

Bassingbourn Village College

# HERON

Autumn 2017



University Outreach	2
Principal's Message	3
GCSE Success	4
Spanish Exchange	5
Angelsey Trip	7
Open Evening	10/11
Enterprising Students	12
Creative Arts Showcase	16
World Challenge	17
Diving Champ	19
Where Are They Now?	20

# University Outreach

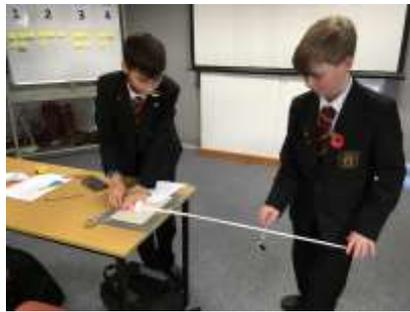
This term we have been lucky enough to take two groups of students to an Experience Day at Cambridge University. A group from Year 8 took part in a Girls Into Physics workshop at Newnham College and the Cavendish labs. A group of Year 9 students spent time at Homerton College and the Cavendish Laboratory. *Josh Ding and Archie Lievesley explain how they spent their day:*

After leaving at 9:15, our group arrived at Homerton, and we were given a tour of the grounds, along with a talk about applying to Cambridge University and other Universities.

In the tour, given by two helpful students, we were introduced to the grand hall, the library, and so many more rooms in the college. Then we had a talk, which we all found very helpful.

After having lunch, we set off to the laboratory. We were greeted by Jacob, the schools liaison officer, who took us around the museum. There were lots of very famous contraptions, like Rutherford's famous invention that led him to discover the structure of the atom, which we use today. We also learned that there were many Nobel Prize winning scientist who had studied at the Cavendish, like J.J. Thomson, who also revolutionised the understanding of the atom, creating the plum pudding model.

Soon after our tour, we were taken to a room where we were asked some questions in a nifty way: we had to write our answers on a post-it note and



stick it on a board. Then we discussed the best answers.

Jacob then introduced us to the various experiments we were to conduct for the remainder of the afternoon. These included an experiment working with counterbalance and getting a weight as far as possible from the end of a table by only using paper & tape (we came up with an original idea that had tape as a strengthening mechanism), and another experiment where we had to use jenga blocks to get as high as possible, as far as possible off the table, and a bridge that crossed a large distance (we won!).



After that we sat down again and were given a very tremendous talk about colour and astrology from Dr Steve Martin, where we got to use red filters and learn about editing of pictures. Then, in conclusion, we were given the results to who did the best in each category of the experiments, and we got chocolate!



Overall, we had a great day at Cambridge, it was a great experience. Thank you to Mr Taylor for arranging the trip, and Miss Lynn for accompanying us.



## Principal's Message

A huge thank you for all your hard work during what has been a very busy and successful term!

I would like to congratulate our newest members of staff on successfully completing their first term and who have already made a massive contribution to BVC. I would also like to thank Cheryl Dean and Dilek Howie for all their hard work, dedication and commitment to BVC. I wish you both the very best for the future. Additional belated thanks and good luck to Lyn Ellis (below, right) and Louise Carter who left us after many years service earlier this term. Good luck to Chordess Harris for her forthcoming maternity leave.

We have enjoyed yet another term with so much packed into it that I barely know where to start... trips to Norfolk and Spain are a reminder of blue skies and sunny days whilst trips closer to home to Cambridge through our partnership with the University have opened our students' eyes to the wonder of higher education and the opportunities available there.

Our continued partnership with the Cambridge Centre for Sixth Form Studies (CCSS) has seen our older students benefit from extension classes in Psychology and Maths whilst Principal Stuart Nicholson (right) came in to speak to our Year 11 students with an inspirational talk on tackling the year ahead. We have been offered some exciting bursary opportunities for BVC students thinking of progressing to sixth form at CCSS, please contact the BVC office if you would like further details.

Students have had great success in computing and debating competitions and I'd like to pass on my congratulations to those involved.

It has been great to welcome some of our prospective students and their families into college to see us in action. I was immensely proud of everyone who was involved in the Open Evening when we were absolutely packed with visitors. It was good, also, to meet pupils (below) from our feeder primary schools who came to compete in our annual Primary Liaison Chess Tournament. Not so good that we were beaten, yet again, by Steeple Morden!

Thank you for your continued support with the new mobile phone policy, I think we all agree that this has resulted in a significantly positive step forward.

Best wishes

Duncan Cooper



We are very proud of all our students' achievements and like to share them publically as often as we can.

To keep up to date with what's happening in college, please make sure you have subscribed to our Parentmail service.

The website ([www.bassingbournvc.net](http://www.bassingbournvc.net)) and weekly mailing keeps parents and students informed of events that have happened and calendar dates to look out for.

For a more 'instant fix', why not follow our news feed on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/Bassingbournvc](http://www.twitter.com/Bassingbournvc)) or Facebook ([www.facebook.com/bassingbournvc](http://www.facebook.com/bassingbournvc))?

Alumni can keep in touch with the college through our dedicated LinkedIn Bassingbourn Village College group ([www.linkedin.com/groups/8369302](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/8369302)) or by emailing [alumni@bassingbournvc.net](mailto:alumni@bassingbournvc.net) and asking to be added to our database.



## Bookworms Excel



**Congratulations to the Year 8 quiz teams who competed in the Central England regional final of the Kids Lit competition earlier this term. They did incredibly well, competing against 26 other teams – The BVC Demons were 6th and the BVC Angels were 12th.**

Well done to: James Pryer, Ami Tobin, Abi Scott, Toby Telford-Reed, Lily Sunderland, Stella Morris, Kai Gilligan and Lucy Whitely.

## GCSE Success

**GCSE Results Day saw another impressive haul of A and A\* grades (or equivalent) for our students.**

Principal Duncan Cooper said: “I am delighted to say that a third of all grades awarded to our students were A or A\* for a second year running. It’s an impressive achievement and shows just how hard our staff and students have worked in a year where the exams have become more challenging and harder to secure these top grades. I am incredibly proud of them all.”

“We are particularly delighted with the grades for languages - in Spanish over half of the cohort achieved an A/A\* grade and in Latin 90% of the cohort secured the top grades. In the new style GCSEs students were also successful in securing the top grades with 50% of all students achieving 5+ in English and Maths.”

25% of the BVC students achieved 8 or more A\*/A (7-9 E & M). Three students achieved A and A\* (equivalent) across the board - Pheobe Elvin, Elizabeth Marriage and Maddie Shohet. Seven students achieved 11 A & A\* equivalent - Finn Chapman, Emily Dow, Ben Hale, Tom Nussey, Patrick Safford and Robert Steyn.

These results came at the end of another extremely successful academic year which saw the college listed in the top 7% of schools in England for pupil progress in English.



## Spanish Exchange



**Our Spanish exchange students enjoyed blue skies and sun on their visit to Albacete in southern Spain.**

Paired with the families of students from Los Escolapios school, the students had a hectic itinerary visiting a bullring, the civic hall, had dancing lessons, went sightseeing, ate churros ... and discovered that the penknife was invented in Albacete!

Albacete is the home town of BVC Spanish teacher Ms Violeta Rios who organised the trip. She said: "I was so proud of all the students - they behaved really well and we all had a great time.

"An exchange is the ideal way for students to practise and learn a language, to make friends and form some long-lasting friendships with a family in another country. I hope this exchange will continue and so build up friendships between our students over a number of years."

The Spanish students will visit their BVC families in March 18.



## French Exchange



BVC students who have signed up for this year's French Exchange were excited to receive letters and gifts from the French students they have been matched with. The French students are from Collège Joseph Bédier which is situated in a small village called Le Grand Serre, near Lyon and Grenoble, in the south-east of France. The French students will visit BVC in January, with a return trip taking place in the summer.

## Site Improvements

**Bassingbourn Village College gets a new glass roof and is proud to be drip-dry!**

As you approach from the drive in South End and look directly in front and up a bit, you may be mistaken for believing that you are approaching the Louvre – such is the new structure, giving height and light to all who enter our school.

The work that took place over the summer holidays and then finished in October half-term was to replace our flat roofs and glass entrance roof as well as a new roof for the bike shed and storage shed. The work was the result of external funding of £330,000.

We think you will agree that the school is looking much improved for having this work done.

The college has been busy developing two more external bids for site development funding. These have been submitted and are aimed at upgrading the electrical system and windows in the creative arts block.



## GCSE Heron Awards

**We welcomed back our summer leavers to the annual GCSE Heron Awards event. Students were honoured for their achievements whilst they were at BVC, receiving cups for achievements in each subject plus special Principal's Awards to those students who had particularly excelled during their time at BVC.**

**Principal's Award winners:** Finn Chapman, Francesca Marshall, Gabba Sutcliffe De Oliveira, Euan Denchfield, Jodie Francis, Riley Gilmartin, Benedict Greenlaw, Natalia Karampetsou, Katie Myerscough, Martin Shodiya.

**Subject award winners:**

Art - Eden Alarcon  
BTEC Construction - Luke Townsend  
BTEC Media - Francesca Churchill  
Computing - Edward Rowe  
Drama - Oscar Davies  
ECDL - Joshua Mutimbanyoka  
English Language - Elizabeth Marriage  
English Literature - Josephine Shoet  
French - Eleanor Bullard  
Geography - Oliver Charlesworth  
Graphics - Olivia Butterworth  
Health & Social Care - Martha Young  
History - Ocean Cook  
Hospitality & Catering - Holly Sole  
Joint Linguist - Emily Dow  
Latin - Sammi Ho  
Leisure & Tourism - Lathan Harris  
Maths - James Tennant  
GCSE Music - Patrick Safford  
Music Tech - Phoebe Elvin

GCSE PE - Benjamin Hale  
VCERT Health & Fitness - Jessica Racher  
Religious Education - Lucy Clay  
Resistant Materials - Robert Steyn  
Sociology - Sophia Racher  
Spanish - Sophie Marriage  
Additional Science - Chloe Mardi  
Further Additional Science - Jordan Pulley



# Anglesey Trip

**Year 7 students have the opportunity to go on a bonding trip when they join us in September. *Rory Haslehurst describes his experience:***

What a great start to our Year 7! We left school at 6am on 20th September and after a six hour coach journey we arrived at our base - a massive residential centre at the side of a wood.

After settling in and sorting out our dorms, we headed into the woods for the first of many activities we would take part in over the next few days. It was all about teamwork and getting to know each other.

Over the next few days we sailed, we canoed, we built rafts, we learnt bush craft and how to light fires. We were taught orienteering, we roasted marshmallows, we ate good food and we got to know our new friends.

It was a really fun and worthwhile trip. We were all really tired when we returned home but all agreed it was a really great experience.



**For the Year 7s who stayed at BVC during the activities week, there were lots of off-timetable fun for them, too.**

They experimented with Land Art, looking at artist Andy Goldsworthy's work. They then gathered natural objects to create images and sculpture in the college grounds.



## Catering and Hospitality

The Catering and Hospitality students have been busy in the kitchen this half term. The year 10 students have been learning new skills and using them to create more complicated products with a focus on improving presentation skills and using garnishes.

The year 11 students undertook a 4 hour cooking session in exam conditions where they created dishes using seasonal produce as part of their controlled assessment project. The students all did really well and we are extremely proud of their focus and endurance to complete such an intensive assessment. Well done Chefs!



## Geography Fieldtrip

Year 11 Geography students travelled to North Norfolk to conduct the physical element of their GCSE fieldwork.

The aim of their investigation was to see whether the shape of the beach in Sheringham protected the town from flooding. The groups used a range of techniques and concepts throughout the day to collect primary data.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the BVC Parents & Friends Association who provided us with the funding to purchase equipment such as ranging poles, clinometers and quadrates. The students have used this data to complete an evaluation of the investigation and will be using the equipment and the skills that they have learnt next term when they participate in an urban study exploring Spheres of Influence.

Let's hope we have such brilliant weather!



For Opening Evening in September, Year 10 GCSE Drama students created a piece inspired by Jim Cartwright's play 'Road' which had its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary performance at The Royal Court Theatre in London earlier this year. This seminal play gives expression to one road's impoverished inhabitants, taking the audience on a journey from the gutter to the stars and back.

Firstly students created a character who could live on the road and wrote back stories for them. They then crafted monologues to capture their character's situation and emotions. We created a movement sequence and transitions to link the monologues together. Several members of the ensemble also learned the lyrics to the iconic Judy Garland song 'Over the Rainbow' to include during the open moments of the piece, as this song is used in the full length play.

The students performed their piece several times during Open Evening and this provided them with invaluable performance experience for their GCSE drama exams and gave them the opportunity to employ their creative writing skills which they will use in their English studies.



**GCSE dance students travelled to Sadlers Wells theatre in London to see Rambert Dance Company perform one of the set works for their GCSE written exam.**

Students had already had a chance to watch a recorded version of the professional work entitled 'A Linha Curva' but nothing beats seeing something live! The piece is influenced by Brazilian culture and the dancers have a live percussive band on stage with them - bringing dance and music into harmonious alignment. The dancers moves are skilfully dictated and tracked by an amazing lighting grid which adds to the carnival tone of the piece as do the vibrant colours of the dancers' costumes which also draws the audience's eye to the Rumba infusion in the dance.

The students saw two perfor-



mances and were treated to a talk from Rambert's Artist Director and Rehearsal director, who had company dancers on stage with them to demonstrate classical and contemporary techniques employed in both pieces to give students insight into the technical and physical training behind the performance pieces.

When we got back into the classroom after the trip it became apparent how much the students had gained additional insight and engagement to this professional work that they are studying.

We are hoping to organise a trip to see Matthew Bourne's Cinderella in January.

# Open Evening



# Open Evening

What a brilliant success our Open Evening was, with over 180 potential students and their families coming along to see the very best of what BVC can offer. Our staff and students pulled out all the stops to give demonstrations in all their favourite subjects – Science, English, Maths, Spanish, French, Latin, Dance, Drama, Music Technology, Craft, Fashion, Catering, History, Geography, RE, Sociology.

Principal Duncan Cooper welcomed over 400 people to his Principal's Address after those present heard first hand from students Loen Groom (yr 7) and Beatrice Cornwell (yr 11) just what life is like studying at BVC.



# Enterprising Students

**Ideas were flowing thick and fast when our Year 8 students had to come up with business ideas in our annual Enterprise Day.**

From robots to dress designs, the students' ideas were discussed, developed and then pitched to their peers during the day-long careers event organised by Form the Future.

Support was supplied by local business mentors who gave up their time to encourage the BVC students in their business endeavours.

John Dow, of accountancy firm PWC, said: 'It was inspiring and exciting to see the creativity, ideas and entrepreneurialism across the whole school year, and how engaged and collaborative everybody was in their respective teams'.

The winning teams were Tectrip (virtual holidays) and AutoPorters (robotic hospital porters) who won Best Pitch and Most Innovative Business Idea respectively.

Our thanks to Form the Future and business mentors Mary Kedward, Strem Chemicals UK; Dan Lee, Zion Landscapes; Chris Sibbons, Cambridge University Press; John Dow, PWC; Andy James, RK Print; Michael Evans, Cambridge Carbon Capture; and Eva Agapaki, Dep of Engineering, University of Cambridge.



**The careers event for Year 9 students this term took the form of a Scavenger Hunt with students tasked to guess the occupation of a number of business mentors.**

Questions such as 'What GCSEs did you sit?', 'Do you work with animals or children?', 'Do you have a degree?' and even 'How much do you earn?' and 'What car do you drive?' enabled the students to make remarkably accurate predictions and allowed them to further question our visitors if they were particularly interested in their industry. Many thanks to our guests Maddie Reynolds, Ion; Justin Crane, The Crane Event; Janet Ritson, Teaching Young People; Matt Lee, Senior Principal Engineer MBDA; Katy Drake, Wysing; Charles Lee, Futureneering; John Hills, Cambridgeshire's Virtual School For Looked After Children.



**Some of our Year 11 students spent a taster day at Cambridge Regional College. Josh Richardson-Game and Charlotte Beck write about their experience:**

“I was looking forward to visiting CRC as I think I want to go there after BVC. I had no idea what the day would be like, but it would definitely be different from a day in school! We spent the day in a huge workshop as I was doing a taster day in car mechanics. The workshop had around 18 cars in it, all old. First of all, we named the car parts. Some were easy, some were hard. I then changed the tyres on a car. I had never done this before but it was quite easy. We had lunch in the classroom part of the workshop and then after lunch we serviced car tyres – checked the tread, checked for bulges etc. This was all new to me and I found it interesting.

“I would definitely like to do this course at CRC after BVC and feel now that I could do this well. The course is mainly practical with a write-up of the course at the end. It was a good day and I learnt a lot about what it would be like to do this course.” Josh.

“I was really nervous before I went to CRC, but it was a really good day and I enjoyed the whole experience. I went for a child care course in the morning – we learnt how to bath a baby properly using a life-like baby. After lunch I went back to the same classroom and had a taster of health and social care. Of the two courses I preferred the childcare.

“After this visit, and visiting other colleges, I am considering going to CRC because I really enjoyed the day and I liked the feel of this college more than the others. I am looking forward to going to another taster day and finding out more information which will help me to make a decision as to what I would like to study next year.”

**BVC hosted a Year 11 Careers and College Fair as part of our Post16 transition. Representatives from all the local 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges plus employer representatives from ION, Johnson Matthey, Ernst Young and The Royal Navy were present, with representatives on hand to answer student queries. Students also received copies of all the college prospectuses. Year 11s have now completed their applications to colleges and apprenticeships, with interviews and offers expected next term.**

We are also coming to the end of the first batch of Business Mentors. We have had over 30 Year 11 students meeting monthly with our Business mentor volunteers with their last meeting being in December. The new batch of mentors will start with Year 10s after Christmas.



## Computing success

Over 300 BVC students took part in a national computing competition, with Year 10 student Noah Telford-Reed winning full marks and an invitation to compete at the next round in Oxford.

The competition was entered by all students in Y7, 8 and 9 and those in Y10 doing the GCSE Computing course. The Bebras Computing Challenge introduces computational thinking to students and is organised in over 40 countries and designed to get students all over the world excited about computing.

The Senior (ages 14-16) group's average score (105.4444) was higher than that for the region (Cambridgeshire: 99.0392) and across the country (88.6983).



### Top 4 in Year 7

1. Robert Thompson 118
2. Liam Thorpe 111
3. Rosina Summers 108
4. Ella-Ruby Slade 105

### Top 4 in Year 8

1. Toby Telford-Reed 125
2. Lucy Whitely 122
3. Annabel Carlile 113
4. Jack Foster 111

### Top 4 in Year 9

1. Adam Russell 173
2. Beth Makower 148
3. Jon Cheeseright 136
4. Gemma Weston 131

### Top 4 in Year 10

1. Noah Telford-Reed 200
2. Edward Weekes 109
3. Oliver Haley 107
4. Oliver Pulley 105

**BVC parent and artist Beth Lievesley dropped into college with an early Christmas present for our Library – a copy of the Cambridge Art Book.**

The book is jam-packed full of art showing Cambridge through the eyes of its artists and features one of Beth's intricate collages of Trinity College.

As a collage artist, Beth specialises in creating unique pictures of buildings and landscapes. Before she produces each piece in her Ashwell home studio, Beth spends a period of time researching the subject to discover interesting information that is unique to the image. She then sources a variety of collage materials to use in the artwork that reflects her findings - these can be old maps, dates, stamps, song sheets, historical text & other paper ephemera to make artwork that draws the viewer in and immerses them in both the history and beauty of the image.

Mum to Yr 10 student Archie, Beth said: "I hope the BVC students enjoy and are inspired by the Cambridge Art Book – it contains a eclectic mix of artwork, showcasing a broad range of contemporary styles of art based on our local city.

"My handcut paper collage is of the Wren Library in Trinity College which was completed in 1695 to the design of Sir Christopher Wren. Among the special collections housed in the building are medieval manuscripts, early editions of Shakespeare, Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica* and AA Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* manuscripts.

"Both Newton and Milne were students at Trinity and my collage contains pages from their work. It also contains quotes from the great poets Tennyson and Byron who also studied at Trinity."



**BVC students Iain Lynn and Edward Evans took to the floor to debate the merits of non-military national service as part of a national debating competition.**

The boys were representing the school in the district heat of the English Speaking Union's Mace debating competition and their arguments were so convincing that they won themselves a place in the regional finals.

The competition was held at Northampton High School and the boys shared the debating chamber with students from Bedford School, Stowe, Northampton High, Moulton College and Chenderit School.

Rebecca Boxall, BVC teacher of English and debate coach, said: "I am so proud of our boys – they did amazingly well.



"Debating has really taken off at BVC and we have students from all years attending our club sessions and supporting our competitors. This really was a team effort with Debate Club members working alongside Iain and Edward to prepare their arguments."

**Public speaking and debating were the subjects of a special workshop run at the college by James Reeve, an expert from the English Speaking Union.**

The ESU awarded the college a bursary for the workshop having been impressed by the BVC team's efforts in their first ESU competition last year. The event also attracted students from other schools in the Anglian Learning trust.

10 BVC youngsters from years 10 and 11 took part in the workshop, which ended in teams debating two topics –

"This house would ban all research and development of morality-enhancing drugs" and "This house would not make first contact with uncontacted human populations".

Principal Duncan Cooper said: "We are obviously very proud of the achievements of our debating team - and really pleased to see more and more of our students showing an interest in debating and public speaking.

"Oracy skills are so important in many aspects of our lives and our students are very fortunate to be able to develop such skills thanks to funding from the English Speaking Union."



# Creative Arts Showcase





Former BVC students have been talking of the 'spectacular journey' they made during the summer as part of a trip to Malaysia. 18 former year 11 students took part in the trip, accompanied by teachers Jude Shortt and Rachel Ward.

Organised as part of a World Challenge, the students travelled to Kuala Lumpur where they worked with Burmese refugees, in addition to trekking in the Cameron Highlands.

With a population of approximately 1.5 million, Kuala Lumpur is a melting pot of Malaysian, Chinese and Indian Cultures and the Bassingbourn group spent their time working in a school which caters for children up to the age of eighteen who are Burmese refugees; some of whom are orphans.

Ms Shortt said: "It was a truly life changing experience for the whole team. The students worked so hard to make a lasting impact on the lives of this community and should be so proud of their achievements which left a lasting footprint of their visit."

For their trek in the Cameron Highlands, complete with tea plantations and rainforests, the students were



responsible for sourcing their own transport and accommodation as well as planning the trek itself. Their

resilience and determination was rewarded with a White Water Rafting experience on the Kampar River.

Katie Myerscough said: "It was definitely a rewarding experience. From learning to budget to valuing my life back home, it changed my perspective on the way I live and strengthened my belief in my abilities.

"The Cameron Highlands were a particularly memorable experience, as we were able to explore virgin rainforest that gave each one of us a very immersive view of the extensive wildlife and vegetation that Malaysia had to offer.

Tom Nussey added: "The high point of the trip was spending time with the large group of Burmese refugees, of varying ages - from 6 to 70, during our stay in Kuala Lumpur. We spent several days teaching the children. We each had our own class and were tasked with delivering a structured set of lessons, which proved to be both rewarding for us and useful for the children involved. It was useful to talk to people our age from a completely different culture."

Fundraising for the trip took place over two years with the students raising the cash through car washing, babysitting, bag packing at Tesco, waitressing, quiz nights, stall at village fairs, odd jobs ... and even selling prized possessions on ebay.



# Festive Fun



The end of term saw lots of festive fun with our annual Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas lunch and a Christmas party in the Hive.



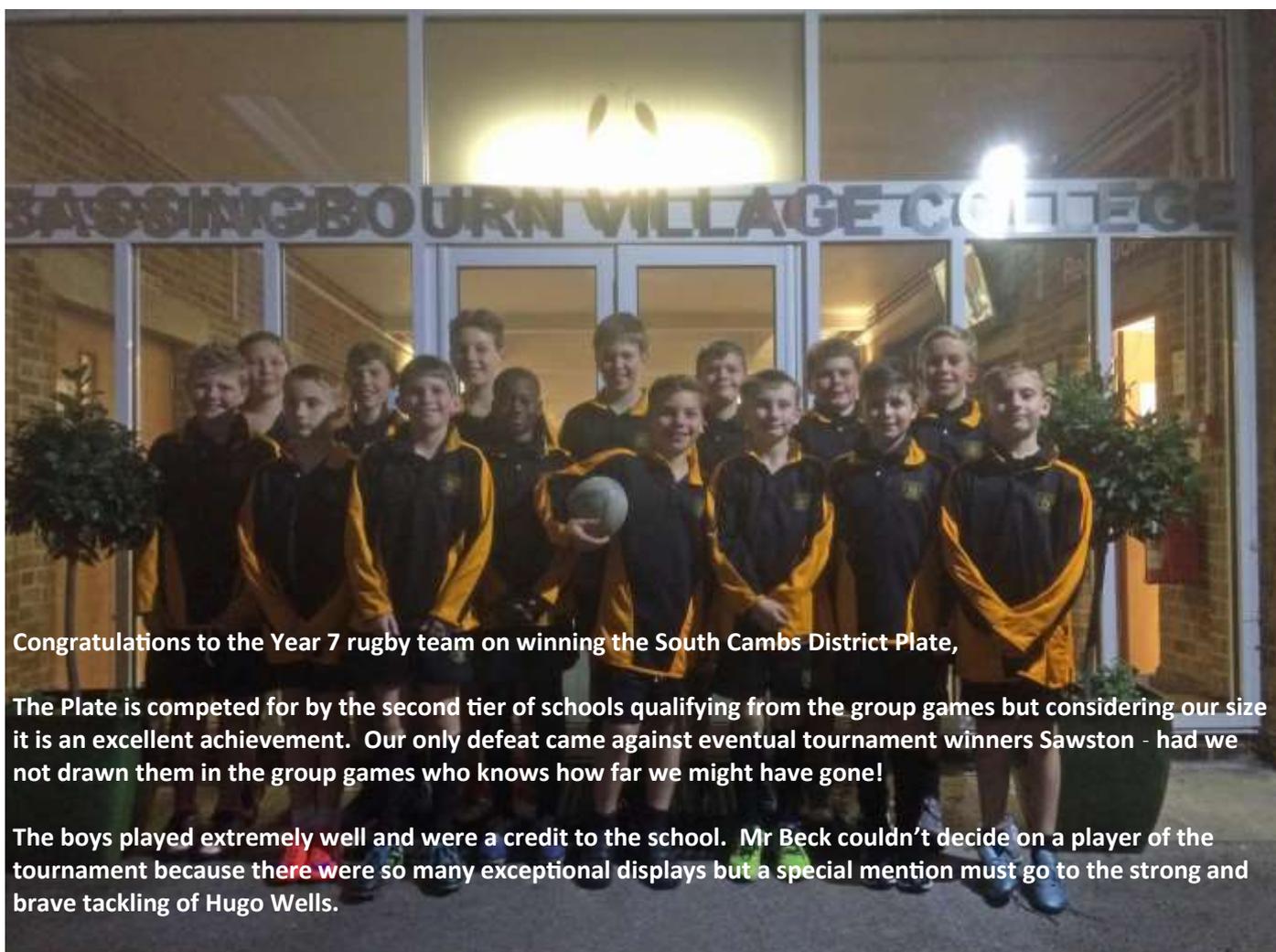
**Year 10 student Ben Cutmore is currently making a big splash in the diving world, having had great success in several competitions this term.**

So far he has:

- Competed in Bolzano, Italy, for England coming home with 2 Golds and a Silver.
- Attended an assessment camp for his place in this year's Junior National squad.
- Competed in the Irish National and Open Championships, winning 2x Gold as Junior and Senior platform champion.
- Took part in the Luton Challenge National Championships, winning Gold in 1m springboard, 10m platform and the pairs event.
- He travelled to Montreal CA for the Camo World International, having success with Silver on 1m and 3m springboard and Gold on 10m platform.



Ben has also been breaking his personal bests throughout the season. BVC is very proud of Ben's dedication and commitment to his sport.



**Congratulations to the Year 7 rugby team on winning the South Cambs District Plate,**

**The Plate is competed for by the second tier of schools qualifying from the group games but considering our size it is an excellent achievement. Our only defeat came against eventual tournament winners Sawston - had we not drawn them in the group games who knows how far we might have gone!**

**The boys played extremely well and were a credit to the school. Mr Beck couldn't decide on a player of the tournament because there were so many exceptional displays but a special mention must go to the strong and brave tackling of Hugo Wells.**

# Alumni News

**Mark Christie is currently Head of History at Bassingbourn Village College - having spent his teenage years here as a student.**

## **When were you a pupil at Bassingbourn Village College and did you have any other siblings here?**

I was a pupil from September 1978 until June 1983. My younger sister, Nicola, attended April 1980 until July 1982.

## **Any particular memories of what you did at BVC?**

Much of my home life was not good and so coming to school was something I enjoyed as an escape.

I loved my PE lessons, especially football, rugby and hockey. I remember not being allowed in the school building at break and lunch time even in the coldest weather. I was a prefect so enjoyed the room we had put aside for us. I liked the lunch times in the 'Zodiac Club' (The Hive now) they felt like a treat. My fondest memory is meeting the first great love of my life here. That was a special time.

I also have fond memories of the staff v pupils' sports fixtures .... Lots of boys hanging off the man mountain who was Mr Billings. Maybe we were just small and weak!

## **Memorable or inspirational teachers?**

I remember so many teachers. My form tutors, Mrs Bibby, Mrs Manton and Mr Smith were all good. In lesson, Mr Snow in PE and Miss Gilpin in English were inspirations and I respected them greatly. The history teacher, Mr Ellison, was a unique delight whom I was equally terrified of and mesmerised by. A special mention should go to Mr Debacker ('Paddy'), my French teacher, who came searching for me on the day I was sitting my French 'O' Level. He got me there in his car but I only gave him a 'E' in return!

## **Where did you go after BVC?**

I left home when I left school and struggled through 18 months working for the Co-op department store in Cambridge. I then stumbled into pneumatic engineering for 15 years. I decided on a change and went to university at 30, got a degree in History and Law and was lucky enough to do teacher training at Homerton.

## **What is your current career?**

I claim to be a teacher. I am. I am happy to be one and it's a joy to be with the young, energetic pupils.

## **What led you to that?**

A general feeling of dissatisfaction allied to a real love of history. I took A levels as evening classes in my 20s and

that made me feel I could change my situation. My modelling career had also gone a bit quiet.

## **Have you travelled during your studies/career?**

Not too much. I like being near home. I used to spend a lot of time driving around East Anglia and really enjoyed that. We live in a beautiful and under appreciated area.

## **What strikes you most about BVC now, compared to when you were a student here?**

The basic school building is much the same but the layout of rooms is very different. For example, the music room was a Chemistry room, drama was Biology and Physics. My form room, room 15, was a needle work room and later a computer room with 3 PET computers. The back car park was surrounded by mobile classrooms for languages, History and a remedial classroom. The science block wasn't there but the infamous, and cold, outdoor pool was where the language block is currently.

I do miss the large amount of farming related objects around the school.

The area is much wealthier. The school feels less a part of the community in some ways too. The school has lost its rural feel to a large degree and the lack of farm is a shame. The school is better but I so think the pupils from my time were smarter, cooler and better looking.

## **Any advice you'd like to pass onto BVC students now?**

Work hard and appreciate the staff. You are on a journey which we have all been on. Smart people take the advice of wise, old adults. We are all hoping for the same thing, great success for our pupils, so try to be part of the team.



*Mr Christie now and then (right, with Stuart Vie)*

If you are a former pupil of Bassingbourn Village College and would like to be kept up-to-date with college news and future reunions, please email your details to [alumni@bassingbournvc.net](mailto:alumni@bassingbournvc.net)