



- Cadet Presentations
- STEM News
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ASTON VILLA ALUMNI

60 YEARS CELEBRATIONS



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A message from the Head Teacher



Ms L Draycott



At Barr Beacon, we always say we look forward to what the future will bring while also learning important lessons from the past. This term has seen some very literal examples of this, with the commemoration of the Holocaust and our stunning production of Hairspray which tackled themes of prejudice and segregation in the middle of the 20th Century.

Our biggest ongoing retrospective is the celebration of this being Barr Beacon's sixtieth year in existence. You will find two more profiles of Beacon alumni in this newsletter, including one who was in Beacon's very first class back in 1958. If you are a former pupil yourself I hope you have your ticket for our special event on 12th July. If not, go to the website now as we sold out of our initial allocation of 500 in less than a week!

Looking to the future, we were so proud to hear about our footballing alumni from 2017: Jacob and Jack have both recently signed contracts for Aston Villa. We look forward to following their very promising careers. We might also be currently teaching some future space scientists and engineers based on how much our pupils embraced every opportunity on the Orlando visit over half term.

As we move into Spring and (hopefully!) better weather, I know you will join us in looking forward with excitement to the rest of the academic year and beyond.

Ms L Draycott
Head Teacher

Attendance Information for Parents/Carers

Please remember that if you take your child on holiday during school time you are very likely to receive a fine from Walsall Local Authority. The Local Authority may also take parents/carers to court if their child is persistently absent (below 90%). Some parents have even been arrested, taken to court and fined over £500.

Notices - If your child needs to take prescribed medication please ensure you have signed it in at reception. The forms are available under the Publications tab on the website.

We regularly conduct research in school to identify opportunities for enhancing the learning for all pupils. This includes surveys and group interviews. If you would prefer your child not to be involved, please contact Mr Lowbridge-Ellis.

PROGRESS EVENING DATES

Year 12 & 13 - Thursday 7th March 2019 4pm-7pm

Year 7 - Thursday 28th March 2019 4pm-8pm

As part of Performing Arts week, Barr Beacon school went all '60s and was proud to present their production of the hit musical Hairspray Jr. The large cast of 56 dancers and actors really wowed the audience with their confidence and professionalism as they dazzled to the musical's hits "Welcome to the '60s", "Good Morning Baltimore" and "Run and Tell That". H Ward, who played the lead, Tracey Turnblad, led the show, telling a powerful tale of one young teenage girl's mission to change attitudes towards racial segregation.

Her beehive hair, amazing voice and comic timing was teamed up by an energetic cast who were excellent in capturing the show's key characters: from the hip-shaking Seaweed (Z Brown), his little sister Inez (S Patel) his soulful mother Motormouth Mabel performed by the enigmatic vocal talent N Thompson, to the charismatic Corny Collins (F Darkes), heartthrob Link Larkin (J Hemming), divas Velma and Amber Von Tussle (L Bainbridge and E Rice) and, finally, the comic duo of best gum-chewing friend Penny (M Summersby) with her strict and overbearing mother Prudy Pingleton played by the hilarious H Neale.

The show was a fun-filled spectacular, with the audience being treated to a colourful finale of singing and dancing and a surprise arrival of the newly glamorous mother of Tracey; Edna Turnblad (played by the extremely comical R Chatwin) and her dutiful husband Wilbur (Z Inman).

The cast of Barr Beacon have worked continuously hard throughout the rehearsal process, showing great dedication. Thank you to everyone who came to watch the spectacular. And remember... "You Can't Stop The Beat!"





60 YEARS OF BARR BEACON SCHOOL



www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk/60-years-of-barr-beacon

Carol Dance (née Claridge)

Carol Dance (*née Claridge*) was a pupil from **the first year Barr Beacon opened.**

"I was a pupil at Barr Beacon School from September 1958 to July 1962. It was a new school then and because Aldridge Grammar School was not complete we shared our building with pupils who would move to Aldridge when it was finished.

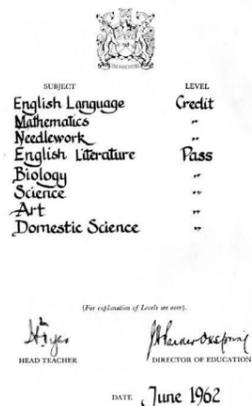
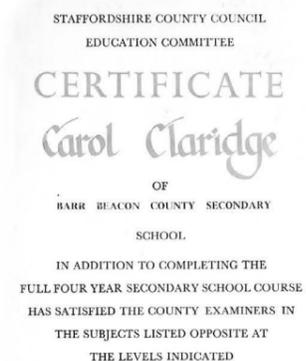
"The teachers I remember include Mr Tyas (*Headteacher*), Mr Brown, Miss Arnold and Mr Findlay. Miss Arnold's favourite saying was "There will be trouble with a capital T".

"During my time as a pupil I made friends with so many other pupils and am still in contact with some to this day. I was always everyone's friend during lunch time as my mother worked in the school kitchen. If there were any extras they knew they would get second helpings.



"I also worked at Barr Beacon School for 20 years, (*leaving in 2016*) doing various jobs including Community Clerk, Accounts Clerk, Swimming Co-ordinator and eventually Invigilator. I remember my first day of work at Barr Beacon, walking into the Staff Room and immediately meeting one of my teachers (*Mr Findlay*) who was still teaching there."

This is a copy of my School Leaving Certificate dated June 1962. There were no 'O' or 'A' levels then!



Lee Perfit

Goalkeeper for Barr Beacon School football team, 1977-1982.

I can't recall much of my school days to be honest but I do know not all of us were driven like the pupils are today to do well. This includes my own children, two of which have already been through Beacon and one is there right now.

I can recall being up before the headteacher (Mrs Boudler I think at the time) within the first two months as, of an evening, we used to play on the football pitches and one of the older boys broke the cross bar by swinging off it. The caretaker caught me trying to get over the fence, took my name but the older boys took the rap for it.

After leaving school I began a YTS course in building with Henry Boot in Walsall for twelve months, then getting a job with a painting and decorating firm from Aldridge: G Wagstaff and Son. After being made redundant I joined another firm from South Birmingham: Herbert Dally and Son. Again being made redundant again I decided to go into factory life and went to Dunlop Adhesive by the Castle Vale in Birmingham. After three years I left due to them relocating to Stoke so I moved to Dunlop Aircraft Tyres just up the road and have been there for the past 24 years. I currently work on the retread section as a tyre inspector and also I am a lead trainer responsible for training any new employees.



An Inspector Calls



Year 8 students were captivated by the 'An Inspector Calls' performance and workshop lead by Drama Impact Productions. This production allowed pupils to understand the play beyond merely their reading of it in the classroom. During the workshop session, the lead actor/facilitator invited a number of volunteer students to work on stage in a specific scene while the remaining audience members were fully engaged throughout, being involved in assisting with directing, developing staging ideas, general and specific discussion of the themes, stagecraft, characterisation, symbolism and language.

Also, a big well done to all the students that participated in the workshop – S. Peevor, I. Khan, G. Jones, S. Burris, T. Berry, A. Fletcher, U. Hassan – demonstrating their exceptional acting abilities!



Aston Villa Ladies Trip



On Sunday 27th January, 4 of Barr Beacon School's girls' football team went to Villa Park to watch Aston Villa Ladies vs. Leicester City Women. A record crowd of 1,618 turned up to cheer Aston Villa Ladies as they played at Villa Park for the first time since 2016. A hard fought game ended in 0-0, but was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Captain of Aston Villa Ladies Jade Richards said in her after match interview, "Hopefully we've provided some inspiration for the younger generations". Positively, women's football is becoming increasingly popular, and with events like this happening in the West Midlands, many girls are now being inspired to play at grassroots level.



The Great Outdoor Mud Crawl

By Corporal Payne (Year 10)

On Monday 14th January our Year 10 Cadets were asked to trade their Blues in for their Greens as we began our outdoor mud crawl activities, also known as Field Craft.

This started by getting briefed by Flight Lieutenant Vahter by understanding what types of equipment were needed in a 24 hours pack for military personnel in the RAF. This was followed by stunned reactions of how many items would be able to fit into our greens.

When we made our way down to the field, Flight Lieutenant Vahter demonstrated some important crawls used in the RAF including the monkey crawl and the kitten crawl. We all joined in and tried these crawls which we soon found out were harder than expected! We also demonstrated different walks that are used to not be detected by the enemy. Despite being rather close to the mud, we loved this task because it was something we had never experienced before. This was also another opportunity for cadets to find where their personal skills lay as there was a prize for the best demonstration of the crawls. Well done to D. Smith who won this and was presented with a very useful Tactical Snood.

The Year 9 Cadets joined in on this experience on the 21st of January and thoroughly enjoyed themselves like we did! Another well done to E. Cotton who won Year 9's prize for best Cadet. We would love to do this again in the future because it was an insight into the different types of careers we could do after we leave school as these crawls are important parts of some jobs in the military.

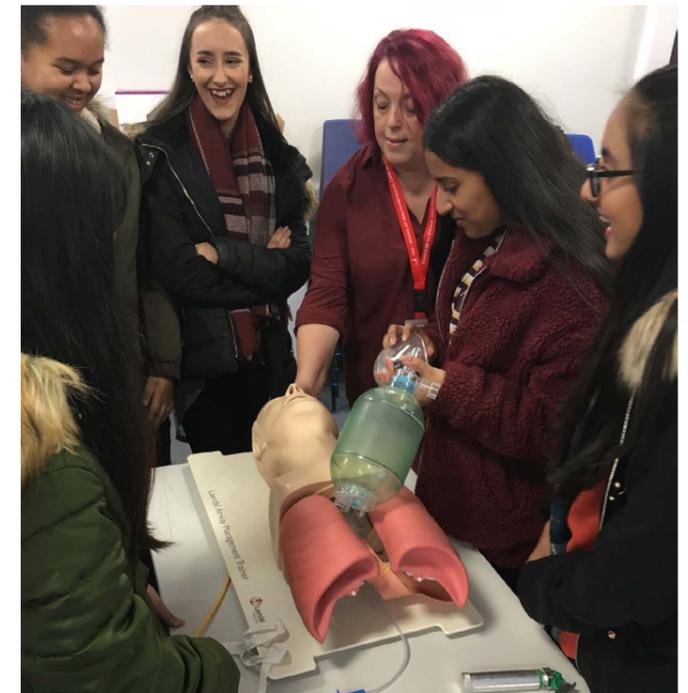


Health & Social Taster Day



On Friday 25th January, the Year 12 BTEC Health and Social Care class attended a taster day at Staffordshire University. The day included a variety of skills sessions on studying to be a midwife, operating department practice, paramedic and adult, child and mental health nursing.

The students learnt how to resuscitate someone, to care for someone who was in an operation and to help support a paramedic, practising on models worth up to £86,000. The day ended with questions and answers about applications, personal statements and interview advice, which was invaluable to the students. A great day was had by all!



Combined Cadet Force Presentation Evening

By Corporal Payne (Year 10)

On Thursday 17th January, Cadets and parents were invited to celebrate the success of our CCF over the past 18 months. This was a joyous occasion to show parents our talents and accomplishments, which they would not usually see, and how much this has impacted our lives for the better.

The evening began with a lovely slide-show of pictures and videos from the trips we have been on while being in the Cadets. Magnificent skies were seen in the pictures of us all flying and gleaming faces were smiling out from the camping photos. It was lovely to see our parents' shocked reactions of all the activities we have accomplished as not many parents can say at fourteen, they flew a plane!

The Year 9 Cadets said they "really enjoyed the evening" and thought it was funny when they had to demonstrate the 'spotty dogs' exercise in front of their parents!

The Year 10 Cadets thought it was "really rewarding as it enabled our parents to understand the talents we have as a Cadet, rather than only academic achievements".

Well done to Year 9 Cadets as they have completed their part one and were rewarded with the badge to sew on their brassard. A further congratulations to Year 10 Cadets as they were awarded their communications badge and those who went flying had earned their 'first flying certificate'. Also, the adventurous Duke of Edinburgh Cadets who have finished their Bronze Award received their certificates.

Everyone should be so proud of themselves and we look forward to this event again next year.

Year 9 Cadets Receiving Part 1 Classification Badges

J. Aujla
E. Barker
B. Broadmore
E. Cotton
J. Ellison
S. Harris
N. Hayre
D. Hegney
J. Hinkinson
Z. Hussain
R. Matharu
A. Mushtaq
Z. Rasool
J. Rees
M. Sandhu
K. Sanghera
L. Tongue

Year 10 Cadets Receiving Communication Badges & First Flight Certificates

S. Ali
H. Bennett
M. Dunn
I. Fletcher
F. Guest
J. Van Rensburg
A. Johnson
A. Lawlor
E. Lorton-Mulcare
W. Mellor
E. Payne
H. Preece
D. Smith
P. Stone

Year 10 Cadets Receiving Duke of Edinburgh Award

S. Ali
M. Dunn



Year 11 Study Hall

For those who want to work *without distractions*

Every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

- Last entry 3.05^{pm}
- First come, first served
- Stationery will be provided
- Revision guides will be available
- Silent working
- No leaving before 3.50^{pm}

World Challenge

Our amazing World Challenge Team have started their fund-raising in earnest this half term.

They are hoping to raise the £2990 for their trip to Malaysia in the summer of 2020 and they started at the production of Hairspray, selling cakes, popcorn and sweets to the audience. This was a great success. Not only did they raise some money for their trip, they also learned the vital skills of team work, perseverance and problem solving, all things which will be brilliant for their personal statements and interviews in the future!

Well done Team Malaysia! Keep up the good work.

If you are in Years 9 to 12 (Y11 – staying for Barr Beacon Sixth Form) and you are interested in going to Malaysia, there are still a few places remaining. Come and see Miss Clarke in D310 for more information.



**Mr
Grocutt**



**Wrekin
House**

What a half term it was for the pupils of Wrekin House with so much going on and them constantly striving to be the best they can be.

A huge well done to all the pupils in Wrekin House who participated in the school production of Hairspray. To watch them dance, sing and perform was truly brilliant and I enjoyed it thoroughly. Special mention to Ross in Year 9 whose portrayal of Edna Turnblad was great... he tells me he got his inspiration from seeing someone else in a similar role in the staff pantomime. I couldn't possibly understand who he's referring to.

What an achievement by Ella and Freya in Year 9 also who picked up bronze medals in the Black Country badminton finals. Their performances were brilliant and I am sure they will go onto bigger and better things in the coming tournaments.

In the same competition however Karis (Year 11) and Leanne (Year 10) managed to go through the tournament unbeaten, comprehensively beating the competition with very few points dropped, thus making them Black Country Champions. What a great achievement by a team that have worked tirelessly to get to where they are, so a huge well done.

**Mrs
Saunders**



**Malvern
House**

A super start to the year with many of you being involved in sporting achievements and charity work. I want to congratulate the following for their outstanding contribution to the school's production of Hairspray:

7M1 – K. Bromwich and J. Van-Rensburg. K. Bromwich is also starring in a production of Bugsy Malone at her stage school.

7M1 – G. Cooper managed to achieve her 2 West Midlands times, qualifying her to compete against some of the fastest swimmers in the West Midlands. Well done!

10M2 – M. Ford has created and sold items online and raised funds by bag-packing at Asda. She has now raised a whopping £4000 which will enable her to attend the World Scout Jamboree. This means that she will be jetting off to Canada for 3 days, then on to Washington and New York. She will then complete her time in the USA (totalling 3 weeks) at a camp-site where she will take part in activities and meet many scout units from lots of different countries. Wow, what an experience! We can't wait to hear all about it on your return.

10M1 - C. Pincher is representing GB at the British Drug Free Power Lifting Association at the European Championships in Jersey. She has also qualified for the World Championships in Kentucky. She trains five days a week straight after school and can dead-lift 110kg and squat 92.5kg. Amazing!

Thank you to all of Malvern pupils and their form tutors for contributions to the amazing charity day where we helped to raise funds for the British Heart Foundation. The atmosphere in the gym was buzzing with excitement and the smell of doughnuts. It was a great way to end the term.

**Bredon
House**



**Mr
Townsend**

After Bredon's outstanding efforts in 2018, our new year's resolution was clear; to build on the tremendous successes of last year. As discussed in our first assembly in January, this can only be achieved through hard work, determination and unity. Thankfully, these are all characteristics which have been instilled within Bredon pupils.

Christmas Assemblies...

Bredon House enjoyed a fantastic end of term by enjoying both the KS3 and KS4 Christmas assemblies. The assemblies were jam packed with fun and festive competitions which Bredon House fully engaged with. My personal highlights were watching Bredon House dominate 'Snowball Tissue' and sing along to Mariah Carey's 'All I want for Christmas is you.'

Year 11 Mock examinations...

I would like to say a big well done to our Year 11 pupils who worked so hard during their mock examinations. I am sure that this invaluable experience will prepare you well for the Summer. It will certainly be worth it on results day in August.

Hairspray – Written by Evie in Year 8

I recently performed in the school musical, Hairspray. I played the role of Amber Von Tussle, who is both a spoilt yet popular character. The musical highlights the segregation which existed between different races in the USA and how unity eventually prevailed. After the finale, the audience went wild! It was a truly fantastic experience!

Charity Cakes – Written by Arun-Jay in Year 9

Today I felt really pleased with myself as I sold many cup-cakes for Barr Beacon's Charity Week. I raised over £30 selling cup-cakes which myself and my auntie made over the weekend. I am happy that my efforts can support people who need this money more than myself. I even sold two cakes to my Head of House and the Headteacher. I hope you liked them!

CCF Cadets – Written by Jeevan in Year 9

I have recently been learning about navigation in my Cadet training. I now know how to use a map effectively and how to locate a person or place. Along with this, I have been practising new commands when participating in a parade. The Cadets is something which I really enjoy and look forward to every week.

Football Star – Written by Jude in Year 8

My football team, Rushall Olympic, have recently finished in second position, which means that we have now qualified to the Elite League. We have currently won four out of four games in this new division and I scored in one of them. I am really proud to be playing a key part in my team's success.

Golfing Great – Written by James in Year 8

I have recently qualified for the Staffordshire Elite Squad for Golf. This Saturday I am playing at Kingswinford Golf Club. There are only 10 juniors out of the whole of Staffordshire who have made it to this competition. I am really excited as I am proud to be representing my county.

**Miss
Franks**



**Clent
House**



Clent have made a brilliant start to 2019 with some great achievements as a House. It has been an honour becoming a part of Clent and learning about all of the superb things you all do, both in and outside of school. As part of this half term we have had Charity Week and the contributions from the forms have been really inventive, such as hot chocolate gift cones being made and 'tin can alley'. It was a delight to see all the forms contribute their ideas and give up their break-time to raise money for the House Charity, Birmingham Children's Hospital.

A. Ramsey in Year 11 travelled to Turkey to play for England, which was a fabulous accomplishment and has allowed him to develop his footballing skills even further with a promising future ahead I am sure.

M. Wood in Year 8 has contributed to the community by teaching dance to younger students at her local dance school, developing her own leadership skills and showing a real caring nature.

A big well Done to J. Ratcliffe, B. Randhawa and J. Hutchinson in Year 10 who have achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards. Lots of time and effort has gone into this award with 3 months of volunteering, physical endurance and learning new skills. Girls you have done Clent proud by completing two expeditions, camping overnight and learning survival skills. Well done.

K. Thornhill (Year 9), R. Flash (Year 8), S. Hayre (Year 7) made fantastic contributions to the Girls' Football Team at the Shire Oak match. The girls were a huge asset to the team and showed tremendous effort and determination. They were superb ambassadors for Barr Beacon.

H. Ward in Year 11 showcased her incredible talent as the lead cast member of Hairspray this half term alongside the brilliant F. Darkes (Year 9) who played Corny Collins. They both, along with the whole cast, dedicated many hours to practices and put on a brilliant show. Lots of Clent pupils had a part in the production and it was lovely to see you all put in so much time and effort and put on what was a truly enjoyable show. Well done to all involved.



Events took place to commemorate the fact that Sunday 27th January was Holocaust Memorial Day.

To make sure pupils know why it is so important to remember the Holocaust, teachers and students have been delivering assemblies. Several teachers and students have actually visited Auschwitz, one of the most notorious concentration camps. They shared their own feelings about visiting such a historically important place as well as some of the lesser known aspects of the Holocaust.

On 24th January, a group of Year 12 History and Philosophy & Ethics students took part in a web-chat with Holocaust survivor Harry Spiro and this was chaired by Robert Rinder, whose grandfather was also a survivor of the holocaust. Harry Spiro grew up in Piotrków in Poland and his family observed the Jewish faith and its traditions. As a child, he had a very happy home and grew up in a society where both Jews and non-Jews would mix and he has no real memories of anti-Semitism as a young child. At the age of 10, World War 2 broke out as Adolf Hitler invaded Poland and life was to change beyond recognition for Harry and his family. They were immediately moved into a ghetto in the town of Piotrków, the first ghetto in Poland, and from there he worked in a glass factory. In 1940, the Nazis ordered for the ghetto to be cleared and all of Harry's family were sent to Treblinka where they were gassed upon arrival. Harry was saved as he was at work but, eventually, he was taken to Buchenwald in Germany and, in the last days of the war, was taken on a Death March to Terezin in Nazi occupied Czechoslovakia where he was liberated.

Upon his liberation he came to England with a group of 732 teenage boys and girls who became known as 'the boys'. He has since married and has a family of his own, becoming a grandfather and great-grandfather.

At the conclusion of sharing his experiences, Mr Spiro was asked whether he feels any hatred because of what happened to him and his family. His reply was this: "I came to the conclusion a long time ago that hating people doesn't achieve anything. People are capable of doing horrendous things to each other, but that isn't overcome by yet more hate."





CELEBRATION EVENING

CALLING ALL PAST PUPILS & STAFF

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE 60 YEARS OF
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REUNION**

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FOOD**

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LIMITED AVAILABILITY

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Aston Villa Alumni



One of our alumni, Jacob Ramsey, has recently signed a 3 year contract with Aston Villa Football Club! He finished Barr Beacon in 2017 and has clearly impressed the Club as much as he impressed us in his time here. We are utterly thrilled at his success and we are looking forward to following his career closely.

Only days after hearing of Jacob's success, we also learned about Jack Birch's Aston Villa contract. Jack finished Year 11 in 2017 as well. We always say we are 'Proud to Succeed' and we could not be more proud of both boys.



Jacob Ramsey (above) and Jack Birch (left) received their contracts at the end of January.



On Monday 11th February, Splat Entertainment came to Barr Beacon to recreate the Midsummer Night's madness of Oberon, Titania, Puck and the fairies causing chaos with their magical mischief on the humans. The whole Year 7 cohort were completely immersed in the magical chaos that erupted on stage. Our very own Ms Everton and Mr Grocutt also made their stage debut, taking turns as Helena!

Throughout the remainder of the day, pupils took part in workshops where they practised an act from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', creating their own props to use for the final production at the end of the day! Students had great fun. A pupil in 7B3 said 'it's been so much fun learning about how to act and move on stage with gestures!'

A special well done to:

L Mills – taking on the role of director very well

E Barnett – helping others making masks

A Ravat – great acting as the character of Bottom!

L Carville – excellent narrator with a clear voice.



STEM News

EEF Apprenticeship event – Year 10

Thirty Year 10 pupils visited the EEF Engineering Hub to learn more about apprenticeships, with a view to possibly applying for positions in the future. Part of the day involved pupils taking part in the Formula 1 challenge, whereby pupils had to change four wheels in their teams in the fastest time possible. The winning team finished with an impressive time of 14 seconds!

Pupils then toured the facility visiting the different rooms where they would do their classwork, but also hands on skill lessons. They found it very interesting when they found out they could get paid to learn!

Overall, it was a fantastic experience for our pupils, who are a step closer to their chosen career path in the future.



Smallpeice STEM event – Year 9

Fifty Year 9 pupils took part in the STEM Smallpeice Lego robotics challenge event, using key skills involved in making team players of the future in the world of STEM. Pupils learned about the processes involved in business where STEM is at the heart of productivity. Pupils found that the planning, advertising and marketing elements of a business were just as important as making the product itself. Working as a team, the groups had to pitch their ideas to the Smallpeice guest who decided on an eventual winner. Those who were successful will now go forward to represent the school at Lichfield Cathedral in the Black Country Robotics challenge finals.

RAF Cosford Engineering Careers days - Year 10

On 31 January, seven Year 10 pupils were able to gain first-hand experience of the Royal Air Force's career familiarisation program, as they watched an RAF Aircraft Technician at work. The event was focused around avionics, which concerns the electrical components on an aircraft.

On arrival, the pupils were immediately confronted with the daunting task of marshalling aircraft around an airfield. Fortunately, the aircraft and airfield were within a simulator, so when the odd mishap occurred, the staff were able to reset the programme and allow them to start again. The pupils were taught all of the necessary hand signals needed to instruct a pilot on which way to turn the aircraft in order to put the airplane in a parking spot and apply the brakes. Once they had mastered this, the task difficulty was increased by introducing helicopters and obstructions. The helicopters needed to be moved out of the way and safely lowered to the ground. The final exercise was to marshal an Apache Attack Helicopter into a landing spot between two buildings. All participants succeeded in this activity.

The second stand involved a visit to the training hanger, where pupils observed current RAF trainee technicians carrying out their final examinations. At the same time, they were shown around the Jaguar training aircraft as well as a typical jet engine and an ejection seat.

The pupils then had the opportunity to sample the trainees' core menu, as they sat down for lunch in the Junior Ranks' Mess. After lunch, the pupils were given a tour of the gym facilities before they moved onto the final stand. At the final stand, which was the Avionics School, the pupils were split into two groups. Our pupils were then shown around the Tornado Aircraft, which is still in front line service. As part of the talk, they were also able to sit in the cockpit. Not many people can say that they have sat in the front seat of a current fighter aircraft!

After the Tornado tour, the groups swapped over and the pupils were given the opportunity to try their hand at fault-finding in the avionics test bay. This involved staff placing deliberate faults in electrical circuits on a training system. The students were then required to use their deduction skills along with a circuit diagram and a test meter to determine where the fault was.

Overall, it was a very successful visit and the pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves. They also gained valuable insight into the world of an avionics technician. There will be several opportunities for familiarisation visits to see different trades over the next few months, so if pupils are given a letter inviting them to take part they should make the most of the opportunity.

Events coming up:

- National Apprenticeship Event – ICC – March 2019
- The Big Bang Fair – Staffordshire University – 18th June 2019
- Aston University Engineering Taster days – 27th March 2019
- STEM Robotics Final – Lichfield Cathedral 25th June 2019

Rotary Club Mock Interviews



On Wednesday 13th February, 9 guests from the Aldridge Rotary Club visited Barr Beacon School to give mock interviews to Year 11 pupils. The event was to ensure no pupil's first interview is their real interview; practice makes perfect.

Our visitors were impressed with how polite and well prepared our pupils were for their futures, with many having secured their plans after Year 11 already. As well as getting mock interview advice that will help them in the future, pupils were also able to ask for general careers advice, as the visitors had a wealth of careers experience from the police force, to engineering, to the media and TV industry.



ROYAL AIR FORCES

STEM CAREER DAYS

Aircraft Technician (Avionics, Mechanical or Weapons Technician & Survival Equipment Fitter familiarisation as required)

May 23 2019

Cyberspace Communications Specialist (ICT Technician)

February 26 2019

June 11 2019

RAF Police

March 21 2019

Engineering Officer (Aerospace Systems and Communications Electronics)

March 28 2019

April 30 2019

Personnel Training Officer (Physical Training Instructor familiarisation also available as required on these dates)

May 16 2019

June 19 2019

Pupils from across KS4 and KS3 contributed to a competition run by Young Writers that required them to write a 100 word mini saga about a catastrophe. Contributions had to be concise, engaging but also tell a story.

103 entries for the competition were submitted in total and the quality of the sagas submitted was excellent. We have now heard that over 90 of the sagas were selected to be published, which is an excellent achievement for all pupils who participated.

Badminton Competition



On Thursday 17th January, we took four teams to the Walsall Schools' badminton finals. This was after they qualified due to success in the South Walsall games. We were the only school to have a team to qualify in every category.

Our pupils were fantastic. We couldn't have been more proud after numerous staff commended their conduct and skill level.

The KS3 girls obliterated the competition and ended up with a 100% winning record. All of these girls are new to competitive badminton and what a way to start... Walsall champions!

E Watts 9W1
K Thornhill 9C2
F Willis 9W2
S Jones 9M2

The KS3 boys won all of their group games with ease. However they lost pretty comprehensively in the final to an excellent Queen Mary's team. It was just a step too far for Beacon and the Queen Mary's KS3 boys team were the best team at the entire competition. All four of their boys played for the same badminton club and two represented county. Runners-up.

D Shergill 9W1
K Jassal 9M1
K Mistry 8M1
S Sadara 9M1

The KS4 girls' team smashed the competition in the group stage and faced Streetly in the final. We had lost to Streetly at this stage last year and they have one excellent county player. But the Beacon girls just keep on getting better and romped home 4-1. Champions!

E Allen 11C1
K Poultney 11W1
L Garcia 10W1
H Payton 10B1

The KS4 boys team finished second in their group and didn't quite make it through to the finals. A narrow 3-2 defeat in the deciding fixture was hard to take, especially as one of the games finished 15-14. The boys will be back next year and will have a chance going even further.

J Sanghera 10B1
D De Silva 10W1
S Scattergood 10B1
J Myrie 10B1



Orlando NASA Trip

Ready to Board! – 15/2/19



Day 2: After a long day travelling yesterday, we arrived at the hotel and enjoyed our 'pizza party'.

Today, we got up early ready for an iFly experience this morning followed by an afternoon at Universal Studios.



Day 3: We have had a long but very enjoyable day. We started off with a 'Behind the Adventures' programme, at Islands of adventure, where we found out about what goes on behind the scenes, where the ideas for the rides come from, how the special effects are added and the costs that are involved.

We were then given VIP treatment and we were allowed to take a ride on four of the big attractions without having to queue! These were: The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk Coaster, Reign of Kong and Jurassic Park River Adventure.

We then had the rest of the day to explore Islands of Adventure and Universal Studios. After dinner we returned to the park and watched the very colourful and entertaining Mardi Gras parade.



Day 4: Today we had our first session at Kennedy Space Centre. We had a lesson on the history of rocketry before getting into teams and building our own rockets ready for a launch competition. We were also privileged to listen to a speech delivered by astronaut Scott Parazynski. He told the audience about how his dream to become an astronaut started at the age of 5 years. We also heard about all his space missions. After his speech, Scott Parazynski posed for a photograph with us.

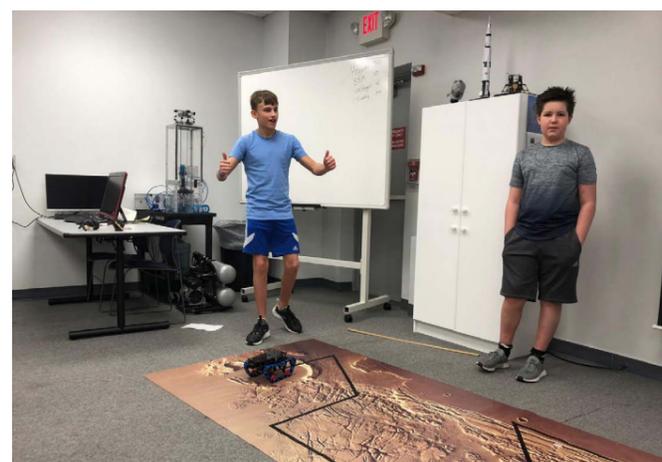




Day 5: Our second day at Kennedy Space Centre started off with a robotics competition – Space Trek Robotics. We learnt how to program a robot using ‘Arduino’. Our mission was to navigate the robot around quite a complex route involving a few sharp turns. The competition was fierce but fun!

We then attended a private event ‘Lunch With An Astronaut’ where we enjoyed some delicious food whilst Scott Parazynski gave a short presentation before taking questions from the audience. We learnt a lot about life in space. After lunch we went on a NASA bus tour of Launch Complex 39. WOW! We saw the tallest single storey building in the world, alligators, rocket launch stations and we sat in the control room where Saturn V was launched from. We learnt about all the failed attempts that were made to reach space and then enjoyed hearing about the successful attempts. A very interesting and informative tour.

On our way to dinner at a local restaurant, we stopped off for a spot of shopping at Ron John’s Surf Shop. After dinner we took a stroll down to the beach where we saw a ‘super moon’. This is when the full moon appears larger in the sky because it’s orbit is closest to the earth. We saw its reflection in the Atlantic Ocean. It was stunning. We then had fun jumping waves in the ocean.



Day 6: This morning we returned to Kennedy Space Centre. We spent time viewing the exhibit of space shuttle Atlantis. We learnt about NASA’s 30-year space shuttle program. We took part in the Shuttle Launch Experience – a simulation of the space shuttle’s eight-and-a-half-minute ascent into orbit! We listened to a pre-launch briefing by veteran space shuttle commander Charles Bolden before boarding the shuttle for an experience that veteran NASA astronauts call the next best thing to flying aboard the space shuttle. It was out of this world!

We then returned to the classroom where the robotics competition continued. We used ‘Lab View’ to navigate a realistic mock up of the martian surface, navigating around targets and gaining points. This exercise required a lot of skill and patience. At the end of the competition all pupils were presented with a certificate before the winning team was announced.

After lunch we spent some time on the beach and jumping the waves in the Atlantic Ocean. We spent our last night in Florida sat around a fire pit at the hotel, talking about the amazing experiences we have encountered this week. We then made s’mores from marshmallows, chocolate and crackers. We are looking forward to our final day before we start our journey home.



Day 7: This morning we went out on an air boat at Boggy Creek alligator spotting – we spotted 6! The largest was 9 foot long! We also saw 2 baby alligators. We then had a pit stop at Walmart to stock up on candy before we embarked on 3 hours of shopping at Orlando Premium Outlet and boy did we shop! A great end to an amazing week. We are now homeward bound.





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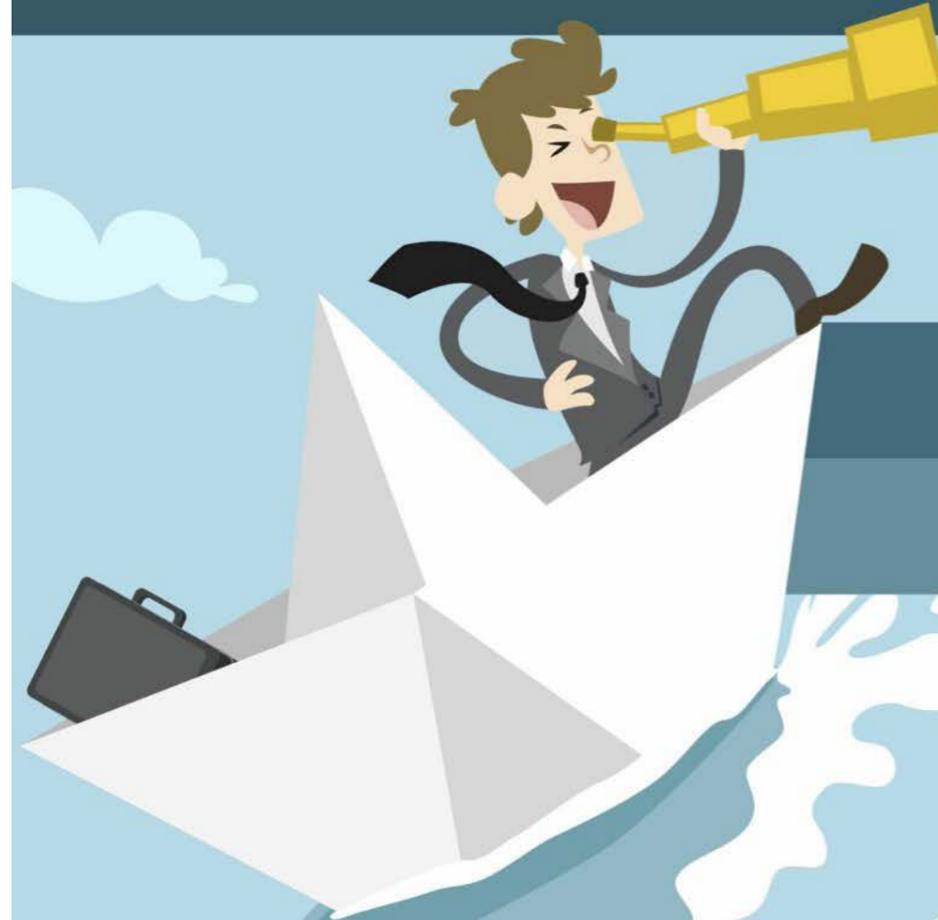
New Hampshire Ski Trip



After a successful week of skiing in New Hampshire we have now moved onto New York City. The pupils enjoyed a traditional meal at the Hard Rock Cafe before walking north through the iconic Times Square, to the Rockefeller Center. While at the Rockefeller the pupils climbed into an elevator and shot 69 floors up in less than a minute. This took us to the observatory deck where we will be able to see the amazing views of the NYC skyline at night.



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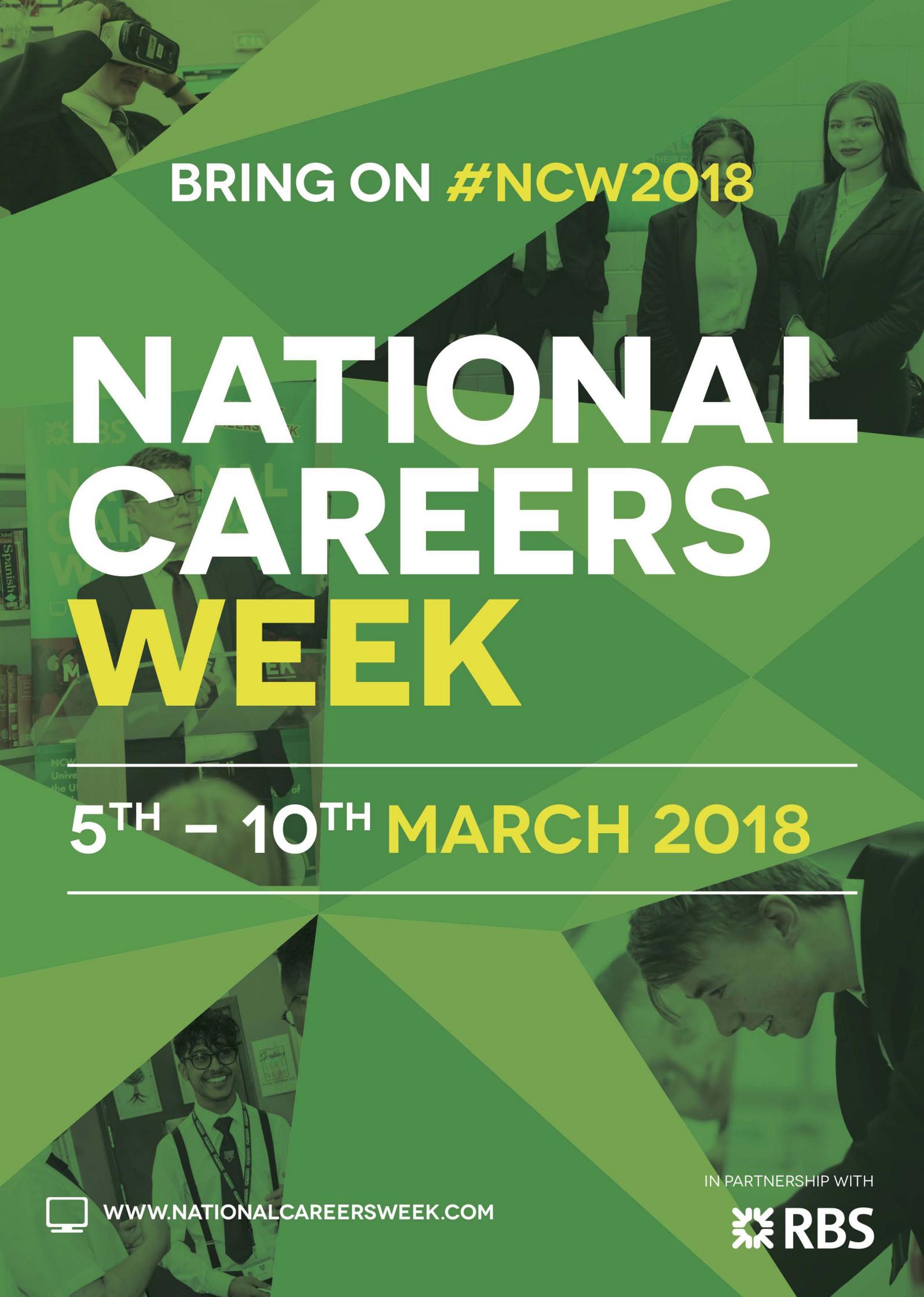


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