

Brymore

experience to last a lifetime



Newsletter

July 2013

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Message from Mark Thomas - Headteacher

"Much education today is monumentally ineffective. All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants."

John W. Gardner

With its reference to plants and flowers, it is clear this quote resonates with what we try to achieve at Brymore. The boys may be able to pick flowers for Mother's Day, harvest vegetables or produce apple juice, but only because they have helped grow the plants in the first place. However, I believe the words of John W. Gardner accurately describe the full Brymore experience. In order to produce fully rounded, educated young men we believe you learn by doing rather than simply being told and that building foundations through hard work, is how success is ultimately achieved. This term has seen countless examples of that. On Open Day the whole school worked together culminating in record takings, visitor numbers and future student enquiries. It was clear for all to see the manners, respect and hard work shown by the boys of Brymore. Year 11 are on course to achieve an exceptional set of results, with ICT, agriculture and horticulture already reporting record figures. The feedback from employers following Year 10 work experience has been extremely positive and the sheer commitment shown by all boys at the swimming gala was clear for all to see.

I strongly believe that it is the full Brymore experience that makes the difference to so many boys. Many achieve results that they would never have achieved elsewhere which then opens doors that would have been otherwise firmly closed. Once through the doors, I also believe boys are then well equipped to make the most of the opportunities presented to them through the appreciation of hard work, the ability to work with others, show manners and dignity and the acceptance that you have to make things happen in life.

Those of you who attended the swimming gala will know that it is this collective will and determination from the boys, parents, staff, old boys, governors and friends that has led to the Minister for Schools (David Laws) visiting the school, the Secretary of State (Michael Gove) requesting more information due to the 'overwhelming level of correspondence received relating to Brymore' and the Prime Minister mentioning the school in a speech recently. Not bad for a small, specialist secondary school in Somerset. More details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, but I would like to put on record my thanks to everyone who has supported us which has quite simply helped secure the future of the school.

I would like to wish everyone a relaxing summer break, although I know for many the hard work continues!

Open Day 2013

We were delighted to welcome the return of the sunshine in time for Open Day this year and with no contingencies needed for potential muddy fields the day went swimmingly.

As people arrived in droves (and superbly car parked by Mr Oliver and his team of boys) the events in the main field kicked off with the preliminary stock-showing rounds run by the farm, but especially Mr Bryant, and the formal presentation of the placings of the boys on show with their cows. A huge attraction last year was Freddie Parker and her duck herding collie dogs who returned for another successful couple of rounds in the ring, along with the dog agility team from Heavens Gate dog sanctuary. One of the highlights of the day was the grand parade of cattle with the boys and Mr Kingston showing their handling skills around the ring and talking to the crowd about this. The workshops were a hive of activity with boys giving practical demonstrations of metalwork, woodwork and showing their excellent pieces created this year. The forge was also busy with Brymore boys showcasing their skills. The day was completed in the ring with the tug-of-war contest with Walker House proving victorious!



The teaching block was opened giving people the opportunity to see the work of the boys across the curriculum and the many resources used in lessons. Room 2 was the base for ICT and Maths, Room 3 for English, History and Learning Support, Room 5 for static displays of Agri and Horti and many science experiments were underway in Room 6.

The farm, as always, did a fantastic job of getting the boys ready for stock-showing in the weeks building up to the day along with using their resources to show off what a great facility we have with everything from hatching chicks to a milking demonstration.

The gardens looked spectacular as ever and the Horticultural department ran the Brymore Flower Show with entries from boys, staff and students at local schools. The walled gardens provided a chance for the public to see the plots and many of the boys proudly sold produce that they had grown and picked that day. With the Brymore Young Farmers Club putting on a medieval slot machine game and the Old Brymorsians hosting the annual raffle it really proved to be a day for everyone.

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Academy Conversion Update

We have recently been informed that the Secretary of State has agreed in principle for Brymore School to become a sponsored Academy. It is hoped that this will be confirmed on 14 August 2013 where the sponsors and myself have to present the final documents to the DfE outlining the future plans. Brymore has faced an uncertain few years, where reduced funding from government and falling boarding numbers (although much less than many other state boarding schools) has threatened its very existence. I have tried where possible to be open with parents, but at the same time not wishing to create any undue worry. Over the past few months much of my time has been spent working with others to put a five year financial plan together, to convince the DfE that we are worth backing. This has mainly focussed around raising student numbers through increasing our age range to include Year 7 and 8 boys. I am pleased to say Lord Nash recently agreed a funding package, which along with support from the Local Authority, secured around £1.4 million over the next three years. This will allow us to meet the financial projections in the five year plan and quite simply continue to offer the boys the experience they deserve, without the need to compromise on class sizes, facilities or staffing levels. This is why working with Bridgwater College has been, and will continue to be, so important. Much of the work to secure the funding has been a joint effort and the opportunities to make efficiency savings in the future are obvious. What has also made a difference is the efforts of parents and 'Old Boys' in supporting Brymore through our land based campaign. This came at exactly the time our profile needed raising and the right people were certainly made aware of the benefits of Brymore. I am sure that by working with the college, our future is not only secure but our reputation can only continue to grow.

The consultation documentation is on our website and everyone is free to complete the online questionnaire. Key information includes:

1. Brymore will be known as Brymore Academy, however as we have done over the past few years the word 'Academy' will be dropped from all publicity material much as 'school' has been dropped in the past. All of our current letter heads, signage, adverts etc simply refer to Brymore and will continue to do so. All literature will also refer to the fact that we are an Academy sponsored by Bridgwater College.
2. Class sizes will continue to be around 15-23 with no planned increase.
3. The curriculum will continue to focus on land based and a practical education, although with greater choice.
4. The planned increase in fees will remain in line with inflation. A further increase may be necessary; however this is something we will do everything we can to avoid.
5. We are not yet able to confirm whether we can take Year 8 in 2014, or whether admission will be for Years 7 and 9 only for that year.

Curriculum Changes/Art

As you are no doubt aware the retirement of Mt Fitzsimons has left us without an art teacher, as we were unable to fill the vacancy. This has resulted in Year 11 students being offered the chance to continue with art (taught by Mr Oliver and supported by Mrs Austin) or GCSE PE, taught by Mr Williams. Year 10 are able to choose between GCSE PE and a BTEC in Engineering. Year 9 will pick up an extra hour of Design & Technology and maths instead of art for next year. It is hoped we can re-introduce art for September 2014 and I am hoping to secure the services of a part time art teacher who may be able to assist Mr Oliver with Year 11 and offer GCSE art as an after school option to Year 10. I will update parents once details are finalised.

Staffing News

We would like to say 'Goodbye and Thank You' to the following staff who are leaving this year:

Mr Baker, Mrs Bastin, Mrs Bindon, Ms Childs, Mr Edmunds, Mr Fitzsimons, Mrs Gemal, Mrs Godfrey, Mrs Lee, Mr Lyddon, Mrs Mudge, Mrs Reid and Mrs Scowcroft.

We are looking forward to welcoming the following staff for September:

Mr Bagshaw - Houseparent, Reid House; Mrs Chubb - Finance Manager; Mrs Jennings - Head of ICT; Mr Williams - PE and Mathematics and Mr Mahon - Groundsperson.

Poetry Competition (Mrs Mudge and Miss Bradford)

This past term we have been encouraging boys to enter the poetry competition and had a good number of poems given in. The overall winner was Will Hartland-Robbins with 2nd place going to Cameron Wallace and a Highly Commended to a boy who wishes to be kept anonymous. The winning poems are featured below.

Will Hartland-Robbins

I soar away into speed's breeze
The engine's power
Between my knees
The throttle trembles in my hand
At my control
At my command
In the droning rumble
of the motor's sound
my problems, troubles
and cares are drowned
Nothing keeps
From the sky
And I can ride
Where eagles fly!
I dig my heels
Into the pegs
Tune every muscle
'til my legs are synchronized
With my machine
To feel the curves
And with it lean,
To live the thrills
Of sudden hills
The heart-quickenning
Panic of would be spills
Don't call me back
To earth again
Where I must race
With other bikers

Cameron Wallace

I was once a boy
Not a popular boy
The boy who was picked on, in the corner of the classroom
I now turn 16 still no friends
But then I heard of the war, the Great War the one that would change the world
I went to sign up but they said I was too young
I went and tried again, and again
I got my place
I left never to be seen again
It was a long journey to France, a journey to be taken once
Taking the morning duty all to be seen was the sun slowly creeping over the horizon with a stunning display
It had been days since the last attack, but still I took that sunset as my last and I am glad I did
BANG!! It had started again
It was our turn to go over the top, knowing I wasn't going to come back
Go, go, go! Was all I heard
BANG!! I was down I had been hit
It had not killed me; I was there for days waiting for someone to find me
They never did, all I know is the song of the bird when I couldn't hold on
It's cold down here under the ground. Remember when you see that seed fall off poppy's it could be me there and remember you could change the world
I know I did.

Grandma (Anon)

You made me laugh
You made me cry
I never got to say goodbye
If you were here
I'd whisper in your ear
Stay with me year by year



Bag 2 School collection

After the success of the last Bag 2 School collection of unwanted clothes, shoes bags and other similar items we shall be holding another collection after the summer with the final date on the Monday after half term (4 November 2013). We shall be sending bags home to be filled but if you can fill more then please contact the school office nearer the time to receive more bags.

Farm Update

Open Day was the main event during this half term and what a wonderful day it was! Yet again the boys rose to the challenge of preparing their animals for the cattle show and provided a wonderful spectacle in the main ring. Harry Hanse won first place in the Dairy Heifer Class, Will Hartland-Robbins was first in the Junior Beef Class, Ben Harris came first in the Senior Beef Class and the Dairy Class was won by Will Sully with his calf Blissful. Will was crowned Supreme Champion and Reserve Champion was won by John Coaker with his dairy cow Briar. We would like to thank Mr White for judging this competition.



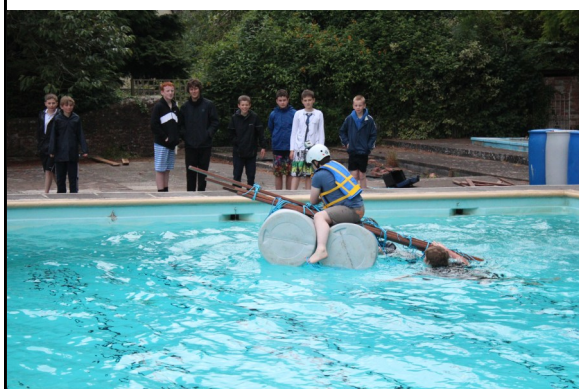
We have successfully managed to find retirement homes for 10 hens and we are expecting 50 new point of lay pullets to be delivered soon, they should come into lay during the holidays ready to supply eggs in the Autumn term.



Adrian reluctantly underwent a hoof trimming along with our other cows and we have recently delivered two of his Beef Shorthorn X calves. Adrian was also one of the stars of the show when BBC Somerset radio paid us a visit and enamoured the presenter, Emma Britton. In addition, the vet has undertaken a pregnancy diagnosis and we know that five more heifers are expecting, as well as having four sows that are pregnant, due in September.

Induction for new Year 9s (Mr Oliver)

On 14 June 2013 we welcomed our new intake of Year 9s for their induction programme. The boys and their parents were given a welcome by the Head before the boys waved a fond farewell to their families to partake in activities. Along with some important testing the boys got to experience a small slice of the Brymore life that they will be leading from September including raft building in the pool, a walk around Chads and games on the field. In addition this induction allowed them to meet teachers, boarding staff and make friends before their arrival after the summer.



Spelling Bee (Mrs Mudge)

The Spelling Bee was held on the last Tuesday evening of term. The first round was won by Silas Lawson for Walker House. He then pitted his wits against last year's winner, Charlie Coleman. Charlie won yet again! Who is going to beat him?

Many thanks to Mrs Drakeford, Chair of the Governors, for presenting the prizes.

Senior Student Leadership Team

We have now appointed our Senior Student Leadership Team made up of Head Boy, Deputy Head Boy and Senior Prefects with Prefects also having been appointed this term.

After a rigorous process involving interviews, presentations and voting the outcome was tight but Head Boy has been awarded to Charlie Coleman with Adam Warren being appointed as Deputy Head Boy and Tod Purcell as Lead Senior Prefect. Senior Prefects are as follows:

Huw Edwards, Joe Odhams, Sam Reasons, Will Waind, Richard Warwick and Jack Wilkins.

The Prefect team are made up of the following boys:

Will Chubb, Tim Coombes, Jack Foale, Ben Harris, Pierce Lawlor, Henry Mattocks, James Nurton, Henry Phillips, Richard Rook, Marcus Slee, Tom Vining and Bradley Williams.

Congratulations to all these boys and we hope you wear your badge with pride.

BBC Radio Somerset

Just over a week before Open Day we had the great pleasure of hosting BBC Somerset Radio who were broadcasting live from the school for the Emma Britton show. The boys were interviewed on various aspects of the school including their plots in the Walled Garden, holter training on the farm, race-walking and tractor driving. Mr Thomas and Mr Kingston were also featured and they even did a feature from our early morning milking. The boys did amazingly well when talking live on the radio and everyone really enjoyed the experience.



Learning with a difference

With the lovely weather we have experienced recently our imaginative and engaging teachers have been taking their lessons outdoors! Even the classroom based subjects like Maths and English have taken to doing some outdoor learning, it certainly is a sight seeing Macbeth being performed near the gardens.



PRIZE LIST - Years 9 and 10

AWARD	REASON	WINNER
Victor Ludorum	Excellent effort in Rugby and Athletics	Richard Warwick
Apatu Shield	Team award	Year 11 Rugby Team for performances during the rugby season
Governors' Award		Adam Warren
Philip Prince Cup	Dedicated effort - Year 9	Daniel Holter-Hovind
Growers Cup	Work on individual plot	Silas Lawson
TE Awamutu award	Junior rugby	Toby Bull
Martyn Knox Trophy	Martyn Knox Trophy	Charlie Coleman (81)
535 American Veterans Award	535 American Veterans Award	Richard Warwick

Academic Awards Years 9 or 10

AWARD	WINNER
Agriculture	Lewis Dunn
Art	Toby Bull, Charlie Herbert, Elliott Milne
Design & Technology	Year 9 - Cameron Wallace Year 10 - Bradley Williams
English	Year 9 - Steven Izzard Year 10 - Samuel Gee
History	Year 9 - Bertie Mountford Year 10 - Jack Wilkins
Horticulture	Henry Phillips
IT	Timothy Coombes, Samuel Perrett
Mathematics	Taylor Weatherby
PE	George Watts
Religious Education	William Sully
Science	Christopher Harris

Year 9 & 10 Commendation Certificates

Agriculture - Academic & practical Tim Coombes, Liam Gammon, William Waind, Ben Williams

Highly Commended Plot John Coaker, John Jenkins, William Loftus, William Rhodes, Cameron Wallace, Jack Wilkins

Commended Work on Plot Johnathon Churches, Elliott Reed, Archie Rich, William Sully, Jack.Turner, Harry Warren

Activities Week

During the last week of the summer term we created a timetable of fulfilling and enthralling activities for the boys to partake in. There was a slight change this year in that both Years 9 and 10 went to London, with the Year 10 visiting the Tower of London and Year 9 took a trip to Hampton Court. In addition both groups experienced paintballing in Cannington and returned having loved the chance to do this but also with minor bruising from the paint pellets.

Year 10s had the opportunity to take part in a Duke of Edinburgh award expedition and spent the best part of two days walking with an overnight camp on the Quantocks.

Year 9s spent a whole day on the Quantock Hills undertaking a challenge along with team building and raft building exercises later in the week. Both year groups also undertook swimming trials ahead of the last event of the year - the swimming gala.



Sports News (Mr Spridgens)

Despite the hot weather towards the end of term the number of boys running Chads remained reasonably high. Six boys reached 60 to be awarded with the 'slap-up' meal in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the School. Charlie Coleman ended up with over 80 Chads Hill runs. The further highlight was the appearance of Mr Fitzsimons who has recently achieved his starter certificate for 10 Chads Hill runs.

Towards the end of term the temperature of the pool passed 80°F for the first time in over 20 years. However, in spite of this the sponsored swim was not held due to the very poor weather earlier in the term. This will hopefully be held in September 2013 or held over to next year.

Throughout the athletics season a small but enthusiastic group of boys travelled far and wide including Exeter and Cheltenham for athletics meetings, ably led by Richard Warwick supported by Jack Wilkins, they achieved numerous personal bests over a wide range of athletic events.

Zac Welsh and Elliott Reed were chosen to represent Somerset in the South West Championships in June. Charlie Coleman, Adam Warren and George Watts were busy maintaining the strong tradition of hammer throwing at Brymore. Toby Bull and Bertie Mountford were showing good potential at a range of athletic activities.

In spite of the recent spell of good weather it is still proving difficult to get boys out of their dormitories in the evenings, either to participate in organised activities on the field for example athletics or even just fun activities such as knock about cricket and football. As previously reported, it would be appreciated if day boys could be more involved in after school activities especially on the sporting front. Those day boys that are committed get a great deal of benefit out of representing their school and tutor groups in various competitions.



Horticulture (Mr Wilcocks)

Many thanks to the whole team who made the grounds and flower beds look so good for the end of term. Also a huge thank you to all our customers who helped us raise a good amount of money from the plant and veg sales at Open Day and this has already been reinvested into the department. I also cannot forget to thank the boys that helped out within the Horticulture department on Open Day, they did a fantastic job in promoting what we do and what we had on offer. We still have some hanging baskets available now and in addition winter hanging baskets can be ordered for the autumn through Mrs Stanley.

The HoDs are well into their role and doing an excellent job within the department. We are looking forward to welcoming the new Year 9's so that the boys can show them what the garden duties involve.

We have been pleased to receive pots from a number of people and we are always grateful to receive pots, in particular the larger (1-2 litre) sizes. We are creating a wild flower meadow during the autumn in a section of the walled garden where we hope we can install 'bee hotels' and bird boxes.

In terms of the workwear required on the garden please can boys ensure they have overalls (if short sleeved these must be properly sewn and not ripped) and steel toe capped wellingtons or work boots. We require boys to wear work clothes under their overalls and not their school uniform.

Equipment (Miss Rundle)

Boys should be coming to all lessons with the necessary equipment including a pen, pencil, calculator and a ruler. Should any boys not have these items then they can be purchased from Miss Rundle at any point when she is in school.

LRC (Miss Bradford)

Senior Library Assistant Charlie Coleman and I interviewed and appointed 11 Year 9 boys who wished to become library assistants in Year 10. They will receive training in issuing & returning items and more importantly returning books to the shelves in the correct places!

The previously loved book sale on Open Day raised over £120 which will go towards purchasing new novels for the LRC. A great BIG thank you to Mrs Mudge, Miss Scott-Ison and the boys who helped on the stall.



FOBSA (Jackie White)

Thank you to every parent, carer or friend that made cakes for Open Day or helped in some way, whether that be donating money, burgers, cakes or some time. We had a great day and raised lots of money!

Friends of Brymore School Association is formed of parents and friends (old and new) as a way of helping to raise extra funds for the boys. We put on events like bingo nights and also provide tea, cake and other refreshments on special days like Cross Country and Open Day. On Saturday 19 October 2013 we will hold our AGM in the Pavilion (on the main field) immediately after the Cross Country has finished. It will not take long and we'd love it if you could come as a new committee as new parents are needed.

As we move onto another academic year and the Year 11s leave we definitely need some more parents to help and not only are we helping the school but often new friendships are formed, so if you can spend even an hour helping then please contact the Chair of FOBSA - Jackie White on 01823 672817 or email topside@tiscali.co.uk

House Award

The swimming gala rounded off the last day of the summer term and we had a glorious day in which to celebrate the boys achievements this year. With Galsworthy the overall swimming champions it was left to a tight finish to see which house won the FOBSA Shield for the year, and in the end Walker proved victorious.

Brymore Young Farmers Club (Miss Bradford)

We finished the year with a visit to Burnham on Sea for a talk by BARB on the use of the hovercrafts for mud rescues, we then watched the Coast Guard practice a deep water rescue from the end of the jetty and finished our evening with a bag of chips.

The following week Richard Kellan from Highcroft Veterinary Group gave a very interesting talk on a busy vets practice with an animal hospital attached, Richard explained about the types of operations performed and that on occasions a vet from Italy who is a specialist was flown over.

The final session was a most enjoyable barbeque held at Wendy Welland's farm in Brean, after a tour of the farm buildings and stable area, there was a game of 'man hunt' on the dunes a drive around the perimeter of the farm and then the barbecue. A big thank you to Wendy and John for giving up their time and garden.



Charlie Herbert & Bertie Mountford, current Year 9's, spoke to the new Year 9's about joining the Club in September and have also volunteered to speak to the whole school at the beginning of term to reinforce the information.

Exam Results

We would like to wish all of our Year 11s "good luck" for exam results day on 22 August. Additionally this message also goes to those Year 10s who took exams this year too.

Brymore Lottery

The winners for the lottery this half term are:

£40.00	Mr M Roach
£25.00	Mr T O'Sullivan
£15.00	Mr F Tucker

Should you wish to join the lottery system then please contact the School Office for a form.

Important Dates for your Diary for Autumn Term 2013

Monday 9 September	From 4.00 pm New intake arrive 5.00 pm Greeting by Headteacher in the School Hall 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm Existing boarders arrive 8.30 pm - 9.00 pm Year 9 out-boarders depart
Tuesday 10 September	8.30 am Out-boarders return
Saturday 14 September	5.30 pm Hog Roast for Year 9 and their parents (Adults £5.00/Child £2.50)
Saturday 19 October	10.30 am Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church, Cannington 11.30 am Cross Country / FOBSA AGM (in pavilion) 4.00 pm Students Depart
Monday 4 November	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm Boarders return
Tuesday 5 November	8.30 am Out-boarders return
Saturday 14 December	11.00 am Christmas Carol Service, St Mary's Church, Cannington Students depart at 12 noon

Newsletter/Parent Bulletin

We currently post out the newsletter at the end of every half term to all parents and carers and the Parent Bulletin weekly to those who we believe not to have internet access. We have reviewed this procedure and have decided to try to reduce the amount of paper being printed/postage costs. Therefore, from September 2013 we will continue to put the newsletter on the website and families of all boys can view it this way, however, should you wish to receive the newsletter in other formats and we do not have your current details then please select one of the options below:

Email

Print to collect from office

Print and posted to home

Student name: _____

Name and address (if posted): _____

Name and email (if emailed): _____
