

stephen perse

6th form college

# Newsletter

Issue No 7 / 2013-14 Friday 17 January 2014

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## Director of 6th Form College – the Nelson Factor

Dear Parents

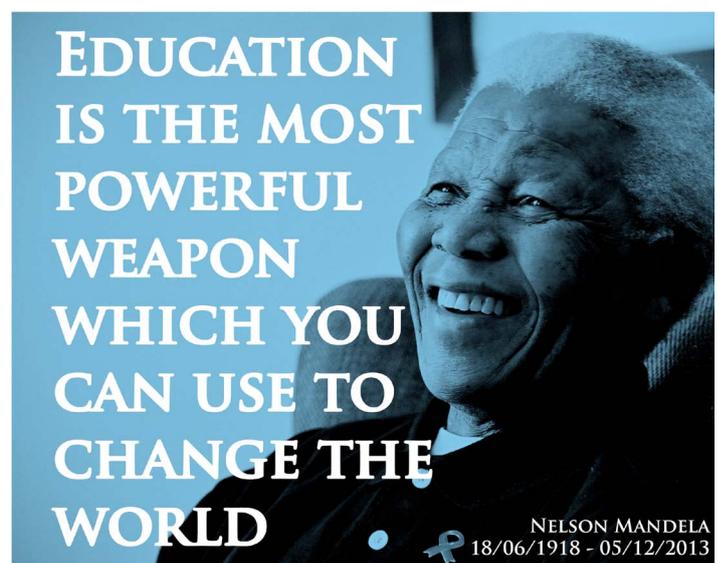
We trust all students and their parents have had a restful break. Whether one is an Upper or Lower Sixth student, this will be a critical term. The revision period and examinations will soon be upon us and all must be clear about the challenges ahead. For many Upper Sixth students, who have secured offers at favoured intuitions, the goal is now clear; whilst for the Lower Sixth, whether AS or IB students, a good deal of hard work lies ahead both in the classroom and beyond.

At this time of year, stories often hit the press of supposedly strange questions asked at interview. "Why is a banana yellow?" for example. Actually it's a jolly good question for a student hoping to read Natural Sciences. Given the recent passing of Nelson Mandela, one could reasonably expect students wishing to read History or Political Science to be able to say something about his significance. Yet, this issue was raised for students studying a very different and superficially unconnected discipline. As a means of taking an interviewee outside of their preparation, I'm sure it worked. My point is that whilst all students need to deliver in terms of the examined curriculum, this alone is not enough. With this in mind, the annual [Darwin Lectures](#) are a tremendous opportunity for all sixth form students, regardless of their areas of study. Each series is built around a single theme, "Plagues" being this year's topic, approached in a multi-disciplinary way, across eight lectures by leading scholars.

We are delighted that a quarter of our current Upper Sixth students applying to university have secured offers from Oxford and Cambridge (Oxbridge). We congratulate our students on their outstanding success in gaining offers for some of the most competitive university courses, not simply in the UK, but on a global level. Given the record numbers of applicants this year for the strongest universities and the marked increase in international applicants in particular, our students' success is especially laudable. Certainly, the range of courses they have selected to study reflects our students' independence of thought and intellectual initiative. It is with the greatest pleasure that we celebrate the success of all our students as they secure offers of places to read the subjects of their choice across a wide range of intuitions both in the UK and beyond. I hope they all would have something to say about Mandela.

With best regards

Stuart Jack  
Director of 6th Form



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## Quantum Tunnelling Talk

By Anna Wang

On Friday 10 January, Mr. Adam Reid, a PhD student at Cambridge University, came in to give a talk about Quantum Tunnelling. By first introducing the subject with a skier on a mountain, Mr. Reid then went on to explain the differences between Classical Physics and the exciting world of Quantum Physics.

The main part of talk was about the concept of particles 'tunnelling' through an energy barrier, like a skier going through a hill, and we were even shown a picture of the largest molecule that was able to do so so far.

Animations helped to explain wave-particle duality and the double slit experiment and we were told that in quantum theory, an electron could be in two places at once and was 'smeared out'. This led to a more undetermined nature to science being introduced as Mr. Reid showed that by squaring a wave function, the probability of an electron being in a certain place could be found.

The many interesting questions at the end of the talk clearly showed how inspiring it had been with one of these even leading to the subject of parallel universes! Overall, the talk was a great opportunity to learn about science from a more probabilistic point of view than before and one of the highlights was being able to learn about more modern concepts in Physics and Chemistry from someone currently doing research.

## DramSoc loved David Tennant in *Richard III*!



At the beginning of the Christmas holidays we took a group of sixth form students to the Barbican in London to see the acclaimed RSC production of *Richard III* with David Tennant in the title role. It was a very stylish production - we all loved the simple but highly effective staging, the medieval costumes and the live music. You can find out more about the production and watch a short extract of Tennant playing the role on the [RSC's website](#).

The next DramSoc trip will be on Friday 14 February to see *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Barbican - an exciting new production by the Bristol Old Vic and Handspring.

[Watch a trailer here](#).

Email [drama@stephenperse.com](mailto:drama@stephenperse.com) for more information or to book a place.



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## Spring Term Concerts

Our busy programme of concerts continues this term. If you son or daughter is performing in one of these concerts, please reserve the date in your calendars; a letter with full details of the specific arrangements for each concert will be distributed in rehearsals in due course. **Parents from all parts of the Foundation are most welcome at any of these concerts:**

### Chamber Music Concert

**Tuesday 11 February, 7.30 pm (Venue: Senior School Hall)**

A wide range of Chamber Music items will be performed; most small ensembles that rehearse on a regular basis in school will take part, as will the Senior School Chamber Choir.

### Spring Concert

**Wednesday 19 March, 7.30pm (Venue: West Road Concert Hall)**

This is our biggest concert of the year and will include all of the school choirs, the Big Band, Concert Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra; there will be a performance of Saint-Saëns' Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso for violin and orchestra, with Katherine Read in Upper 6 as soloist.

Tickets (free of charge) will be available from reception after half-term.



### Lunchtimes Concerts at Michaelhouse

Our series of Friday lunchtime concerts in Michaelhouse Chapel continues, with performances **31 January, 14 and 28 February, and 7, 14 and 28 March.**

These concerts take place at 12.30 pm and last for 30 minutes – there is no admission charge and everyone is welcome.

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## New online digital theatre resource for staff and students!

We are delighted to announce that we have just subscribed to **Digital Theatre Plus**, a really exciting online resource that will allow all students of the Senior School and Sixth Form to watch recordings of live theatre, opera and ballet productions on their iPads. They will also be able to access exclusive interviews with cast members and creatives to gain further insight into the making of the productions.

This venture is an exciting collaboration between the English and Drama Departments and the Senior School Library.

Website address: [www.digitaltheatreplus.com](http://www.digitaltheatreplus.com)

Login email: [student@stephenperse.com](mailto:student@stephenperse.com)

Password: studentaccess



## Book Club

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, 4th February, at 8pm (contact Adele Warner, 01223 365991). We will discuss 'The Grass is Singing' by Doris Lessing. We always have a lively discussion and are keen to welcome new members. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Martha Crouch for details (020 7638 6983, [martha.crouch@btinternet.com](mailto:martha.crouch@btinternet.com))

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## Inspire me: Stop drifting.... start adventuring

We start the new year with four top adventurer speakers all under one roof to inspire everyone to take an adventurous approach to careers and life. Hear stories of exploration, pushing human boundaries, supporting others, and why they do it.

We are delighted to add alumna Roz Savage MBE to the line-up of speakers on **Wednesday 5 February** - Roz holds four world records for ocean rowing, including first woman to row three oceans: the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian. She has rowed over 15,000 miles, taken around 5 million oarstrokes, and spent cumulatively over 500 days of her life at sea in a 23-foot rowboat.

Our other speakers are Sasha Borodin, polar explorer (and also a parent of a current student); Fred Branson, who set up a charity helping girls out of poverty in Peru, and two of our 6th formers talking about their trip to Kenya.



[WATCH OUR TRAILER - CLICK HERE](#)



For more information on the event, our speakers, and pre-ordering books, please visit our [website](#).

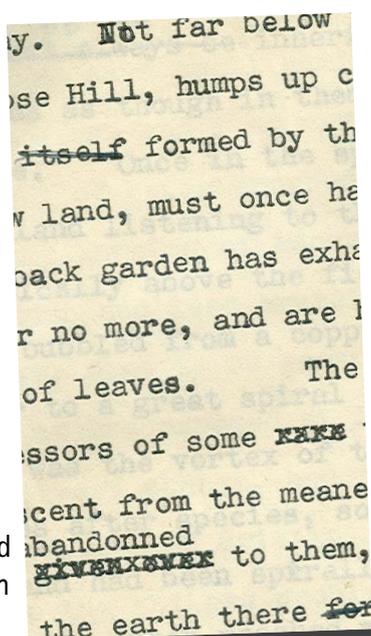
Please book your place for Wednesday 5 February through [office@stephenperse.com](mailto:office@stephenperse.com) - no tickets will be issued, but we will note your attendance.

## Private view - Jacquetta Hawkes and Deep Time

On the same evening as the above Inspire Me event, we would like to invite you to a private view of the inaugural exhibition in the new Senior School Library:

### Jacquetta Hawkes and Deep Time

The private view will offer a chance to explore the exhibition as well as the new Library. Light refreshments will be served, and if you are already booked for or planning to come to the Inspire Me event, we do hope you will be able to arrive that little bit earlier and come to the Library, or if you would just like to come to the private view and perhaps stay on for the Inspire Me event please do let us know. There is no need to book if you just wish to view the exhibition in the Library.



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foundation

The Stephen Perse Foundation cordially invites you to a private view of the inaugural exhibition in the new Library at the Senior School

**Jacquetta Hawkes and Deep Time**

Wednesday 5 February 2014  
6.00pm - 7.15pm

Light refreshments

Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1HF

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