



THE BORLASE REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the July edition of The Borlase Review.

This has been the half term which has marked the culmination of our 400th anniversary celebrations most notably the grand Exhibition & Open Day and the Ball on July 5th, and the Borlase Bash summer music festival on July 12th. Both events brought together the very best of Borlase, past and present:

We welcomed Old Borlasians back to the school, some of whom had attended as long ago as the 1940s while others of whom had travelled from as far away as Canada and Australia to join us. They were treated to a fantastic trawl of the archives which has led to the further adornment of the Cloisters with photographs of sports teams through the ages, commemorative displays illustrating key points in the school's history, a wonderful third verse to the school song *Te Digna Sequere* composed by Mr Robson, Harry Elliott's quite brilliant digital reconstruction of the school's architectural development since 1624 to the opening of the Centenary Hall in January of this year. Meanwhile, Miss Mountfield's play brought the school's history and forming characters in it from the serious (and sometimes unscrupulous) headteachers from days gone by to a very amusing send-up of a certain Welsh bundle of energy in the Theatre which bears her name.

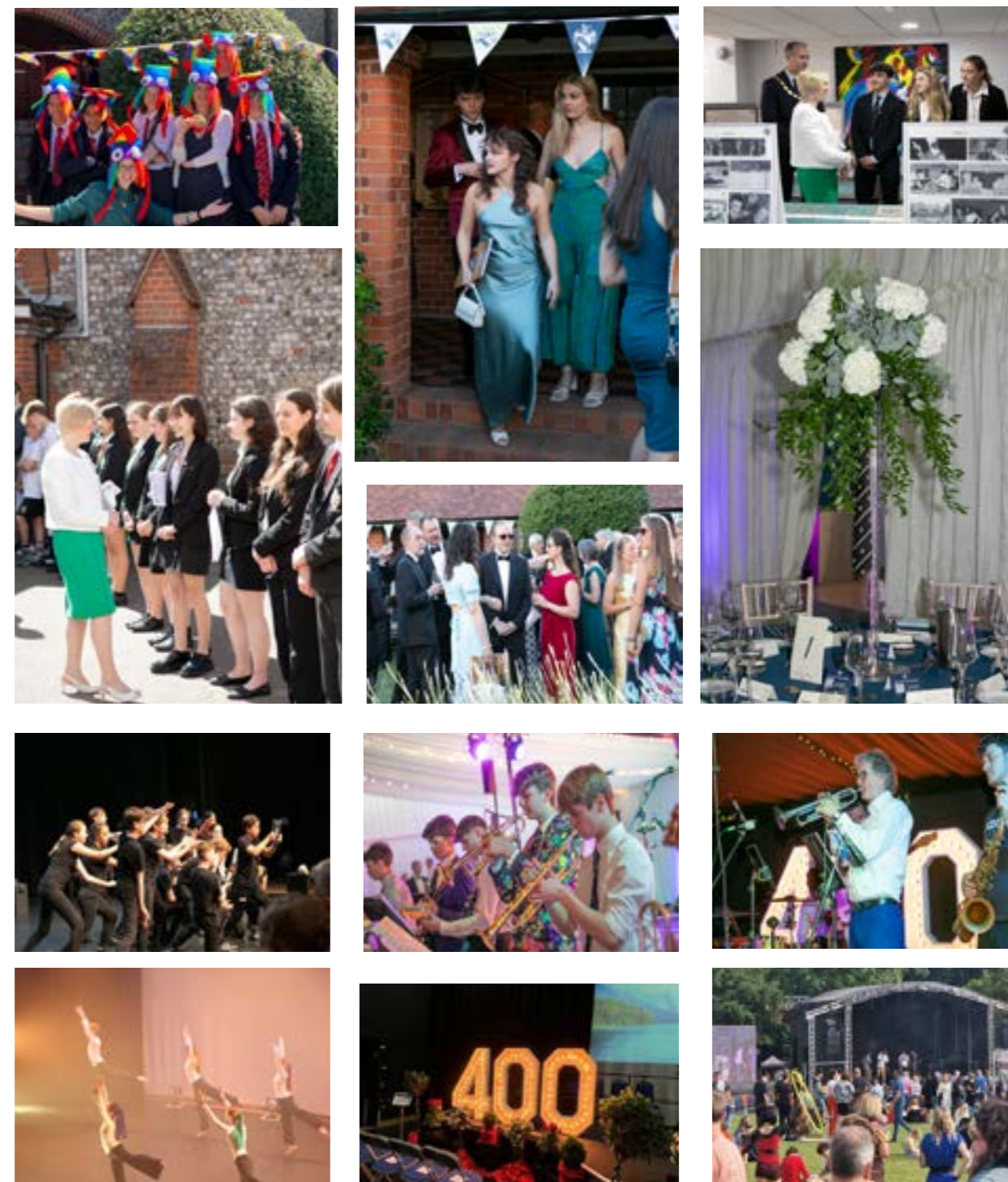
At the Birthday Bash, Colonel's Meadow was transformed into a festival showground complete with main stage, second stage, bar serving the very popular Borlase 400 beer from Marlow's own Rebellion brewery, ferris wheel, food and drink vendors, car show organised by outgoing (in every sense of the word) Year 13 student, Rahil, and various side shows and attractions to keep children (big and small) entertained throughout the afternoon and evening. Meanwhile, the talent on display from the multitude of Borlase bands and ensembles including current students, Year 13 leavers in the forms of West Street and The Fundamentals!, and the alumni band was a testimony to the hard work and support of the Performing Arts team.

Over the coming terms you will hear repeated the three words that characterise the journey that any Borlase student takes as they move through the school from Year 7 through to the Sixth Form: Participation, Responsibility, and Service. These shows were only possible through the contributions made by a huge number of our students, particularly the Year 12s, but also by the incredible vision and dedication of a huge number of staff across the school to whom I am incredibly grateful, as should all the people who attended and enjoyed either of the events I speak of.

This first year at Borlase has been quite a ride but it is a fabulous school, one which provides a fantastic array of opportunities which so many of our students seize upon and about which you can read in the coming pages.



Ed Goodall
Headteacher



Borlase 400 Celebratory events

Sponsored School Walk, Friday 28 June

On Friday 28th June, 800 students took to the hills and woods of Marlow to complete a sponsored walk in aid of Mind and Marlow United Charities. Celebrating the school's 400th birthday on the day Sir William Borlase was knighted, depending on their age the students walked distances of 8km or 12km (with a bold 50 including Year 7s opting to complete the 16.24km "Full Borlase" option!). With mid-route treats of Haribo or ice pops and only a few accidental detours, the walk was completed with great enthusiasm and has so far raised over £6,000 to be divided equally between the two charities. Crossing the finish line as they lived the school's motto of 'follow things worthy', three students exclaimed "I'm so proud of us!" You can pledge your support at The Borlase 400 School Walk GiveWheel page [here](#).

Open Day & Exhibition, Saturday 29 June

Pass down West Street and you might not notice that there is a secondary school housing close to 1,200 students behind the brick and flint facade. On Saturday 29th June, Sir William Borlase's Grammar School opened its doors to current and former students and parents, and members of the wider community for a celebration of its 400th birthday. In the morning, Countess Howe, Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, formally opened The Centenary Hall, a beautiful social study space for Sixth Form students, now housing a 400-year timeline of the school's history set against the national and global context. Attendees on the day were treated to specially-written dance and drama pieces in the Theatre, pop-up drama performance, an incredible digital rendering of the evolution of the school's buildings by Old Borlasian, Harry Elliot, cake sale, hockey matches contested by teams in the school's current and original colours, and musical pieces in the Chapel including a third verse of the School Song with descant, written and composed by English teacher and organist, Hugh Robson. A great day was had by everybody and the bottles of "Borlase 400" beer, brewed by our friends at Rebellion Brewery proved to be particularly popular! The whole school provided the backdrop to a history exhibition supported by The Marlow Society with student guides on hand to explain the significance of different areas to the visiting public including a couple from Massachusetts whose curiosity was spiked as they walked past and wondered what was going on!

Centenary Gala Ball, Saturday 29 June

350 guests including current and former staff, parents and students came together for drinks in the school's Cloisters before heading to the school's Sports Centre which had been spectacularly transformed into a magnificent venue for the Gala Ball. Speeches were delivered by former students who had attended the school in each decade going back as school 70 years ago "hadn't changed a bit"! Themes returned to in the speeches included

as far as the 1940s - former student, John Barry, quipped that some of those who had left the school 70 years ago "hadn't changed a bit"! Themes returned to in the speeches included the strength of friendships forged during their time at the school, of school trips and endeavours on the sports field, developing the confidence to challenge the status quo, and in every case, the importance and value of their teachers. There was a great fondness being displayed for the school and all that it had provided for successive Borlasians before the current Headteacher, Ed Goodall, reflected on the the school's current state of health, its recent grading by Ofsted, and the vision for its future commitment to providing the best and broadest education possible for the current and future generations. The night was danced away to a concert band featuring the school's long-serving Music teacher and jazz band conductor, Simon Davie, and Jordan Lee Pirrie on the decks.

Performing Arts Performances, Open Day

Introduction

As part of our 400th birthday celebrations, the school put on a unique and extraordinary History Exhibition and Open Day, on Saturday 29 June. For the first time, the school opened its doors to members of the public to come and view displays and exhibits all about its history, its present and its future. As part of these displays, current staff and students organised a set of live and interactive performances for people to enjoy across the day. This included Hockey matches on the new astroturf, Y7 STEM projects and a fantastic video from alumni student Harry Elliott showing the development of the school buildings over the past 400 years. As ever, the Performing Arts were a key part to this day and were delighted to have the opportunity to present dance, drama and music performances to the hundreds of people who came along. These performances are described further in the articles below.

Borlase 400 Exhibition and Open Day: Cantorum

As part of the live performances for the Borlase 400 History and Exhibition Day on Saturday 29 June, a small group of students from our senior mixed choir, Cantorum, gave short choral performances throughout the day. Taking place in the Chapel, the group of Y12 and Y13 students sang two anthems: Stephen Paulus' The Road Home and Arthur Sullivan's The Long Day Closes three times across the morning, followed in the afternoon by a very special performance of the school song, Te Digna Sequere, which included a new third verse, with text, original harmonies and a new descant written by long-serving English teacher and resident organist, Mr Robson. We were also very pleased to undertake a second performance of the school song at the 400 Ball in the evening, this time being joined by over 300 guests!

The students sang beautifully throughout the day, giving sensitive and highly musical performances, which were much enjoyed by the members of the public who came to listen.



BORLASE 400

My thanks go to them all for their commitment and enthusiasm, both during the day and evening itself, and in the preceding rehearsals. My thanks also to Mr Robson for his wonderful new 3rd verse setting and words! He has given some further detail about his writing below.

Mr Miall

“Some time ago Miss Mountfield asked me if I would write an anthem to celebrate the school’s 400th anniversary. I had previously written a setting of the twenty-third psalm for the 2018 Remembrance Concert and was very pleased to be asked again to compose something for this important commemorative occasion. However, after giving the matter considerable thought I was unable to decide on a suitable text; nothing seemed fitting. Mr Miall suggested as an alternative that I compose a descant melody to accompany the existing version of the school song ‘Te Digna Sequere’. This sounded like a very good idea. Happily there exists a third verse to the song which could in theory be sung with the new descant. On reading this extra verse I was struck by how strongly it communicated the intimate atmosphere of the all-male school which Borlase had once been, but that this tone did not seem quite appropriate for the formality of a modern 400th anniversary celebration. I therefore set about writing a verse which looks back in time and to the future and offers expressions of gratitude for the blessings of life and for the people, living and dead, who have contributed to Borlase since 1624. It is deliberately rather impersonal in tone.

In writing the descant (a high extra soprano line) and slightly altering some of the original harmony, I wanted to add an extra element of grandeur to Samuel Bath’s original tune. This necessitated transposing it down a tone (from F to E flat major) so that the final top note (an A flat) was not too difficult to sing. I also changed the short organ introduction to add a touch of ‘pomp’. I was delighted with the beautiful rendition given on June 29th and must thank Mr Miall and the choir for their hard work. I would just add that while I found the descant and reharmonization relatively straightforward, the writing of the words was, for me, agonisingly difficult. In relation to this I want also to thank Ms Harris and Mr Lofthouse for their comments and suggestions. The whole enterprise was a great privilege for which I am very grateful.”

Mr Robson



Year 9 Drama Performance: Four Centuries in twenty minutes

Spectacular showcase of Borlase’s four hundred years of history.

Sir William Borlase’s grammar school in Marlow has amazed the public with its historical display showcasing the school’s and Marlow’s history over the past four hundred years. It included a slew of talent which was represented through video, dance and the incredible Reduced Performance of Borlase’s History. This performance depicted many pivotal moments of the school’s history, which was portrayed through the best year nine actors the school had to offer. Nineteen actors and four backstage prop and costume masters managed to comprise the twenty minute piece that told the story of one of the oldest schools in the world! All of this would not have been possible of course without the director Miss Rayner, the tech team and the script writer, former Headmistress Miss Moutfield. Despite the play telling Borlase’s story over four centuries key individuals were not skipped over and that included early Headmasters such as William Heather to some of the more recent figures such as Miss Mountfield herself and the current Headmaster Mr Goodall. The school’s recent outstanding Ofsted report was even included in the play.

The actors all really enjoyed performing the play in front of huge audiences but the most enthusiasm was derived from being a part of the four hundred year celebration of Borlase. It was an opportunity of several lifetimes and the actors were so pleased to have had it. The crew backstage were also immensely proud to be a part of this incredible celebration. Although their faces were not shown to the public, without them the play would simply not have come together. The cast were right to be proud, as everyone who saw the showcase expressed immense joy and happiness. In fact, Mr Goodall enjoyed the play so much that year seven, nine and ten were all taken off timetable a few days later to see the performance for themselves. Students have never been taken off timetable for a performance before which shows how great and important this performance really is to the school.

The Chairman of Buckinghamshire and the Mayor of Marlow even witnessed the brilliant piece and thoroughly enjoyed it. As an actor of the play myself, I can conclude that everyone who played a part in this masterpiece should be incredibly proud whether your role in it was small or large, as it took everyone involved to make it the best it could be and one of the greatest performances produced by Borlase, over its four hundred years of existence.

Christian Rubim-Mckeating, Y9



Year 9 Drama Pop-up Performances

As part of the Borlase 400 Exhibition, the Year 9 Drama students were involved in a series of site-specific performances around the main school building. These performances were performed at a key time slot every hour and were enjoyed by the numerous guests.

Next to the Centenary Hall, a group reimagined the events of the 1932 Bucks Football Cup win. This was depicted with a series of team talks, intercut with recreated footage of the fouls, bookings, goals and celebrations of the match. In the Cloisters, a group showed the story of Basil Horsfall and his heroic actions in the First World War that earned him the Victoria Cross. On the Chapel Lawn, a group recreated some comic scenes centred around Ye Olde Tuck Shoppe, complete with smitten boys, a local gossip and jars of sweets! In the main building, we had a presentation on life in the correction house. This was stylishly performed using a lot of physical theatre up in the Dance Studio. Meanwhile, a group set up in the staffroom to perform a lighthearted piece looking at the feelings of the first girls to attend Borlase in the late 80s.

All of these pieces were warmly received by their audiences. The students felt a great deal of pride in their efforts and in the final pieces. It was a really lovely part of the day and we were all happy to be a part of such a memorable occasion.

Mr Tekerian, Head of Drama

Dance 400: the student perspective

The choreographic process began in two independent lessons where our Year 12 class choreographed a piece based on the stimuli of “a helping hand” and the school’s history. Then, Miss Lidgate and Mrs Hindley refined the work ready for the Dance 400 show in March. With the help of Miss Chislett, a fitting accompaniment including Borlase’s motto: “Follow Things Worthy” was created. Also a set design consisting of projections on the backdrop was added to the piece to greater its effect.

After a successful run of shows, we were then given the exciting task of incorporating

Boys’ Dance company into the work for the Exhibition Day on the 29th June. With limited rehearsal time, we managed to do ourselves justice by performing 6 times on the Saturday with a few different combinations of dancers!

Overall it was a brilliant opportunity and experience for all.

Max Bignall, Y12

To perform in the Borlase 400 Exhibition event was very motivating and exciting. We had so much fun both creating our piece (originally for the Annual Dance show and performed by only year 12’s) and reworking it with Boys dance. Collaborating with them was very fun and was overall an enjoyable experience as we worked with people we’d never worked with before. Our piece was inspired by ‘a helping hand’ and the history behind Borlase. It captured scenes of students coming together as the school bell rings, and also included a projection of real footage from Borlase in the 1900’s. Thank you to Miss Hindley, Miss Lidgate and Miss Ramnarine who helped us make our piece amazing!

Izzy Ambrose, Y12

Marlow Bookshop Window Dressing

Ella Jenkins, Michalina Bizior Year 12 and their team of students have dressed the window of The Marlow Bookshop to celebrate 400 Years of Bolase in Marlow. A huge thank you to them and to the bookshop for their work and support. Borlase has produced many authors and the town has a long history of literary connections. The students’ recommended reading includes books from three old Borlasians: Max Porter (Booker Prize Winner), Chris Bradford (Prolific writer of popular teenage fiction) and Ella Jenkins.



BORLASE 400

Borlase 400 Bake-Off Competition

As part of our 400th birthday celebrations, the school launched a special 'Borlase 400 Bake-Off' Competition, which invited all members of the Borlase community - including students, staff and their families - to bake 400-themed cakes, cup-cakes and decorated biscuits. As well as the traditional house points being on offer for entries, and for 1st-4th placings in each category, we felt this special birthday competition deserved special prizes and we were thrilled to be able to also award prizes from local businesses and bakeries (including Gail's, Laurents, Burgers, Danesfield House, Strawberry Grove and Cedar Cafe) to our winners. Our gratitude and thanks go to all these businesses for their generous support.

In the end, we had over 40 individual cakes, almost 130 cupcakes and over 80 biscuits delivered to school for the judging. The entries were fantastic, demonstrating a huge amount of baking skill, creativity and colour! This included models of the school chapel to 'wagon wheels' (first invented by old Borlasian William Peschardt in 1948). The bakes were judged based on three criteria: design, creativity and taste, and the standard was very high - making judging incredibly difficult.

As mentioned, points were given to 1st-4th placings in each category; we are pleased to announce that the winners of each category were as follows:

Family: The Lyons Family

Staff: Mrs F Colville

KS3: Abby Barford

KS4: Amelia Bullivant

KS5: Alex Ley

Most Imaginative Design: Matthew and Eleanor Dockray

Overall, the final house results were as follows:

1st place (402 points) = Britons

2nd place (249 points) = Saxons

3rd place (241 points) = Romans

4th place (239 points) = Danes

5th place (217 points) = Vikings

6th place (208 points) = Normans

All of the bakes were then presented and sold at the Borlase 400 History and Exhibition Day on Saturday 29 June. We are pleased to confirm that all of the cakes were quickly consumed and much enjoyed by the members of the public (and students!) who came along. Thank you to everyone for getting involved and a particular thanks to Alex Ley, Miss Holmes, Mrs Ashby, Señora Roman, Mrs Woodgate and Mr Miall for their support of the competition.

Mr S Miall

Director of Music & Performing Arts



SIXTH FORM

Birmingham University Visit, 21 June

Students from Borlase Sixth Form recently embarked on an enriching visit to Birmingham University, aimed at providing an insightful glimpse into university life. The trip included a comprehensive tour led by enthusiastic university ambassadors, who showcased the state-of-the-art facilities, from cutting-edge laboratories to expansive libraries. Engaging in discussions with current undergraduates offered our students invaluable insights into post secondary school academics and the diverse extracurricular activities that define the university experience. During their visit, Borlase students were particularly impressed by the university's commitment to innovation and the supportive learning environment fostered by passionate faculty and dynamic student communities.

The open day provided the students with a fresh perspective on their course decision-making process, offering detailed information sessions about various programs and personalised advice on aligning their interests with academic opportunities. Birmingham University's focus on fostering informed choices was evident in the guidance provided, helping students to consider new fields of study and interdisciplinary options.

Daniela Yakubovich and and Freddy Smith
Year 12

Global Citizens Leadership Conference, 12 July

On Friday 12 July, we had the opportunity to host a Year 12 Global Citizenship Conference for a second year running, welcoming visitors from other Buckinghamshire Grammar Schools. The focus of discussions were around the UN's Global Sustainability Goals, in areas of defeating poverty, promoting equity and sustainability.

Keynote speeches were delivered by Sevan Dymond and Gemma Webb from EY Global Renewables, and David Skeates from a local engineering firm. Year 12 students Ruth Groffman and Nathan Taylor delivered an inspiring talk about their role as Environment Captains outline accomplishments at Borlase around the environment and sustainability, while year 8 students Colin Miles and Jack Berry gave an insight into their experiences being part of this important area of school life.

A panel discussion featuring professionals such architect Ian Blake, and academics including Emeline Warner and Borlase's Geography teacher, Jane Blane, answered probing questions relating to the UN goals. Students gained valuable insights and guidance to develop actionable plans for positive change. Armed with newfound expertise, students were empowered to return to their schools, equipped and motivated to implement meaningful transformations.

Mr N Hussain
Director of Sixth Form



STEM

Primary School STEM Enrichment Days

In June we welcomed a group of Year 5 students from Holy Trinity School in Marlow to two afternoons exploring STEM subjects. In Science, they used chromatography to determine the colours that make up brown and black ink, built circuits to understand how switches work in series and parallel, and looked at the world close-up using microscopes, developing observational drawing and problem solving skills to document their work. In Maths they seized the challenge of some tricky questions through team games, including working out multiples of 3,4,5 to identify correct cones and solve problems underneath, bursting balloons to answer questions hidden inside, and a Maths relay race.

Many thanks to Mr Marchand and Mr Manthorpe for masterminding the sessions and making STEM such fun.

Diamond Light Physics trip, 25 June

On the 25th of June, 31 year 12 physics students took a trip to the Diamond Light Source just outside of Oxford for the opportunity to look at the institute's synchrotron, the research conducted at the centre and its various uses.

We started the day using software to observe the presence of muons and electrons in a synchrotron, giving students a good hands-on experience with particle physics. We then moved on to a lecture from Dr. Emmanuel Olaiya, a particle physicist at the facility, to learn more about the development of the Standard Model theory that classifies all elementary particles and explains the building blocks of the universe, as well as a zoom call from a researcher in Switzerland to show us inside the Large hadron Collider at CERN, giving a good insight into the sheer scale of these experiments. Finally after a quick lunch break, we were given a tour of the particle accelerator itself, getting a look at the beam ring from right above the loop, segments of the electromagnets used to accelerate electrons to near the speed of light, as well as going further down into the inner workings and seeing some of the previous applications of the accelerator, giving us a great insight into the research conducted at the site.

Joe Cockroft, Year 12

Wakehurst Botanical Gardens Biology trip , 10 July

When we arrived at Wakehurst, we split off into our groups to go and explore the plethora of opportunities the day had to bring.

We firstly went on a conservation walk, which showed us the staggering beauty that the site had to offer, with plants from each corner of the world such as the monkey puzzle tree or eucalyptus trees. We then returned to explore the seed vault in which our guide enlightened us on exactly how Kew have been able to conserve their seeds so well for many years now.

After a short lunch, we set off to complete our fieldwork where we chose 2 areas, one in which had been coppiced just this year and another 10 years ago, overall we found an overwhelming outcome of more biodiversity in the area coppiced just this year. With our fieldwork done we took a stroll back to base, where we saw some incredible statues and art installations which had been constructed out of the coppiced wood shoots, my personal favourite was a huge red kite like bird soaring above us as we walked underneath.

After such an exciting day we were soon back on the coach to school.

Liberty Gaunt, Year 12





Year 10 History trip to Berlin, 28-31 May

After arriving in Berlin, we conducted a small walking tour of Berlin taking in Hitler's bunker, the Holocaust Memorial and the infamous Brandenburg Gate, a place rooted deep with history for the city for many reasons.

The following day, we visited the Plötzensee Memorial, which is a place of silent remembrance for the nearly 3000 people from Germany and abroad who were executed there by the Nazis. We then visited Sachsenhausen, where there were remnants of the original concentration camp, which has now been turned into a memorial. Whilst it was an emotionally impactful historical area, it is also important to learn about these areas of history.

During our second evening in Berlin, we were able to go on an evening walk to see Berlin at sunset, if we wished. So half of the group set off with a few teachers and we were treated to ice cream at the Mall of Berlin after the long walk through the city with incredible views of both historical sites and nature!

On the third day, we visited the Allied Museum, the Berlin Wall Memorial and the Stasi Museum, prior to visiting the Reichstag (into the glass dome and roof terrace). We got the chance to see Berlin from above, looking over the Reichstag to the "city of fragments and ghosts". While walking up the gorgeous, wide spiral staircase we observed the tables of information below, with photos and paragraphs of information - which was available to all tourists already inside the Reichstag.

Before flying home we visited the Palace of Tears and then the Stasi Museum. Located in House 1 on the former grounds of the headquarters of the GDR Ministry for State Security (MfS), the building was erected in 1960-61 as the offices of Erich Mielke, who served as Minister for State Security from 1957 until the end of the GDR. What was striking, and frightening, was just how well preserved it was for it felt like you were quite literally stepping back through time. To be honest we are pretty certain that one of the guides was a former member of the Stasi, which was a little disconcerting!

As our flight home was delayed, while still on the ground, a few students played a friendly game of Blackjack with a very sweet flight attendant, ultimately winning a chance to go into the plane's cockpit. They sat in the pilot's chairs and had a close look at the controls and setup inside!

Samantha Hill and Maya Anastopoulou, Year 10



Year 12 History to Hampton Court, 7 June

On Friday 7th June, Year 12 History students travelled to Hampton Court Palace to spend the day learning more about Tudor culture, Henry VIII, and his ministers, in particular.

We started the day with a talk from a historian at the palace, learning about the Reformation and discussing the many reasons behind this. We then went on a tour around the key parts of the palace and appreciated the architecture and the lavish style of the palace.

We were lucky enough to have a sunny day, allowing us to enjoy sitting on the grass in the beautiful palace gardens, and enjoy lunch in the cafe.

After this, we had time to roam the palace with our friends. Seeing the real copies of historical paintings, such as The Field of the Cloth of Gold, was very interesting.

Overall, the trip was a lovely day out and allowed us to learn more about Henry VIII.

Izzy Graham and Zara Yates, Year 12

Year 9 English-History Battlefields Trip, 14-16 June

The Menin Gate

On the first day of our trip we visited the Menin Gate, a memorial in the Belgian town of Ypres that has over 54,000 names of Commonwealth soldiers without a known grave who lost their lives in World War I in or around the Ypres Salient. We visited during the Last Post Ceremony, a service held every day at 20:00 to remember and honour those who gave their lives for our freedom. Two representatives from Borlase had the honour of laying a wreath during The Last Post, whilst eight others formed a small choir who sang Abide With Me during the ceremony.

The Battle of the Somme

The second day of the battlefields trip was focused on the Battle of The Somme. We visited the Lochnagar Crater, an enormous crater created by a large mine that was placed under the German front lines to aid the infantry advance on the first day of the Somme. Both here and at every site we visited we were kept informed through discussion and teaching about the Battle from both a history perspective and through literature. We also visited Sunken Lane, a lane in what was no man's land situated below the German front lines and the place where the incredibly infamous photo of the Lancashire Fusiliers was taken on the 1st of July 1916 just minutes before the battle began. Only a few of them survived.



Basil Horsfall VC Service

The last place we visited on the second day was the Arras Memorial, a memorial dedicated to those without a known grave who died in the Arras sector during the war; there are over 35,000 names commemorated on the memorial walls alone. It was in this area where Old Borlasian 2nd Lieutenant Basil Horsfall was awarded the Victoria Cross for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty and where his name can be found. We held a small remembrance service for 2nd Lieutenant Horsefall where we had a minute's silence, heard various poetry and a letter sent to his mother after his death, followed by The Last Post and the Ode of Remembrance.

Passchendaele Museum

On our last day we visited the Passchendaele Museum, a museum about the third and most infamous battle of Ypres lasting over 3 months from the 31st of July to the 10th of November 1917, with over 275,000 casualties from the Allies alone. In the museum we were immersed in incredibly informative, and interactive, displays along with replica dugouts and trenches you could walk through.

Langemark Cemetery

Langemark Cemetery was perhaps one of the most moving memorials we visited and one of the extremely few German cemeteries on the Western Front. Over 44,000 German soldiers are buried here, in what is essentially a mass grave. This cemetery is not nearly as well kept or funded as Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries and had a completely different atmosphere. The difference between the German and Allied cemeteries was truly astounding. Here we were read an extract from All Quiet on the Western Front, one of the most famous books to come out of the Great War, as well as a German poem that was read by students in honour of the Germans who also lost their lives but are often overlooked.

Tyne Cot

We also visited Tyne Cot, which is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world and is located on the former site of the aforementioned Battle of Passchendaele. It is a memorial to the missing soldiers who died in the Ypres Salient with around 11,900 graves and another 35,000 names of those whose bodies were never found and here we were shown the names of a few Old Borlasians who are commemorated.

Chocolate shop

Of course we could not go to Belgium without getting some Belgian chocolate and so on the last day before we concluded our trip, we visited Leonidas, an incredible chocolate shop located in Ypres, where everyone was able to buy some absolutely delicious Belgian chocolate.

Sophie Babbs, Year 9





Creative Writing trip to Dorset, 5 July

Our Creative Writing trip began in historic Shaftesbury, where we walked to its most famous sight, the steep cobbled street, Gold Hill. We visited the local museum filled with artefacts found in the area, including an axe head that was over 200,000 years old. After writing a story set on Gold Hill, we drove to Springhead, our base for the next two days. Unfortunately, due to the rain, we were unable to go out and write in the beautiful gardens.

The next day we travelled to Dorchester where we visited the cottage in which Thomas Hardy grew up and wrote some of his novels. After lunch we visited Corfe Castle where we wrote among the ruins - there were a few rain showers but we persevered and those of us without waterproofs found appropriate places to shelter until it eased off. We then travelled to Swanage on a steam train, before racing back to Springhead to catch the second half of England's Euros quarter final.

On the final day we visited Stonehenge. The weather was awful, but it made for a very dramatic visit - and then we met at the cafe to dry off and do some consolidatory writing, if we could find somewhere to sit and get our notebooks out of our bags.

Our final stop was Salisbury where we gathered in a room in the museum and read out a piece of our work to the group and received feedback from the teachers accompanying us as well as our friends and trip-mates.

We were also able to explore the town of Salisbury for a little while before returning to the bus and travelling home.

Overall, the trip was a very educational and inspirational experience during which we learnt in detail about how to write effectively and the different styles in which we can write.

Luella Knight & Amelie Riddle, Year 10

Solutions not Sides day, 12 July

Last Friday, my year group experienced a fascinating talk by the charity 'Solution Not Sides' regarding the ongoing issues and atrocities being experienced in the Middle East today, particularly Palestine and Israel. For many of my classmates this was a somewhat unknown topic, yet for all it was extremely refreshing and stimulating to hear two magnificent gentlemen with long history and experience with the conflict. For so long now many people, including our demographic, have been disoriented and hounded by the image in the news that Palestinians and Israelis are sworn enemies, or that the conflict extends to people's religions and faiths. However, through the discussions held between the students and the speakers it became clear that this was in fact not the case, and solutions can be reached in the region. From a Palestinian perspective, the ideas and solutions both the speakers mentioned aligned with many of my own beliefs and objectives, as I hope it did with many other perspectives.

Through this discourse pupils in my year group were enabled to apprehend the severity of the situation in the region and can attempt to educate themselves and others about the matter in the future.

Adam Daowd, Year 10

From an Israeli perspective the talk was a comfortable space for two excellent guest speakers to share their own life stories and experiences. It was an excellent opportunity that encouraged the students to learn and understand the nature of the conflict in a compassionate, unbiased manner. Solutions Not Sides managed to clearly educate those who knew less about the topic without being insensitive to those who were personally affected and as someone who finds the topic difficult to talk about, it was a refreshing change.

Sahar Feldberg, Year 10



MFL News - French Exchange Trip

On a sunny morning Monday at the beginning of June, we set off with seventeen excited Year 10 students to Marly-le-Roi, a suburb of Paris and Marlow's twin town, for the French exchange trip.

Having already spent a week with their French exchange partners in the UK in May, the students were excited, although perhaps a little nervous, to be meeting up with them again and staying with a French family. After a smooth journey to France on the Eurostar and a métro ride, we arrived at the Collège Louis Lumière in Marly-le-Roi where the students' exchange partners had gathered to meet them. It was lovely to see the excitement with which they greeted each other.

Tuesday was the joint trip with the French students to Notre Dame and then to Montmartre. We were lucky that the sun was shining and travelling there by bus provided students the opportunity to see the sights of Paris on the way and to experience the preparations for the Olympic Games. Whilst we weren't able to go inside Notre Dame due to the ongoing repairs following the fire, a guided tour provided us with lots of information. This was followed by a trip to Montmartre for our lunch, a look inside Sacré Cœur and a stroll around the narrow streets and Place du Tertre where lots of souvenirs were bought! After their day of sightseeing, students returned to their host family to practise their French and prepare for a morning in the French school.

Students were naturally apprehensive about attending lessons with their exchange partners but were a credit to Borlase in the way they threw themselves into the experience, trying out French tongue twisters and attending a range of other lessons. And we all enjoyed the school bell: a different ABBA song each day! After lunch in the school canteen, we spent the afternoon in the small picturesque town of Saint-Germain en Laye, famous for its impressive château.

Of course, no trip to Paris would be complete without a visit to the Eiffel Tower and on Thursday, armed with our sun cream and sturdy shoes, we climbed the 674 steps to its second floor where we enjoyed the impressive views before having a well-deserved rest and snack on the first floor. After a walk to the Trocadéro, it was time for the boat trip along the Seine to see the sights from a different perspective and to soak up some more sun.

Friday was an opportunity to enjoy a couple of Paris' many museums. Firstly, after a stroll past the Louvre's iconic glass pyramid and through the Jardin des Tuileries, there was a visit to the Musée de l'Orangerie which boasts, amongst other artwork, Monet's water lilies – well worth seeing. A leisurely lunch in the beautiful Jardin des Tuileries was then followed by the Hôtel de la Marine. On Friday evening, many of the students and their exchange partners got together for an informal school prom, a chance to experience a French school event which they thoroughly enjoyed.

After all of the group trips, Saturday and Sunday morning provided the opportunity for students to spend more time with their French host families, immersing themselves in French life before returning back to Marlow on Sunday afternoon.

The trip was thoroughly enjoyable and the Year 10s were a credit to the school, immersing themselves fully in French culture and also making the most of the opportunity to practise their French language skills. This is reflected in the fact that many plan to keep in touch with their exchange partner and have been invited back to Marly-le-Roi.

Mrs F Colville, Head of MFL



German Exchange Trip, 29 June - 5 July

I found the German exchange very fun! It was busy, to say the least. We spent 7 days in Saarbürg, near Luxembourg, flying out on the 29th of June and returning on the 5th of July, and every day was full of activities!

On Saturday and Sunday, we spent time with our exchange families, with some people going to Luxembourg to shop for clothes- the airline misplaced our bags, which caused many headaches- and many people watching the Germany vs Denmark and the England vs Slovakia games at home. For me, I visited a treetop walk in the Saarland, a beautiful spot.

In the span of 4 days, from Monday to Thursday, we visited three different cities- Cologne, Koblenz, and Trier (twice!). When visiting Cologne and Trier, we learnt about some of the histories of each city- in Trier through the guided tours of the Porta Nigra and the various churches situated throughout the city centre, and in Cologne through the Cologne Cathedral, all of which were amazing and beautiful landmarks. For me, I found the history of the Cologne Cathedral particularly interesting, as it had a construction spanning hundreds of years, and is of massive religious significance. We also visited the chocolate museum in Cologne, on the banks of the Rhine, where I may or may not have bought quite a lot of chocolate! In Koblenz, we visited the Deutsches Eck, the point where the Mosel and Rhine rivers meet, and then we went to see the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress, going via cable car, along with an adjacent football museum. The views from the fortress and cable car, overlooking Koblenz over the Rhine, were amazing!

On Friday, we had some lessons and a tour of Gymnasium Saarbürg (Saarbürg Grammar School), the school in which our exchange partners go to- There we experienced computing, PHSE, and drama lessons- I quite liked them all, and the tour of the school was also very interesting to me. Afterwards, it was time to say our goodbyes to our exchange partners and travel back to England.

For me, I really enjoyed the process of learning about a country I didn't know much about and learning the language alongside it- testing my German skills so I could talk with my exchange family, ordering a Doner (kebab) in Koblenz, getting to know the history of these amazing places, and so much more was really enriching for me!

Nicholas Constandinos, Year 10



Borlase Election

As the former UK PM Rishi Sunak announced a snap election, so did the politics enthusiasts at Borlase. An action packed agenda was launched with just a month to go; the date set, July 4th. A level politics students, PolSoc members and beyond were invited to stand as party candidates and commence manifesto writing, reflecting both national party policy pledges also tailored to local interests. The candidates were Katy Butler/Odette Foley Conservative/SPAD, Sakura Wada-Brown/Chloe Wentzel Labour/SPAD, Ella Taylor Lib Dem, Calvin Chris-Biju (& Ellie Spicer) Reform UK, Stanley Sparrow Green, and Toby Dickinson, Monster Raving Loony Party. Increasingly noticeable around the school grounds were brightly coloured rosettes and attention- grabbing campaign flyers. Whole school key stage assemblies presented the platform to meet the candidates, followed by lively PolSocs with a fascinated key stage 3 audience demanding answers to everything and declaring it a scandal that one had to wait until Sixth form to study politics! A General Election quiz, mid-campaign poll, student hustings and Exit Poll, built further momentum towards Polling Day.

Meanwhile, there were the real world dynamics with real politics and real politicians, two of whom were able to visit Borlase for Q & A's with students - Joy Morrissey for the Conservatives and Anna Crabtree for the LibDems.

With early online voting for those on school trips, when Election Day arrived, the Polling Station open from 7am, saw Odette Foley and Tom Shaw first to cast their vote, with the period up to lessons commencing so busy, additional support of Ren Reay proved invaluable. Throughout the day, there was a steady flow, with several peaks and a fairly constant buzz.

Could the national turnout be exceeded (as in the school mock election 2019)? Favourable factors included the mysterious artwork opposite the archway-a Banksy? A future Borlase chancellor talent spotted? Then quiet, and a transfer of attention to 10pm and the beginning of the UK constituency counts. The results announced by Returning Officer Mr E Goodall, in assembly and livestreamed around the school, met with wide applause; the Loonies had it and on a voting turnout which exceeded the national %.

So what does this all mean in terms of the younger person's psephology? There are various theories as to why the mainstream parties were rejected; Y12 felt somewhat cheated by a snap election which brutally excluded them from voting; and the younger years-how do they view politics in recent times-it certainly has their attention, but how seriously did they view politics in recent years?The Loony campaign was articulate, refreshing and fun! Why not?! The Lib Dems, triumphant in 2019, were pushed into 2nd place. So there was a vote for change, in the UK and at Borlase. The whole school engagement and participation was impressive, and it is hoped the interest in the government of society is maintained.

Thank you to all who participated.

Mrs Pryor, Head of Politics, Andrew Freedman- Year 12



Summer Concert, 20 June

With a packed theatre of friends and parents, the Summer Concert kicked off with exciting solos and fantastic ensemble performances. Youth Voices brought all the energy to their performance of their Past, Present and Future medley, including hits from The Beatles and Adele, as well as Borlase's own The Fundamentals. Cambiata's renditions of 'What the World Needs Now' and 'Swing Low', (with accompanying dance moves!) were brilliant, while Forte e Fiero embraced musical theatre with a rendition of 'Come Alive' from 'The Greatest Showman'. Year 9 band Offbeat's performance of their first original, 'Obsessed' was true rock and roll, as well as ensemble performances of tracks such as 'Don't Stop Believing' and 'Party in the USA' - the first time Miley Cyrus has graced the Borlase stage! All solos were performed with quality and confidence, including numbers such as 'The Teddy Bears' Picnic', 'Lose Control' and 'As Long As He Needs Me' - a true showcase of all the talent and potential currently in performing arts!

Ella Jenkins, Year 12

Borlase 400 Birthday Bash, Saturday 13 July

The school was keen to include as many members of the Borlase and Marlow community in our celebrations as possible. The Borlase 400 Birthday Bash brought over 1000 visitors to the school site for a wonderful music festival and party on Colonel's Meadow organised by Mr Miall, Mr Hartley, Mrs Chislett and the Y12 Technical Theatre students. Overnight, the field was transformed into a festival environment, with the 'main stage' and the 'encore stage' all dressed in fairy lights and bunting, ready for the performances to take place. The Technical Theatre students worked incredibly hard to piece together elements for the day, spending any free time painting, rigging and planning their activities for all to enjoy. Over seven hours, a large number of Borlase bands, ensembles and choirs performed brilliantly across the two stages: the musical programme kicked off with a wonderful set from the Jazz Orchestra and the night ended with a performance from Bucks Battle of the Band winners, The Fundamentals. We were also very pleased to have alumni bands 'Blankfield' and 'These Certain People' joining us. Whilst the music entertained, the large crowd attending were also able to take part in karaoke, quizzes, face-painting, henna, penalty shoot-outs and croquet. There were bouncy castles and even a ferris wheel (a first for Colonel's Meadow in 400 years!), and the Friends of Borlase kindly set up a bar for refreshments all day. The community element to this event was key and, in that spirit, we were very pleased to invite JAM Theatre to undertake a performance, and a number of local vendors set up stalls. There was a car show featuring cars from members of the local community and we were thrilled that Marlow FM agreed to broadcast the whole festival live.

All in all, this was a fitting and really positive end to a summer, and academic year, full of 400 celebrations. We will continue to mark this special anniversary year through all of our normal events in the approaching Autumn Term, culminating in our traditional Family and Alumni Carol Services in December.

Mr S Miall, Director of Music & Performing Arts and Hattie Parkinson, Year 12





Year 7 Cross Curricular Dance Project - 'Games Wide Open', 15-16 July

The Year 7 Cross Curricular project this year entitled "GAMES WIDE OPEN" takes its inspiration from the Paris 2024 Olympic games. Our stimulus focuses on the history of the Olympics, old Borlasian Medalists and sports. The objective of the project is to share the journey of travelling to a new city and experiencing the Olympics Games.

The dance pieces will explore the themes of Ancient Greece (Olympia), Old Borlasians, France, how spectators react and break dancing. This piece was performed by the entire Year 7 cohort. There was also a performance from our A-Level dancers, designed to support the work and understanding of the Year 7 students. The performance also incorporated audio visual experience of travelling to the games and exploring Paris.

7A's dance was a welcome to the ancient Greek olympic games. 7B took inspiration from two Old Borlasians: Tom Dean who won both Relay and Individual Gold medals for swimming, and Jack Beaumont who won Silver. 7C's dance explored a tour of France including fashion, cuisine, art and architecture as they travelled through Paris. 7D explored the idea of Spectators getting ready to watch and how a crowd moves. Lots of our phrases show the idea of: Queuing, entering the stadium, celebrations/Loss and the sound of a crowd. Finally, 7E's dance was based on 'breaking' which featured at the Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires in 2018. Following its outstanding success at the Games in Argentina, breaking was added to the Paris 2024 Olympic programme as a new sport.

We were so impressed with how the year 7s took ownership of their performances and took on feedback from our Year 12s. We hope each and every one of them enjoyed the process of creating, rehearsing and performing.

Miss S Ramnarine, Head of Dance

SPORTS

Sports Update

As a department we are delighted to announce and celebrate that we have been awarded the Platinum School Games Mark for this year. This is in recognition of the extensive range of activities within and beyond the curriculum and the inclusive nature of our offering. We are incredibly proud of the number of students involved in and passionate about sport on a daily and weekly basis and enjoy hearing their stories of success in taking up new opportunities or improving performances in a sport they are already committed to. There is a huge amount of work that goes on behind the scenes in making so many opportunities happen across the range of sports and year groups. This award is a particularly high rating and recognises achieving the 'Gold' standard for over 6 years along with evidence of the sports program meeting additional inclusive criteria from the YST. Thank you to all staff who plan and support the lessons, clubs, training and fixtures. Thank you to all parents and carers who facilitate the students taking part in the activities and recognising the key role that sport and physical activity plays in education and development. Thank you to all our wonderful students who on many occasions make teaching and coaching sport an easy and enjoyable way to spend our time! Let's keep it all going as we are all looking forward to a busy summer of sport!

Cricket

The cricket fixtures have come thick and fast this term. The U13 side lost to Ousedale in the Semi Final of the Junior Trophy. They have one more league game to go, to try and secure a place in the District League final. The side have beaten GMS, Cressex and Highcrest this half term.

The U15 team have progressed through to the Senior Trophy Final and in the final few days have won their final and have been crowned district champions in an exciting final against John Colet! They are still in the running to make the District League Final with wins against GMS, Cressex and Highcrest this half term.

This half term has also seen the U18 team play their first few matches of the season. They successfully beat St James Senior school with Aarav Band hitting a composed 50 and Georgie Lloyd being the pick of the bowlers. We also saw the return of the OB's game which was yet again a fantastic encounter. The OB's went onto hit 200 despite early wickets from Toby Pettit. The Borlase run chase got off to a strong start with a fluent Sam Babes 50. However, strong bowling from the OB's meant Borlase finished all out on 164.



Athletics

On the 26th June the year 7 & 8 Athletics teams competed at the District Athletics at Thames Valley track. The students all showed resilience, determination and a positive attitude. For their efforts both Year 7 Boys & Girls finished 4th, Year 8 Boys finished with a Bronze medal and Year 8 Girls came on top with a Gold medal.

During the half term, the Year 7&8 students have been competing in the friendly district athletics league, allowing opportunity for lots of athletes to compete in a range of events. It is great to recognise the success both for those who have done well individually in their events, but also to anyone who has challenged themselves to compete or try a particular event for the first time.

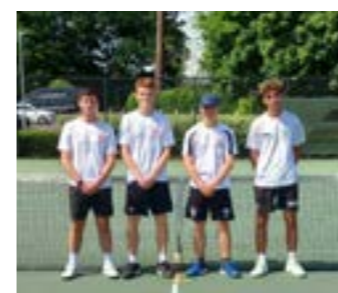
On an individual basis, both Harriet S and Aoife M have represented Buckinghamshire at the Regional combined events championships. This is a great challenge in age groups working towards the Olympic disciplines of heptathlon (female) and decathlon (male) competitions. The fantastic results placed Harriet 4th in the Junior category, achieving 4 PBs on the day and an agonising 9 points short of the bronze medal. Aoife worked so hard all day and was placed second, securing the silver medal.

As I write, we have three Borlasians travelling to the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham to represent Buckinghamshire at the English Schools Athletics finals. Henry (1500m) and Chisom and Aoife (both Long Jump) will be competing against the top athletes from around the country having been recognised as meeting set high performing criteria throughout the season. We wish them the best of luck.

Due to the postponement of sports day, we will bring you an update on the performances and results in the first newsletter of the new academic year. Good luck to all students in the events and sports they will be representing their houses in at this exciting end of term event.

Tennis

Senior Boys - The senior boys overcame a rain impacted semi-final away to AGS in a tightly contested fixture. In the tighter moments the team showed great fighting spirit and eventually won out on all of the ties to secure a strong victory. The reward was another meeting with old rivals Claires Court in the regional final. On this occasion it was the opposition's strength in depth, combined with their experience that saw Claires Court secure the win. The boys fought hard and it will stand to them next year as all four will once again be looking to make up the senior team for the 24/25 season.



Tennis - U13/15s

The underage students have continued to impress in each training and fixture they play. We have had seven teams competing across the various divisions. We have seen some amazing progress and will look to keep moving on the upwards trajectory into next season. A special mention once again to Mr Monk who has given up a lot of his time after work to help with high quality training sessions and leading matches that have taken place this half term.

Hockey

It's been a relatively quiet term for Borlase Hockey given the season finished at Easter, but some of our students have still been busy with various school commitments, as well as Development Centre and Talent Academy assessment phases, and, of course, summer league matches! The parents have also been busy fundraising for Marlow Sports Club through our annual Borlase Golf Day.

Borlase Golf Day - Sally Woolven and the Friends of Borlase Hockey group must take credit for another successful Borlase Golf Day this year. The annual golf day at Henley Golf Club in Harpsden took place on Wednesday 5th June in warm sunshine. This ever popular event was sponsored by WH Ireland with many other local businesses generously supporting the fundraising efforts of everyone involved. In total, 84 golfers took part in the day with a shotgun start at 8.30am, followed by lunch and a prize giving. TV presenter Steve Rider presented the prizes to the winning team, 4 Man Barracuda. Olivier Picard, their captain, praised the condition of the course saying it was in 'absolutely splendid condition'. Henley Golf Club member Erica Brady won Nearest the Pin competition for the ladies and Angus Jones for the men. Event organiser Sally Woolven said 'given the amount of rain we've had recently, we were all very grateful it was a dry, sunny day which showed off our beautiful golf course in the very best light!'

A huge thank you to everyone who helped raise over £6,000 towards the facilities at Marlow Sports Club. We wouldn't be able to run the hockey programme without the use of the facilities, so we really appreciate your financial contributions, sponsorship, gifts, and attendance on the day! The hampers were an excellent addition again this year as the raffle raised around £500 in total. The silent auction was another resounding success with some fantastic prizes on offer. The auction raised nearly £1,300, and we raised £2,350 on sponsorship, up from £1450 last year, so we really appreciate your support. A special thank you to Mr Proudfoot, whose company, VPI, sponsored the Nearest the Pin hole. The Friends of Borlase Hockey did another amazing job of coordinating the sponsors, auction prizes and raffle hampers prior to the Golf Day, as well as supporting the event on the day itself. Thank you very much!



FIH Pro League

Thirty students travelled to the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre on Wednesday 12th June to watch the Great Britain women's and men's teams take on Australia in the FIH Pro League. The two minibuses battled through the north London traffic to arrive just before the start of the men's match at 5.45pm! The men are playing some of their best hockey in years and the first half was an end-to-end affair - Australia headed into the break with the score finely poised at 2-1. However, a strong second half display from the visitors saw them score three more unanswered goals as the match finished 5-1 to Australia. The women also started well and raced into an early lead in the first quarter. Similarly to the men though, Australia women came roaring back and the final score was 3-1 to the visitors. The behaviour of our students throughout the afternoon and evening was exemplary, and they carried the Borlase badge extremely well in a busy and crowded venue. Well done!

Primary Schools' Hockey Festival

On Thursday 27th June, Borlase Hockey invited four local primary schools to Marlow Sports Club for a hockey festival that took place throughout the day. Marlow Hockey Club and Borlase Hockey coaches have been running weekly sessions for nine local primary schools since September, and the Festival provided the students with an opportunity to impress their peers, teachers, coaches and parents with the new skills they've learnt throughout the year. Students from Spinfield, Holy Trinity Cookham and Danesfield joined us in the morning for a round robin rotation of 4-a-side matches, whilst Spinfield and Holy Trinity Marlow students joined us in the afternoon. The Festival was supported by a number of Borlase Hockey and Marlow HC young leaders, who expertly umpired the matches and supported the next generation of hockey players! Thank you must go to primary school coaches, Kate Porter and Dan Couldrake, for their commitment to coaching regular sessions on a weekly basis.

Borlase's 400th Anniversary

Only two days after the Primary Schools' Hockey Festival, it was the Borlase students' turn to show off their impressive skills. On Saturday 29th June, guests of the 400th exhibition on the school site were treated to three high quality hockey matches from 10.30-3pm, all of which involved students from Year 7 to Year 13. The students were split into two teams - one current day team wearing their new Adidas kit and one 1972 team in the replica red and blue kit, which was created to mark the 50th anniversary of Borlase Hockey two years ago. The students were excellent as they worked tirelessly in extremely hot conditions to put on a show for the visitors. The most pleasing aspects of the day included the bravery from the Y7 & Y8 students to get fully involved, and the leadership skills from the Y12 & Y13 students to include everyone.



Coaching Workshops

Borlase Hockey and Marlow Hockey Club joined forces in July to deliver two workshops for the senior coaches. We were incredibly lucky to welcome former England and Great Britain player, and Old Georgian's Men's 1st XI coach, Ashley Jackson, to SWBGS on Monday 1st July for a workshop based around technical development. It was great to hear from one of the world's best players about his journey and technical priorities. A week later, on Monday 8th July, Mike Irving ran an excellent workshop on Talent Identification, which was incredibly thought provoking and provided everyone with plenty of takeaways. The coaches are raring to go again next season now! Thank you to both Ashley and Mike for not only giving up their time for hockey in Marlow, but for also delivering two excellent workshops.

Student Coaches

And finally, a huge thank you must go to our student coaches, all of whom supported the delivery of the Borlase Hockey programme this season. Not only do our student coaches play for their own age groups during the week, they also give up their time voluntarily on an extra night of the week to coach the younger age groups. They've been fantastic ambassadors of Borlase Hockey since September and they can be proud of the role models that they've become whilst working with our Y7, Y8 & Y9 students. Thank you very much, we wouldn't be able to run the programme without you.

SGO

The Varsity series Came to an end with the final 2 tournaments this half term. First was the Ultimate tournament where Borlase won every game and finished top. This meant Borlase were top of the table going into the final event. During the Rounders event Borlase put in a very strong performance coming 2nd. This 2nd place finish was enough to claim the Varsity Series 23/24. A big thank you to everyone that has represented the school for the Varsity Series and all Sports leaders that helped run the events.

Rowing National Schools Regatta

The Borlase Rowing team have been hard at work this half term with several large national and international regattas as well as the fantastic Thames Valley Park Regatta for junior crews over the 500m course.

The National Schools Regatta is a chance for the rowers to test themselves against the best the country has to offer and in some boat classes Ireland as well. With almost 60 rowers competing at this level there were some really promising results with many crews inside the top 15 clubs and schools nationally.



The J14 boys and girls octos were 15th and 22nd respectively. Five J15 quads took to the course as well, with the boys A boat finishing 11th and the boys B and C boats taking 5th and 13th in the B category. The girls J15 boats were 19th in the A event and 17th in the B event. For many of our junior rowers this was their first experience of National Schools and it was really visible how motivated they are to build on this set of performances.

With senior crews racing over the weekend the intensity of competition really stepped up and the Borlase rowers set about taking on the challenge. Sam Furley put in an extremely mature race in the Championship single coming under significant pressure from other crews in challenging water conditions to take 6th place. Kat Finney racing in the Women's Championship single

Marlow International & Henley Womens Regatta

With the senior girls racing Henley Women's Regatta and senior boys racing Marlow international as the major precursor to Henley Royal all in the same weekend the boat club was full of action. Marlow international as the name suggests attracts crews from all over the world racing across 8 lanes. The senior boys in the highly competitive junior quad put in some promising performances to show good growth and understanding of their boat speed.

The senior girls tackled the Henley booms during their time trials first thing on Saturday morning. An amazing experience to be racing along the famous and prestigious course in an all female event. The senior quad qualified well from the time trial to draw eventual winners and national champions Wycliffe in the first knockout round. Attacking them off the start was great to see but their additional power eventually told but great to see Borlase's girls taking on the country's best.

Henley Royal Regatta

Over the past few years Henley Royal Regatta has continued to grow and grow and now spans six days of racing with crews from over thirty nations taking part. All of the races are streamed live on Youtube to hundreds of thousands of people around the world. This time round Borlase had a senior boys crew racing in the Fawley Challenge Cup for junior quads. Drawn to race Whitmarsh Boat Club from Philadelphia, USA the boys took on the challenge of racing the historic and prestigious course lined with wooden posts with confidence. In one of the closest races of the day Borlase pushed the US crew all the way down the course keeping the boats within a length at all times and as close as half a length at points. Unfortunately the boys crew were not able to overturn the margin and it was Whitmarsh that progressed to the next round by a ¾ length verdict. The boys raced brilliantly well and were proud of their performance, if not the result. With three of the crew eligible to return next year they have their sights set on being back at Henley in 12 months time ready to push on again

ENRICHMENT

Pride Week, 17–21 June

Our Equality Leaders were pleased to get together to plan a programme of events for Pride Week which took place from 17-21 June. The vision was to have something going on every break and lunchtime, with the possibility of some after school events as well. We also tried to reach out to local schools to encourage the connection and grow the community. More will come from this in the future, now that we have established some links.

The leaders then delivered an excellent assembly (written by Miss Holmes) which centred on the importance of the Pride movement and celebrations. The focus was on the defiance shown by the LGBTQ+ community in the face of great prejudice over the years. We live in a generally much more accepting society now, however, the message is still important. Schools, like all areas in society, still have work to do to ensure everyone feels comfortable and accepted.

The week began with a real buzz! The sunny weather and the colourful rainbow flags in the Cloisters was a perfect setting for the events to begin. We were inundated with a huge number of incredible cakes and bakes. The number of rainbow sponges and rainbow icing and decorations was really wonderful! As well as this, we had a great deal of merchandise that students could buy. The pin badges, lanyards and wristbands proved hugely popular, but it was the sunglasses and squid hats that stole the show!

Our balloon arch in the cloisters proved hugely popular and was a great location for many selfies and other photo opportunities. As the week progressed, we put on book displays and an after school screening of the film 'Everyone's Talking About Jamie'. It was really lovely to see students coming together and having fun.

Towards the end of the week, we set up friendship bracelet stations, so that students could make their own highly decorative and personalised bracelets. With many students lucky enough to be going to see Taylor Swift at the weekend, these bracelets proved hugely popular!

The final day, Friday, was a wonderful celebration of colour. The school had a non-uniform day and many students took the opportunity to show off their rainbow colours with pride. The atmosphere was ebullient, and demonstrated how positive and supportive the Borlase community is. We ended the week with a karaoke extravaganza in the Drama Studio! A number of students and teachers took the mic to sing and dance to their heart's content! It was really special.

I am really proud of the equality leaders and all of our lovely volunteers who did so much to make this a fun and enjoyable week. It is really heartwarming to see people coming together to support others (and each other) in events such as those we put on this week. My intention is to continue to build on the foundations we have built this year, so that the sense of equity is in the hearts of our students as they move on from the school and enter the wider world.

Mr B Tekerian
Head of Drama



Year 8 UKSA Isle of Wight trip, 1-5 July

From the 1st to the 5th of July, the Year 8 students embarked on an incredible five-day water sports trip at UKSA in the Isle of Wight. It was a week filled with fun in the dorms and exciting activities. Some of these activities include kayaking, paddle boarding and sailing with our activity groups and wonderful instructors. After a day of fun, we were met with delicious food and welcoming staff. Our wonderful teaching staff helped the year group throughout the week with bumps and bruises as well as support for those who needed it. The week could not have been as great as it was without the amazing work of all the teachers involved in this year's trip. The range of water activities the site provided were outstanding with over nine activities for our school to enjoy while developing skills like teamwork and self-confidence. Overall, it was unanimous that this was a trip that was loved greatly by all those who attended.

Georgia White, Jenna Elliott & Shreya Telfer, Year 8

Mini Masterclass for Years 7 & 8

Dominique's presentation was very inspiring and full of valuable insights. As a senior foreign news producer at Sky News, Dominique has won multiple awards and shared her experience and love for journalism. Her talk left a strong impression on everyone at the event.

From her early days at CNN, she shared her journey in journalism, working with well-known journalist Christiane Amanpour. In those years, her stories taught her about the importance of the industry, and finding the truth. As she transitioned to Sky News, she covered important global events, which marked the beginning of her successful career.

One of the best parts of the talk was her detailed description of reporting, during the worst COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Dominique described the difficult scenes and her team's commitment to bringing those stories to light. This coverage led to the team winning Emmy and Royal Television Society awards, showing how exceptional their work was.

Dominique talked about her recent assignments. She covered the wars in Myanmar, Ukraine, and the Middle East. She focused on telling the stories of the people most affected by these conflicts, showing her commitment to original storytelling and breaking news.

During her talk, Dominique's passion for journalism was clear. She stressed the important role of journalists today and motivated many of us to seek the truth with the same determination and bravery. Overall, Dominique's talk was an educational experience that provided valuable insights into the world of reporting foreign news.

Addyson Hawtree, Year 8





The Friends of Borlase – Borlase 400 events and an urgent appeal!

Enormous thanks to all the FoB volunteers who stepped up to help at the **Borlase 400 Dinner and Ball** – assembling gorgeous floral centrepieces under the direction of Mrs. Challis and Ilona Cains; completing the table setting (including the fiendish work of sorting out table assignments and place cards); setting up and serving at the Friends Bar; assisting the truly excellent student servers with wine sales; running the Cloak Check; and after a long and busy night, showing up to help clear out the next morning!

At the time of writing, things were ramping up in preparation for the **Borlase 400 Birthday Bash** on 13 July – the Friends of Borlase worked hard in advance to assemble the roster of food vans and community stallholders, and our friends Bar volunteers will be serving up cold beverages and some snacks and sweets to guests at this student-led performing arts supershow!

Can you help?

The Friends of Borlase URGENTLY need volunteers, chiefly:

- a **Secretary** in order to maintain quorum;
- a **Communications Team Lead** to manage emails, social media, and the FoB website; and
- a **Friends Bar Team Lead** to maintain the volunteer roster and manage bar stock for school events.

These roles are essential to a functioning parent association and could be shared among friends or partners. Incoming volunteers will have lots of documentation and guidance, and a fulsome handover from the outgoing committee member. Hi, I'm the member, it's me. I and my family are returning to Canada after two very rewarding years in Marlow and the Borlase community. I'm happy to chat with anyone interested in stepping up in any of these roles – please reach out: adrienne.e.blair@gmail.com.

The proceeds from all FoB fundraising goes to enrich the lives and support the learning of all our Borlase students. Follow us on Instagram [@friends_of_borlase](#) and on Twitter/X [@FriendsSWBGS](#)

Have a safe and happy summer break!

Adrienne Blair – Friends of Borlase Secretary

