



Newlands Newsletter

Autumn 2007

Dear Parents

It hardly seems possible that we are about to begin the countdown to the school's Christmas festivities. As is always the case, the first half of the Autumn term has been exceptionally busy, both inside and outside the classroom. It is good to see so many new children in the school and to report that numbers are still steadily increasing. We now have 222 pupils at the school.

The end of September saw the official opening of the Discovery Garden. The day was a huge success and Tommy Walsh proved to be a larger than life character, fully involving himself with the children and their work. On a dreary, wet afternoon a crowd of over 200 witnessed the event. Many thanks to all involved and in particular to Martin Bulger whose vision and inspiration under-pin the concept of the Discovery Garden.

At the beginning of October the school celebrated Harvest festival with two services - one for the Prep School and the other for the Pre-Prep and Nursery. Both were well attended and we are very grateful for your contributions which have now been sent to St. Patrick's in Hove, who operate a shelter for homeless people.

Jeans for Genes Day coincided with Harvest Festival and, once again, proved to be a great fund-raising event. This year the school raised £150 for research into genetic defects and disorders. A worthy cause and a fantastic effort by the children!

Our Open Day on the last day of term proved to be a magical experience with the appearance of two well-known book characters. Harry Potter and Hagrid (or two people very like them) caused a whirl of excitement, delight and wonder amongst the pupils in the Prep School.

The 'Friends of Newlands' had a very successful Car Boot Fair on Sunday the 7th October. As you may know, the 'Friends' raise funds which provide important improvements to the school. The boot sale raised over £700 and thanks go to all the Friends and helpers for their sterling work on behalf of Newlands.

Music is very much at the heart of what we do at Newlands and the Performing Arts Department put on a splendid evening of 1960's music. The event went with a swing and was enjoyed by all who attended. It also raised £210 for Children In Need. Many thanks to Jane Pendry and the Music teachers for their expertise and direction. We can look forward to other wonderful nights of musical entertainment in the run up to the Christmas break.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity

to congratulate Ms Toni Kingman, Mr Andrew Abaza and Mrs Julie Champion who have all been voted as School Council Representatives. I look forward to working closely with them in the future.

Chris Bridgman
Headmaster



It was once an area of wasteland within the school's 21 acre site. Now, after months of commitment and effort, it is the Discovery Garden. A garden designed by pupils, created by pupils and enjoyed by pupils of all ages throughout the school - and on Friday 28th September it was officially opened by TV personality Tommy Walsh.

Tommy, known for his expertise on the BBC's Ground Force, spent over an hour with a group of pupils, heavily involved in the garden's creation, before taking on the official duty of unveiling a beautifully inscribed monolith that now stands at one end of the garden.

Inspired by Newlands teacher, Martin Bulger, and named after one of Captain James Cook's ships, the Discovery Garden has become a wonderful addition to the school. Martin said: "The inspiration really came after a visit to the famous Eden Project which had left me completely in awe. When I returned to the site after the school holidays, I spoke to the children about the concept of creating our own mini project and was delighted with their enthusiasm."

Under the guidance and watchful eyes of Martin, pupils have, over the last twelve months chosen to spend break-times and activity periods in the garden. Seeds have been nurtured into plants which in turn have created beautiful beds. Herbs and organic vegetables now lie amongst the garden's colours and scents. A wooden seating area designed like a snail - that transforms the area into an outside classroom in fine weather - was also designed and built by the pupils.

The official opening gave over two hundred visitors the opportunity to appreciate the result of many months of creativity and work. The guests, including representatives from the Seaford Horticultural Society and the Seaford Allotments Association, joined parents



The Opening of the Discovery Garden



and pupils as they wandered past the wildlife pond (still a work in progress), marvelling at the Autumn colours on display.

The flowerpot pyramid that overlooks the pond received many admiring glances as did the snail seating and the large pumpkins in the raised vegetable plot. Tommy's particular favourite feature was a table that was designed and built to look like the huge open flowerhead of a Michaelmas daisy.

The plans for the future of the garden go on and on. A waterfall, bridge, pergola, folly and drama stage are just a few of the ideas in the pipeline.

The garden has become many things for many people. In fine weather it is not uncommon to find the younger pupils enjoying stories in the garden. Older pupils have used the setting for creativity in English and Art.

Children that once had little or no interest in gardening are choosing to spend their activities and break times outside - seeding, planting, designing and building - generally enjoying everything a beautiful garden can bring.

Speaking about the Discovery Garden and the pupils, Tommy said: "It is so refreshing to see children so enthusiastic. They have taken great pride showing me around and talking about their vision for the future. In a time when children so often have interests that lean towards computers and non-active hobbies, the Discovery Garden opens up new horizons for many of them."

Speaking at the end of the event, Headmaster, Chris Bridgman said: "The result of months of hard work



has culminated into a wonderful area for all to enjoy. It would not have been the success it is without the leadership of Martin, the energy of the children, the support of the school's maintenance team and the generosity of parents, including Mark Tilley, who was kind enough to donate the inscribed monolith."

1960s Evening

The first concert of the new school year was a real cracker! Performed on the last Thursday of the first half of term, the pupils and students gave the audience a 'fab' evening of music from the 1960s, all launched by Lauren Troak's wonderful performance of 'Welcome to the 60s' (from Hairspray) complete with funky dancing from Aimee, Laura, Rachel and Georgia. The Pre-Prep children performed some guitar ensemble pieces, and Faye Robinson sang a beautiful 'Ride on Rainbow'. Emily Pearce performed her debut as a soloist with 'Castle on a Cloud', and there was also another first-time performance from Tom Scotcher on guitar performing an extremely touching version of 'Tears in Heaven' with Pip Hersee. Alfie Dyer was an amazing drummer for the evening, making everything go with a real 60s swing!

One of the delights of the evening was seeing how far some of seniors have come - Seb, Alice, Pip, David, Beth, James, to name but a few - in growing into such accomplished and assured performers.



Both halves of the show were brought to a rousing finale by the Performing Arts Singers, under their new director Alex Diepold, singing a Beatles Medley and 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough'. Next stop Wembley.?
Jane Pendry

A Magical Day

Friday 19th October became a magical day for pupils in the Prep School when they were joined by none other than Harry Potter and Hagrid (or two people very much like them).

The characters joined the school for the day to officially welcome Open Day visitors and to spend time with pupils in Reception to Year 8. The visit, which coincided with Book Week, allowed Harry and Hagrid time to view some of the work that had been produced

earlier in the week. The imagination of pupils had competed with that of J. K. Rowling in their creation of spells during English lessons and of wands during Design and Technology. Speaking after Harry and Hagrid's day at the school, Form Teacher Yvonne Miller said: "The characters were larger than life and created a real sense of magic around the school. It was so lovely to see the children's reactions to the pair, who quite simply brought the books of Harry Potter to life."

Creative Writing Awards

Shortly before the half term break, two Year 9 English classes gathered in St Wilfrid's to celebrate their achievements in a creative writing project. The Headmaster presented book prizes to four students whose quality of work and effort had stood out: Rachel Bonnici, Anya Reade, Aaron Austin-Locke and Henrietta Barton.

Their English teacher, Rowena Carr said "All of the students had put so much effort into their five week project on 'Islands' and many received commendations from the Headmaster."

"The creative writing project gave us the opportunity to reward the excellent work produced by students" added English Teacher Chrissy Smith.

