



SPRING 2020

Insight

the Bancroft's newsletter

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Going Green(er) at Bancroft's

Aria Bapna, 5N

Although it's only been two years since we fully launched the initiative to become a certified eco-school. We have already been presented with the Silver Flag Award and I am delighted to say we are underway to achieve the Green Flag Award. With continued work and support from everyone, we hope to reach this milestone by this summer.

Wednesday 22 April will mark Bancroft's very first Earth Day. Earth Day is the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement from 1970, which gave a voice to an emerging public consciousness about the state of our planet. Bancroft's Earth Day is about celebrating our planet, and raising awareness of how we can be more sustainable to better protect our World.

On Earth Day we've planned a full day of activities which should make it a fabulous event. From dancing to decorating (both cakes and clothes) there will be something for everyone to enjoy. We will have the opportunity to express our creativity as everyone will be encouraged to come into school in a recycled T-shirt with



their favourite environmental awareness slogan; whether it's an air pollution fact or a climate change plea all environmental-related messages are welcome. To go with your T-shirts, you may also wear glitter in the shape of planet-friendly symbols.

During break, there will be a plant-based bake sale, showing you don't have to sacrifice your favourite treats to save the planet! Because everyone loves to dance through lunchtime there will be the chance to join in a flash mob. Also at lunchtime are woodland walks; there is no better way to celebrate Earth Day than to truly appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds us. And if that's not enough choice, you will be able to take part in a lunchtime yoga session.

Perhaps the most enlightening activity of the day will be our mini-market selling sustainable options for everyday products, where Bancroftians can test items from soap to toothpaste. We want Earth Day to last beyond school hours, so every pupil will get a pack of sunflower seeds to plant in their garden. Even for novice gardeners, sunflowers are relatively low maintenance to grow and the results are beautiful.

Earth Day is one of the focuses of the sustainability team this term, however, we would also like to share with you the advancements we have made in our other projects.

ARIA

“Bancroft's Earth Day is about celebrating our planet, and raising awareness





- We've seen our first harvest in the school garden of organic lettuce which has been used in some school lunches.
- After a successful first crop last year, the potato trenches are now ready for the 2020 crop.
- On the school menu, we've made an effort to incorporate plant-based meals with increased options and clearer signage. The Prep School pupils held a vote and they now enjoy "Meat-Free Mondays."
- To understand fully the environment around Bancroft's, we surveyed the site's air quality. This made us more conscious about the levels of on-site pollution we breathe. At the Prep School, pupils encouraged parents waiting to collect children at the end of the day to turn car engines off while stationary. Parents were met with children holding signs stating the facts about air quality around the school while, aptly, the song the "Air That I Breathe" was played.
- We are excited that our on-site bees have quickly become a budding hobby of some pupils; we can even expect to receive some honey soon!
- We have two new pieces of equipment installed around the school. The first is a Bluetooth weather station. This will allow us to record day-to-day, real-time weather data as well as allowing us to analyse the climate long term to see what impact climate change has on the local area. Data from Storm Ciara in February recorded from the top of the tower showed the peak wind gust was 53mph. In addition, Bancroft's now has a real-time camera trap which allows us to see local wildlife visiting the school site.
- Sustainability issues have made their way onto areas of the curriculum. For example, in art lessons the Thirds have designed and made their own plant pots. Once planted up, the pots are distributed around the school with the aim of having a plant in every room.

Senior Maths Challenges and Olympiad

Last term we saw 102 awards from 142 participants in the Senior Maths Challenge. Twenty five pupils were awarded Gold certificates, with twenty of them qualifying for the follow-on Senior Kangaroo and five qualifying for the British Maths Olympiad Round 1. The latter is a three hour written paper for which the top 1000 school aged mathematicians in the UK qualify. The five were: Alex Yan, Mustafa Lodhi, Adam Agbamu, (all U6); Shivan Aggarwal (Joint best in Year) and Avneet Sapal, (Joint best in Year) both U4. Mustafa was awarded a Merit and Alex (Best in School) a Distinction, which places him in the top 100 students nationally.

In the Senior Kangaroo six pupils - Max Stear (Joint Best in Year), Jathusan Vijayakumar, Kyrrill Borzenko, Swasthi Surendran, Kail Francis and Felix Harman - were awarded Merits. Swasthi Surendran was awarded a Distinction in the Maths Olympiad for Girls, placing her in the top 200 female school-aged mathematicians in the UK.

The following received Senior Maths Gold Certificates and qualified for the Senior Kangaroo: Zaki Lodhi, Nathan Tan and Krishan Parmar (all U4); Aarian Judge (Best in Year), Ananya Vijay, Akhila Natarajan and Pari Jethwa (all 5ths); Jai Robinson, Matt Dean, Ben Hughes, James Ormsby, Ahaan Kumar, Emilia Nygaard-Parsons (L6); Richard Tuite (U6).

In November, four pupils were accompanied by Mr Tse to St Joseph's Mathematical School in Rochester to partake in the Regional Senior Team Mathematics Challenge (STMC). The team consisted of Max Stear, Jathusan Vijayakumar (both L6th), Alexander Yan and Swasthi Surendran (both U6th). The competition begun with a group round, which posed no problems. In the following crossnumber round (a numerical take on the crossword), however, the team lost two careless marks. This was soon rectified by a clean sweep in the shuttle round (something STMC veteran Alex had never seen before). This placed the Bancroft's team comfortably in first position to qualify for the National Finals in February. At the National Finals held at the Linley Hall, they faced the 87 other regional winners (from an initial entry of 1200 schools nationwide) and finished in 9th place. In the poster competition, for which they had to design an A3 poster, the Bancroft's team secured first place. Their winning poster will be used as marketing material for next year's competition.



Oxbridge 2020

Emilia Hitching, U6W

Many congratulations to the eleven members of the U6 who have been offered places at Cambridge (nine places) and Oxford (two) conditional upon their A Level results in the summer. In addition, two of last year's leavers have been offered unconditional places at Cambridge. In the following article, Emilia Hitching describes the Oxbridge preparation process at Bancroft's.

Although the hallowed days of hearing from Oxford and Cambridge fell on the 14 and 15 January this year, the Oxbridge process for our year group began way back in the spring term of 2019. Following preliminary talks from Dr Hunn about what the next few months would entail, we began our preparation in earnest in the summer term.

While each subject encompasses a range of widely different disciplines and the content covered in each session is led by the pupils' particular interests, the format of the in-school preparation is largely the same. Whether for English or Engineering, we embarked upon weekly or twice-weekly sessions with subject mentors - ours was the omniscient Mr Jones - covering questions or exercises that might be likely to come up in our admissions tests and learning new ways of thinking. Not only was exploring different genres and eras of writing great practice for my entrance exam and subsequent interview, but I found some novels and areas of literature that I never would have discovered otherwise, from eighteenth century letters to criticism published in the last five years.

While this breadth and depth of learning may sound daunting at the outset, any pupil who loves their subject enough to want to dedicate three or more years of study to it, regardless of the institution, is sure



to enjoy these sessions. The most important aspect of this part of the process is learning what your interests are. I started to draft my personal statement sure that I knew exactly what I wanted to talk about and ended up going in entirely another direction. Being led by your passions is the most fulfilling part of the application, allowing you some creative control over a totally unpredictable few months. While it may not lead to you actively enjoying the admissions tests, finding your areas of interest certainly helps to reduce anxiety.

Once we had completed the tests during October half term, we moved onto general interview preparation, asking each other questions based on our personal statements and tackling unseen material in the moment. We also learned about more psychological aspects during mock interviews: whether we spoke too quickly or failed to look the interviewer in the eye. Such advice will be useful later in life regardless of the outcome of the Oxbridge process. The mock interview exchange with Forest and Chigwell was particularly useful, with each pupil going to a different local school and having a taster of another environment: as close as you can get to the true interview experience in December.

Every student involved in Oxbridge preparation comes away with a wealth of super-curricular knowledge which enhances their A-Level studies and feeds their curiosity about the wider subject. In addition to this, we have a great appreciation for all the teachers who supported us, both emotionally and intellectually, throughout.

Erasmus Essay Competition

Miss L Jones, Head of RS

Three Bancroftians were invited to a prize-giving lunch at the City of London School for Boys on Thursday 16 January in celebration of their participation in the prestigious annual Erasmus Essay Competition.

Entrants had been required to produce an essay in timed conditions on the topic of authenticity, having read books and articles over the summer to prepare themselves. Ben Hughes (L6S) won the second prize of £300, in recognition of the success of his analysis of authenticity, especially in light of the increasing secularisation of society. The guest judge of the competition was Christopher Hamilton of King's College London. He addressed pupils who attended the lunch on the topic of the philosophical issues of authenticity and whether it is possible to develop a genuinely authentic sense of personal identity, in light of factors such as historical circumstance and psychological barriers to genuine self-knowledge. Eleanor Channer (L6S) and Nikki Wang (L6W) also had essays submitted for judging and both are to be commended for producing thought-provoking and insightful work.





Bancroft's Competitive University Admissions Workshop

Mrs M Dean, Head of Careers, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

On Tuesday 4 February we held our first ever Competitive University Admissions Day. We were pleased to welcome representatives from Oxford, St Andrews, Durham and Imperial College to the school to speak to our L6 who were joined by over 70 students invited from other schools. These schools were Roding Valley, St Paul's Way Trust, Drapers' Academy, Trinity High School, Woodford County High School for Girls, Woodbridge, and Sir George Monoux.

The universities presented interactive workshops on applying for higher education, with Dr Hugh Munro from Wadham College at Oxford, speaking about making a good Oxbridge application and the interview process; Scott Wilson from St Andrews, who detailed the difference in structure at Scottish Universities and Ben Hodgkiss from Durham explaining the collegiate system. Florence from Roding Valley HS said of Scott Wilson's session, "He spoke to us about the dos and don'ts of writing a personal statement, including showing engagement, motivation, and commitment to the chosen subject. Overall, I enjoyed this session the most and felt that it was very informative."

Besides speaking about making an application to a global top ten university in science, engineering, business and medicine, Dr Charlotte Booth from Imperial College gave the students a peak into her study on the adolescent brain and her career path to date. The pupils found the talks informative and inspiring.

The university representatives were very impressed with our students and remarked that our pupils asked pertinent questions. They were also delighted to be able to speak to pupils from visiting schools. Katie Collins, teacher at Roding Valley HS, said "We really enjoyed the day and, after speaking to our students, I know that their aspirations were raised and there was a renewed motivation for their studies." Rosie, a pupil at Roding Valley, commented, "Overall, I found the workshop to be particularly informative about the application process when it comes to the top universities. Hearing from a member of staff, specifically what they are looking for in a successful applicant, has helped me to focus more on developing ways in which I can demonstrate my passions."

We hope we can build on the success of this event and host an even better one next year.



ROSIE

Overall, I found the workshop to be particularly informative about the application process when it comes to the top universities



Fact or Fiction: *The Guardian* Workshop

Abisola Daodu, RN

On Monday 9 December, thirty Bancroftians went to *The Guardian* newspaper's headquarters in King's Cross. On the morning of the trip, we gathered around the tower eagerly awaiting our coach despite the bitter cold. As we embarked the coach, we were all engaged in chatter, which continued throughout our journey.

The Guardian's headquarters are made of glass and very modern looking, with photographs taken by their photographers adorning the walls. We were greeted by Margaret, one of *The Guardian's* employees, given name tags and then ascended the escalator towards our workshop in complete silence. This was because there were offices around us and people were working. When we entered the workshop, we were put into groups of six in which we were to remain for the day.

Once we were seated, we were shown a PowerPoint explaining the fundamental 5Ws of journalism (who, what, where, when, why). This included a short clip of an advertisement for *The Guardian*, showing us that there are different angles for a story. We were shown a typical day at the newspaper. We were then told about our task which was to research fake news, then present and record our findings. Fake news is a big problem sweeping the world of journalism, since journalists often do not have time to research stories fully. Most of the time, they are told rumours and then they must investigate the story from there. Each group was given three news headlines to analyse and find out if the stories were fake or

real. We did this by searching our headline on iPads. It was very important that we read multiple articles to gather information on all possible angles of the story. We also had to make sure that we had enough facts on each of the 5Ws and enough data to support our reasoning. An example of a story that we had to research was an image of a man carrying a jaguar which allegedly was a photo of the jaguar being rescued from the Amazon fires. By comparing different sites, we discovered that it was actually a photograph of the Brazilian military's mascot playing with the soldiers.

Once we were sure that we knew enough about each headline and had concluded whether it was a fake or a real story, we filmed each other presenting the stories as if we were newsreaders. We filmed these based upon an Instagram series that *The Guardian* produces, called 'Fake or For Real'. When we had finished, we put the clips together using iMovie. Afterwards, we successfully filmed all 15 stories in one attempt. Once we had completed this our time at *The Guardian* was unfortunately over. We thanked Margaret and left for our coach. We had had a great time at *The Guardian's* headquarters.

ABISOLA

“ Fake news is a big problem sweeping the world of journalism ”





A Magical Harry Potter Week for the Thirds

The enthusiasm for all things Potter does not seem to wane and our annual Harry Potter week for the Thirds has now become a firm favourite fixture in the calendar. Indeed, such is its popularity that the Removes have clamoured for a similar event and Mrs Squire and team have been busy arranging a Hunger Games week for them.

For a week our four houses were renamed after the Hogwarts' houses and the Thirds got a chance to compete in a series of Harry Potter themed activities which embraced various areas of the curriculum. There were lunch time debates, potion making sessions, quizzes, after school art (mandrake making) and, of course, the chaos which is Quidditch! The final day gave them, together with Third Form tutors and Junior House Staff, the chance to swap Bancroft's uniform with something inspired by J K Rowling's novels. This year the staff really went to town: Ms Grimwood's Fat Lady and Ms Wainwright as a Nimbus 5000 were memorable. A visit by staff from Eden Falconry together with some of their beautiful owls was a fitting climax to the week.



Tate Britain

Neha Pillai, U4W

On Thursday 17 October, U4th art students visited the Tate Britain. We were given an hour to explore the gallery. The different rooms and exhibitions were fascinating as we learnt how art has been interpreted throughout the decades. We also observed the time periods in which certain art styles were developed such as Surrealism, Cubism and Impressionism.



the gallery was *Close Encounters* by Susan Hiller. This piece really stood out to me as it was based on the supernatural, banal and bizarre," George Metson-Bailie stated. "I loved it as I felt as if we witnessed the entire experience with the teenagers, who were the subject of the film. The utilisation of dark surroundings created a somewhat bleak atmosphere. This added to the theatrical involvement of spectral visions, sound and video, which were responsible for this feeling." *Under in* by Lecky seems to be a direct representation of how Lecky thinks drugs govern today's society and maybe portrays the hallucinations of intoxicating substances in an abstract form. After *Under in* was finished, the screens showed Lecky's second theatrical composition, *Dream English Kid*; this exhibit illustrates Lecky's infancy and past aspirations through a collection of edited videos and photos.

Subsequently, we made our way into the Mark Lecky exhibition titled *O' Magic Power of Bleakness*. This was most of the pupils' favourite as it contained several hidden messages. "I liked this exhibition because you had to consider the work carefully to understand the piece completely. It was different to other exhibitions I have visited as the videos were juxtaposed against the solid structure of the bridge. His work addresses the effect of technology on popular culture. However my favourite piece in



Jasper Andrews said that "[he] learnt about contemporary art from the Mark Lecky exhibition and how art can be more than just a stand-alone object." This trip gave me a wider insight into the world of art and how society has a direct impression on modern art. It also changed my perception of art that to understand it involves a huge involvement of analysis.

5ths Curwen Print Workshop

Rebekah Wright, 5N

In October, the Fifth Form art students were lucky enough to take a trip to the Curwen Print Study Centre to improve and add to our coursework. Despite the hour-long journey and the cold weather it didn't feel long until we arrived in Cambridge.

Once there we entered their amazing facilities with the acetate designs we'd created at school. Patsy and Charlotte, who led our workshop, showed us a variety of different ways to mark acetate than just the etching tools we were used to. These involved using different types of sandpaper and also placing Lego bricks beneath whilst sanding to create circular designs and using masking tape and duct tape to give the ink a more textured look. Once we'd finished testing the new techniques and adding them to our original designs, we began using the presses. We had a choice of green, red, blue or black ink and we spent lots of time meticulously inking up our designs.

When we were printing Patsy and Charlotte showed us new techniques to make them more interesting. They showed us how to overlap ghost prints (prints from an already used and inked acetate) using different colours to give a psychedelic effect. They also showed us how to create one print in many different colours at once and use *chine-collé*, which is tissue paper with glue on the back. This can be pressed into your print to create areas of solid colour. All this drastically increased the amount of our work and also improved its quality and experimental aspects which is really beneficial to us. We were very lucky to be able to go!



Behind the scenes of Harry Potter

Nikita Saha, L4W

On Tuesday 3 December, the Lower 4th art students, went on a delightful trip to experience the Harry Potter Studio Tour. We were all buzzing with excitement when we arrived. We travelled through various corridors, which had fascinating objects and sculptures from the actual films on display. I think I photographed everything.



We ventured through this incredible exhibition until we reached the set of the Forbidden Forest, where 'fog' and spider models hanging from the ceilings descended upon us; a friend of mine was terrified to go in, but plucked up the courage in the end. Everyone stopped for lunch, which meant we could try their 'butter beer'.

Afterwards we carried on going through the sets, eventually reaching the last area which is a huge scale model of Hogwarts. We ended the trip visiting the gift shop, which consists of a variety of items, from candies to Hogwarts' robes.



We all had an amazing time and this is one trip that I will look back at and remember not regretting a single second. Going on this trip could help in areas such as architecture, fashion, media, film and theatre, which are great for future career options, and something for me to consider in the future.



The Armed Man

Saturday 9 November, saw a memorable performance of Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man, A Mass for Peace*. Members of Bancroft's Sinfonia and the Bancroft's Singers joined with parents, OBs and members of two local choirs – the Crofton Singers and the Evening Chorus – as well as other community members to perform this remarkable work.

Commissioned by the Royal Armouries in 1999, the work reflects on the passing of "the most war-torn and destructive century in human history". Taking its framework from the Catholic Mass, *The Armed Man* draws upon texts and music from many different religious and cultures. The work is by turns disturbing, rousing, contemplative and poignant but ultimately ends on a note of hope.

The long hours of work and rehearsal which had gone into the performance were evident and the soloists – Yusuf Shahzad, Emilia Hitching, Sonia Sagoo, Gauri Godbole, Matthew Pinto, Martha Grimsell and Tom Jackson - are to be congratulated. A massive thanks must go to our Director of Music, Mrs Julia Whitbread, for all her work creating this very memorable evening. Mrs Whitbread said, "It was such a privilege to bring together so many parts of the Bancroft's and local community. Rehearsals with the adult choir were a real highlight, with much laughter and some wonderful singing. I have received many positive messages since the performance."

One adult soprano from the Arts Society commented, "The performances and practices drew our whole community together in a way that we were all enriched. I have lived here 42 years and I met 'Woodfordians' who I hadn't seen for years. The Bancroft's Choir and Sinfonia were superb, their joy and enthusiasm were epic and the soloists amazingly confident."



Sixth Formers Become Language Teachers

David Nana, L6S

If this experience had to be summarised in one word, *perspicaz* (the Spanish for insightful) would be the most appropriate term. It not only gave us insight into the challenging reality of teaching but it also allowed us to experience first-hand the wonders of teaching itself.

A fortunate group of eager and determined Lower Sixth Form pupils were given the opportunity to become language teachers for a day at the Prep School. We had to plan and deliver our own tailor-made lessons in either Spanish or Russian as part of an MFL Leadership course organised by Mrs Whalley. Each lesson had its own topic ranging from numbers to sports to school subjects. The only thing all of our lessons had in common was the way in which we began them. We often learn things best when we say them ourselves, which is why Mrs Whalley recommended we begin our lessons with lots of speaking to engage and involve all pupils. There were several further tricks we used to make the most of this simple exercise, for instance, many of us used fun PowerPoint slides when presenting new vocabulary, while others carried out actions when teaching vocabulary which aimed at encouraging pupils to remember words by relating them to an action, eg imitating a tennis swing after repeating *el tenis* in unison.



The lessons needed to be enjoyable, so “edutainment” was another technique we used. Our prime aim was to ensure each pupil had a positive experience learning their new language. In short, we wanted to show that learning a language is fun. This was achieved by the variety of games we embedded in our lessons such as charades, the use of toys, songs, matching card games, pair work, competitions and even food! Many of our ideas were inspired through the group’s fortnightly meetings prior to delivering the lessons in which we brainstormed ideas we could use to maximise engagement ensuring each pupil would enjoy their language starter course. We also had invaluable advice and tricks from Mrs Whalley. After we had delivered our lessons we were utterly exhausted, needing a quick visit to the Prep School staff room where a couple of coffees were enough to keep our energies high. As we sipped our coffees, we received feedback from Mrs Whalley and we evaluated this extremely valuable experience. Many thanks must be given to Mr Whalley for organising it.



Teaching is tough. Behind a single lesson are hours of blood, sweat, planning and administration. It takes time but I found planning my lesson the most rewarding part as you can see your lesson grow as you compose it, however it is by no means easy. I have a new respect for my teachers following the experience. I admire them and thank them all for everything they do to maximise our learning experiences. All in all, the lessons were a success. What was far more fulfilling than the smiles on each pupil’s face at the end of their lessons were the lessons we had learnt ourselves. As we taught a lesson on languages, we also learnt a lesson on teaching. It was far more challenging than I had ever expected; nevertheless, it is an experience I found extremely enriching and one I will never forget

“ Our prime aim was to ensure each pupil had a positive experience learning their new language



It's Nicer in Nice –

Jemima Strong, 5W

It is universally acknowledged that the best way to learn a language is to go to the country where that language is spoken. Attending *France Langue* in Nice for a week, meant I was totally immersed in French. Living with a family, who could not speak English, meant that I was listening and speaking French all day, every day.

I was on the French study trip to Nice from 27 October until 2 November with ten other pupils from the Fifth and Sixth Form. Every morning we attended educational and fun French lessons. They mainly focused on improving our spoken French, although there was some writing involved. At the end of the course we received a certificate, praising us on our progress.

Every afternoon we experienced an excursion to many of the finest areas in the south of France. We had a guided tour of Nice which is located in the French Riviera and is the second largest city on the Mediterranean coast. We visited the Old Town and the market place. We visited beautiful Antibes which included a visit to the Picasso Museum. I was fascinated by the luxury yachts moored at the Port Vauban Marina - a very fashionable and affluent area. The next afternoon we visited the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in the heart of Nice which contains 1300 works from 300 artists. In the evening we watched *Maléfique: Le Pouvoir du Mal* at the cinema. We had an excursion to Monte Carlo with a guided tour. Although it was raining, Monte Carlo was by far my favourite resort with its famous casino,



harbour and breath-taking scenery. It is Hollywood in France! The next day we took a short journey to Menton and Ventimiglia which meant we actually crossed over the Italian border. In Menton we visited the cemetery of the Old Chateau, negotiating a maze of streets to the top of the Colla Rogna hill. In Ventimiglia we enjoyed a pizza while watching the energy of the street market which ran along the sea front. Before departing on Saturday, we went to *la plage* in Nice and enjoyed a traditional crepe. We had free time to explore, eat ice cream and buy gifts.

Luce and Jean, the family I stayed with, were extremely kind and hospitable. They fed us well, made us comfortable and encouraged us to speak French all the time. This trip was enjoyable and improved my spoken French tenfold. Thanks to Miss Grossmann for organising and to Mr Young for accompanying us. *C'était super!*

North London Collegiate French Debating Competition

Vishaali Ganesh, L6W and Jemima Henderson, L6E

On Thursday 14 November, Vishaali Ganesh, Daniella Bradley, Leya Dayal and Jemima Henderson participated in the North London Collegiate French Debating competition. Our competitors were Berkhamstead School, Haberdashers' Aske's Boys School, Henrietta Barnett School and University College School. The competition consisted of three tricky motions: "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité: une fiction française*", "*La mondialisation mène inévitablement à l'uniformisation culturelle*" and "*Il n'y a que les Etats qui puissent sauver la planète*".

Once we arrived, we were given fifteen minutes to prepare the motions, after which we were taken into separate rooms to begin the debate. Before the debating began, the judge told us whether we were arguing for or against the motion. The format consisted of a one minute introduction, five minutes of "*lutte acharnée*" (a back-and-forth-style argument) and concluded with a final statement from each team. This was repeated for each of the motions against both schools. After a successful first round for both Bancroft's teams, we unfortunately did not advance further. We enjoyed the friendly competitiveness and the experience enabled us to gain invaluable skills which we plan to use in our next debating competition.



Slalom Kayaking

Herbie, 3E

I have been kayaking since summer 2018. It kicked off when a couple of Olympic paddlers visited schools in the area asking who was interested. I had no experience or knowledge of kayaking but thought it would be thrilling if I tried it, so that's what I did.

We started off as a group of all the children wanting to participate and, after a few weeks, we were asked if we wanted to continue onto the talent programme or stop. This was a very hard, life-changing decision as I already had a tight schedule. In the end, I accepted and went on to a three day schedule which included a gym session, a flat water session and a white water session starting off with the Legacy course, which is smaller than the Olympic course. At this point I had a worry which was the Legacy course. Going from being a beginner at kayaking to going on rapids was a big step for me and I suffered a couple of traumatic incidents including getting stuck in a wave, holding my breath for too long, not being able to get out of my boat, etc. It took a long period of time but finally, thanks to my friends, family and my coaches, I was able to push through and conquer my fears. Through the winter, training intensified from four to five days a week: gym, flat water sessions, Legacy sessions, Olympic sessions and even psychology. I am now frequently going in my trusted campervan to races around the United Kingdom, in places such as Nottingham, Cardington, Stone and Orton Mere, and even across Europe to France (Dijon and then Paris).

As well as kayaking, I also fit in canoeing. Many people think they're the same thing and others think it's size but there are three distinctions. These are: a canoe having not a two but a one-sided paddle: not sitting down but kneeling in your boat and the boat itself being wider at the cockpit area.

I have had many ups and downs but I am determined to paddle the Olympic course without any fears and to reach Division 1 by the end of the year. I will continue to strive through the training and I am hoping to make Olympic standard.



U18 Girls to National Finals



Our U18 girls' hockey team continued its fantastic season in the second half of last term. The Essex champions played in the East Regional Finals of the National Schools Competition at Redbridge Sports Centre on 19 November.

The Bancroft's team first faced Sevenoaks School from Kent and cruised to a 3-0 win thanks to a hat trick from England U16 player Grace O'Malley-Kumar. Next up was Parmiter's School (Hertfordshire). Although we took the lead with an early goal (again from O'Malley-Kumar), this game proved more challenging. The Bancroft's girls gave away too many short corners leaving coach, Mrs Jo Fryer-Green, in a nervous state on the side-lines. These two wins were enough to secure a place in the Finals, but the girls were determined to progress in style by winning all their matches. This they did with a 2-0 win over Cranbrook School, with goals from Vice Captain Eleanor Channer and a fifth for the day from Grace O'Malley-Kumar. Grace was awarded the team's "Player of the Tournament" title having scored in all three matches. Under the captainship of goalkeeper Anika Mayor, all the team had played strongly throughout the day, although Emilia Parsons and Kiera Murphy deserve special mentions for their contributions. Thanks too to coaches Mrs Jo Fryer Green and Mr Dan Webster for all their hard work.

The Bancroft's team now go onto the National Finals on 3 March. This is the first time that a Bancroft's team has reached the National Finals. Mrs Fryer-Green was fulsome in her praise for her team, "This is a fantastic achievement from a very committed and hardworking squad. This team is a joy to work with: so easy to coach. They have shown incredible focus so far; we just need to make sure this doesn't slip in the next couple of months ahead of the finals."

Squash British Junior Open Championship

Yusuf, L4E

We arrived in Birmingham on the evening of Wednesday 1 January to take part in the British Junior Open Championships. I had trained hard for this tournament all year as it is one of the most prestigious tournaments in the world. Going into the tournament I was seeded to finish between 5th and 8th position out of 128 boys drawn in the U15 category from around the world. The main venue was the University of Birmingham which is where my matches were played.

My first game was against the England number 7, Sonny Flint which I won 3-0. My next match was against a top player from Germany, Denis Igelbrink. We played the game, which I won 3-0 comfortably, on the main glass show court. The same day, I played my next round against the Pakistani number 3, Anas Ali Shah who again I beat 3-0 in a very long drawn out game.

This win took me into the quarter finals. This is where I had hoped to finish. Already satisfied having reached this far I was drawn against Yuvraj Wadhvani, the Indian number 1 and 3/4 seed for the tournament. I was definitely not expected to beat Yuvraj and I knew it wasn't going to be easy but I wasn't going to give up. I started off well and then suddenly lost my focus. I played up and down; the game ended up being a lot tougher than it should have been but, to everyone's surprise, I pulled it off and I beat him 3-1. That was a close call

I found myself suddenly in the semi-finals of the British Junior Open. I couldn't believe that I had got this far and nor could anyone else. In the semis I was up against the much stronger; experienced Pakistani number 1, Muhammad Ammad, who had thrashed me two years earlier in the first round of the British Junior Open when I was playing in the boys' U13 category. Ammad had taken out the number 1 seed in one of the earlier rounds and was expected to win the tournament. I was very



nervous but the earlier win against Yuvraj gave me a lot of confidence and I knew that if I played smart I had a good chance. Our match took place on Sunday on the main glass court. Luckily, I played my best squash so far. I ended up beating him 3-0. I was ecstatic; I couldn't believe it. No one thought that I would get into the finals of the British Junior Championships. I found myself surrounded by a crowd of people wanting to congratulate me as I came off court. The England coaches were there, the England squash press interviewed me. I had barely recovered from the win when I needed to prepare myself mentally and physically for the final.

The final took place on the afternoon of Monday 6 January. I played Muhammed Humza Khan, a very skilful player also from Pakistan. Humza had beaten a top Egyptian player in his semi-final and hadn't dropped a single game throughout the tournament. On Monday morning I felt quite nervous going into my match, but I wanted to leave it all on the court. I had the whole of England behind me, supporting me, but sadly I underperformed and wasn't able to show the Pakistani number 2 what I was capable of. I lost in three games and I was extremely disappointed with my performance. I was gutted to have played like that, but he was a very strong player and it wouldn't have been easy; it never is. He deserved it much more than I did. But one thing I do know though and that is that I am going to come back stronger next year.

“

YUSUF

I played my best squash so far. I ended up beating him 3-0. I was ecstatic

”

Thirds Rugby Tour to Wales

Krishan Arya, 3E

We arrived at school at 6am, everyone excited and raring to go even at this time in the morning. We had a six hour journey to Pen y Dre School. There we played our first rugby match of the tour. Unfortunately, both A and B teams lost, however they were hard-fought games. We left having made some new friends, with the Pen y Dre players and coaches having been very welcoming and amicable. Afterwards, we went to Nando's to restore our energy before watching a professional rugby match between Newport Dragons and Worcester Warriors - Newport won convincingly. The first day had been a thriller.

The following morning, we woke up early but ready for action. We enjoyed a delicious breakfast before setting off on a memorable climb to the summit of Sugar Loaf. After

our adventurous trek we went back to the centre and tried our hand at rock climbing and zip wiring. They were fun. Unbelievably, the teachers had kindly washed our kit and boots. What a day it had been!

The next morning was the last match of our rugby season against Blackwood Rugby Club. A mixed A and B team of fifteen Bancroftians played formidably to win the tough game. Our opponents were gracious in defeat. We headed back home, exhausted but elated. This trip would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment of Mr Faiers, Mr Greenidge, Mr Dickinson and Mr Hay. They did well to survive the weekend with us.

Model United Nations

Aria Bapna, 5N

In September 2019, for the first time since *Game of Thrones* became a thing, Americans searched for "climate change" on-line more often than the fate of their favourite characters. To be specific, the peak of climate change searches was the week of September 20 when millions of young people around the world, including some Bancroftians, skipped class for what may well have been the biggest climate change protest in history.

Climate change agreements have been debated many times over in the United Nations by adults from nearly every country in the world and yet they haven't reached a solution. This is why it was the perfect topic for pupils from schools all across England to come together and debate on Saturday 1 February in a Model United Nations (MUN) held at The American School in London, which was the first showing of Bancroft's newly formed MUN Club. MUN is an opportunity for pupils to represent the views

of countries in the UN, to come together and debate solutions for real-life global issues that affect us and our future. Five Bancroftians took part, representing Kuwait, Brazil, Mongolia, Vietnam and South Africa in different committees.

MUN has allowed me to negotiate and debate solutions to the various problems of the world which is why climate change was very fitting. The research and preparation involved gave me a closer insight into the world's problems and enabled me to understand the causes of conflict between nations. I've learned to adopt views and attitudes other than my own and to co-operate with people I've never met before and who hold different opinions to me. More than anything, MUN is an enjoyable experience outside the classroom which gives me a chance to hone on my debating, public speaking and diplomacy skills while talking about topical issues.

Bancroft's Remembers



Members of the present Bancroft's community joined together on Sunday 10 November to remember members of the past Bancroft's community who gave their lives for our freedom during conflicts.

Remembrance Sunday is always a very special day in the Bancroft's Calendar. The CCF was on parade with RSM Madhav Narayanan laying the wreath on the War Memorial in the Quad, while CSM Ali Ullah placed a second wreath inside the School by the board in memory of Dan Clack and Paul Watkins, both of whom were killed in 2011 in Afghanistan. The Sea Scouts and Cubs were well represented with the Cubs leading the congregation in the Prayers of Intercession during a moving service led by the Rev Ivan Moore.



Playing our Cards Right!

Mrs A Adams

Business is booming in our Prep 2 Enterprise Club; the children have been working round the clock to ensure supply of their fantastic collection of Bancroft's trading cards meets demand. Alphas, Betas and Prep 1s have had a chance to buy up to 30 cards each, and the playground is busy with daily trades and games of top trumps. The Prep 2s have been patiently waiting and will be getting their hands on their cards later this week.

This is by far our best venture to date, the Business Team have already made over £1500 profit and this increased when final chances to buy extra packs or individual cards took place before half term. All money raised will be going to charity; a huge thank you to all those involved and to our parents for their fantastic support.



EPSCA Chess Championship

Mrs L Life

As we gathered by the Tower on Saturday 1 February there was already a real sense of achievement in the air before the Eastern Round of the EPSCA Championship had even begun. When Mr d'Costa joined us in May 2018, his ambition for Bancroft's Prep was to begin playing in the English Primary Schools' Championship, and here we were; bright eyed, armed with books about tactics and ready to go.

We took five teams with us: two U11 and three U9. Having only attended one much smaller tournament before we were unsure what to expect. We arrived to find Moulsham Junior School, Chelmsford thronging with excited chess players from all over the region. Players were to play five rounds of games, each round beginning at the same time. It was very exciting to find one's table, sit down opposite one's opponent, shake hands and let the game commence. At this point the hall became very quiet as the children focused on the important matter in hand.

Between each game the children returned to their 'base camp' for a spot of last minute coaching from Mr d'Costa or a run around outside. During the day it was clear we were performing reasonably well but it's hard to keep a handle of everything that's going on when you have thirty teams playing at any one time. After a long day of play all competitors gathered in the hall for the results – and how proud Mr Layburn, Mr d'Costa and I were. Gold for our brilliant U9 A team and Bronze for our U9Cs! In a very competitive U11 category our equally magnificent U11A team brought home a Bronze medal. Four out of our five teams had qualified for the semi-finals which take place in North Wales in June. All five teams played superbly all day with five of our children winning every match they played.

I'd like to thank all the children that took part, all the children that play chess regularly at school and Mr d'Costa, Mr Lee and Mr Bukojemski for making this happen.



Prep 1s' DT Project at Senior School

Mrs S Strong

It was wonderful to bring the Prep and Senior Schools together in an extensive Design Technology project last term. The Prep 1s were studying 'Force' in Science and were also studying 'Moving Vehicles' as a project for DT, so we thought it would be wonderful if we could do a cross-curricular activity where children could design, make and race their own cars to fulfil all objectives. With the expert help of the DT department at the Senior School (Aron Whitbread, Marc Rogers, David Fernandez, Simon Newbury) we did just that.

Over the course of three weeks, the children designed, sawed, sanded, drilled, painted and sprayed. They then raced their cars, learning about force and friction. They followed up with a written report, reflecting on all they had learnt. They learnt about health and safety in the workshop and the different tools involved in the process. So successful was the project, it caught the attention of the Bloodhound LSR team who tweeted about the quality of the cars. A big thank you to all involved in making it happen; I think we have some engineers in the making.



MRS S STRONG

“ Over the course of three weeks, the children designed, sawed, sanded, drilled, painted and sprayed. ”



Christmas Fundraiser

Our Christmas term ended with a fundraising concert which gave pupils and staff a chance to display some of their many talents. All money raised went to two great causes: Haven House Children's Hospice, which is local to us in Woodford, and Wings of Hope.

All age groups were encouraged to join in and the performers ranged from the Thirds to the Upper Sixth and beyond, with some notable acts by members of staff. Devanshi and Zainab delivered a comic routine on the dangers of life as a Third with admirable confidence. The unenviable job of following Mr McGuiggan and "The Common Denominators" fell to Matthew whose beautiful rendition of *Oh Holy Night* contrasted starkly with the audience singing along to *Sweet Caroline*. Mr Argyle made a memorable debut channelling his inner Freddie Mercury. "The Duke" surprised us all with his version of the iconic Queen number *I Want to be Free* which morphed into *I want DofE* and, for a moment, even our slick compere Alex was lost for words. The afternoon ended with a massed choir of staff, under the watchful eye of Mrs Nadasan-Mead, performing *Do They Know It's Christmas?* leaving everyone feeling suitably festive and ready for the holidays.

All acts were greeted with huge applause and generous festive spirit was certainly in evidence. Thanks to all acts and the organisers for a great afternoon of fun and entertainment.



Taal 2020

Taal once again brought a touch of Bollywood glamour to Bancroft's during the cold February evenings. This year's Taal saw the involvement of 250 Bancroftians and raised a staggering £25000 for three charities. With its fusion of dancing, music and acting, Taal is more than just another School production; it has become a much anticipated fixture in the Bancroft's calendar as well as an important part of the School's cultural life. Members of the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Muslim Society (HSBM Society) take on full responsibility for everything, from finding sponsorship from local businesses to sourcing costumes. Sixth Formers are tasked with writing, choreographing and directing the event.

Led by an elected pupils committee, the cast worked incredibly hard to produce this year's Taal. Anjali Tohani, one of the Presidents of Taal and one of the choreographers, said, "For me Taal has been the most amazing journey. I don't think we realised how many challenges we would face but these challenges made it all even



more rewarding on the final night. The Taal community truly became a second family to me and I am so honoured I had the chance to be part of the amazing team we became."

Taal is a major fund raiser for charities and this year it supported three charities: The Anderson School for Autism in Chigwell, Dementia UK and Veerayatan in India. Veerayatan has transformed the lives of thousands of underprivileged children and has also supported rehabilitation and emergency relief programmes in the wake of natural calamities. Closer to home, the Anderson School seeks to give young people with autism the best possible opportunities for their future.

Head, Simon Marshall, thanked the members for the U6 Taal Committee who have worked so hard on this year's production which he described as "a fantastic celebration."



Saturday Morning Challenge

Amber Fisher and Ariana Ahmed, U4N

This winter term, Bancroft's hosted a group of Year 5 pupils, from a mixture of local primary schools, in the annual Saturday Morning Challenge. This consists of ten weekly sessions ranging from building dens in Epping Forest to making fresh pasta with the school chef.

Alongside the hardworking staff, a group of Upper Fourth and Lower Sixth volunteers were lucky to be a part of this valuable experience. Despite some challenges with working with the young children, we learnt a great deal, whether it was skills for working with children or learning facts alongside them each week. It was a very enjoyable experience for us, not to mention how much the children must have learnt. This shows in the feedback the children gave us at the end of the Challenge when many parents commented on the skills their children had picked up. In fact, many of the children have shown interest in joining Bancroft's in Year 7. The Challenge ended spectacularly with a well-rehearsed play and a great video which showed the progress.

As the weeks went by, we saw the children's confidence grow and watched as they became more enthusiastic in the various tasks. This was especially true of some of the shyer children and it was extremely rewarding to see how we had contributed to this.



Haven House Enterprise Team

Eleanor Channer, L6S

On 7 October, a group of four L4th (Sabina Talbot, Sehrish Alam, Harry Blisset and Amber Chowdhury) and four L6th (Emilia Parsons, Matthew Dean, Ben Hughes and myself) attended the launch of an enterprise project in aid of Haven House. Each of the six teams competing from local schools were given £50 seed capital by construction company, Galliard Homes, with the aim of reinvesting it to produce £1500 for Haven House.

So far, we have held bake sales, had people throw sponges at Mr Brennand and Mr Dickinson at East House Family Evening and helped organise the Christmas Fundraiser. Before Christmas, we were treated to a day out by our Galliard Homes mentors, who took us to two of their construction sites. One involved an extensive tour around a large amount of scaffolding and the other around some of their latest and very swanky, £4 million apartments on the South Bank. Whilst some of our photos and videos were, for some members of the team, vertigo-inducing, the views were spectacular. The highlight, however, was of course the free Nando's, courtesy of Galliard Homes



This term, we are planning a 'Haven House Hopstacle Course' for the Prep School on 14 February, with all proceeds going straight to Haven House. Thank you to everyone who has already supported us through donating or helping us organise an event and we hope to see as many of you at our future events as possible to help raise money and awareness for a great cause!

OBA News

Mrs S Day, OBA Administrator

The Old Bancroftians' Association continues in its aims to maintain links between members, the School and the Bancroft's Foundation. Over the last few months we have run a series of very successful events.

OBA Annual Dinner

On 18 October 2019 the School welcomed a fantastic turnout of more than 130 Old Bancroftians to the 113th Annual Dinner held in the Dining Hall. We were delighted to catch up with more recent leavers from 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2014. The President was also well supported by his year group. Pre-dinner drinks were followed by an excellent meal provided by our super Bancroft's catering team. Post-dinner speeches were both entertaining and informative from the OBA President Steve Dodd, his son OB Matt Barrett and the Head, Simon Marshall.

OB London City Drinks

An informal drinks evening for OBs took place on the 13 November at Balls Brothers, Bury Court, London. It was a great location and venue to catch up with our OB community, OBA Committee members and Head, Simon Marshall for drinks and a bite to eat.

OB Golf Society

At the recent AGM at Chigwell Golf Club, we preceded the meeting with 18 holes of golf followed by lunch. The winner of the event and the Michael Steward Trophy was Lionel Smith with an outstanding score of 44 points. After lunch we conducted our AGM and elected officers for 2020. Roger Booth presented OB Frank Davis with the Woodford Bowl for his success at the Autumn Meeting at Thorpeness. This adds to his five previous successes in the competition in 1976, 2003, 2006, 2011 and 2012.



Looking ahead, the OBA continues its programme with the Northern Dinner in Chester in April, the Five and Ten Years On Reunion at the School for the leavers of 2009 and 2014 in May, OBs' Day on Sunday 28 June, and the 114th OBA Annual Dinner in October. Please do sign up to <https://www.bancrofts.org> our engagement and mentoring platform for all the Bancroft's Community.



Parents' Association Christmas Fayre

Mr A Ross, PA Secretary



Saturday 30 November saw the sun shining for the Bancroft's Prep Christmas Fayre. Everyone, especially the children, enjoyed themselves with the bouncy Snow Globe and Tea Cups being very popular.

Mrs Dalton was kept busy providing what seemed a never ending supply of candy floss. And, as much as we tried, we never have enough chocolate or teddies for the tombolas. Well done to the Prep 2 pupils and Mrs Adams who planned, organised and ran their own stalls, with the girls' stall raising money for new netball kits, with whatever raised being matched by the PA.

A big thank you to event leads Harleen, Andrew and the Christmas Fayre committee for providing a great event and raising £2,000 towards future PA spending. Finally, the PA would like to thank Mr Layburn, Mrs Life and the fantastic ladies in the Prep Office for the continued support in making it the day that it was.

Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7-18

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