

## Abbey 1000 Schools Celebration

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 thirty Y7 students took part in a Bury St Edmunds Abbey 1000 Schools' Heritage Project which was organised by Mrs Gridley, who used to work at St Benedict's before taking up a new position at Abbeygate Sixth Form College.

Mrs Gridley put on a fantastic programme to bring local history to life for young people within the town through a creative, cross-curricular approach to learning. Although there were eleven participating schools over the two day programme, the event had a special significance for our students as St Benedict's takes its name from the Benedictine abbey that was established in 1020 by King Canute (the celebration has been delayed for two years due to COVID restrictions).

All of the students (and staff) were excited to be going on a trip and were in good spirits as we walked into town. Our first stop was a guided tour of the Abbey Gardens with one of the Bury St Edmunds Tour Guides. Both Caroline and Mike did a wonderful job of explain the history of the abbey to our students, and even included a role play in which Leonor (7S) played the part of St Edmund being tied to a tree by a Dane (Samantha (7P)) before being shot with 'arrows' by students from Sebert Wood Primary School!

Our next stop was just up the road as we had a guided tour of St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Once again, we had superb guides who explained the timeline of this beautiful and atmospheric building, from its sixteenth century architecture, Victorian restoration and the contemporary additions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Particular highlights were seeing the carved mouse behind the pulpit, the atmospheric and peaceful atmospheres in the north gallery and St Edmund chapel and lying down on our backs to view the vaulted ceiling in the lantern tower in an unusual way! If you ever get the chance to do this, make sure you look out for the blank shield among the shields of all the English cathedrals on display – apparently the Isle of Man didn't meet the deadline for sending their design through!

After an enjoyable lunch in glorious weather in the Abbey Gardens we made our way to the Guildhall where the students had a chance to either see Britain's only surviving royal Observer Corps Operations Room or the Ration Books to Rock 'n' Roll exhibition – both are well worth a visit if you are ever looking forward for something to do in town. However, the main reason for our visit was to see the old courtroom brought back to life by History and Law students from Abbeygate Sixth Form who re-enacted the trials of two famous 19<sup>th</sup> century murderers including that of William Corder who was found guilty of the murder of Maria Marten in what became known as the Red Barn Murder.

These re-enactments were followed by a quick role-play of trial by ordeal, in which Freya (7X) and Anniston (7X) were chosen to take part in some audience participation – and excelled in their roles.

Our final destination was to Moyse's Hall Museum where Dan Clarke and his team delivered a fast-paced tour of all things grotty – from Abbey life to horrible medieval trades, the battlefield and the executioner's gallows. The students were invited to sniff 'smell boxes' and to handle artefacts including gauntlets, helmets and swords. Then they were taken upstairs to find out more about William Corder and the Red Barn murders, as well as being invited to view the display containing a book of an account of the murder bound in William Corder's skin and his death mask.

We would like to say a thank you to Mrs Gridley and all our guides for putting on such a fantastic day: and to Mrs Chacksfield for planning the trip. All the students thoroughly enjoyed it and were excellent ambassadors for the school. They are now looking forward to working on the next part of the project which is to contribute acts and performances for the School's Celebratory Event in the Abbey Gardens on the 29<sup>th</sup> June.



Mr Murphy & Mrs Wray



## Science News– Climate Change Explains Pasta Shortage

At the outset of the COVID pandemic it was noted that panic buying in shops led to severe shortages of some items – notably toilet rolls and pasta. However, although most shop supplies are now back to somewhere near normal, there is a continuing shortage of pasta that has led to a significant increase in prices and reduced availability in some areas. This is due to climate change having caused a near-catastrophic failure of the pasta harvest at the end of last year.

The majority of the world's pasta is grown in northern Italy where, historically, the climate has been ideal for growing the various trees and vines that produce the wide variety of pasta types we see in our shops.

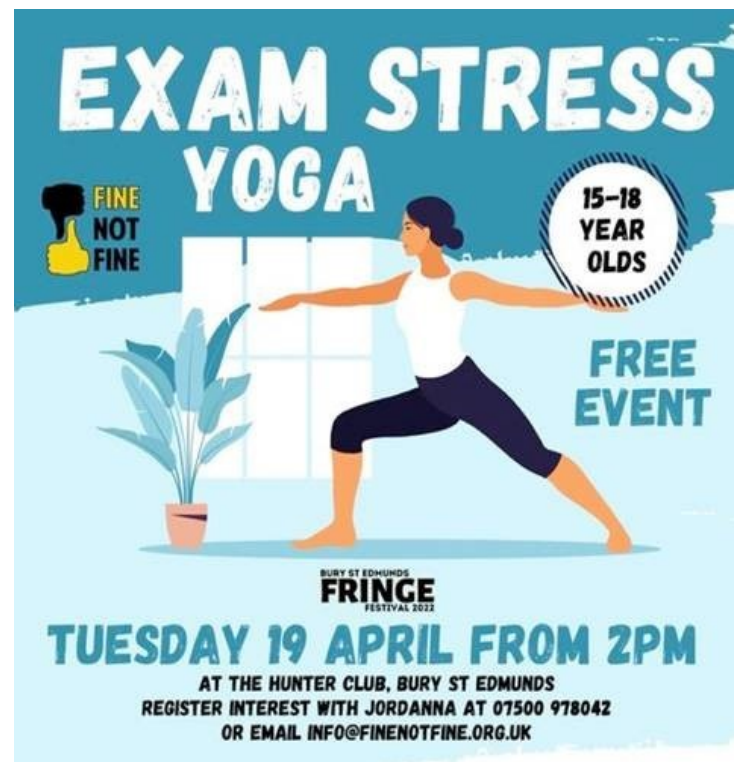


Selective breeding of the pasta plants over the last 200 years has enabled growers to produce perfect pasta, from anelli to ziti and all the types in between. I'm sure that you all have a favourite pasta and will be astonished to find that they are actually produced by plants.

The photo shows Mrs Bella Ricciolini at work during the autumn harvest on her family's farm in the Parma province of northern Italy. Pasta plants typically have been bred to grow enthusiastically during warm, wet summer months but then require cooler temperatures during the harvest season – Oct-Nov. This allows for the final maturation of the pasta prior to picking it off the trees and is why Parma is a major pasta producing region. Unfortunately, with climate change giving rise to much warmer weather late in the year, this has had a drastic effect on the crop of all types of pasta and yields are significantly reduced.

For the agriculturalists among you, here is an interesting question: have you ever wondered why individual strands of spaghetti are always the same length? Well, the answer lies in some very clever selective breeding and plant hybridisation: as mentioned earlier, pasta plants have been selectively bred over the last 200 years and this has resulted in a perfect spaghetti plant – one that produces hundreds of strands of spaghetti that are all exactly the same length, as seen in the photo of Mrs Ricciolini.

Although the UK climate is not particularly conducive to the cultivation of pasta plants, the Science Department does have a limited supply and will happily give them out free-of-charge to keen gardeners on a strictly first-come-first-served basis. Please email: [aprilone@everbeenhad.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:aprilone@everbeenhad.suffolk.sch.uk)



## Vacancies

Job Title:	Exam Invigilators
Salary:	Grade 2 point 3 currently £9.62 per hour plus holiday allowance
Job Term	No guaranteed hours
Appointment:	Casual
Place of work:	St Benedict's Catholic School

We are looking for reliable and responsible persons who are available to work primarily during the exam seasons (January, May, June and November). The ideal candidate will be flexible; have effective communication skills; and be able to remain calm and confident while invigilating our pupils during external exams, mock exams and controlled assessments. Enquiries to [sbuchan@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:sbuchan@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk)

## St Benedict's Prom Loan Library

Thank you to those who have already sent us dresses to loan to students in year 11 and 13 for their proms. Just a reminder that we wish to collect formal wear from our community to allow our students the choice of pre-loved items that you may have also only worn once. If you have any dresses or suits, we would be very grateful. The items must be clean and in good repair, they will loan the item and return it to us clean and in good repair. When you donate an item please indicate if you would like the item returned after our prom season or if you are happy for it to remain in our formal attire library.

