



A Sure Thing...

11th June 2021

There are some constants in life: taxes, England batting collapses and the weather gets unbearably hot as soon as pupils start to sit exams.

And so, this week was no exception. Despite the heat all boys in Years 3-8 coped beautifully with the assessment schedule and many of them have told me they genuinely enjoyed showing off their skills and knowledge.

Lockdowns have provided many challenges, not least to boys and teachers (and parents) getting through the curriculum – early signs from initial data crunches suggest we are very much where we should be – which is a huge credit to all!

The 'ultimate' set of exams for THS boys is of course Common Entrance. For 120 years pupils have been sitting such exams and they provide a fitting substantiation for the boys' studies.

This photo shows a very happy bunch exiting the Townsend Hall having tackled this year's challenges – let the party begin!

Of course exams create many other challenges both logistical and emotional. All boys behaved impeccably this week whilst moving around the school – giving absolute consideration to others.

We send our thanks and apologies for the inconvenience of having to provide packed lunches this week – at the time of writing I am distracted by aromas coming from the kitchen; Chef Chris is evidently rustling up a celebratory treat.

All in all, although cricket fans shake their heads in disbelief as the wickets tumble and boys' heart rates surge at the thought of exams – there has been a welcoming normality about this week!





THE SPACE RACE

Many (most) would have accepted the undeniable consequences of the (1st) national lockdown last March and would have resigned themselves to the fact that the 2020 THS senior drama production would need to be cancelled.

'Pulling the plug' at the 11th hour (two days before the scheduled dress rehearsal) left Mr Geary with two choices: (i) bin it, or (ii) adapt and produce an alternative version to that originally intended.

All of us have adapted in many ways over the last 15 months – but, Mr Geary, in this instance, took things to another level! Why not change a proposed stage production into a feature film?

Well, after safely filming every scene on stage he was left with hundreds of hours' worth of footage 'in the can'. He switched role from director to editor and over the course of twelve months honed the mountain of material into a three hour epic!

Stage 3 of the (in)famous roadmap allowed us to screen the aforementioned odyssey to audiences who had been waiting so patiently – five shows at half capacity took place during the half term break.

Those who came along were treated to a faultless retelling of *The Space Race* – a dramatisation of humanity's daring first forays away from the home planet.



By landing on the moon, the United States effectively "won" the space race (against Russia) that had begun with Sputnik's launch in 1957. However, these two events are just 'bookends' to a story looking at how the politics of the time and the personalities involved interacted to create such a famous competition. With the main figures, Von Braun and Korolev at the centre, Mr Geary skilfully took us on a journey which taught us many technological details as well as giving us an insight into the 'human condition'.

Directorial/editorial brilliance aside I am sure Mr Geary would agree that the greatest pleasure was derived from being able to invite the 2020 THS graduates to return for a gala evening.

They (and their parents) were unanimous in their appraisal – 'it was definitely worth the wait'!





CLAY TIME

The Year 3 pottery club have been busy this term creating some stunning glazed pottery birds.



YEAR 2

Many thanks to Wilfred in Year 2 for this fantastic write up of the class trip this week!

First of all two men called Nick Morgan and Tim Catchpole showed us a video about Leslie Hammond. After that they showed us some bomb maps. Tim told us about two decoys one was called a starfish decoy and then Tim showed us a tank decoy with fake tanks. Then we walked up to the Air Raid Shelter in St. Leonards Court. I was really excited! When we got there we went down the steps there were four rooms there was a ladies day room, a men's day room, a ladies night room and a men's night room. In the day rooms there were two toilets. Everyone had their own pegs. There were numbers on each bunk bed to show which one was yours. Then we got out of the shelter. I enjoyed the trip and learnt quite a lot.





RECEPTION

On Tuesday this week Reception enjoyed a lovely trip to Richmond park where they took in all the sights, sounds and smells of the space, made nature bracelets and shared a tasty picnic lunch.



YEAR 3

Year 3 also ventured up to Richmond Park this week for a variety of nature based activities. First, the boys were tasked with hiding a raisin before going off to find items on their Nature Scavenger Hunt. Once they had completed the hunt, they were then asked to go and find their raisin. This was connected to what happens with squirrels. Chestnut and oak trees rely on squirrels burying and losing nuts to help disperse seeds that grow into new trees. Afterwards, the boys



were asked to take a squirrel's perspective and create a Treasures and Trials map. For the final activity the boys had to recreate a scene from a book or film made out of items found in nature. Acorn cups became storm trooper helmets, sticks were fashioned into robots and a rather impressive chocolate factory made of leaves and bark rose from the ground. All in all, the boys had a brilliant day getting back to nature.



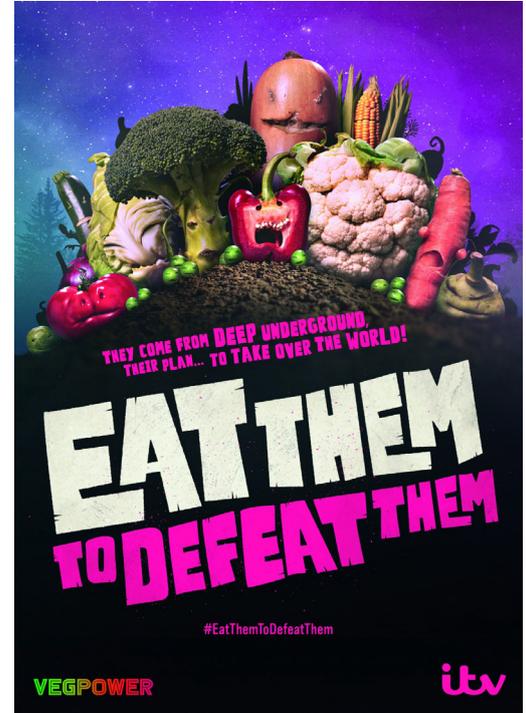
EAT THEM TO DEFEAT THEM

In today's assembly we heard from Chris, our fantastic new chef, about a new nationwide campaign which our catering company are supporting. The campaign is designed to highlight and enhance the image of common vegetables and to encourage our boys to eat and enjoy more of them. This campaign is being supported across the nation, you may have already seen the advertisements on television. This is part of the wider 'Change for Life' campaign.

Over the coming weeks we will be highlighting and educating the boys in the pleasure and diversity of tomatoes, sweetcorn, peppers, carrots, peas and broccoli in particular. This is of course something we can all get involved with at home with discussions about favourite family vegetables, different ways of cooking or preparing vegetables and of course trying some different recipes to include vegetables.

Boys from Reception up to Year 3 will be coming home today with a 'Mission pack' including all sorts of goodies, puzzles and information so please do have a look at it with your son. We will be encouraging all the boys and our families across the school to search for the campaign online and find out more about it too.

We look forward to hearing all about your experiences!



FRIDAY NIGHT FIVES

Below is a photo of the Year 2 boys from their Friday Night Fives' derby match before half-term - THS Tigers v THS Tornadoes! The boys were so excited about it and had a fantastic time playing as a group - well done!





FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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| Mon 14th | - | Year 8 Post CE activities programme begins | |
| Thur 17th | - | Year 6 information evening for Year 7/8 pathway
School Hall | 6:00pm |
| Fri 18th | - | Year 8 CE results morning | |

Calling all (parent) cricketers

Dear THS Parents,

After a fallow year, the THS parents cricket team will be back in action this season and have two fixtures in the diary:-

- * match v Old Vicarage school parents XI on 20th June
- * match v Kings House school parents on 27th June

In preparation for this feast of cricket, the team will be doing a session in the nets at Barn Elms Sports Trust this coming Sunday, 13th June.

If there are any cricketers amongst mums and dads who would like to get involved, please contact Tom Singlehurst at thomas.singlehurst@citi.com

Have a lovely weekend!

