Museum where they saw, inter alia, a gold nugget which was worth £400,000- probably more than that post-Brexit.

On the subject of Brexit we were delighted to hear that senior civil servant and Old Colfeian Oliver Robbins had been appointed as Permanent Secretary to lead the new EU unit in the Cabinet Office. This is a highly important role which will support the Cabinet as it considers options for our future relationship outside the EU with Europe and the rest of the world. Oliver will move across from his current role as Second Permanent Secretary at the Home Office. His distinguished career to date was recognized in the Queen's Birthday Honours list last year when he was made a Companion of the Bath for services to national security.

And finally, still on the subject of Brexit, one of our Year 11 pupils was present, in the course of her current work experience, in the room in which Boris Johnson announced last week that he would not be contesting the leadership of the Conservative Party. We remain grateful to all parents and Old Colfeians who continue to offer exciting and rewarding work experience placements.

The wet weather mainly held off for the CCF's (Combined Cadet Force) annual Parade Day last weekend.

We welcomed back former Colfeian Lieutenant Colonel Jo Butterfill MC, Commanding Officer of the First Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers as the day's Reviewing Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Butterfill was both a cadet and an officer in the CCF during his time with us and was extremely impressed with our current cadets. Many thanks to Garry Hooton, Commanding Officer for the first time this year, for the meticulous preparation which preceded the event.

Our cadets will be setting off tomorrow for their DofE Bronze expeditions in the Lenham area in Kent. Later this month, Gold Practice and Gold qualifiers head for Snowdonia. All Colfe's expeditions are carefully planned and supervised by experienced mountain leaders and each team carries a tracking device which enables us to pinpoint their exact location at any point in time.

Literary and cultural highlights of the final weeks of term have included the Senior School House Poetry competition and the House Music competition. I was also delighted to hear that Mr (Joel) Smith has received a total of 30 applications for the Henry Williamson essay competition. Henry Williamson, best known for his best-selling *Tarka The Otter*, is an Old Colfeian who, despite his espousal of fascism in the 1930s, remains one of the most distinguished novelists of the 20th century. His *Chronicle of Ancient Sunshine* sequence of novels is set in and around Lewisham in the early years of the last century.

The Year 6 musical *Alice in Wonderland* was an ambitious project and a wonderfully successful night – thanks to Victoria Welch, Head of Key Stage 2 elect, for her expert direction and to all the parent volunteers who produced the most magnificent set, costumes and makeup on the night. Thanks also to Ruth Hall for the fantastic Pre-prep and Nursery production last week.

It has been another record year for the number of pupils (over 100) taking part in LAMDA exams (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art) with, for the first time, three performance evenings (two senior, one prep) which enabled us to demonstrate the strength and depth of Drama across the school. 50 new joiners have already signed up for lessons in September. Others who wish to enrol should contact Richard Gregg by email: rgregg@colfes.com

The Year 5 debating competition involved more than 10 local schools with entries of the highest quality. Expertly managed by Mr Dunsmore, more than 40 pupils debated the merits of technology, amongst other things, with one of the two Colfe's teams emerging victorious. Congratulations to Ines Robinson and Alfie Bracken.

High profile events of the last two weeks have included the Sixth Form Leavers' Ball held at the Greenwich Yacht Club and a reception in school for the parents of Sixth Form Leavers. Both were enjoyable occasions which gave cause to reflect on what an impressive group of pupils we have had at the top of the school this year. I am particularly grateful to Mr Drury and Mr Foxall for guiding them through the last two years and delighted that they have been the first cohort to occupy the new Stewart Building which has so successfully transformed the physical heart of the school. Looking to the future, I am delighted to report the appointment of Sophia Rosen Fouladi and David Battersby as the new School Captains.

Despite the persistence of the Jet Stream, all three sports days were successfully completed in the closing weeks of term. New school records were set at Sutcliffe Park: Teya Adedeji, U12 girls' discus, Aliyah Robinson, U14 200m, and Benjamin Tynan who set a new record in the 300m. Also in athletics, Denny Ashison, William White, Ronald Aduaye-Odiete, Nia Southworth and Christian Hooper have all been selected to represent Greenwich in the London Schools' Championships. Twenty-four of our talented Prep athletes took part in the senior event. Prior to Sports Day, more than 400 parents and guests had attended the Sports Presentation Evening on the 22nd June which was preceded by a barbecue in the main school quad.

Over 60 girls and boys (Years 7-10) took part in the Greenwich Schools Athletics Championships against schools across the borough. Well done to all those who took part especially the Year 10 boys who won the



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event with gold medals for James Back-Wilkins (100m), Gabriel Foley (800m) Tom Simpson (1500m), Luke Okosieme (High Jump), Ololade Fakoya (Shot Put), Matthew Walker (Javelin). James, Luke, Ololade and Nathaniel St Louis-Mason won the 4x100m relay.

The total raised within the school for charity has now topped the £25K mark for this year, making it one of our most successful years ever. The Leathersellers' Charities Committee have contributed significantly to the total through their match-funding arrangement.

There have been many outstanding individual achievements from across the school community this year and fittingly in the last few weeks these now include:

- Horse Rider Jasmine Shaw (Year 6) won 1st prize in the Dressage Intro B competition at Chelsfield Equestrian Centre on her pony Joey.
- Luca Thurlow in Year 6 who won the Year 7 Runner of the Year Award for his outstanding performances this year. Luca qualified for the World BMX Championships for a third time running this year although he unfortunately broke his leg whilst training in Columbia. We all wish him a speedy recovery.
- Barnaby Marchant (Year 8) won a Bronze Medal in sailing at the London Youth Games - RS Feva Class - represented the London Borough of Bromley and Colfe's.
- Year 5 swimmers, Zachary Kirkman and Jacob Walker who were selected to swim in the London Mini Games held at Crystal Palace representing the boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich respectively.
- Anna Hadingham (Year 7) has been selected to represent London at the British Triathlon Inter-Regional Championships in Glasgow at the beginning of September. Sophia Kirkman (Year 7) was selected as the reserve. The fact that two of our pupils have been selected is particularly impressive because only three children are selected in each age group from across the whole of London.
- Louise Wright (Year 12) who opened the 100 year memorial ceremony (representing the next generation) at the Somme battlefields. Louise took part in the service at the Lochnagar Crater where her great-great-grandfather died at the age of 25 on the 1st July 1916. <http://www.lochnagarcrater.org/>
- Dan Kelly and Arthur Drury (Year 9) who were invited to the Royal Institute of Mathematics for a day of lectures after strong performance in the national Maths Challenge. Dan and Arthur came second in the Institute lunchtime competition out of around 100 teams from schools across the country - both were awarded prizes of Maths books.
- Evan Olding (Year 6) filmed in Camber Sands for the Discovery Science TV series called 'What is Earth'. Evan played a child in the USA who was swallowed by sand.

I look forward to seeing all pupils back in school at the start of next term. Between now and then, pupils and parents should note that access to the school will only be possible through the Upwood Road (Junior School) entrance. This will apply throughout the A level and GCSE results period. The Horn Park Lane entrance and the approach to the senior school will be the subject of major renovation during July and August.

With best wishes to all at the end of a wonderfully successful school year,

Yours sincerely

Richard Russell
Headmaster