



HERON

SPRING 2021

Bassingbourn Village College

BVC Trek to Colombo!

As part of our drive to encourage our community to be physically active during lockdown, a 7000 mile trek to Sri Lanka was developed. The premise was to encourage students and staff to step away from their devices and to run, walk or cycle each day between Monday 8th February and Sunday 21st February. With this being such an ambitious target to reach, it was decided the trek would become a fundraising opportunity for everyone to get involved with. To encourage the students to engage further they were given the choice of which charity the trek would support. The student body overwhelmingly selected Tom's Trust, a local charity that provides support for children with brain tumours and their families. To enable some competitiveness we made both the distance travelled and the fundraising intercollege competitions.

Our progress was tracked daily with students and staff submitting their distances reached each day with the combined result published the next morning. Every day there was cultural and historical information about where each college had reached along with how much money they had raised; thus allowing students to learn about countries and cultures they may never physically visit. By the end of the two weeks, the students and staff had surpassed both the distance and our fundraising targets. The final distance travelled was a staggering 8559 miles, this amazing accomplishment would have allowed us to trek back up the east coast of India and reach the border with Bangladesh! Our winners of our intercollege competition was Keller who collectively completed 2558 miles.

Most impressively the total amount raised for the very deserving Tom's Trust was a fantastic £4,289.83 – smashing our £3,000 initial target. This will cover the cost of vital psychological treatment for four children with brain tumours and 12 family members for the next year.

COLLEGE	CHARITY FUNDS	TOTAL MILEAGE	LOCATION	INFORMATION	DAY 11 – 18.2.21
KELLER	£550	1387.4	Korosten, Ukraine	<p>There is an annual potato pancake festival in September during the festival a "potato pancake marathon" is held. The marathon, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato pancake powerlifting – "equal with two heavy jugs" full of pancakes • Throwing potato pancakes in a bowl with your cream • Throwing potato pancakes to a partner 50m away 	
LUTHER KING	£648	1135.3	Biala Podlaska, Poland	<p>Biala Podlaska was an important village during the 17th century when it belonged to the Radziwiłł family. Only a gateway, two towers, and a chapel of the Madonna with Child remain. The city is noted for its gentry and rapid rebuilding. An important area of industry was destroyed with most of the city in World War II.</p>	
MOORE	£722	1256	Phlyone, Ukraine	<p>Phlyone is one of the largest and most beautiful towns in Ukraine. It is a beautiful town with many interesting sights including churches, parks, and a large brick tower. It is a beautiful town with many interesting sights including churches, parks, and a large brick tower. It is a beautiful town with many interesting sights including churches, parks, and a large brick tower.</p>	
SHAKESPEARE	£538	1144.8	Horbów-Kolonia, Poland	<p>The nearest town is Horbów, right on the border with Belarus. Having World War II in Horbów was specifically caused by the Soviets in September 1939, and then by the Germans from 1941 to 1944. During this occupation most were persecuted in the ghettos. The Germans also established a concentration camp for Polish prisoners of war in Horbów.</p>	
WHOLE SCHOOL	£2458	4923.5	Gadra Road, India	<p>Gadra Road is a well-settled village of Indian and migrants and like most other villages, bonded in the organized handicrafts trade. The border villages of the Thar Desert are inhabited by Hindu and Muslim caste border and other farmers who during drought migrate to distant places in search of water and fodder.</p>	



A message from our Principal



There is no denying the spring term presented a multitude of challenges to our community. Once again I was immensely proud of how our students responded to these and the resilience they continue to demonstrate through a time of constant uncertainty.

Our teaching staff rose exceptionally to online learning and this time we were able to offer all our students 90% of live lessons. Our wonderful student support team ensured our students who need additional support, had TAs available in these lessons. As a result, our student engagement during the latest lockdown was incredibly high.

I remain grateful for the support that our students received from you at home during this time – once again many of you were working full time while supporting more than one child with online learning which is incredibly challenging.

For those students that did come into school during lockdown, our Cover Supervisors and TAs did an amazing job of supporting students with their learning, especially as many students were engaging with different subjects simultaneously. I have no doubt that through collaboration we have all ensured our students remain in the best possible place with their education. Over the course of the next term we will be looking to revisit work that took place in lockdown to re-enforce this learning while providing those students who need it with additional support.

When we returned to school the next challenge was the massive task of testing our whole student body three times in a two week period. This presented huge pressures and we needed a high number of volunteers from the staff and our wider community to support this effort. I cannot thank enough those members of our community that stepped up and volunteered. Without you we would not have been able to run such a successful operation.

I remain saddened that once again another issue of the Heron is unable to reflect the plethora of activities we would normally be involved in during this term. Rest assured as soon as it is safe and permitted we will be offering our students an abundance of exciting extra-curricular activities.

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

To ensure you are up to date with what's happening at Bassingbourn Village College, please make sure you have subscribed to our ParentMail service.

The weekly student PowerPoint and Weekly Mailing keep both 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) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/bassingbournvc)

Parents interested in helping with our Parents and Friends Association can email PFA@bassingbournvc.org

Or follow our PFA Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/BVCPFA/

Student successes

During the latest lockdown a number of us took on new challenges and Eddie Cook of 8 Darwin was no exception. Eddie accomplished an amazing achievement by running 100 miles raising over £1200 so far for the very deserving charity, Children with Cancer.

In January, Eddie started to run a mile every day with his mum to maintain his fitness levels and to ensure he was getting outside every day. When he had reached 30 miles his mum suggested that to challenge himself further perhaps he could push himself to get to 100 miles and raise £100 for charity.

Eddie took on this challenge and selected to raise money for Children with Cancer; a charity close to his heart as a good friend had fought and survived cancer as a child at only 12 months old. Eddie was therefore very aware of the amazing support the charity offers families indeed.

Initially Eddie was only running with his mum but after hearing of his challenge two of his friends joined in to support him which gave Eddie further motivation to keep going! At the end of lockdown Eddie had reached his 100 mile target and has smashed his £100 target with his fundraising efforts standing at £1200.



Roy Burrell Winners 2021

The Roy Burrell Awards, organised by the Cambridge & District Secondary School Sport Association, take place every year and recognise the amazing sporting talent across the county. Unfortunately the award evening was unable to go ahead this year but we did still have some fantastic achievements amongst our Year 11 sports super stars!

Aimie Taylor was recognised for Pole Volt, Molly Brundle for Swimming, Francesca Venn and Georgina Adcock for Dance, Olly Dwyer for BMX, Fraser Clapham for Archery and Charlotte Parr for Rowing.

Well done to all our winners!



BVC Test Centre

As part of the ongoing initiatives to keep our community safe, prior to half term we set up a Covid Testing Centre which would allow us to test students and staff for COVID using the lateral flow tests. Having never undertaken the likes of this before, it was a huge logistical task and required many of the non-teaching staff to come together, undertake the training and facilitate the testing for the school.

Our dance studio was set up by our site team with a number of testing bays and initially we were running around 100 tests a week. From 8th March with the full return of all students and staff to the school the requirement was for each student to be tested 3 times in a 2 week period. This meant we had approximately 2,000 tests to carry out in two weeks. The team with the help of volunteers worked tirelessly and the testing on site was a fantastic success.

From Monday 22nd March all staff and students now carry out their lateral flow tests at home and the Testing Centre is once again a dance studio. While this was certainly a challenging task, the process did show the school community working together and supporting each other through the ongoing trials we are presented with.



Well being Week at BVC

To support our students with their return to school, our first week full week back after lockdown was Wellbeing Week here at Bassingbourn Village College. During mentor time throughout the week we focused on our mental wellbeing and ran small workshop sessions on how to think positively, deal with stress, the power of mindfulness, how to support each other as well as how to reconnect with class mates and friends after such a long period of time at home.



Students and teachers alike found this time to focus on our mental wellbeing every day, very useful to explore and discuss the raft of emotions that have been felt throughout the last year with the global pandemic.

We continue to remain focused on our students mental wellbeing and have introduced Wellbeing Wednesday as part of our weekly mentor time.

Alumni Interview—Sarah McMeechan

When were you a pupil at Bassingbourn Village College?

I attended BVC from September 1989 to June 1994.

Any particular memories of what you did at BVC?

I immensely enjoyed my time at BVC and have many fond memories. The sense of community within the school and the opportunities to be involved in extra curricular activities, laid good foundations for my future studies and career and gave me the confidence and motivation for success.

Memorable or inspirational teachers?

Mr Johnson was an inspirational sports teacher, who really did motivate us to achieve. Madame Bell was a fantastic language teacher, who motivated me to go on to study French at A level and also inspired my continued interest in languages, which has led me to take evening classes in Italian as an adult.

Where did you go after BVC?

After achieving 11 G.C.S.E's, I attended Hills Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge to complete my A Levels in English, History, French and an AS level in Dance.

I then obtained a 2.1 LLB (hons) Law degree from Staffordshire University in 1999.

Where do you live now?

13 years ago, after a decade of living in North London, I chose to relocate back to the area, with the intention of settling down to have a family. I now live in Royston and have 3 primary aged children. I love the area and all it offers, including being close to Cambridge and in easy commute to London. I was also keen for my own children to have the same positive experiences I had growing up here.

What is your current career?

I was 'called to the Bar' in August 2000 and I am a practicing Barrister, with a specialist practice in Family Law. I have previous experience in criminal prosecution and defence work, however my current practice now mainly involves child protection. I attend Court in London and the surrounding counties, on an almost daily basis (albeit during the pandemic, most of my court hearings have taken place remotely as video hearings).

What led you to that?

I recall speaking with a 'careers advisor' at BVC, who after reviewing my favourite subjects (which were English and Drama), gave me various different career options to consider, including 'Lawyer'. I did a little research into what a Lawyer was and became fascinated with the skill of 'advocacy' and 'performing in court', motivating me to become a 'Barrister' and to complete a Law degree.

After undertaking work experience in both Barrister's chambers and firms of Solicitors, after my degree, I enrolled on the Bar Vocational Course, in London, to learn the core skills necessary to become a Barrister. Following interviews, I then obtained a 'pupillage', which is a 12 month training period to qualify as a Barrister. During the first six months, you shadow the cases of experienced Barristers and in the second six months, you can start to take work of your own. After completing my training and qualifying as a Barrister in August 2000, I then applied for 'tenancy', which is an invitation to join a set of Barrister's chambers as a self employed practitioner and have been 'on my feet' ever since.

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

My advice to students is to take the opportunity to involve yourselves in extra curricular activities to broaden your interests and skill sets. My career had a clear path but many do not and it is important to find out what motivates you to want to achieve. Aim for progress, not perfection. The saying, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again' is an enduring life lesson, enabling you to develop perseverance to achieve your goals.

