

# Brymore

experience to last a lifetime



## Newsletter December 2013

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### Message from the Headteacher - Mr Mark Thomas

Those of you who managed to squeeze into the church for our Christmas Carol Service will know that the theme this year was 'Christmas presents or Christmas presence.' I am sure this struck a chord with many of you, especially those whose sons are boarders who live a long way from Brymore. Christmas is very much a time to spend with the family, and I hope all parents are reading this having had the opportunity to catch up with their son again. Of course many of the boys are returning home to work, others such as the Year 12's have yet to finish whilst some are in Italy on the school ski trip. There are staff also who will continue to work over Christmas. However I hope everyone manages to spend some time with their family over the festive period.

I often talk about Brymore having to move with the times yet I am determined to keep the traditional values and ethos that I feel are so important in today's world. One such development is our increasing use of Facebook to publish photos, videos and stories about recent events which also gives the opportunity for others, including parents, to comment and feel part of the school community. I would encourage all of you to keep up to date by viewing our Facebook page regularly, which can be accessed by simply clicking on the icon at the bottom of every page on our website. Do not worry if you are, like me, not a Facebook user, you can still view all of the stories, photos and comments. I would like to thank all of you who contribute regularly, with Mr Truebody's record breaking double Chads proving especially popular recently. Spend a few minutes scrolling back through 'time' and it is clear to see the diverse range of activities, and the huge range of opportunities that have been made available to the boys over the past year.

We endeavour to keep the website, Facebook and Twitter as up to date as possible, however often things move so quickly we need to be able to communicate with parents almost immediately. With this in mind I would be grateful if parents could ensure that we have an up to date mobile number and e-mail address so that we can contact them quickly. If you are happy for e-mail to be the primary method of communication (including things such as this newsletter) then please let us know also.

On a similar note we are having extensive ICT work carried out throughout the Christmas period which means our ICT facilities and telephone lines will be affected. Therefore, the office will be closed between 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 and 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2014 and I apologise for any inconvenience caused.

I hope you all have a merry and restful family Christmas and a successful 2014.

### **Blood Brothers trip**

On Wednesday 28 November, Mrs Taylor-Lane, Mrs Austin, Mr Simmons, Miss Scott-Ison and Mrs Davis had the pleasure of taking Year 10 to the Princess Theatre in Torquay to watch the production of Russell's 'Blood Brothers'. This was a thoroughly enjoyable day that really brought the play to life for the boys and undoubtedly supported their preparation for GCSE.

### **Armistice Day**

In order to allow both boys and staff to pay their respects to those who have given their lives in battle, the school held a moving service on 11 November at 11.00 am. With members of the school community lined up along the top of the drive we held a two minute silence after the last post had played and this was then followed by the Head Boy and Deputy Head Boy laying wreaths followed by representatives from the Old Brymorsians Association.



### **House Improvement Team (Miss Gardner)**

The house improvement team (HIT) have produced a new catalogue of clothing items, including Summer and Winter hats, along with new sized kitbags. The items will all include the Brymore logo and have the option of having nicknames, slogans and initials on different items. All profits made go back into improving the boarding houses. This half term we have made approximately £220 which has paid for eight wall art canvases for School House, five for Kemp House and five for Reid House. These clothing items are open to staff, pupils and parents or anybody who would like to buy them and support the school. There has even been interest from an old Brymore student who now lives in New Zealand!

If you would like more information or a copy of the Brymore clothing catalogue please email Miss Gardner [LGardner1@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LGardner1@educ.somerset.gov.uk) who will be happy to help.

### **Mentoring Week (Mrs Anstice)**

On our first week back after half term, we held our inaugural Mentoring Week in school. During this week, each boy had a meeting with his mentor to review academic progress as well as pastoral issues. We felt that this was a really positive step for all the boys and targets were agreed between the boys and their mentors which were then communicated to parents. We will be continuing to have a Mentoring week every half term and will keep parents updated with their boys targets throughout the year.

### **The Run up to Christmas (Mr Watts)**

For a term that can traditionally be seen as the long run up to the festive season, this term has passed surprisingly quickly. The nights have drawn in and the weather has started to turn, but this has done little to dampen the speed at which the boys rush from place to place, keeping themselves busy with the extra-curricular program and increased workload at this time of year. Houses have been joining in the festive spirit and thinking of others within the community by promoting the 'Smiles for Christmas' campaign, whilst donating gifts and building their house hamper. The House Improvement Team (HIT) have been developing a range of Brymore clothing which is now presented in the school's very first catalogue, with all profits from the sales being reinvested back into the boys boarding provisions. Boys from all three houses have been involved in the continued refurbishment of their houses, selecting a range of new picture canvases, pool table cloths and furniture to be ordered over the Christmas holidays. The new Year 9s are beginning to find their feet and settle into Brymore life, whilst the Year 11s will return after the holidays with a matter of months until their exams, planning for the future.

We have just finished a very busy final week of term which included Christmas meals, the staff v pupils football match, Christmas parties and a carol service to finish.....both pupils and staff will deserve a well-earned break after this busy term.

### **Presents from Santa (Miss Rundle)**

When all the boys are writing their Christmas lists to Santa please could they request pencils, pens, pencil case and other similar items that they need to undertake lessons to the best of their ability. Should Santa not be able to provide these items in their stockings then they can be purchased from Miss Rundle during the school day. Thank you.

### **LRC (Miss Bradford)**

Please could all parents/guardians check that their son does not have any school library books tucked away at home. Five Year 10 Library assistants have been appointed and alongside them, two very keen Year 9s.

### **War Memorial Planting**

Brymore boys, along with the Horticulture department, have been working with the Cannington Parish Council to plant up troughs at the village War Memorial.

Year 10 boys were given the opportunity to help with the local community by ensuring that the area was free of weeds, dug over and then replanted much to the delight of the villagers involved.



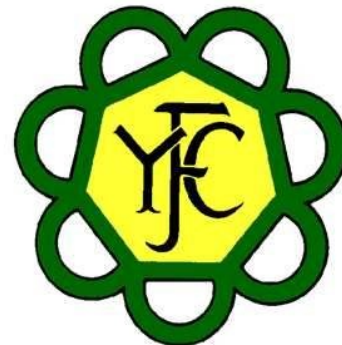
### **Brymore Young Farmers Club (Miss Bradford)**

We have been very lucky with guest speakers this half term, including two favourites: Bee Keeping with Mr Edwards, Falconry with Mr Buller and two new subjects. Kverneland gave a most interesting talk with a PowerPoint and we had a quiz from Mr Vickery, in addition to Pizza making with Mr Oliver.

Mrs Whyte made a second appearance for the term with felting soap for those boys (and me) that didn't get a chance to have a go during her first visit.

Several boys joined me in attending the AGM of the Somerset Young Farmers, where Charlie Coleman proposed and Bertie Mountford seconded Mrs Wendy Welland to be voted in as Deputy President for the forthcoming year. Wendy, having run the Brymore YFC for a number of years, was touched that it was Brymore boys who had proposed and seconded.

Mr Mahon and I took four members to the Somerset Young Farmers Carol Service that was held at Weston-zoyland Church on 8 December 2013.



### **Message from Matron**

Boys will not be allowed to play hockey or rugby without the sufficient protective equipment such as gum shields and shin pads. Please can you ensure all boys have these for their chosen sports.

### **Poppy Appeal**

We were delighted to have raised £108.25 with our poppy appeal sales in November. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this.



### **Online Rugby Qualification (Mr Williams)**

IRB Passport is your gateway to the training and education web sites provided by the International Rugby Board. Registering for an IRB Passport gets you access to online accreditation on a range of topics from Law education to physical preparation. It is completed totally online and it allows you to print a certificate on completion with the following courses available: law of the rugby game, strength & conditioning, keep rugby on-side, player welfare, rugby ready, keep rugby clean, officiating and coaching.

This is open to everyone. However, everyone undertaking GCSE PE is encouraged to do this.

The website for registration and completion is: [www.irbpassport.com](http://www.irbpassport.com)

## Horticulture (Mr Willcocks)

A very fruitful Autumn led to the pressing of a lot of apples and the production of apple juice and cider- we do not yet know what the cider will be like but we can hear it bubbling away!

The boys have been involved with community projects (planting tubs at the local War Memorial and bulbs along the roadside of Cannington) and some have attended the Cannington Centre at Bridgwater College for work experience through the Horticulture department.

Production of cuttings and seedlings continues and the Walled Garden has been dug over, mulched and prepared for the Spring crop. Broad Beans and carrots have been planted and the boys have been working on their own plots but the excitement of the Year 11 groups being allowed to use the compact tractor has reached fever pitch!

We always have shrubs and perennials for sale and also bowls of bulbs and house plants - contact the department to arrange a visit to see what is available. We advise you do not redo your garden until you have checked with us first, the plants we have available. We do have shrubs, herbs and soft fruit trees at very competitive prices. Why not bring your neighbours, friends or relatives along to choose something too!

One final thing from this department, please can you ensure that all boys have enough warm clothes, steel toe capped boots and overalls as we continue the practical lessons regardless of the weather.

## Theme nights

Mr Bagshaw and Mrs Saunders are working together to set up theme nights throughout the year and this began with our first; American Night on Thanksgiving. The boys really enjoyed the evening which saw them being served up American style food and milkshakes and culminated in a quiz. Other nights planned are Chinese New Year, St Patricks Day and Pancake Day with more being thought up throughout the year.



## Activities (Mr Coll)

As an addition to next term's usual activities we have an Olympic pistol shooting coach who will be coming in to teach this sport to the boys over a six week period. It is an exciting addition to our current offering and maybe we can produce some future Olympians out of it!

## Sports Report (Mr Spridgens)

### Rugby

#### Year 11

At the time of writing, 28 Year 11 boys are members of the Senior School Rugby Squad. They are supported in several sessions a week by a number of Year 12 boys. Three matches were cancelled by the opposition at short notice because they were unable to raise a team. However, the team have soldiered on and recently found themselves up against Sidcot XV which contained 11 boys Year 12 and over. Although they lost this fixture it prepared them for the most important game this season against Bridgwater College Academy. BCA were last year's area champions. Brymore had to beat them convincingly to make the final of the Sedgemoor league. Producing some of the best rugby seen in Mr Thomas' time at the school they managed to beat them 36-5 and therefore qualified for the final which will be held next term.

#### Year 10

Under the watchful eye of Mr Williams the Year 10s are making slow but steady progress. Although they have lost all their matches they are certainly showing true Brymore spirit.

#### Year 9

The Year 9s won their first game of the season against a very weak Robert Blake Science College. However, since that match they have lost every game. Although they are showing very good potential their commitment to the extra fitness activities that are needed to improve them could be improved.

To the parents of boys who do not play rugby

The School are trying to run a Hockey XI at the moment but many boys who opt out of playing rugby have also opted out of being involved in this sport. Mr Williams, during the week and Mr Winter on Saturday afternoons, are giving up valuable time for those who wish to participate in the school hockey team. It would help if parents of boys not involved with rugby could encourage their sons to participate in hockey on a more regular basis.

### Fitness

The numbers attending the evening fitness sessions remain high. Unfortunately, many out-boarders in Year 11 in particular are opting out.

### Chads Hill

The Chads Hill run still remains a very popular activity. Most boys are on their way to receiving their starters award for running 10 Chads Hill. Many staff now participate in this activity with recent personal bests being achieved by Mrs Hill and Miss Miller. Recently the gap student, Mr Truebody ran one of the fastest times ever recorded in 17 minutes 13 seconds, moving just in front of Mr Spridgens on the 'all-time list'. He followed this up by setting the School record for Double Chads, which had stood for over 20 years. Mr Truebody completed the double run in 36 minutes and 2 seconds - a truly inspirational feat!

### GCSE PE

Mr Williams has recently re-introduced GCSE PE as an option in Year 11 and also Year 10. Parts of this course require boys to show commitment to extra-curricular activities, notably fitness and the Chads Hill run. Parents of those boys who opted for GCSE PE need to be aware of this.



## Farm News

Another busy half term down on the farm including a Christmas calf born during the final week to Ulrika!

We are continuing to sell weaners at £1.50 per kg and if anyone would like some please contact the farm to arrange movement details. In addition we sent three rare breed pigs and two lambs to Stilmans in Taunton to be turned into different cuts of meat and this will be sold to staff and parents before and after Christmas.

We have bought a new cow from Sedgemoor Auction Centre in November, a Dutch Friesian Holstein heifer who has been named Tulip. She has settled quickly into life at Brymore! All the cattle are now in and have been wormed and are ready for the brutal winter that the forecast keeps telling us will arrive. Our farm cats Sooty, Sweep and Misty are working hard to keep the vermin at bay and have fitted in well with Brymore life!

All our Ewes have been served by either Ronnie our Texel ram or our new Suffolk ram, Sammy. We look forward to spring lambing and hope to have another productive season. We have been sending lambs to Sedgemoor Auction as they are fit, with groups of students weighing and grading the lambs on the farm and then watching graders demonstrate and give personal tuition at the market to follow up. Sheep have all been wormed as well, with the students all involved in this routine treatment to help prevent problems with the stock, as a part of their BTEC qualification. In addition, boys have been clipping cattle in preparation for the damp winter months. Our milk quality this Autumn has been excellent with butterfat levels currently 5.32%.

9R were lucky enough to visit the market for the Christmas Fatstock show and sale at the end of November. Several Year 9 and Year 10 students also helped steward and have been invited to do so again next year by the RBST and Greenslade Taylor Hunt.



## Somerset Winter Fayre

On the weekend of the 2nd/3rd November we held the first Somerset Winter Fayre. We had over 60 stallholders with everything from Linda's Loaf, showcasing bread making to Cadogan Cardigans. We had an ice rink and an old boy undertaking blacksmithing - enough for everyone. Attendance numbers were probably lower than we had hoped but we had a lot of new visitors to the school that would not have seen it were it not for this event and the number of people that commented that it was a good event was high. Our heartfelt grateful thanks go to Mrs Hilary Weldon, who was one of the main organisers of the event and who put in a huge amount of time and effort into making the event come to life.

## Mathematics (Mr Ashton)

Another busy autumn term for the Brymore maths department. Mr Fewtrell and Mr Williams joined the team, teaching the foundation classes. Thank-you to both of them for their on-going efforts; and now, taking over from Mr Fewtrell with Year 10 and 11 is Mr Palin, a highly experienced maths teacher from Bridgwater College.

Year 9 have begun their GCSE course with great enthusiasm. A tradition forged by Ed Foy from last years' Year 11 is now being perpetuated by many Year 9 and 10 boys - aiming for the longest list of MyMaths tasks completed in their own time; outstanding work boys, well done!

'Set Zero' has been well attended after school by several Year 10 boys this term, aiming to achieve an A grade in maths, with personalised learning taking place in their own time. They will investigate advanced trigonometry in the new year.

Year 10 have mostly overcome their fears and objections to algebra this term and now find basic skills easy, which is where we want everyone to be! We can now tackle more advanced algebra in the spring term.

Recent changes in government policy mean that early entry for maths GCSE is no longer advantageous to pupils or to schools. Therefore all of Year 11 will sit their maths GCSE in June 2014. This should give boys the best opportunity to achieve the highest grade that they can.

Year 11 completed their first formal mock examination at the end of November, showing significant improvement on previous scores. Their next mock exam will be the week before February half-term. They will need to revise every holiday, a little each day to maintain their momentum as we move towards their summer exam.

Every Thursday during prep, Higher Tier boys (sets 1 and 2) have been attending GCSE tutorial sessions, studying exam questions and techniques.

Already the Year 11 foundation class have been attending two extra maths lessons from 4.00 pm - 5.00 pm every Wednesday and Thursday with Mr Ashton, to consolidate and revise GCSE topics.

As the spring term gets underway, we will inform students and parents of extra classes for Higher Tier boys. These will be small groups, both before and after school.

Wishing everyone success with their mathematics in 2014!

## Smiles for Christmas

Boys at Brymore have been working hard to think about their local community in the annual 'Smiles for Christmas' campaign, run through the boarding houses.

'Smiles for Christmas', which started last year, is an inter-house competition to design and fill a hamper. This ultimately gets distributed to the elderly residents in the Homes in Sedgemoor Supported Housing location in Cannington. In addition, any extras will be sent onto to the local Foodbank, further helping the wider community.

The three boarding houses came up with some amazing hamper designs, including Tabitha the Cow and a farmer inspired one. This culminated in an assembly by Coleen and Gary from Homes in Sedgemoor, in which they told the school about their work and their appreciation for the efforts of the boys. The winning house was revealed to much applause. The big congratulations go to Kemp House, which came first overall but a brilliant effort was made by all the houses, helping local people.

Thanks also go to Mr Fewtrell who has, once again, organised this event.





### Brymore Lottery

Winners of the December draw are:

1<sup>st</sup> £40.00 L Murphy  
2<sup>nd</sup> £25.00 Andrew Elliott  
3<sup>rd</sup> £15.00 Mrs J M Payn

Cheques will be in the post to these lucky people. If you would like to join please contact Mrs Hill in the main office.

### FOBSA

There has been a recent change on the FOBSA committee and the new line up is as follows:

Chair: Andree Chandler

Treasurer: Michelle Harris

Secretary: Delia Brandwood

Should anyone else wish to join the FOBSA committee, offer help for key events or simply get in touch, then Andree can be contacted on: 07754 545677 or [andree2058@gmail.com](mailto:andree2058@gmail.com)

### Carol Service

Thank you again to all those who participated in this year's Carol Service - a truly sensational event - attended by more parents than ever, meaning there was standing room only in the Church!

Mr Willcocks and the rugby team surpassed themselves with a beautiful rendition of "Let Her Go" by Passenger, in which Ashley Palfrey excelled as the soloist. The Boarding Team delighted all, with their version of "Silent Prep" and the singing from all the boys was, as ever, magnificent.

Our thanks go to Mr Willcocks for organising such a powerful event and for reminding us all that, at this time of year it is 'peace and goodwill' that should be celebrated.

### Upcoming dates for the diary - Spring Term 2014

Sunday 5 January	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	Year 12 return
Monday 6 January	INSET DAY	
	3.30 pm - 5.00 pm	Year 11 Parent consultation
	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	Year 9 & 10 boarders return
Wednesday 15 January	6.00 pm - 8.00 pm	Bridgwater College Open Evening
Saturday 25 January	10.00 am - 12.30 pm	Bridgwater College Cannington Centre Open Morning
Saturday 8 February	4.00 pm	All Students depart for Spring half-term
Sunday 16 February	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	Year 12 return
Monday 24 February	INSET DAY	
	3.30 pm - 5.00 pm	Year 10 Parent consultation
	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	Year 9 & 11 boarders return
Tuesday 11 March	6.30 pm - 8.30 pm	Bridgwater College Open Evening
Saturday 29 March	Last day of Spring term:	English & Maths Focus Day - Year 11 Parents
		Parents Chads Hill Run/Walk
		Rugby & Hockey House Finals
	4.00 pm	Students depart for Easter holidays
Friday 4 April	4.00 pm	Year 12 students depart