



# SDC - The Week

17 December 2009

### Message from the Headmistress

It is fitting, as the Michaelmas Term draws to an end, that I can report the completed renovation to the front façade of the College. We were delighted to welcome the Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster Abbey and an Old Dunstonian, who gallantly climbed to the top of the building, to perform the ceremony of blessing the refurbished cross.

The term has been successful and busy for the pupils, who have been involved in a number of events. Years 10 and 11 welcomed back Old Dunstonian Alice Craig-Membrey to hear about her gap year at a children's orphanage in Ghana; the Senior School pupils also enjoyed talks from Old Dunstonians, Helen Keppe and Kasey Redler, who spoke of their experiences in Asia and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.

The Visual Arts Society welcomed Turner Prize-winner Martin Creed, and the autumn series of Armstrong Society lectures got underway. Dr Howard Falcon-Long spoke about fossilised forests on Antarctica, Dr Theo Kreouzis gave a fascinating insight into the ever-changing world of LCD TV development and Old Dunstonian, Dr Richard Bogle, talked about 'an explosive way to treat heart disease.'



Pupils and staff celebrated Modern Languages Day by dressing in national costumes. The teachers took part in a Fashion Show while students entertained with a Talent Show. The Lower School House Drama evening was enjoyed by all, with Hecker House the winners with an adapted version of 'Cinderella'. Senior school students

have also had a very successful term of basketball, cross-country, netball and rugby.

Congratulations go to Evi Atkinson, Charles Brook, Jo Kelen and Jake Richards who have progressed to the second round of the Cambridge Schools Debating Competition, and to Year

13 Economics students who, earlier this term, advised the Bank of England on how best to run their monetary policy in the Target 2.0 competition.



Our pupils are fortunate to enjoy trips and visits throughout the UK and overseas. The hockey and netball tour to Cyprus during Exeat was a huge success for pupils and staff, whilst the U15 rugby

tour to Lake Garda gave the boys the experience of playing against a number of good teams. 29 GCSE and IB pupils from Years 10 to 12 embarked on a trip to Berlin, which complemented their study of 19th and 20th century German history. A Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition group ventured to South Wales, whilst a Gold Award training day took place locally.

The Music calendar this term has provided, as ever, a very full programme of events. The Music Scholars' and Exhibitors' Concert and the Michaelmas Concert were of an extremely high standard. I was also delighted to see so many parents attend the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols earlier this week. The church was packed to capacity and glorious choral items lifted the spirit of everyone there.

The Family Society has hosted a number of successful events this term including a Krispy Kreme Doughnut sale for Macmillan Cancer Support, the annual cheese and wine evening and a bustling Christmas market with the new feature of Santa's Grotto, complete with elves!

Pupils and staff have hosted 11+ and 16+ events throughout the term. Feedback from visitors has been extremely positive, with particular emphasis on the warmth and friendliness of pupils and staff, as well as the special atmosphere of the school.

Year 13 students have been particularly busy as they made their

UCAS applications and attended interviews at universities across the UK and beyond. I look forward to sharing news about their offers with you next term. We wish them every success with their examinations in January.

As always, I am grateful to my colleagues for their dedicated commitment and efforts throughout a long and demanding term. Members of staff frequently comment that the pupils at St Dunstan's are a pleasure to work with and the evidence of this is to be seen daily around the College and in the wider community. I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school in January. Meanwhile, I wish you all a relaxing Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

### Message from the Head of Junior School

What an exciting term we have had. The weeks have flown by and as I reflect on all that has been achieved, I am again amazed at the children and how they have responded so positively to the challenges and experiences of their new Year groups.



To highlight just a few moments is always difficult. However, special mention must be made of our assembly for the European Day of Languages led by Madame Smith. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Junior School to appreciate the variety of languages spoken in our community. The

Pre-Prep Harvest Festival was a delight as the whole of Pre-Prep worked as a team to present a celebration in song and dance. In sport our Year 4 Netball and Rugby teams competed for the first time both demonstrating great promise for the future. House competitions have produced fierce contests, and activities have included cross country, rugby and a master-mind quiz. There was great excitement and tension as the term's results were announced by Mrs Poole in the Prep assembly. It was revealed that Usherwood is leading the activities competition by 70 points and Stuart is in the lead by two points for the credit shield.

In their class-based lessons the children have been applying their learning while simultaneously enjoying the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. This term in Design Technology the Prep children have designed, built and evaluated toys. Year 3 and 4 focussed on rolling toys and Year 5 and 6 on pneumatics. Great fun was had by all as they tested the success of their models. In science Year 2 and Year 6 completed units of work on electricity and met to share their knowledge of circuits. Mr Buckle and Mrs Smith were amazed at how confidently the children were able to share their ideas and explain their learning.

The end of the Michaelmas Term has been a busy and exciting time. We have seen magical performances of song, drama and dance. Our Nursery class enchanted us with their performance of 'The Nativity Story'. They sang and acted with amazing confidence under the guidance of Mrs Jarlett and Mrs



Marcinkiewicz. Pre Prep had their teachers and audience on their feet participating in the 'jitter bug' in their tale of 'The Little Donkey' and Year 3 and 4 excelled in their rendition of the 'The Night before Christmas'. The Year 3 and 4 children did an amazing job of speaking in rhyming couplets as well as entertaining us with their

skiing snowflakes! It was lovely to see so many of you at the performances showing your support of the children and appreciating the progress they are making.

A change to our Christmas celebrations was the holding of the Junior School Carol Service in the Great Hall. The grandeur and tradition of the Great Hall really enhanced the occasion resulting in a beautiful, enjoyable service. We were very grateful to the Reverend Alison Newman for joining us and encouraging reflection on the true meaning of Christmas while pulling crackers. It was a lovely occasion, enhanced by the excellent contributions from the Prep choir and band. Thank you to everyone who made donations to our charity, St Christopher's Hospice, and I am pleased to announce that we raised £320.80. So, as the Michaelmas Term ends and the children and staff begin their well-deserved break, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

### The Night Before Christmas

On Monday 14 December, Year 3 and 4 children entertained parents and pupils with their Christmas play, "The Night before Christmas". The children all seemed to love performing, as many of these Year 3 comments show:

When I went home I felt proud and happy – **Ceyda**. The nursery children were laughing their heads off – **Alastair**. I was a mouse and I had a really, really good time - **Adam**. The best part was going through the curtains – **Jakob**. I really liked my skiing move, it was funny – **Megan**. All of the parts were good but the reindeer got to go down a stage door and back up the aisle when nobody noticed – **Patrick**. I liked all of the songs, especially "See them gallop" - **Aaron**. I was a snowflake. We had to wear white and our dance was funny. We went 1,2 3,4,5,6,7,8 and weeeee and weeeee – **Evie**. My dad did an impression of my dance as we went home – **Victoria**. I felt a bit scared before the play because I was afraid of getting it wrong – **Andrew**. I felt very nervous at first but when we got on stage I felt better as I calmed down – **Sophia**. I loved the snowflake dance, I felt as if I was going to burst - **Miles**. I was a reindeer and got to go behind a curtain – **Thomas A**. My mum thought the play was brilliant – **Beth**. It was fun sliding through people's legs – **Amelia**. I thought it was the best play I've ever done – **Callum**. When I wore my tail it didn't feel as if it was on my tee shirt - **Cameron**. I liked all of the costumes – **Sam**. It was funny when we did our snowflake dance, my dad said it was! - **James**. I had to be brave to be a mouse without one ear – **Liam**. I thought my costume was itchy – **Gabriele**. I was a reindeer, it was super fun – **Elly**. I was a white and silver snowflake but my headband hurt a lot (I had to put up with it) - **Luke**. This play was mousetastic! – **Rujeko**.

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