



8th March 2010

## From the Headmistress:

Last week Notre Dame Senior School led the way in preparing sixth formers for the General Election. Six other schools were delighted to accept the invitation to join in with our 'Question Time' and all agreed that it had been very interesting. Many of those present said that they would now take more interest in the election and, if they were old enough, would exercise their right to vote.

Our panel included representatives of the major national parties, led by Shadow Justice Minister, Mrs Eleanor Laing, MP for Epping Forest, a constituency which covers much of Sir Winston Churchill's old seat. In the light of comments from the sixth formers, Mrs Laing gave an impassioned argument for the 'normality' and 'human qualities' of MPs which, she said, people had lost sight of in the recent media frenzy over expenses.



Joining her in responding to questions from the sixth formers were local candidates who were hoping to win votes from those in the audience. Dominic Raab, the new Conservative candidate for the school's own constituency of Esher and Walton, was most impressed with our girls, whom he found to be friendly, polite and interested. He wrote, following the event, saying that they were 'a credit to the school.' Mr Raab's legal training at Oxford and Cambridge and his experience on a Foreign Office team in the Hague, dedicated to catching war criminals, gave his answers added interest for the girls.

The Liberal Democrats were represented by Mrs Sue Doughty, who was MP for Guildford from 2001-2005. She is standing again for the seat this year. One of Mrs Doughty's interesting contributions to national political life was tabling a parliamentary question which led to the Prime Minister opening an e mail account by which ordinary voters can contact him! Mrs Doughty told the audience of her party's plans to lower the voting age to sixteen but, in a show of hands, only half the audience agreed that this was a good idea.



The Labour party was represented by one of its youngest prospective candidates: Tom Miller from Woking. He came into politics through blogging and was selected for parliament at the age of twenty three. Tom Miller works for Tribune magazine which has a long and distinguished history in the Labour movement and has numbered George Orwell, of '1984' fame, among its editors.

Our fifth panellist was Robert Lee, Sky Sports commentator, former professional golfer and Notre Dame parent. Selected as a 'non-political' panel member, Robert Lee's succinct answers with down to earth content were a valuable counterweight in the debate.

In a poll of Notre Dame students after the event, Robert Lee (Independent) had the biggest share of the vote, closely followed by Dominic Raab (Conservative).

All in all, it was an enlightening afternoon which has whet our appetites for the General Election campaign ahead, although the forthcoming Party Leader debates are unlikely to be as lively as the Q & A session between our sixth formers and this panel of willing volunteers!

## Ypres 2010

On Friday, the 26th February, the whole of Year 9 experienced a day that we will never forget. We arrived in Belgium and the first place we visited was "Flanders Museum". When we entered the Flanders Field museum we were all given a card with the name of a First World War character on it. Sophie had the name of the Canadian soldier William Bower and as she went around the museum she followed his journey through the information points. This made the visit to the museum a very personal experience. There were also pictures, statues, posters and artefacts which all helped with our understanding of the War.

After visiting the Museum we went to a Belgian chocolate shop where we were given exclusive offers. We all walked out of the shop carrying bags of chocolate! We walked a short distance up the road to the Menin Gate which is a memorial to soldiers whose bodies were never recovered from the battlefields of Ypres. It was a very moving experience as many people in our year had relatives in the First World War, and saw them written on the Menin Gate.



We then visited the preserved trenches called Sanctuary Wood. As we arrived, there was a man playing the bagpipes in remembrance of all of the soldiers who had died and this was very atmospheric. The physical sensation of walking through the trenches had the most impact on us all. We really felt how it would have been for the vulnerable soldiers who had to show such bravery.

After the moving experience in the trenches we visited "Tyne Cot", which is the largest British Commonwealth cemetery with 11,953 headstones of men who were killed in battle. We were amazed that 70 % of the headstones said simply "Known to God" as the bodies were never identified. We laid a wreath at the cross of sacrifice to commemorate the thousands of soldiers who had lost their lives to fight for our country and we held a minute's silence.

Overall, we can speak for everyone when we say that we had an amazing day. The trip was full of moments that we will never forget and this is what Remembrance is all about.

By Sophie Lightowlers and Sydney Pimbley



## Notre Dame Sailing Club

On Wednesday, 3rd March, Tim Anderton, RYA On Board Development Officer for West London, based at Queen Mary's Sailing Club, gave a presentation on sailing at the Year 8 assembly. He talked about the opportunity to join our Notre Dame Sailing Club next term. The Sailing Club is already well established with girls from Years 7-10. This year we hope to arrange fixtures with Charterhouse and other schools. However, beginners are also welcome. The girls will be able to achieve RYA dinghy certificates plus the ability to be competent when hiring a dinghy on holiday. There may also be the possibility to do some yacht sailing.

The club will begin on Thursday, 29th April. The girls will be taken to St. Mary's by minibus at the end of the school day and parents can pick them up at 7pm from St. Mary's or 7:30pm from school.

If you are interested and would like further details, please contact Mrs. Turner in the Senior School.



## Drama Department Productions

On Tuesday 9th March the GCSE actors will perform 'Darlings, You Were Wonderful' & 'Widows' in the Drama Studio 6:30 – 8:15 p.m. Please sign up on the list.

On Thursday 11th March the GCSE actors will perform 'Not Such an Ordinary Life' & '10 Sugars or 12' in the Drama Studio 6:30 – 8:15 p.m. Please sign up on the list.

'The Box of Enchantments' - Lower School production  
on Thursday 18th & Friday 19th March at Walton Playhouse 7:30 – 8:45pm Tickets £6/£4.

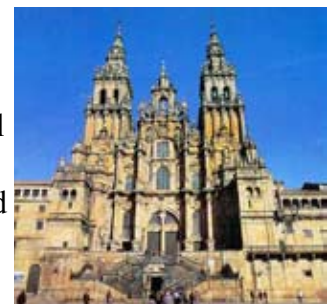
On Tuesday 23rd & Wednesday 24th March the A2 actors will perform the final production of 'Vinegar Tom' in the Drama Studio 7:30 – 8:15 p.m. Please sign up on the list.

## Mothering Sunday - Sunday 14th March

Senior and Prep Choirs will be singing at the Mothering Sunday Mass at 11am, Sacred Heart Church (opposite Waitrose), Cobham. Please do join us.

## Santiago Choirs

The girls in the Senior and Prep School Choirs will be giving a special performance in the School Chapel of the hymns and music they have been rehearsing. This is in preparation for the Santiago Choir Tour and their performance at the Cathedral. Please do join us on Monday 15th March at 7p.m.



## Elmbridge District Netball Tournament Results 2010

On Tuesday 2nd March it was the U12 A and B Elmbridge Netball Tournament, hosted at Notre Dame. The A team played very well, securing good wins against Heathside (12-2), Hinchley Wood (9-0) and Claremont (8-2). Their final game was against a strong St George's team; this proved to be a very close and exciting game with St George's narrowly winning by 5 goals to 4. These results meant that the Notre Dame team finished as District Runners' Up. The team was: Hannah Burvill, Nicole Reardon, Naomi Rothwell, Jemma Sharman, Francesca Monteiro, Francesca Back (Captain) and Catherine Harrison.

The B team demonstrated what strength in depth there currently is in Year 7 by winning all three of their matches in their separate tournaments, defeating Heathside (7-0), Claremont (6-0) and St George's (2-0). These excellent results meant that Notre Dame won overall and the girls received certificates and medals for their efforts. The team was: Charlotte Hookway, Sharifa Al-Turki, Sarah Menezes, Emma Cook (Captain), Sasha King, Alicia Graham, Lucy Sessions, Francesca Linney, Christina Hobday and Lucy Dickinson-Green.

On Wednesday 3rd March Notre Dame U14 and U13 Teams were in their Elmbridge Netball Tournament. The U14 team only had 2 games, ND had a very one-sided game against Hinchley Wood, Notre Dame led 20-0 at half time and continued to play superbly well, even when substitutions were made; ND won 41-0. Notre Dame played Claremont in the final. Notre Dame took an early lead and were 9-2 up at half time. Claremont fought back in the second half but ND maintained the lead to win 15-9 and to become Elmbridge Champions. The team was: Joanna Simpson, Kirsty Marsh, Hattie Battle, Amy Clayton, Catherine Stainton, Caitlin Moran, Olivia Barrett, Mary Harrison and Natalija Sekanic.

The U13A team had a tough start in their tournament, losing to St George's College by 3 goals to 4, but they bounced back from this setback to record a good win, beating Claremont B 8-0. They had a tough game against Claremont A, losing 2-9. These results placed the team in 3rd place in their age group. The team players were Emma Appleton, Tilly Prowse, Isabelle Stewart, Anna Morris, Grace Dickinson, Sophie Plummer, Iona Lee (Captain) and Melina Klein.

## London Marathon for Cardinal Hume Centre

Along with the Sisters' charity FISC, our special fundraising project this year is the Cardinal Hume Centre, a charity which helps the homeless and badly-housed in London. Already we have had a successful collection of various clothing and toiletry items before Christmas and this week a representative from the Centre will come to accept a cheque for £1500 raised by the Year 7 and 8 girls in the sponsored swim. Continuing the sporting theme, Mr Marshall is running the London Marathon this April on behalf of the Centre and would value any contributions and encouragement you could give. If you would like to sponsor his efforts, you can do so through a form in the School Office or by visiting <http://www.justgiving.co.uk/dominic-marshall>.

