

Dear Parents/ Carers

This week has ended with Remembrance day and it is a solemn reminder not just of the tragedies of wars past but also of those who suffer due to conflict today and those still affected by their experiences of conflict. As a history teacher I spent much of my early career teaching about the horrors of and human cost of both the Great war and Second World War. I have always felt that this knowledge is powerful, because through understanding these events we might as a society be able to prevent them from happening again. It is, I think important to remember and reflect and we ask Our Lady of Peace to pray for us and help all those whose lives are marred by conflict. We particularly pray for Ukraine at this time.

Yours in Christ,

Imogen Senior

Thank you to Max and Mrs Roughley for playing The Last Post splendidly during the 2 minutes silence this morning.



## 'Memories Adrift'

### An Exhibition of Remembrance for the Royal British Legion

An exhibition of works made by Year 12 Art students and textiles club has been put on display this week to coincide with Armistice Day at St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds. Students have worked in honour of remembering those who have died at sea particularly those in service in the Royal Navy as part of this years' focus to produce a textile piece and large-scale drawings.

Photographs and drawings were made of the knotted forms and pieces of flotsam that students have created inspired by looking at naval knots. Charlotte Humphries, Filipa Pinto and Emily Walkowska extended their work to include charcoal drawings of Naval Vessels from history and the present day.

The work will be on display over the next two weeks in the church so we hope parents and students will have a chance to see it in a public setting.

Ms Chacksfield

## Sporting Highlights

Under 15 Area Netball Tournament – Wednesday 12th October

It was a pleasure to take the Under 15 girls to their Netball Tournament last Wednesday.

The standard of play was very high with teams from across West Suffolk.

In the first game the girls played well and won 4 – 2 against Mildenhall College. The second game was against our neighbours County Upper – a very close game which could have gone either way but in the end County won 5 – 4. Our next game was against the host school Thomas Gainsborough who were a very fast and agile team. The St Benedict's girls were a little slow to get going, by the end of the first half we were 4 – 2 down but with some focus and a more positive mindset the game ended 8 – 6 in favour of TGS. This was probably St Benedict's best game the style, speed of play and skills shown were very good and gave a preview of the potential of the team to compete at a higher level in the future. Our final game was against the eventual winners of the Tournament Culford to whom we lost. The player of match for this game went to Peggy who surprised herself with a beautiful but unexpected goal. All the team worked well together represented St Benedict's beautifully.

Team: Grace, Grace, Alice, Ella, Peggy, Nancy, Franklyna, Amelia (Captain) and Portia. Sadly, Sarya was not well enough to play on the day.

## Youth Parliament

On Friday 4th November two year 12 students from St Benedict's and two other members of Suffolk's Youth Parliament, joined more than 200 young people aged between 11 and 18 in Westminster, to participate in debate sessions of the UK Youth Parliament. This is the first time they've met like this since 2019; and their morning session was chaired by speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle.

Will Blewitt was elected by his peers to speak on the issue of the cost of living crisis and he delivered an inspirational speech from the Dispatch Box, which received a standing ovation. Will's proposal has now been adopted by the Youth Parliament as their main focus for the year ahead.

If you would like to watch it here is the link, feel free to watch the whole debate or scroll to Will at 1:02.50

<https://youtu.be/qYi4dfz06w8>

Katie Dunn was also there and she can be seen in this clip from the BBC.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-63520778>

## Library News

Attention! Very exciting news from the academic research group JSTOR!



Register for a free account

EXPANDED ACCESS DURING COVID-19

To support researchers during this challenging time in which many are unable to get to physical libraries, we have expanded our free read-online access to 100 articles per month.

JSTOR is a leading academic research group that provides articles on a multitude of leading subjects. Students and staff can sign up for a free account and view one hundred articles a month for free. Register for updates and access today at <https://www.jstor.org/>

## Public Speaking

After school, on the Monday of last week, Hallowe'en, four of our Year 12 students represented St Benedict's in the ESU Sixth Form public speaking competition via Zoom. The topics they had chosen were eclectic and fascinating. William Blewitt gave an inspiring speech on "What Labour needs to do to win the next election" whilst Jasmine Lau argued very convincingly "Why we should all be feminists"; Katie Dunn's treatise on "The impact of the contraceptive pill on women's liberation" was beautifully balanced and compelling and Flora Eggleston's exploration of "What causes eating disorders? A Mental Health Crisis" was totally absorbing.

(Unfortunately, Amelia Tas wasn't well enough to tell us about the impact of Vivienne Westward on fashion.)

They were outstandingly fluent, erudite and well-prepared, answering really tough questions from the adjudicators with huge aplomb. We are all extremely proud of them, especially as Jasmine and Flora were doing this for the very first time.

Will was the one selected to go through to the semi-finals, but it must have been a real dilemma to decide, and I am grateful that I didn't have to judge.

The Eastern Area organiser Brian Cooke remarked on how the students from St Benedict's always seem so tight-knit and mutually supportive that it suggests a very strong school ethos. I am confident that the whole group will be cheering Will on in the next round.

Meanwhile, our brand-new debating team of sixth formers Katie Dunn, Jasmine Lau and Alex Wass have been preparing for the first round of the Mace – the ESU's national debating competition. Also competing via Zoom, they are proposing the motion they were allocated: that "This house would ban the use of digital manipulation in advertising, including social media ad content". Their opposition are from Chantry Academy and we are looking forward to the event being staged on the evening of Tuesday 15th. Good luck to all our speakers!

Mrs V James

## Bunnies!

We have recently welcomed to the St Benedict's community our two mini-lop wellbeing bunnies. They have settled in marvellously and are currently in a lovely new house by reception. We also have an outdoor run still to set up so that they can get plenty of variety in their days. We have named them Napoleon Bunnyparte and Hareatio Nelson (never let a history teacher name animals). So far they have been brilliant in terms of improving student and staff wellbeing, with lots of student hopping by to say hello (although they have also had a bit of an impact on productivity at times)!





## This Week's Alumni Career Talks

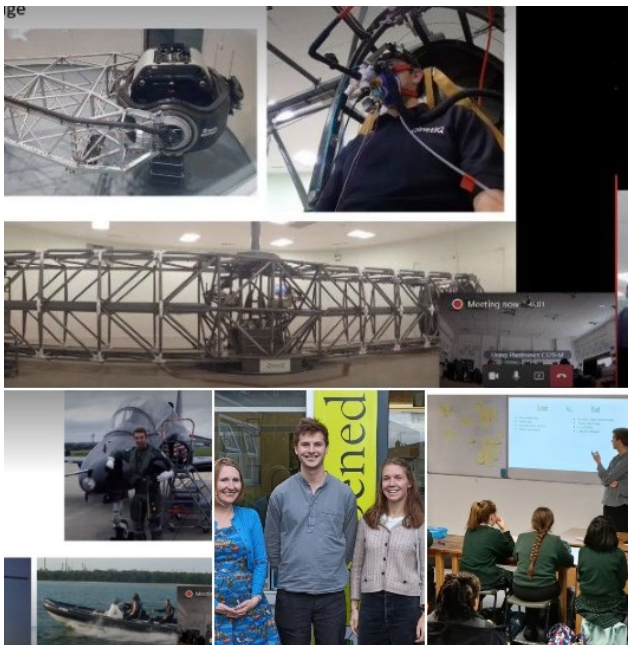
Medicine – Dr Claudia Snudden and Dr Henry Dunne  
Aerospace Engineering – Adam Pearson

Wednesday, it was with great pleasure that St Benedict's welcomed back former students Dr Claudia Snudden and Dr Henry Dunne to talk to students about their pathways into the medical profession.

Claudia and Henry spent time reflecting on the many different reasons that they find their roles rewarding, but also spoke openly about the many different challenges that Dr's face. They also spent time answering the many interesting and insightful questions posed to them by the 40 students in attendance. It was a highly interesting, informative, and interactive session enjoyed by all the students.

Thursday, it was the turn of Adam Pearson to beam into school to talk to students about Aerospace Engineering and his role as a flight test engineer. Again, it was a highly interesting and informative talk about Adam's journey since leaving St Benedict's and was enjoyed by the 25 students in attendance.

The school would like to thank Claudia, Henry, and Adam for giving up their time this week to support the school's current students and helping them to gain a critical understanding of their roles, and the pathways into them.



## Upcoming career talks

Alumni Career Talk – Thursday 17th November – Stephen Dunne – Civil Service/Government and Politics/Oxbridge

Stephen is former student at St Benedict's who is now working for the Treasury Department and will be coming in to talk about his time studying Spanish & Portuguese at Oxford, graduate employment in the Civil Service which led to working on Foreign Aid in Rwanda, Data Ethics, and also his current role working in the Treasury. This will be an excellent talk for anyone interested in government and politics, or aspirations of attending Oxbridge. (this talk has been moved from the 11th of November).

Career Talk – Thursday 19th January 2023 – Claire Lockwood – Criminal Law

Claire is a partner at Oslers Solicitors and will be coming into St Benedict's to talk to students about her work as a criminal defence solicitor and the pathways into the profession.

Alumni Career Talk – Monday 23rd January 2023 – Julian Bruton – Theatre Director/Performing Arts.

St Benedict's will be welcoming back former student Julian Bruton to talk about his role as a Theatre Director. Julian will be talking about his pathway into his profession, as well as the many other career opportunities available within the performing arts sector.

If anyone is interested in any of these talks please register your interest with Mr Steward.

## New Mental Maths Resource available for Key Stage 3

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have been set up with a school account on the website **10ticks.com** which provides mental maths online activities. Students can use their mymaths username and password to log in. We recommend that students try to do some mental maths practice at least three times a week to help improve their speed and accuracy. It covers addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in the form of fun activities and games.



There is a National 10ticks Competition running from 7<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> November. All correct answers will contribute to the schools' score and we have chance of winning some money for our school. It would be great if all students in Key Stage 3 could login and complete some activities on 10ticks during this time.

If you would like a reminder of your mymaths and 10ticks login details, please ask your Maths teacher.

It is great to be able to offer this exciting new resource for our students.

*Mrs Eastwood and the Maths Team.*

## Alumni Career Profiles

For the remainder of the school year each week we will be looking at the career profile of one of St Benedict's former students in the newsletter. However, to kick things off, as we have had three alumni in school this week talking to current students about their career journeys since leaving St Benedict's, we will have a look at the career profiles of **Dr Claudia Snudden, Dr Henry Dunne, and Adam Pearson.**

### Dr Claudia Snudden, Class of 2011



#### **Higher Education Subject and University:**

Infection and Immunity, BMBCCh – Medicine, University of Oxford (2011-2017)

MPhil Population Health Sciences, University of Cambridge (2021-2022)

#### **Brief Career History:**

Foundation Doctor, Royal Liverpool Hospital (2017-2019)

GP training scheme, Cambridge Deanery (2019-present)

After finishing medical school, I went straight into working as a Foundation Doctor in Liverpool for two years. Following this, I started my specialty training in General Practice closer to home in Cambridge. Alongside my clinical training, I am also working as a researcher at the university.

#### **What do you love about your job:**

The ability to combine lots of different roles and interests within my job as a 'doctor' – my week is hugely variable and includes clinical work seeing patients, academic work in my research department, and teaching.

Medicine is a fascinating career that allows you to interact with people from all ages and backgrounds and is incredibly rewarding when you see people's health improve.

#### **Three words to sum up an average working day:**

Diverse, stimulating, demanding

#### **What three pieces of advice would you give someone thinking of a career as a doctor:**

- 1) Being a doctor doesn't just mean looking after patients in a hospital. There are all sorts of career options you can choose from including working in research, commercial companies, or policy and politics.
- 2) Communication skills are really important – a large part of your day will be spent talking to patients, their families, doctors on your team, or other healthcare professionals such as nurses and physios.
- 3) There is lots of training involved. Medical school takes 5-6 years, and after that you will need to work (and study for more exams!) for between 5-10 years before you are fully qualified as a consultant or GP.

#### **How did St Benedict's help you into your present role:**

St Benedict's helped me develop strong moral values, and

the ability to work

effectively, independently and as part of a team; qualities that are fundamental to the role of a doctor.

#### **Favourite memory from your time St Benedict's:**

Free periods in sixth form hanging out in the library with friends

### Dr Henry Dunne, Class of 2012



#### **Higher Education Subject and University:**

Medicine - Pre-Clinical, University of Oxford.

Clinical Medicine, Kings College London.

#### **Brief Career History:**

Foundation year one - Royal Sussex County Hospital Brighton: Rotations - general surgery, ENT - Respiratory medicine.

Foundation year two - Royal Sussex County Hospital Brighton - Rotations: A&E, academic research (medical education).

Next steps - I am training towards becoming an ENT surgeon!

#### **What do you love about your job:**

Amazing opportunity to help patients and really get to know people of all walks of life and to make meaningful positive impacts on people's lives. I work in great teams surrounded by lots of motivated people, continued learning and development (unfortunately that does mean having to continue to do exams throughout the career though).

#### **Three words to sum up an average working day:**

Stressful, exciting, a privilege

#### **What three pieces of advice would you give someone thinking of a career as a doctor:**

- 1) It really is a super fulfilling job that you won't get bored of.
- 2) There are so many different jobs within the title 'doctor' – there will definitely be something for you.
- 3) Teamwork is really important.

#### **How did St Benedict's help you into your present role:**

St Benedict's help me to get the A-levels and GCSEs I needed to get into medical school, they also had helpful lunchtime sessions to prepare for my interviews in Oxford. The school helped to instil principles such the importance of self-directed learning that have been and continue to be so valuable in my career and training so far. It was also a great place to make some lifelong friends that have come in very handy when I've needed a chance to relax after a hard day's work!

#### **Favourite memory from your time St Benedict's:**

Playing football every lunch time and break.



### **Higher Education Subject and University:**

BEng Aerospace Engineering, University of Leicester.

Msc Aerospace Vehicle Design, Cranfield University.

Empire Test Pilots School: No 42 Flight Test Engineer Course

### **Brief Career History:**

I joined QinetiQ in 2014 on a graduate scheme as a flight physics engineer, after finishing a BEng and MSc in Aerospace Engineering. I had multiple placements over two years to explore the company and it was during this time I worked on my first flight trials and had my first dose of flying (in a fighter jet!).

2017 - After the graduate scheme I started work in helicopter flight testing and was selected as a flight test observer, my first airborne role. I worked primarily on testing how well Royal Navy helicopters could land on new ships, which involved going to sea for weeks at a time!

2018 - I then applied and was accepted into the Empire Test Pilots' School, which taught me how to lead experimental and high-risk flight tests. This year-long course involved some very hard work coupled to some very exciting flying, in everything from basic trainers to state-of-the-art military aircraft. On graduation I was granted the title of Flight Test Engineer.

2019 – current. Shortly after Test Pilot School I got the opportunity to join an RAF test squadron, the only civilian there! Here I lead teams on the front line of military aircraft testing to push limits and generate more capable aircraft for the RAF. I expect to be here for at least another few years.

### **What do you love about your job:**

I can now actually get in trouble for not flying enough, and there are still plenty of “pinch yourself” moments. It's also very rewarding to see the results of our hard work get to front line pilots, hopefully giving them safer and more effective aircraft.

### **Three words to sum up an average working day:**

Plan, Execute, Analyse

### **What three pieces of advice would you give someone thinking of a career in Flight Test:**

1) It's about who you know. For better or worse, networking is very important for finding opportunities. The flight test community is small, get your face out there as somebody good to work with. It's amazing what can come your way if people know who you are and what you want...or what you can do for them! This is important across all employment areas.

2) Be flexible and open to new opportunities. It's good to have a plan for your career in order to send you off in the

right direction, but don't be afraid to take some detours on the way. Trust me, you have time. You never know what you might find, but don't simply chase the highest salary.

3) Get that healthy work life balance nailed as soon as you can, nobody will thank you for working yourself into the ground. There are times when you will have to work harder for longer hours than is reasonable, the trick is to ensure this is the exception and not the rule. You will be happier and healthier for it if you also have a life outside of work!

### **How did St Benedict's help you into your present role:**

By providing us with teachers more than willing to go the extra mile to help, whether that was extra revision sessions or practice interviews to get ready for university selection days. At university you realise just how good your schoolteachers were at actually teaching, so make the most of it!

### **Favourite memory from your time St Benedict's:**

The whole sixth form, especially our “socials”

## **Odd Socks Day**

On Monday 14th of November all students are encouraged to come to school wearing odd socks to start anti bullying week 2022 in support of the Anti-bullying Alliance campaign. The aim of the odd socks day is to have a little fun and an opportunity for everyone to express themselves and celebrate their individuality and what makes us all unique.

So please set a reminder for your child to come to school in odd socks next Monday in support. It would be great if you joined in too.

Mr Taylor

## **Different Voices**

### **Reading Week 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November**

Advance notice that 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November will be the first Reading Week of this academic year. The theme for this week is 'Different Voices' and the aim is for students to read a range of different texts throughout the week that celebrate diversity.

As part of tutor time activities, we are asking for students to bring in their own recommended reads and explain to their fellow students why they should read those particular books. Students will receive two house points for each book they recommend.

In addition, if students want more ideas of interesting books to read that cover diverse topics, they should visit the library to see the display of recommended reads. Then, if a student chooses one of these books, reads it and completes a quiz or writes a book review, they will receive double house points.

We really hope that this week will give students the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the wide range of different voices reflected in literature.

Mrs Oakes



## Battlefields Trip

At 0400hrs on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November an elite group of St Benedict's students mustered at St Benedict's to travel from Bury St Edmund's to Ypres, a journey mirrored by Suffolk Regiment soldiers from Gibraltar Barracks just up the road just over one hundred years ago.

Having crossed the channel and driven down the road to Ypres parallel to the railway line which took the soldiers to and from the front, the students stopped at Lijssenthoek cemetery for some lunch and an introduction to the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, delivered by our expert guides from Anglia Tours, Sean Cripps and David Morrison.

They explained that Lijssenthoek, situated on the main communication line between the Allied military bases in the rear and Ypres battlefields and close to the Front but out of the reach of the German field artillery, became a natural place to establish a casualty clearing station. The cemetery contains 9,901 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 883 war graves of nationalities. Of particular note in this cemetery is the grave of Staf Nurse Nelly Spindler of the Imperial Military Nursing Service, the only woman buried among more than 10,000 men at the cemetery.

The next stop was the Hoge Crater Museum, where the group were able to see original uniforms, weapons and paraphernalia used by the soldiers of both sides, including a stone flagon of Greene King beer from Bury St Edmunds. The highlight of this stop was the recreation of a trench system. Sean and David explained the development of trench warfare, including the use of ground, trench construction, daily routine and problems with fighting in trenches. This was followed by a visit to Ypres to visit Sir Reginald Blomfield's Memorial to the Missing on the Ypres Salient, site of the daily Last Post ceremony since 1928, on the way to the chocolate shop where the students were able to taste and buy some authentic Belgian treats.

Then it was back on the bus for a drive past the St Julien Memorial, also known as the Brooding Soldier at Vancouver Corner, which commemorates the first use of a poison gas attack on the western front, on the 22-24<sup>th</sup> April 1915, at a point where the British (Canadian First Division) and French (45<sup>th</sup> (Algerian) Division)) met. The gas drifted across positions mainly held by the French colonial troops who broke ranks and abandoned their trenches, but the First Canadian Division and assorted French troops filled the gap and held the line.

The final stop of the day was a visit to Tyne Cot, the largest cemetery for Commonwealth forces in the world, in any war. 11,961 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War are buried or commemorated in the cemetery, 8,373 of whom are unidentified. Of those whose who have been identified, the gravestones demonstrate both the folly and valour of war. The gravestone of Second Lieutenant Arthur Conway Young of the Irish Fusiliers whose gravestone bears the legend, 'Sacrificed to the fallacy that war can end war', lies only a short distance away from those of Captain Clarence Smith Jeffries (34<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Infantry), Sergeant Lewis McGee (40<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Infantry) and Private James Peter Robertson (Manitoba Battalion Canadian Infantry)) – all of whom were awarded the Victoria Cross. Zara-Jane Sparks was also able to visit the grave of her great, great, grandad's mum's brother, Private Harry Miller from the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers who died on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1917, aged 28, whose remains have only been identified recently and received a full military burial in 2021, and featured in the ITV show Long Lost Family Special: The Unknown Soldiers.

After a long day, the party then enjoyed limitless pizza at the fantastic 'Family Pizza' restaurant, before retiring for the night at the Messines Peace Village. Despite, a disrupted night, the students made it on time for breakfast and then headed south to the Somme to learn about the events that took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916 – the worst ever day in British military history.

En-route, the party stopped off at Ploegsteert Memorial, which commemorates over 11,000 men who have no known grave, including the name of Toby Flood's great, great, grandfather, Private Herbert James Blower of the 1<sup>st</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the North Staffordshire Regiment, who died on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 1918.

When the party reached the Somme, they stopped at the Sunken Lane, which was in the middle of no-man's land near Beaumont-Hamel, which was used by the 1<sup>st</sup> Lancashire Fusiliers on the first day of the battle. The students retraced the steps of the soldiers who bravely climbed over the embankment into no-man's land, advancing towards the German trenches only to be cut down by machine gun fire within a matter of metres.

This was followed by a visit to the Newfoundland Memorial Park which commemorates 814 soldiers who lost their lives in the regiment's first major engagement, which lasted approximately 30 minutes and has become a Newfoundland symbol of sacrifice and source of identity. Then, once more it was back on the bus and a short trip to Ocean Villas for lunch and a show and tell experience, which involved Matijus Juchna being dressed up in a Great War uniform, and being transformed into a very convincing Tommy, complete with a short barrel Lee-Enfield rifle.

Having had some lunch, the party boarded the bus again for a quick stop at the Ulster Tower, which commemorates the 36th (Ulster) Division's initial success on the 1st July 1916 at the cost of over 5,00 men including Billy McFazean who was awarded the VC for laying down his life for his comrades by throwing himself on top of a pile of grenades just before they detonated which instantly blew him to pieces but meant that only one other soldier was injured. The penultimate stop of the day was at the Lochnagar Crater, which was one of 19 mines that were dug under the German lines to help the infantry advance at the start of the battle. The mine was detonated at 0728hrs on 1 July 1916 and left a crater 30 metres deep and 100 metres wide.

While the group were in the Somme area, they also managed to take the opportunity to visit the Flatiron cemetery, where Miss Dalby was able to visit the grave of her great, great, grandfather, Private Arthur Dalby, who died on the 14th July 1916 at the age of 40, leaving behind a wife and three children.

The tour ended with a visit to Thiepval Memorial to the Missing, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, which commemorates 72,337 missing British servicemen who died in the Battles of the Somme between 1915 and 1918, including the composer George Butterworth. At the Stone of Remembrance, Sean and David asked the students to reflect on what they had seen and experienced over the last couple of days and led a short act of remembrance, before reminding the students that they were about to do something that none of the soldiers whose names were engraved on the walls and pillars would do, and that was to go home – a thought provoking end to a fantastic trip.

