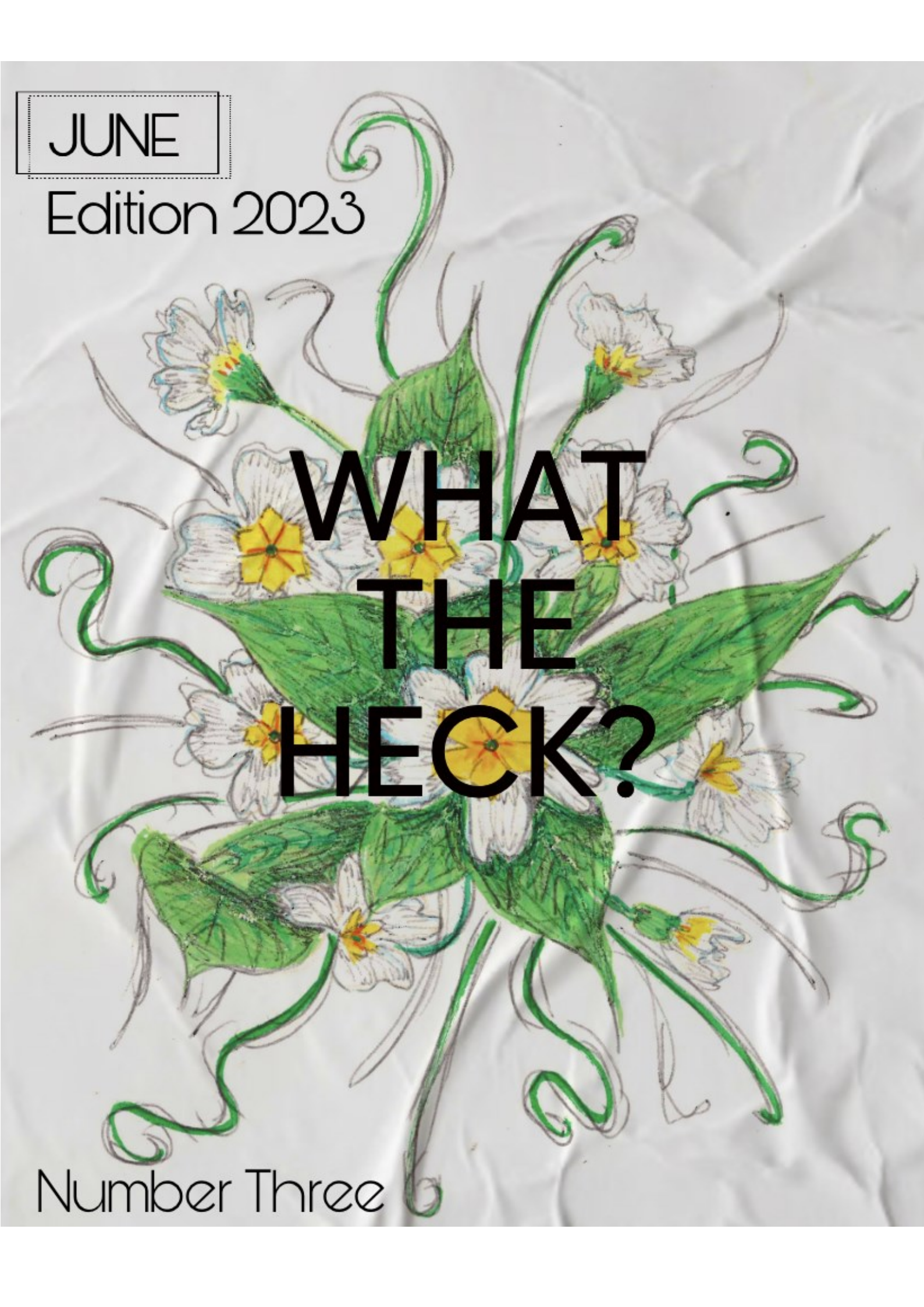


JUNE

Edition 2023

**WHAT
THE
HECK?**

Number Three



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EDITORIAL LETTER

Welcome to the third edition of ‘What the Heck?’

With this edition, we wanted to bring the focus to the numerous events held across school this month, As a student newspaper, we represent you! Look towards our ‘Student Life’ section to see what we’ve reported on.

This month, we saw many of our older students leave in preparation of their final exams. We wish them the best of luck in their endeavours.

We have continued to develop our design as we gain more experience with producing the paper with each edition — I hope our progress is visible with each edition!

Finally, the biggest thanks must go to my team who work tirelessly to ensure we meet our deadlines amongst their busy schedules as work experience and mocks draws close.

We’re looking for anyone with a passion for news, the arts, student life and our wonderful community. If you’re moving onto sixth form, this may be a great way to enrich your personal statements. We’re interested in the view-points of all students, no matter your year. Let us know what you’re interested in and how you can contribute at:

WhattheHeck@heckgrammar.co.uk

Thank you,

Alyssia Evans

WELCOME THE NEW ADDITIONS!

Fatima Babar

Ben Walshaw

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CRAZY LITTLE DING COMES GOOD

A Review of the World Chess Championship 2023

By Ben Walshaw – Chess Correspondent

This year's World Chess Championship was one of the most memorable yet: the absence of the World Number 1, seven decisive games, the possibility of Blitz format tie-breaks, and the finale won with the Black pieces. After the abdication of four-time-champion Magnus Carlsen, anticipation began to build – who would win this fourteen-game marathon? Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi, a previous runner-up, or Chinese superstar and World Number 3 Ding Liren?

After a slight inaccuracy in game 1, Ding defended perfectly to prevent Nepo breaking through, thus securing a draw. Going into game 2, the Catalan opening was expected. So, when 4. h3 (a move never played before in a master level game) appeared on the board, everyone was surprised. Following some inaccuracies, Ding's time dwindled; Nepo tightened his grip, eventually forcing his opponent's resignation.

After the first rest day, game 3 saw a much-improved performance by Ding but ended in a draw by repetition. The fourth game was a chaotic affair. Ding started to take control of the game early on and eventually Nepo was forced to give up his strong defensive knight. The Russian's position became hopeless, and he resigned on move 47. In game 5, after excellent opening preparation, an accurate kingside attack and a few mistakes from Ding, Nepo was able to use his large time advantage to breeze past the Chinese player, reopening his one-point gap.

Game 6 saw a shock performance by Nepo, who described it as "one of my worst games ever". As the game progressed, his position went from bad to worse and he was forced to resign on move 44 as Ding looked for checkmate. However, in game 7, the pendulum swung the other way, and in time-trouble, Ding spent five of his six remaining minutes on a move that relinquished any hope of maintaining an advantage. A few moves later, he resigned with three seconds on the clock.

After the chaos of four successive decisive games, proceedings calmed down somewhat. However, pressure began to build on Ding. Four draws on the bounce meant that he required a win from one of the last three games, the first of which was a complex and error-ridden affair that developed into one of the most exciting games of the tournament. After Ding equalised the position, Nepomniachtchi's 34... f5?? – one of the most pivotal moments of the championship – allowed his opponent to take a free pawn and left Nepo in "complete disbelief". Just a few moves later, Nepo resigned in a completely lost position, leaving the match tied at 6½ – 6½ with two classical games remaining.



The defining moment of a marathon tournament: Nepo's 48. h4 in the final game.

Image credit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xxqi7IvwekE> (25:46)

Game 13 amounted to little: Ding held a slight advantage but after a sacrifice of the exchange, a draw ensued, meaning everything hinged upon the final match. A long struggle – the longest of the entire match – ensued, Nepo trying to create a winning chance with Black, equally matched by Ding, who found the only drawing moves. Nepo was unable to make progress, and the game ended in a draw.

To tie-breaks the tournament went. Four Rapid games would be played – and four even shorter games if necessary – and a win for either player would crown a new world champion. After three obscure draws, it seemed we would be heading for Blitz games, but the eighteenth game proved decisive.

In another Ruy Lopez, Nepo – with the White pieces – played accurately and was able to gain some attacking chances. However, strong defensive play from Ding and his refusal to play for a draw suddenly resulted in a fatal mistake. In Nepo's eagerness to gain a winning position, he played 48. h4. Ding found the right continuation in two seconds, and after 48... Qd3 49. Qf3 Rf6 50. Qg4 c3 51. Rd1 and 51... Qg6, Ding's king was protected by his queen, and his A and C pawns were unstoppable! Yet just a few moves later, Ding was too greedy, offering Nepo the chance to force a draw. However, he unfortunately he missed his chance and was forced to resign as nothing could be done to stop Ding's pawns.

So, after a marathon, even by chess' standards, we have the seventeenth World Chess Champion: China's Ding Liren.

TOTAL WIPEOUT

Heavy Losses Pile the Pressure on Rishi Sunak's Government

By Sam Walshaw – News and Current Affairs Editor



Image credit: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/local-elections-as-the-day-went-on-tory-bloodbath-only-grew-grimmer-0nx6wzhwz>

Held on the 4th of May, this year's local elections were billed as a key litmus test of England's major political parties' chances in a future general election (likely to be held next year), and they did not disappoint. As is often the case for an incumbent government, the Conservatives were predicted to suffer losses, but not on the scale seen after all 230 councils finished counting the votes on Tuesday the 9th.

In all, Rishi Sunak's party lost an extraordinary 1063 councillors, with Labour (+537), the Liberal Democrats (+407) and the Green Party (+241) all making impressive gains. It ought to be noted that the Conservatives said beforehand they thought they would lose over a thousand seats. However, most commentators saw this as deliberately overestimating their losses, such that they would appear to have done well after losing, say, five hundred. The fact that so many councillors were deposed on top of the 1,333 lost when the same seats were last contested, then, is even more remarkable.

Why such big losses? Well, the trials and tribulations of Brexit, the pandemic, prime ministerial carnage, inflation and strikes surely played a part, coupled with the ever-diminishing state of public services. There is also a growing feeling that the public have had enough with a party that has been in office for thirteen years – a very long time in politics. Many people feel let down by a failure to keep the grandiose promises made in exchange for a "Leave" vote in 2016. Likewise, many first-time voters who supported Boris Johnson in 2019 may not vote again, and those who lent their vote to the Tories may revert to their usual party next time around.

While the Conservatives suffered, the gains were split between three rival parties. Labour continue in a strange state of purgatory: not quite convincing, but commentators suggest still being on course for gov-

ernment. Perhaps the split in vote between them, the Greens and the Lib Dems signifies a general discontent with the Tories, instead of enthusiasm for the alternative – a Labour government.

Still, a gain of well over 500 councillors (as well as winning control of 22 more councils) is an important milestone in the Keir Starmer era. The party feel winning back seats in Brexit-voting areas is crucial, and will be happy that they succeeded at doing that this May. And for the first time in twenty-one years, Labour is the largest party in local government.

Tactical voting also means that, in areas likely to produce either a Conservative or Labour MP, Green and Lib Dem voters are likely to support the Labour candidate. Likewise, in some rural Conservative seats that are most likely to be gained by Ed Davey's party, Labour voters may lend their votes to the Lib Dems. This means it is unlikely that a large number of Lib Dem, and especially Green, MPs will be elected at the next general election, in contrast to the large gains made locally in May.

The Green Party were a particular focus of attention because, for the first time, they gained full control of a council – Mid Suffolk. This is a significant milestone for the party, not far from being on par with the election in 2010 of their first MP, Caroline Lucas. Indeed, gaining in all 241 seats amounts to the Greens' best-ever local elections performance. The party's co-leader, Carla Denyer, said that they had benefitted from "a deep dislike of the Tories and Starmer's uninspiring Labour".

The Conservative Party's losses in this year's council elections were stark. Where do they go from here?



LET'S
CONSIDER...

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE OPPORTUNITY OR THREAT?

By Mr J. Barnett – Assistant Headteacher

Artificial intelligence is fast becoming one of the major technological turning points of the decade.

We already use computers to make decisions on our behalf to manage call centres, predict the weather, help the farming sector with agricultural planning and for emergency planning relating to traffic management, flooding and power supply. For a number of years, algorithms have enabled computers to make 'decisions' on our behalf, most of them without us realising. In effect, the decisions computers take are based on the information already stored and do not necessarily mean that robots are learning to take decisions for us. However, technological advances that are coming on stream now will mean that computers will be able to learn and take decisions based on live information.

Is this progress, or should we be wary of enabling artificial intelligence to make decisions on our behalf? Questions of safety, reliability, feasibility and ethics are starting to generate much discussion. With the recent retirement of Geoffrey Hinton who is widely seen as the person who spearheaded the development of artificial intelligence expressing concern regarding the dangers of AI, are we now at a tipping point?

Such concerns were also expressed by Elon Musk, who recently suggested that there should be a freeze on AI development until full consideration had been given to consequences of the technology. Others doubted that current levels of employment could be maintained with the advance of AI. Indeed, Goldman Sachs reported that up to 300 million full-time jobs could be lost. But it not just the employment sector that may be affected by advances of AI. Geoffrey Hinton referred to 'bad actors' taking control of AI to create robots to boost or gain authority or control in their countries.

Legitimate questions remain over how society will cope with the management of information generated by AI and whether the information is true, fair or legal. Will laws, which have been implemented protecting citizens against those preaching racial discrimination, misogyny or terrorism, be effective?

In April, Ford announced that their new Mustang Mach-E model would be as Ford suggest 'hands-off, eyes-on', on pre-mapped motorways in the UK, and Google and Microsoft launched their own AI applications to rival OpenAI's ChatGPT.

This leads to a more detailed view of the use of products such as ChatGPT. If AI search engines can generate text, images, voice or video, we must consider how readily we accept the reliability of news outlets in producing their content. In recent years, the spread of inaccurate news stories which are designed to sway public opinion is worrying. Fake news is becoming more prevalent and harder to identify. As a result, potentially harmful content which may contravene existing safety and decency laws could become normalised, and therefore be verified as true by AI.

The potential for artificial intelligence to change society has been compared to introduction of technologies such as the Spinning Jenny. In a speech to the Education World Forum in London, Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education, suggested that AI could transform a teacher's day-to-day work in planning lessons and giving feedback, but would not be able to replace the human interaction between students and their teacher. It is clear that the advances will help society, but the costs in terms of jobs losses and other economic changes must be acknowledged. In the education sector, concerns about the ethics of content generators such as ChatGPT arise in the context of exams and coursework. Clearly, the candidates themselves must produce exam content. Exam boards are vigilant to plagiarism and malpractice.

How would you know if the article you were reading in the news was human or computer generated?

There are a few ways to tell if an article has been written by a human or by ChatGPT. Firstly, a human-written article is likely to have a unique voice and writing style that reflects the author's personality or expertise. In contrast, an article written by ChatGPT may lack a distinct voice and sound more generic. Secondly, human-written articles may contain personal anecdotes or opinions, while ChatGPT's responses are based solely on the information provided to it. Finally, human-written articles may contain errors or typos, while ChatGPT's responses are typically error-free. However, it's worth noting that as AI technology continues to advance, it may become increasingly difficult to distinguish between human and machine-generated content.

Was the previous paragraph written by this human contributor or was it generated by ChatGPT?

That's for you to decide.

LE PETIT ÉCHO DE LA MODE

The magazine that lived in women's wardrobes and lives, what life was like for women in 1908

Illustrated By Jack Wharton

By Juliet Scott

Le Petit Écho de la Mode (the little echo of fashion) was a weekly French newspaper that ran from 1879 to 1983. It was an affordable domestic fashion and lifestyle magazine, marketed towards women with its contents of fashion, tailoring patterns, and everyday life: etiquette, cleaning, cooking, and culture. After Charles Huon de Penanster and his wife Claire Le Roux took over the magazine in 1880 it became instantly successful, 'the magazine drew up 19,000 copies every Sunday. In 1900, more than 200,000 copies were printed per week, rising to 1,100,000 copies around 1930 and then 1,500,000 in 1960'. It could be bought for the equivalent of 25p today, meaning fashion and trends were becoming widely accessible to the masses.

It was influential to women of all ages, the fashion displayed in the magazines included stylish women's, girls', and boys' clothing. The clothing displayed in the magazine would be able for the reader to create as it included tailoring patterns, as this was common for women to sew their own clothes to save money.

The advertisements show an accurate depiction for what life was like for women across the century. In 1908 there are advertisements for sewing machines, creams, potions and perfumes. This describes the profile of life, the instruments used for living, (the sewing machine), the medicine they had, and the beauty standards. The products advertised tell us that a healthy appearance was incredibly desirable, with multiple companies advertising for different products to have healthy hair (in particular). Hair dye was advertised in 1908, despite only being created a year prior for commercial purposes by the French Chemist Eugene Schueller. Although hair dye was not popular until the mid 1900s, it was advertised

that people who used hair dye cared about their health and the preservation of their hair. Also, for this purpose, creams were advertised to give people luscious hair for life.

There is also social commentary on 'Bloc-Notes' where people could discuss the fashion at the time. The corset was criticised here, with a long history of controversy, the first being the Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. This gave an insight into people's attitudes towards the corset when their popularity began to decline as the post-Edwardian long line corset changed the position of the hip, making the waist appear higher and wider. It was considered uncomfortable, cumbersome, and required the use of strips of elastic fabric.

Following World War I, the popularity further began to decline because of the lack of clothing materials so styles became looser and simpler, eliminating the need for the type of corset that had been so popular among women for the past 400 years.

Today, Le Petit Écho de la Mode is mostly unheard of. The biggest scene is antique collectors and those who enjoy vintage fashion. In modern art, Hormazd Narielwalla is best known for his intricate paper collages and assemblages, which are depicted on antique and vintage tailoring patterns. They are 'beautiful abstractions of the human body, that carry with them not only an outline of a garment but also a representation of the individual that wore it'. One of the pieces that demonstrate this the best is a part of his abstract figuration work, where he collages shapes to look like a scene. In his Petit Collages, they are more abstract they 'express ideas of identity, memory, migration and diaspora'.

Le Petit Echo de la Mode is a piece of history that has insights on how



French women lived from 1879-1983. It helps us to learn more about the development of fashion and beauty in France and Europe from the 19th-20th century. These effects still impact us today. We can see from the magazine what was sold to them, what was manufactured at the time, what technology was available, how they advertised, movements like the Suffrage movement have been noted in these magazines. The promotion of beauty standards shows how the expectation for women has not changed, it's just *what* is demanded has. This means we can see throughout history bodies, makeup and fashion have been a trend, which is often based on what society is experiencing at the time. For example, looking 'healthy' was deemed attractive in this newspaper because of the effects of rationing and poverty during the wars in Europe.

If you would like to look back on archived magazines of Le Petit Écho de la Mode the website is linked for you to browse:

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb328362370/date.r=petit%20echo%20de%20la%20mode>

EUR VISION

By N. Roberts, Illustrated by Brendon Hodgson

Last month, the UK experienced an event like no other. An event with the ability to unite or divide the nation. An event that attracted millions of viewers both at home and worldwide. For many, this could be a once in a lifetime opportunity. And I'm sure we're all thinking of the same thing. That's right. Move over Your Majesty – Eurovision's in town!

The UK hasn't won Eurovision since Katrina and the Waves' 1997 hit 'Love Shine a Light' and last year was no different – the UK's Sam Ryder entered a tense head-to-head with Ukraine's Kalush Orchestra before being felled at the final hurdle by the popular vote, which saw him finish in second place. But due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, it soon became clear that they would be unable to host the concert, and instead the UK welcomed the massively popular song contest on their behalf. The final took place in Liverpool, historically a cultural epicentre for British music, despite a heavily Yorkshire-dominated shortlist.

Despite the inability to host, Ukraine was never left out of the spectacle. Each video card at the beginning reflected a cultural space in both host countries, and UK hosts Hannah Waddingham (who became the stand-out act for many), Graham Norton and Alesha Dixon were joined on-stage by Ukrainian singer Julia Sanino. For many, the most touching moment of the night came as Eurovision contestants both old and new joined with a Ukrainian Children's Choir to perform a heart-wrenching rendition of 'You'll Never Walk Alone.' Eurovision stars such as former UK contestant Sonia and Iceland's break-out star Dadi Freyr also participated in a medley celebrating Liverpool's long contribution to the UK's musical history.

Eurovision is famous for the weird, wild, and wonderful, with 2023 being no exception. Acts ranged from Austria's song about being possessed by the ghost of Edgar Allan Poe to Croatia's anti-war anthem which they promised to perform naked if they won. (Croatia finished 13th). Both Moldova and Czechia delivered what we might fondly refer to as a 'sacrificial vibe,' leaving questions over the safety of the juries if they didn't win. For me personally, the standout performance of the night was Portugal, doomed from the beginning (no one who has performed second in the Eurovision final line-up has ever won the contest). However, it was Sweden's intense power ballad 'Tattoo' that took the crown, giving a prestigious second win to Loreena



who won previously in 2012 with her song 'Euphoria'. And what a year to win for Sweden – not only did it give them their seventh win, making them join with Ireland as the countries with the most wins, but next year they will host on the fiftieth anniversary of ABBA winning the contest with smash hit 'Waterloo'. But Sweden's win was controversial for many, with public support rallying around Finland's techno-dance hit CHA CHA CHA, which formed a cult status in the build-up to the competition. The song only coming in second place despite such an overwhelming performance in the popular vote has raised questions about the necessity of the jury vote, especially when it rarely reflects public opinion.

Around 160 million people worldwide were predicted to have watched Eurovision this year, showing just how important the contest is as a unifying cultural moment. Given this, the year's theme of 'United in Music' seems especially fitting. The contest offers a chance for people all over the world to overcome their differences and place their support behind their favourite contestant based entirely on the power of music and performance. Despite a disappointing result for the UK, it won't prevent us from returning with a new song to rally around next year; the best thing about Eurovision being that everybody finishes in good spirits, no matter their position on the leaderboard. So, let's raise a toast to one of the greatest creations in musical and TV history. Here's to Eurovision!

The audience may have had their say... but what did the Heckmondwike jury think?

Miss Rattigan, Teacher of Music and Drama

'As a lover of music and performance, there is a certain time of the year that excites me greatly...Eurovision time! The different genres, cultures, costumes, artistic staging, and lighting design but also the community spirit of celebrating music from around the world. I was particularly impressed with Italy this year, artist Marco Mengoni with his song Due Vite started with a powerful spotlight onto him centre stage with a beautiful sequin outfit. Not only was the musical quality on another level, with beautiful vocals complimenting a sweet piano melody but the singer's range and powerful emotion as he delivered a heartwarming performance. I thoroughly enjoyed his performance but also give credit to the choreographers who designed two performers using trampolines as symbolism throughout the performance. An all-round emotional spectacle. Looking forward to next year already!'

Alyssia Evans, Editor

'The sense of community is what ensures my annual view, especially in the most difficult of times – there's an act for everyone! The focus on celebrating the host city is always so special – the Liverpool medley was perfectly executed, bouncing from 'I Turn to You' to (arguably the best rendition) of 'Whole Again.' This year, I particularly enjoyed Finland's CHA CHA CHA and Germany's metal moment, which were both a visual and musical spectacle. I always embrace the outliers who are more daring and just there for the fun. I'm always rooting for the rebels, such as 2021's victors Maneskin, who have displayed the success that Eurovision can bring.'

FUN FACT

Did you know that Heckmondwike Grammar School's Mr Barnett taught English to the singer and the songwriter of the 1993 Lithuanian Eurovision entry that scored 'nul points'?

Juliet Scott, Contributing Writer for 'What the Heck?'

'Eurovision was spectacular! It was awesome and I am incredibly saddened that Finland didn't win - it was so much better than Sweden's, which was rigged for the ABBA celebration. I found Poland's song to be so disappointing. Last year their song was beautiful, but this year's was a generic pop song with too much dancing. It doesn't compete with last year's entry! I am furious that Finland didn't win – it was infinitely better than Sweden's.'

Sam Walshaw, News and Current Affairs Editor

'I will begin (if I may) with a confession: I do not normally watch Eurovision. Shock! Outrage! But when I saw on the news pictures of the build-up to this year's competition, the uniqueness of the event suddenly struck me. People of all competing nations talking to each other, enjoying the music, and generally having a good time. After the disaster of 'Brexit,' building back our relationship with the rest of Europe is imperative. Perhaps our successful hosting of Eurovision is a good way to start.'

Alec Lai, Y12 student

'My favourite Eurovision song was CHA CHA CHA performed by Käärijä from Finland. His neon green outfit and charismatic singing immediately caught my attention. Also, his dancing and the flashing lights mimicked the atmosphere of a club, which I believe set him apart from other contestants. Personally, he was unlucky not to win it, because of how he enthralled and captivated the crowd.'

Dominic Kenworthy and Brendon Hodgson, Y12 students

'Our favourite was Australia. They had everything a Eurovision act needs – cool staging, a decent song, and a stand-out vocal moment. The only thing that let them down was the lead singer – if the guitarist had sung the whole song instead of a solo, they might've had a fighting chance at winning.'





CREATIVE WRITING...

PRINGLES

By Sam Walshaw

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
Hip hip hip hooray!

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
They'll be gone in just a day...

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
I'll eat them all today.

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
Don't let me get my way!

Was it Mum? Was it Dad?

No, of course not!

Must have been my brother:

Come on! Don't feel so bad!

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
One more and then I'll stop.

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
Taken the lid off with a POP!

Someone's cracked the Pringles,
But that doesn't change the fact

That this newspaper does not condone the consumption
of unhealthy food like Pringles.

DIFFICULT JOB

By Sam Walshaw

The headline

On the Private Eye

This week

Was a royal joke:

“Man in hat sits on chair”.

Personally,

I wouldn't dare.

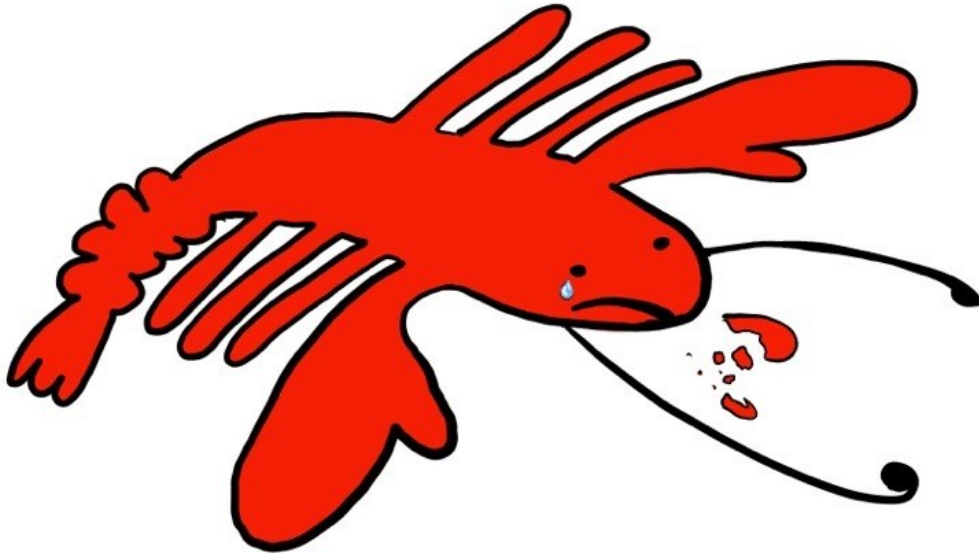
COMIC STRIP

By E. Hoyland Illustrated by Jack Wharton



MOVING ON

By Juliet Scott



A pair
We are fated to separate,
When?
Today? tomorrow?
Sometime soon.

It will happen.

So hold my claw a little longer,
The days are longer but the years shorter.
Just a while more than before,
I ask you to stay.

I don't want to see you go.

"We will meet again soon"
You soothe me.
It is our destiny,
In this life or the next.

I can't help but wonder.

Perhaps when we are withered,
I shall be greeted with your face.
Or maybe never again,
Your claw escapes my clasp.

I want to watch you succeed.

I hope the sea is kind to you,
She is infamous for her cruelty.
You are strong, resilient and kind,
But I must leave you behind.

I cannot be there for your moments of greatness

I can only dream of where you'll be,
When there is no you and me.
However this is mutual,
I must set forth and create my own splash.

It is for the very best.

With watery eyes and a quivering smile,
All I can manage is this goodbye.
For I will cherish what we've created together,
Now, but always forever.

I don't want to leave you behind

But I sigh,
I will always have the memories.
In my heart I will remember,
The times we have spent together.

A pair no more.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO...

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

A Film Review

By H. Batley

Based off of the re-emerging role-playing game, *Dungeons and Dragons: Honour Among Thieves*, released in cinemas on 31 March, is something that has been anticipated by many for years. Despite worries of the film being comparable to its 2000 predecessor, the movie captivated audience members with its brilliance and creativity in presenting the unique world that is *Dungeons & Dragons*.

The plot line was incredible and the storytelling fantastic with special effects that make the movie come to life alongside it. It follows the story of an adventuring party of four trying to save reality and the world as it is known from an evil sorceress whilst coming across many obstacles such as being trapped in

unfamiliar environments and a fan favourite, a dragon!

The movie explores the true nature of *Dungeons and Dragons* games with the entire basis of the movie being a group of adventures doing something wrong and having to fix up their mess through chaos and banter, with a good mix of finding a family with the people who fight with you along the way. It manages to explore the large variety of players you may see in an actual game, ranging from the discrete spell caster in our main character Edgin (a human bard) to the 'rule of cool players' such as Doric (a tiefling Druid).

Throughout the build up to this movie, there were already criticisms from people who believed the

rules from the official editions of the game should be followed exactly as they were written. However, there is also the idea that *Dungeons and Dragons* games are something to make your own. Whilst some love following the rules of the game to a point, there are also people who love to change or alter rules to make the game their own as well as dramatically increasing their own enjoyment of the game, and this is exactly what the movie has done.

This movie is definitely worth the watch for new, old and aspiring players or even just lovers of fantasy - you don't even have to be a D&D player to enjoy this movie!

LA NUIT DU 12

Dominik Moll's Dark Film Expertly Shines Light On Deep-rooted Societal Issues

By N. Roberts

'Something is wrong between men and women' intones the trailer of *La Nuit du 12*, the new French thriller from Dominik Moll. Having swept the board for French awards, the film is now finding its way to an international audience – and furthermore, an international debate.

The film follows newly promoted Captain Yohan Vives of the Grenoble police as he investigates the horrifying murder of a young woman set alight as she leaves a friend's home. This involves delving into Clara Royer's private life; quite specifically, her romantic relationships with men. The plot is driven by investigation of each 'bad boy' that she has been involved with – each entirely different and yet seemingly, each entirely capable of killing her. Despite being inspired by the real murder of Maud Marechal, it's clear from

the beginning that Moll is not interested in entering the usual parameters of the ever popular and often condemned true crime genre. Instead, he takes the tension of a classic thriller and reframes it to leave a harrowing reflection on the prejudices that affect women in life and in death.

As thrillers go, *La Nuit Du 12* borders dangerously close to stereotype. Although expertly crafted, the symbolism is often obvious, and the soundtrack isn't amongst the most notable of films I've seen this year. But Bastien Bouillon brings remarkable nuance to Yohan, a role that could be easily sidelined as a tired repetition of the lonely detective coming home to an empty flat to be haunted by his work. Yet not all the characters are afforded the privilege of well-roundedness - he

is accompanied in his work by a violent and angry detective who holds a secret passion for French literature. He is also given several underdeveloped workmates who appear as nothing more than their sexist beliefs, allowing Yohan to develop as he becomes increasingly frustrated by the ingrained misogyny around him.

For a film about misogyny to be so male dominated may seem like an interesting choice, and whether it is the correct one is a question left unanswered. However, the film, and its leading man, are deeply introspective, allowing Moll to widen out the message while keeping the plot intensely focused. It leaves the audience in the tight grip of a horrifying realisation – no matter the killer, society remains an accomplice.

ALL WE HEAR IS RADIO REUBEN!

Taking a closer look at HGS Radio with Sam, Reuben and Noel

By James Wilding

I sat down with some of the hosts of HGS Radio – Sam, Reuben and Noel. While it may have started out as an enrichment activity for sixth formers to take part in, it has since branched out to include these year 8s who are enjoying their school fame.

While talking to Reuben, he told me about how he joined. He first overheard it playing whilst at another club run by Mr Tipler, and asked if he could participate. He then involved Sam and Noel by getting them talking or playing music on the radio.

I delved deeper into this idea of including people, and they told me about the fun of being able to involve anyone by getting them laughing or taking part in the weekly quiz. One week, separate teams came into the quiz and both beat the records that were in place. The first record breakers were a group of year sevens, who were then beaten only a few days later by a pair of year eights, who have continued to hold the record to this current date. According to the DJs, year eights are the most adept at the quizzes, usually winning and taking the records in terms of the most points. For these quizzes, anyone can sign up by using the code on the posters for the clubs.

After talking to him, Reuben told me about the most widely played episode of the radio show - HGS 125. Throughout the school day, Reuben interviewed, quizzed and scared teachers, while also playing songs relating to the different decades that our school has lived through. Various members of the SLT and other teachers were ranked on their general knowledge and ability to withstand the relentless quizzing. Some teachers ranked as low as zero points, with the highest score of eight.

As well as that, the DJs gave me insight into their music selection methods. On Mondays, the show features metal and rock music, for those with those sorts of tastes. On Fridays, they pick a random year, and create a playlist of songs (similar to hit BBC Radio 2 shows, Sounds of the Seventies and Sounds of the Eighties). When asking them about this, they refused to reveal what the other days were, and told me that I would have to listen to find out. I highly recommend that our readers do the same and get involved with the fun!

HGS SPRING CONCERT 2023

“A little bit of music goes a long way”

By Alyssia Evans

On Thursday 11 May, the Swann Hall welcomed the school community in anticipation of this year's Spring concert. Family and friends were played in by Kyran Russell on the piano before the Concert Band opened the show with three huge hits, ‘Raiders March’ by John Williams, ‘The Mandalorian’ by Ludwig Goransson and ‘It Had Better be Tonight’ by Henry Mancini. The band is great at creating an atmosphere of excitement that sets the audience up for what's to come because they choose such suspenseful and somewhat eerie pieces.



Next up were Senior Girls Vocal Group presented Billy Joel's ‘And So it Goes’ followed by Lennon and McCartney's ‘Yesterday’. First created as a bit of fun on a Wednesday lunchtime, the choir allows us to explore a range of harmonies. These songs perfectly displayed this, specifically the layering of voices and exploring range. Whilst I may be biased as a member, I love the simplicity the choir brings. Singing with just a piano highlights the complexity of voices.



Following was the String Group with ‘Morning’ and ‘In the Hall of the Mountain King’ from Edvard Grieg's ‘Peer Gynt’ and ‘Sarabande’ by Carl Bohm in part two. The concentration of the group is wonderful to see! It's clear when watching that this group requires great determination and skill. It's really amazing to see this bravery across the school due to the age range of its members. Particularly, it was a fantastic performance from Leigha Blanchard, who leaves us this year.



It's safe to say the most heart-warming of groups was Junior Choir. They sang in both parts and included ‘Ain't no Mountain High Enough’ by Gaye and Terrell, ‘Shake it Out’ by Florence + the Machine as well as ‘Somewhere’ by Leonard Bernstein later on. They deliver us performances that really showcase their talent, but also their enthusiasm as they grin throughout. I always look forward to seeing them each concert and they never disappoint! It's lovely to see the group expand, particularly with boys, as commented later by Mr Cole and move up the ranks when it's their time.



Senior choir always bring the fun and a great contrast in voices. In the first half, they sang us ‘The Music's Always There

With You’ by John Rutter and ‘You'll Be Back’ by Lin-Manuel Miranda from the popular musical ‘Hamilton’. The latter has positively been stuck in my head since they performed! These catchy songs create a joy in the audience which is visible by the beaming smiles of family and friends. Closing the second half was my personal favourite group has to be the Soul Band. They always add an immeasurable energy

On this occasion we were treated with ‘September’ by Earth Wind and Fire, ‘Knock on Wood’ by Eddie Floyd, ‘Flashdance...What a Feeling’ by Giorgio Moroder and ‘Respect’ by Otis Redding. We had the pleasure of hearing the talented vocal soloists, Molly Lawford, Phoebe Backhouse, Zoe Cole and Eleanor Linsell-Fraser. Seeing the joy of performance and support on stage is priceless. With stand-out vocals and a roof-raising band be sure to be blown away by Soul Band.



Opening part two was the percussion group with 'Soul Limbo' by Booker T and the MGs and 'Drum Line' by Lauren Rosborough. As one of our more creative and experimental of groups, the Macarena dance was incorporated which achieved a giggle from the audience. We then had Senior Girls Vocal Group for the final time with 'Summertime' by George Gershwin and 'Dream a Little Dream of Me' by the Mamas and Papas. I think the addition of these songs really emphasises the theme by drawing on the breezy glow we associate with Spring.



The atmosphere of the night changed as Vocal Soloist Rowan Leightfoot took to stage with 'Why God Why?' by Claude-Michel Schonberg from 'Miss Saigon' because our attention was drawn to our year 13 leavers. Backstage as well as in the audience it was clear they will be missed in future concerts. Senior Choir singing 'When I grow Up' by Tim Minchen from 'Matilda the Musical' and the powerful 'This is the Moment' by Wilhorn and Bricusse solidified this feeling, alongside Miss Sutcliffe's tears and closing speeches from the department and Mr Roberts later on. The clear message of tonight was that 'A little bit of music goes a long way' despite exam stress or the fear of moving on. At HGS music is an inclusive, supportive and broad way to participate in the arts and find community.

The concert band played us out with 'Sweet Gingerbread Man' by Tim Minchen, 'Always on My Mind' by Carson/James/Christopher and 'Avengers' by Alan Silvestri.

Within speeches, there were tributes to our leavers as well as thank yous in flowers and chocolate to the department. We want to wish luck to Molly Lawford, Pheobe Backhouse, Zoe Cole, Eleanor Linsell-Fraser, Rowan Lightfoot, Eleanor Lilly, George Dye, Henry Pollard, Beth Kernick, Leigha Blanchard and Jacob Pow on their ongoing exams and future endeavours!

Mr Hall commented:

"Once again, the senior choirs excelled with their performances. Particular acclaim must go to the Girls' Choir's stylish rendition of 'Dream a Little Dream', and the Senior Choir's 'This is the Moment', which showed off the versatility and combined power of the singers.

"My thanks to the year 13s and the year 11s who are leaving us, for their commitment to the Senior Choir over many years. I always think that if we've instilled a love of singing it will never leave, and hopefully all our choristers will progress into adult choirs in the years to come. As one of our choral pieces said, "the music's always there in your heart"."

To wrap up the whole evening, there was an encore of 'Mambo No. 5' which had everyone swaying and clapping along.

Look out for Pheobe Backhouse, playing Morticia, and Henry Pollard, playing Gomez in the upcoming production of 'The Addams Family'. Tickets for the three showings (10-12 July) will be on sale from early June.



HOUSE SUM-UP

Priestley Widens the Gap as Brontë Chases for 1st Place

By James Wilding

Over the last half-term, there have been many house events, with Priestley taking first place in four out of the six events making them our current front runners for this year's Lees Cup competition.

We kicked the half-term off with a win for Priestley in Junior House Maths. This involved groups ranging from years 7-9 working together to solve maths related challenges. Brontë took first place in this event, having gained more points during it. Houldsworth and Priestley managed to tie for second place, making the gap between houses as tight as ever. Clarke then catch up at the end, having scored the lowest number of points during the event.

After being short listed by Mrs Bates, the long-awaited House Art Showcase took place this half-term in the Library with Mr Roberts, Mrs Whitelaw and Mrs Brooke as the panel. Priestley achieved first place overall thanks to their winning entry for the senior category from Freya Roberts and participation from Neev Mahi, who took third place in the Juniors category, and Yoyo Zhou, who took third place in the Senior category. Following was Houldsworth with Tahmeed Bhuiyan taking second in the Juniors, and Ruby Swift achieving third place for seniors. Brontë placed third with Beth Griffiths taking second in the senior category. Clarke pulled up the rear, despite having had Zavva Ali get first place in the juniors category. You can see on the placements here that the number of entries played a part – despite getting first place in one of the categories, Clarke had an overall last place in the rankings. This shows the importance of participation in creative events!

While I covered the actual cakes in the last edition, I now know more of the details relating to the rankings. Despite not winning any of the categories, Priestley took first place, winning overall, from

what I assume would be for having the most entries or having highly ranked cakes that did not win first place. Brontë placed second then in the bake-off, due to Mrs Swann's win in the traybake category, achieving first place with her Lemon Drizzle traybake. Clarke then came third, having the points from Mr Currie's win in the cake category with a Strawberry Cream Sponge. Houldsworth placed last in the rankings for this category, with none of the teachers there winning 'Star Baker.'

We also had some of the main sporting events during this half-term. Senior Rugby resulted in a win for Clarke, made easier by the fact that Houldsworth had to forfeit due to not having the numbers to be able to field a team for the event. Priestley then placed second, having lost to Clarke in the final, while Brontë automatically got third place due to Houldsworth's forfeit meaning that there was no-one to play for third place.

For the girls, the leaderboard was completely different, with Senior Rounders resulting in a win for Priestley, and a joint third place. Second place for this event was Houldsworth who lost to Priestley, followed up by Brontë and Clarke, who tied, both ending the event in third place.

As chess has been taking HGS by storm, it's not surprising how popular House Chess would be this year. Supervised by Mr Roberts, competition has been tough with the results still to follow over the next 4 weeks.

Overall, this leaves the leaderboard with Priestley currently leading the rest of the houses, with a



grand total of 119.5 points towards the Lees Cup, attempting to keep up their winning streak. Brontë are not too far behind them, with 110.5 points, and are, at the time of writing, the competitors to break the winning streak. Third place is currently occupied by Houldsworth, who sit at 98 points towards the cup, and Clarke who bring up the rear of the leaderboard, with 91 total points. Despite the clear lead that Priestley has here, there is a chance for potential disruption, as we draw closer to Sports Day – a chance to win so many points that any house could catch up and take the Lees cup.

We also said goodbye to the year 13 house captains whose role it is to help coordinate events and drum up teams. This means that new appointments from year 12 are impending. Contact your heads of house for more information!

We have also interviewed your heads of house for their interpretations on the success of their house this half-term.

Mr Keenleyside, Head of Priestley House comments, “Priestley continue to go from strength to strength this half-term with lots of house activities taking place. It’s been amazing to see so many students actively involved. A real team effort! At the start of the half-term Priestley had a narrow half a point lead but with wins in house art, creative writing, senior e-sports, senior rounders and staff bake off to mention a few means Priestley have opened up a 6pt lead. Lots of events still to play for means it’s still all to play for but the futures bright the futures Priestley. Come on you reds”.

Mr Drake, Head of Houldsworth House also reflected on this half-term—”It’s been a challenging term but I couldn’t be more proud of Houldsworth’s indefatigable spirit. There is so much to play for in this last term. Don’t rule us out just yet!”

Ms Jarvis has also shown her enthusiasm for supporting Houldsworth House as the co-Head—“When Mr Drake and I took over as House Leaders of Houldsworth in September, they had finished the previous year a disappointing fourth place in the Lees Cup. I joked that we should make a two-year plan, with a view to winning the Lees Cup in 2024, to tie in with the 30th Anniversary of the formation of Houldsworth House.

With much enthusiasm (mainly from Mr Drake and me) Houldsworth had some excellent early successes (Seniors and Inters Netball and Staff University Challenge). At one point they were top of the Lees Cup table. The swimming gala didn’t go well, and we finished in last place! A double weighted last place at that, meaning that we lost our position at the top of the table.

On returning to school in January, we collectively picked ourselves up, dusted ourselves off and showed what a resilient bunch we are. At the time of writing Houldsworth sit comfortably in third place in the Lees Cup standings, with notable wins in House Drama, Seniors Hockey and the Spelling Bee plus a number of second places all helping to boost our points total. Our mantra ahead of events became *as long as we don’t finish fourth, anything else is a bonus and for most events so far this year we haven’t!*

Sports Day planning is underway and all being well our athletes will do their best on the day and help us to secure something other than fourth place this year. The future is looking bright green for Houldsworth House.”





YEAR 13 LEAVERS' DAY





**YEAR 11
LEAVERS' DAY**





HOROSCOPES...

By Alyssia Evans



ARIES Mar 21st – Apr 19th

You're represented by the ram, making you confident and assured.

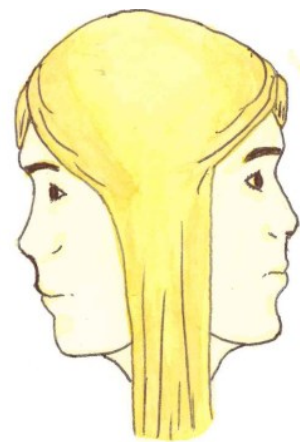
Now is a busy time for you with lots of options about your future both long and short-term. Don't sweat the small stuff! Instead focus on bigger picture and what you need to do to get to your next mile-



TAURUS Apr 20th – May 20th

You're represented by the bull – powerful and strong.

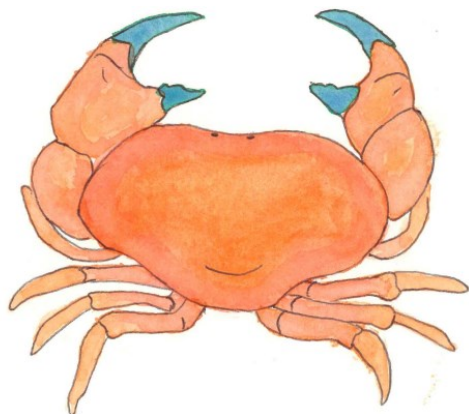
Life may be becoming overwhelming as you have some big life decisions to face – take some time for you! You can't make the right choice for your future without being the best version of yourself first.



GEMINI May 21st – Jun 20th

You're represented by the twins – adaptable and capable.

This month, after a very hectic period, you'll be craving a change of pace. June is seeming like your lucky month! Focus your energy into what matters most and keep it fun.



CANCER Jun 21st – Jul 22nd

You're represented by the crab – devoted and protective.

You may recently have faced a failure or minor setback - don't worry! This may have been a blessing in disguise. You need moments like this to show you who you truly are and what you value.



LEO Jul 23rd – Aug 22nd

You're represented by the lion – passionate and vivacious.

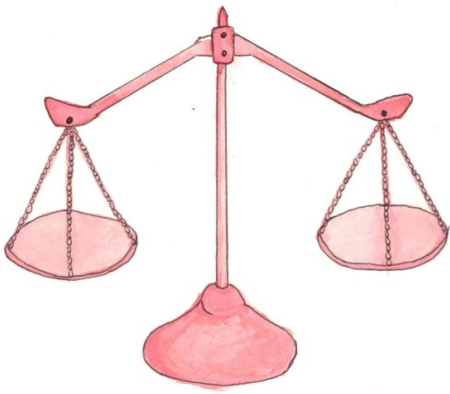
You're feeling particularly frustrated at the start of this month. Channel this energy into dissecting the problems you're facing and utilise your innate confidence and enthusiasm to support your personal desires.



VIRGO Aug 23rd – Sep 22nd

You're represented by the virgin – logical and systemic.

This month you are going on a journey of new discovery. It's important to consider alternative pathways and broaden your horizons, even if your set on the first route. You can never be too safe!



LIBRA *Sep 23rd – Oct 22nd*

You're represented by the scales
– balanced and harmony.

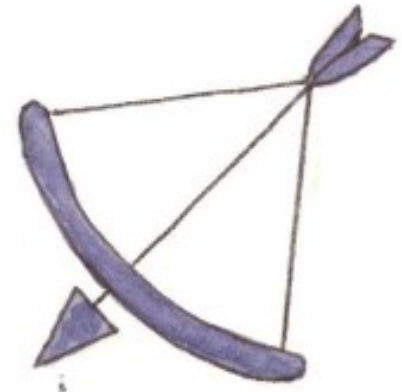
Stop procrastinating. Make sure you achieve what is important, including the little tasks. A tidy room is a tidy mind, so look after yourself!



SCORPIO *Oct 23rd – Nov 21st*

You're represented by the scorpion
– observant and mystic.

Now calls for you to inject passion into the mundane. Find what you love and hold gratitude for what challenges you. It's important to not reject change, even if it's intimidating.



SAGITTARIUS *Nov 22nd – Dec 21st*

You're represented by the archer –
intelligent and grounded.

You may be struggling with feelings about your relationships with peers. Focus your energy inwards and pace yourself. Don't rush what is to come, allow the process to occur naturally!



CAPRICORN *Dec 22nd – Jan 19th*

You're represented by the goat –
stoic and pragmatic.

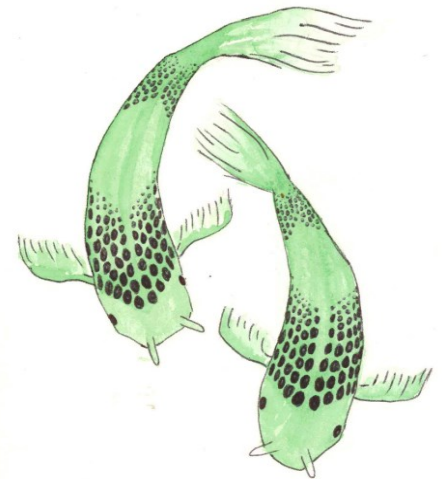
Your feelings are heightened this month. Whatever they are, ensure that you don't allow yourself to be swept up by them. Feel them, rationalise and then react!



AQUARIUS *Jan 20th – Feb 18th*

You're represented by the water bearer – original and independent.

This month is in your favour. Expect strokes of luck that may seem unthinkable. It is important to embrace this instead of hesitating in fear.



PISCES *Feb 19th – Mar 20th*

You're represented by the fish –
sensitive and gracious.

Any complications you're having this month will ease. Expect a decrease in tension and to feel blessed with the energy you've chosen to surround yourself with.

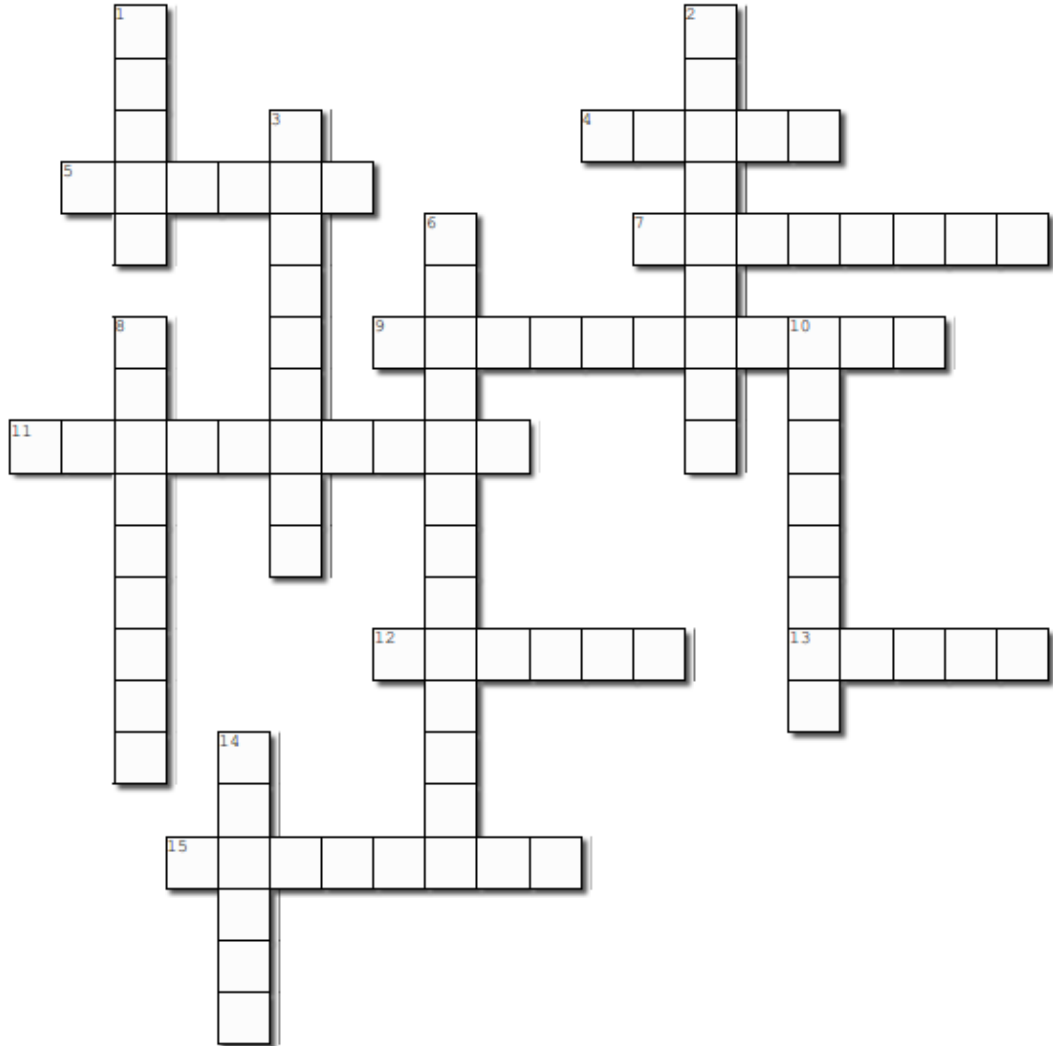
CROSSWORD

By N. Roberts

Name: _____

What The Heck Crossword 3

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

4. Footballer injured in first match with Juventus (5)
5. The Commodores sang that they were 'Easy like...morning' (6)
7. Capital city of Finland (8)
9. Great Wonder of the World located in Peru (5,6)
11. 1945 allegorical novel by George Orwell (6,4)
12. Comedic orange bear from the Muppets (6)
13. Princess who stars in 'The Princess and the Frog' (5)
15. Wakefield gallery is named after this famous sculptor (8)

Down

1. Medical term for the thigh bone (5)
2. Mg is the chemical symbol for this element (9)
3. UK's Eurovision singer for 2023 (3,6)
6. Author of the Peter Rabbit series (7,6)
8. Name of two English Queens (9)
10. Long-running BBC hospital soap opera (8)
14. Winner of Eurovision Song Contest 2023 (6)

SUDOKUS

By Sam Walshaw

To solve a sudoku, you need to fill in every missing box with a number between 1 and 9. Each row, column and 3x3 square should contain the numbers 1 to 9 once, and only once.

Sudoku 4 (Easy)

				3				
6	5		9		7	3		4
		4	5				8	
7		3			8		4	
4		5	7		6	8		9
	8		3			6		1
	4				3	7		
5		8	6		4		9	2
				1				

Sudoku 6 (Hard)

8	9						5	4
		2				1		
			1	7				
7		4				5		2
6								7
9		8	4		2	3		6
	8						9	
1			6		3			5
				2				

Sudoku 5 (Medium)

				6				
		5				6	4	
						2	8	
5			1	9				
	9		4	8				1
8		3			2			
7		6	2				1	
4				8				
	3	2	6		7			

CHESS PUZZLE

By Ben Walshaw



Tigran Petrosian – Vladimir Simagin

Moscow, 1956

How can White play for a win, without allowing a perpetual check?

(From the *Mammoth Book of Chess*)

GIRO D'ITALIA LATEST

Will it be one last triumph for Britain's Geraint Thomas?

By Sam Walshaw



This lad from Cardiff can sure ride a bike...

Image credit: <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/geraint-thomas-mark-cavendish-ineos-british-cycling-france-b2343593.html>

When this edition of *What the Heck?* went to press, the 2023 Giro d'Italia was yet to finish. Consequently, a full review of this year's race will appear in the July edition, which will also feature a preview to this year's Tour de France.

After stage 17, Geraint Thomas leads the Giro, eighteen seconds ahead of Portugal's João Almeida. Primož Roglič completes the top three, who are split by less than half a minute and from whom the winner is likely to come. The big news is that favourite Remco Evenepoel is out, due to a positive test for coronavirus.

	<i>Rider</i>	<i>Nation</i>	<i>Team</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Gap</i>
1.	Geraint Thomas	UK	Ineos Grenadiers	71:58:43	
2.	João Almeida	Portugal	UAE Team Emirates	71:59:01	0:18
3.	Primož Roglič	Slovenia	Jumbo-Visma	71:59:12	0:29
4.	Damiano Caruso	Italy	Bahrain Victorious	72:01:33	2:50
5.	Eddie Dunbar	Ireland	Team Jayco Alula	72:01:46	3:03
6.	Lennard Kämna	Germany	Bora-Hansgrohe	72:02:03	3:20
7.	Bruno Armirail	France	Groupama-FDJ	72:02:05	3:22
8.	Andreas Leknessund	Norway	Team DSM	72:02:13	3:30
9.	Thymen Arensman	Netherlands	Ineos Grenadiers	72:02:52	4:09
10.	Laurens De Plus	Belgium	Ineos Grenadiers	72:03:15	4:32

The maglia ciclamino (points jersey) is currently held by Bahrain Victorious' 22-year-old, Jonathan Milan, who is nearly one hundred points ahead of the nearest competition. Ireland's Ben Healy, of EF Education-Easy Post, is the leading climber at the minute, so wears the *maglia azzurra*. The final jersey, the *maglia bianca*, will be awarded to the best rider under the age of 25. It is currently held by Almeida and it is hard to see that changing, given that Leknessund is three and a half minutes behind in second.

BRING ON THE ASHES

The World's Greatest Cricket Series Is Less Than a Month Away

By Sam Walshaw

Before I address the elephant in the room – the upcoming men's Ashes series – let us first discuss the Indian Premier League (IPL). The mammoth group stage is now complete, with last year's champions Gujarat Titans the standout side. The Titans finished three points clear at the top of the ten-team table, with ten wins from fourteen matches. Their Indian batsman Shubman Gill has the second-most runs of this year's tournament, with a high score of 104 not out. Incidentally, top of that ranking is Royal Challengers Bangalore's star man Faf du Plessis, on 730 runs, all of which were in vain as his side finished sixth (only the top four proceed to the play-offs). The two bowlers with the most wickets this season, pacer Mohammad Shami and mercurial spinner Rashid Khan, both represent Gujarat.

Chennai Super Kings (CSK) always seem to do well, and this year is no different with the team finishing second in the regular season. On Tuesday 23rd May, they duly faced Gujarat in the first 'eliminator' match – and won by fifteen runs, putting them through to Sunday's final. Likewise, Mumbai Indians finished below Lucknow Super Giants, but they too beat their previously better-performing rivals in the eliminator. And what a convincing victory it was: Mumbai won by 81 runs, with Akash Madhwal taking an impressive 5–5. Gujarat might have lost to Chennai, but will, by the time you read this, have had a shot of redemption against Mumbai. And so the final on Sunday will see CSK face the winners of that match.

Closer to home, in the County Championship Division One, current champions Surrey again lead the way after six games. Durham are top of the second division (and Yorkshire are quite shockingly bottom), with England's Matty Potts staking his claim for an Ashes spot with 30 wickets so far, in ten red ball matches. Speaking of the Ashes...

The excitement levels of cricket fans across the land are slowly increasing, with the Test summer to begin on Thursday 1st June at Lord's (of course), against Ireland. Following that, the Ashes will commence on Friday 16th June at Edgbaston at 11 o'clock sharp. Get it in your calendar/diary/phone now! This will be followed by further Tests against Australia at Lord's, Headingley, Old Trafford and, finally, the Oval.

Last week, England's likely team for the first Test became a lot clearer when the England and Wales Cricket Board announced their squad for the Ireland match. Disappointingly, Jofra Archer will again miss the entire summer, after "a recurrence of a stress fracture to his right elbow." Jonny Bairstow, however, will return to the side after his own freak injury last summer. There



Ben Stokes will lead England into an Ashes series for the first time.

Image credit: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/cricket/65625969>

Debates like this are testament to the newfound strength in England's batting line-up, words which would have seemed entirely unbelievable a mere year-and-a-half ago. Ollie Pope, who has impressed at three, is now the team's vice-captain. It would not be surprising if he captains the side at some point this summer, given Stokes' dodgy left knee. So Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett will open, followed by Pope, ex-captain Joe Root, Brook, Stokes, Bairstow and four others. Those four, all bowlers, will come from Jimmy Anderson, Stuart Broad, spinner Jack Leach, Potts, Ollie Robinson, Chris Woakes and outright fast bowler Mark Wood. It is likely that they (and perhaps others) will be rotated as the summer progresses.

In summary, England go into this year's competition with rare confidence. Australia will pose a significant challenge, but we shall see how strong that challenge is as the days and weeks go by. It cannot get worse than last time out down under; indeed, England may have as good a chance this year at reclaiming the Ashes as they ever will.

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