



BEL CANTO



Bede's pupil Sally-Ann Wild was born into a musical family.

Since joining Bede's she has gone from enjoying singing to taking part in an original composition at Glyndebourne. Towards the end of the Autumn term, she took some time out of her busy rehearsal schedule to talk about her life and art.

"My mum was an opera singer," says Sally-Ann, who lives in Eastbourne, "and my dad played the organ. I've been immersed in music since I was very little."

"I've been at Bede's since year 6. Before then I was at a very quiet girls' school. As soon as I arrived at Bede's it was... well, it seemed like there was so much going on!"

"What's amazing about Bede's is that you can pursue your passions. Teachers move mountains. So suddenly, every spare minute I could sing, other people could paint, play sport. I started singing in the choir at every break time."

"When I was little, my mum used to give singing lessons to people, and I would sometimes sing in them, but had always been a solo singer. Once I joined Bede's, I found myself suddenly slotted in to the middle of a chord. It was incredible!"

"I absolutely loved being part of a big muscle, harmonising in a room full of people. There's nothing as amazing to me as when I'm working with a big team to make great sound."

"At the Senior School, I adore singing in all the choirs. Jazz, Chamber Choir, regular choir. The Bede's Music department is so, so good."

"Roy Hilton for example. He is... spiritually amazing. He boosts your confidence so much. You really want to impress him because he's such a talented musician."



"Singing at Glyndebourne happened in a really roundabout way. I was on a train, sat next to two women, and my mum texted me from across the carriage. She told me that the women were quite famous opera singers, so I just approached them and started talking."

"They were coming back from the Albert Hall, and I told them how I'd sung at Glyndebourne when I was eleven, in Hansel and Gretel, which went on a tour of the UK. They recommended joining Imago, this brand new community opera written by Orlando Gough."

"Imago is being debuted at Glyndebourne in March, so at the moment we're putting it together. I'm there, singing 8 part harmonies, and Orlando will sometimes come into rehearsals. It's so exciting!"

"I'm really into the music too. I've always loved opera. La Boheme, The Cunning Little Vixen, Pearl Fishes. Don't get me wrong, I'm into all sorts of music, but I feel extremely inspired at the moment."

"What's brilliant though is that for Imago we're working at such speed, and the people there are surprised that I can keep up. Things change in an instant, but I'm there, feeling ahead almost."

"When things like that happen, I realise I've been really well prepared."

"I only have Bede's to thank for that."



TAKING STOCK



As Bede's Senior School prepares to enter a brief hibernation, Head of School Mia Harvey and Headmaster Dr Richard Maloney took time out of their end of term preparations to meet and discuss the school year so far.



"With the winter term being one of the busiest in the year, it's not surprising at how quickly it has flown by," says Mia. "And what a term it has been!"

Having returned from the long summer break, pupils arrived in September with high-spirits and a palpable energy. Many among them had contributed to the school's record-breaking results at GCSE and A Level and were eager to get back to learning.

"It's not a normal school in that sense," Mia continues. "The students here really enjoy it. But it's like people say – time flies when you're having fun, and this term has just gone by in a second!"

Dr Maloney shares Mia's sentiment.

"As teachers, we have a very different experience of the ebb and flow of the term, and of its pressures. There is a tangible sense of Bede's as a place of dynamism. It is soaked into the fabric of the school and helps feed our enthusiasm for what we do."

As autumn arrived, with the thirty-plus varieties of trees on the Bede's site turning from green to innumerable shades of yellow and brown, it was almost as if the school was defying the seasons; where normally one might be inclined to see winter as a time of conclusions and finality, this term has seen extraordinary outbursts of life, creativity and joy taking place around the school site.

"It seems only yesterday that I was enjoying Bede's Rocks in September," says Mia.

"The level of musical talent displayed by the bands and individual musicians that day, combined with the beauty of the Park in the last of the summer sun, made it spectacular. That energy was carried through into the Inter-House competitions, and then the House Music, which was one of the best I've experienced."

Dr Maloney nods in agreement.

"The girls' houses took centre-stage this year, which was fantastic to see. That was an evening which, like Cabaret, provided an incredible showcase for the talents of the pupils. Seeing so many young people so involved in their performances, displaying such passion, is a huge source of inspiration for us all."

And what of the student council?

"After the summer holiday," says Mia, "I was extremely eager to start working with the prefects."

Mia's first speech, in early September, laid out her team's agenda for the year.

"We started our work with a conference after school in which we came up with our two aims – bringing boarders and day students together and inspiring younger pupils."

"One of our biggest tasks was organising socials for every year group, in the hope that it would be a time for boarders and day students to mix."

"The Sixth Form had an American themed night, where the school dining room was transformed into an American diner. Everyone came dressed in American inspired costumes. It was great to see people coming together throughout the evening."

Another aspect of the school the prefects have been dealing with is student voice, something about which Dr Maloney feels passionate.



"In the last two years, we have facilitated an incredible evolution of our Student Councils and Prefect Team. An enormous amount of effort has gone into this aspect of school life. Our pupils are now genuinely and profoundly empowered."

"Alongside setting and maintaining the school's system of rewards and discipline," he continues, "the pupils guide us. That might be in relation to changes to the structure of Bede's house system, how we organise the School or make sure teaching and learning is as good as it can be."

"Every half term," says Mia, "there are four sub-committee meetings. Social, Academic, Food and Co-Curricular. In these meetings, house representatives discuss issues brought up in House Councils with relevant members of staff. Then, bigger issues are discussed in School Council."

"Through student committees, many issues have been overcome," she continues. "For example, we are making plans, as a student body, in relation to Teacher Assessment, developments at the Sixth Form centre and increasing access to certain rooms and facilities out of normal school hours."

"All of these achievements are down to the prefects," adds Dr Maloney, looking out onto a crisp winter's day.

"But wait until next term," he says. "They're just warming up."



FUTURE-PROOFING FIRST YEARS ❄️ ❄️

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Equipping the young for the future is something Bede's prides itself on however. It is difficult to even imagine what the needs of the global economy will be when they enter the workforce, but there is no doubt that certain principles will decide who succeeds and who fails within it.

It is these principles that define and underpin the First Year curriculum at Bede's.

"We focus on delivering a broad and balanced set of courses, and we do so in a rigorous way," says Mr Liam Backler, Head of First Year. "We take this approach because we want the pupil's to be able to make informed choices in their lives."

The challenge faced by any family with young teenagers is to try and balance the need to specialise early and focus on a path to a profession or university course with the desire to provide children with a chance to experience as wide-ranging a selection of subjects, crafts and disciplines as possible.

At Bede's, the First Year curriculum is unique in this regard. It has been built from the ground up, by Bede's teachers, with the express intention of providing pupils with as broad an experience as possible, delivered in as sophisticated, challenging way as possible, while also offering younger students the chance to concentrate on areas of personal passion or aptitude.

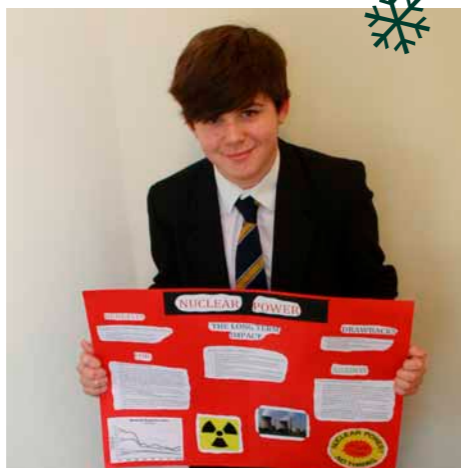
"The curriculum is designed around developing skills. All pupils need understanding in all core areas; English, Maths and Science. But we also want them to embrace the wider Humanities and Arts. And we don't do First Year exam entries. Bede's pupils are more than capable, but we believe in keeping their options open, allowing them to truly discover their interests and aptitudes rather than rushing them into decisions."

"We ensure that there is plenty of choice within the programme, allowing pupils to experiment and try things. Sometimes they fail, sometimes they thrive. Whatever the case, we push them and challenge them to move outside of their comfort zone."

While many schools stress early exam entry as a strength, the evidence actually suggests the contrary. A study by the Department of Education earlier this year found that pupils who are entered early for GCSE's in fact perform worse overall than those who do not, even after re-sits are taken into account.

For this reason, the school inspectorate Ofsted has warned all schools that 'Entering pupils too early for GCSE's is damaging to children.'

"Across our First Year," continues Mr Backler, "pupils do begin to specialise. To take an example, we run two First Year Music courses. One is introductory, the other more advanced. Both will help students interested in potentially



taking Music GCSE in the Lower Fifth, but the goal from our end is helping students who want to try Music to give it a go, while also ensuring that those students who know they want to take Music have the opportunities they need to truly stretch themselves and progress."

"We offer equivalents for many core subjects, including Maths and English, but our belief is that there are many more important skills which should be of a much greater high priority than those skills or pieces of information necessary to simply pass exams."

One part of the Bede's approach is the First Year Projects Programme, which was launched and developed throughout 2011.

"The issue of Prep and Homework is something which has plagued educators for generations," says John Tuson, Bede's Academic Deputy Head. "We want pupils to work independently, of course, but work for work's sake is next to useless."

"The idea is to make all tasks meaningful and to bring in balance," says Mr Backler, reinforcing Mr Tuson's sentiments.

"For Prep," he continues, "First Year pupils do have exercises and grammar work for subjects like English, Maths and Modern Foreign Languages as, at a certain level, some kinds of learning are best undertaken as an individual, working by yourself."

"Alongside those tasks, which are a small part of the independent learning programme we have created for First Years, the Projects programme has been launched to develop the pupils more meticulously, and in a holistic, innovative way."

"The defining goal of the Project Programme is to develop pupils' independent research and independent thinking skills,"

says Mr Tuson.

"Many young people, when they join us, don't really

know how to learn. The Project Programme is therefore scaffolded to teach them how to learn, and then help them to specialise and explore, with the luxury that they can make, and learn the most from, their mistakes."

The Project Programme at Bede's is focussed on helping pupils to acquire a broad experience of investigation. They gather data, lay that data out imaginatively and artfully, and then present their findings orally, through presentations with accompanying materials, or through essays and mixed media, including film.

"Universities are complaining very publicly that modern students lack two things: core literacies and the ability to function autonomously," says Mr Backler.

"The Projects Programme is an antidote to this problem. Plus, although the projects themselves are subject specific, we are increasingly building cross-curricular links between subjects."

Mr Tuson concurs, enthusing, "The idea is that pupils study topics in core areas, such as Charles Dickens in English. The Dickens project, which ran last year, then had cross-curricular elements in History and Biology, where in History the pupils studied the Victorian Era and the Industrial Revolution, while in Biology students learned about malnutrition, hygiene, and the diseases which develop as a result of these problems."

"The idea is that First Years step outside of the curriculum and head to places and fields of knowledge that their teachers haven't already covered with them."

One major side-benefit of this approach is, according to Mr Backler, that as pupils engage in this research they often stumble into new ideas and subject areas about which they become enormously passionate.

"This helps them to start thinking about potential careers," he says.

"It might seem early, but GCSE choices need to be made during the First Year, and those GCSE choices can have knock-on effects for the rest of their lives. We therefore ensure that every pupil receives very personal care from their tutors."

"The key to the process, from our end as teachers, is to ensure that we are providing every pupil with the information, targets and support they need to improve."

Mr Tuson nods, adding, "Pupils are given feedback in tutorials, and these sessions function somewhat like seminars. They see each other's work, develop ideas and set personal targets for the future."

"Advice from their peers gives them added perspective and helps them place their own achievements in context."

"It is a very forward-thinking approach to learning."



CABARET REVIEW ❄️ ❄️

Cabaret has become, undoubtedly, one of the most exciting, innovative and enjoyable events in the Bede's calendar.

One expects a school concert to be filled with talented students, dedicated staff and a superb atmosphere. Cabaret 2012 was all of this, and more.



The brainchild of Maestro Extraordinaire Andrew Barclay, Cabaret this year was a simply stunning occasion: the main hall at the Senior School was turned into a '70s-style disco, complete with glitter ball, star cloth and movie reels depicting Saturday Night Fever, the Bee Gees and the Manhattan skyline.

Students, staff, parents and other invited guests were treated to a sumptuous meal, all with a '70s theme. Classic Atlantic prawn cocktail awaited guests as they arrived from a blustery November evening; music played

around the hall, whetting people's appetite for an unforgettable evening.

Divided into three 'concerts', the evening ran seamlessly from one item to another, divided by a short 'interval' where diners enjoyed chicken cordon bleu or beetroot, asparagus and yellow pepper tart.

Supper was completed by a pudding of black forest gateau and a wild berry coulis.

In concert one, the students excelled. Dancers, big band and singers came to the fore in the opening medley where the audience were transported to the late 1970s. Roy Hilton arranged some wonderful musical items accompanied by our visiting music staff. There are simply too many outstanding performances to mention here, but some notable solo performers were Idris Ellis singing Baker Street, Alice Auer singing the reflective ballad Somewhere That's Green, Sophie Rudge singing and playing Time After Time and the very talented Georgia Mae Ellis making us feel nostalgic with The Way We Were.

In concert two, the Orchestra shone in Medley from Les Misérables. The Bee Gees and Andrew Lloyd-Webber featured in the choir's performance of How Deep Is Your Love and a Lloyd-Webber medley.

In concert three, Andrew Barclay declared the dance floor open; students and parents alike

took to the black-and-white checked floor under the glitter ball and were treated to yet another musical feast.

As the Jazz Choir, under the direction of Louise Morris, singing Night To Remember and If I can't Have You, everyone danced the night away in spectacular style.

The evening was then crowned by Maestro Barclay declaring: 'It's good night from me, and it's good night from them'.

A truly remarkable and great occasion: one that will forever live long in our memories.

Robert Scamardella



TOP OF THEIR GAME

Bede's is well known and highly regarded as a Football school.

This season has already seen notable successes for the various sides fielded by the school, including two national IFSA championships in boys and girls 6-a-side. There is a sense, however, that the best is yet to come.

Towards the end of term, just days before both teams were set to play significant competition matches, the boys' and girls' 1st team captains came together to discuss their successes, not only in terms of the performances of their respective teams but also as individuals.

Adam Forrester, the boys' captain, was the first to speak up.

"The first thing I have to say is about how Bede's has given me such great opportunities," he says. "I feel so thankful."

Elena South, the girl's captain, nods in agreement.

"I came here in the Lower Fifth," she adds. "I used to go to Bishop Bell, and football there was really good. There were lots of matches but, to be honest, there was never a sense it was going anywhere."

Forrester, who hails from North London, tells a similar story.

"My old school, St Aloysius, was known as a great footballing school. But you never trained. Players just turned up and played. We did all right, but it wasn't organised."

Both pupils came to Bede's as Sports Scholars, South hailing from Eastbourne. Both are also keen to emphasise that although they love football, sport isn't the be-all and end-all for them.

"I came here for the Football," says Forrester,



"but academically it has totally changed me. My tutor, Mr Chambers, has helped me so much. I came to the conclusion that I wanted to become a physiotherapist because of him and the careers advice here. That never would have happened before."

South concurs.

"I saw school as a bit of a laugh before. I didn't see failure as anything bad. But Miss French, her approach to work, the way she teaches. Teachers like her have changed me – all in good ways."

When asked specifically about Football, it is South who is initially more forthcoming.

"I love playing Football," she says. "I always have. When I came to Bede's I thought I'd do everything sports-wise, but playing for the team has built a real sense of allegiance in me.."

Forrester, who joined the school as a boarder at the start of the Sixth Form, knows how she feels.

"It was really hard at first, but now I really enjoy it. I mean, it's just me and my mum, and she found it difficult. She saw how much I'd grown and prospered though, met people from every corner of the world."

When asked about what inspired her to play girls' Football however, South becomes pensive.

"It's weird. When we won the IFSA one year, we met the England girls' team and John Terry. On one level, that was pretty cool, but in life my role models are people in my family. My mum, my grandparents. The press present footballers and football as if it's all about money, and it shouldn't be."

"It seems to me that the game has lost the innocence it had 50 years ago. It used to be about passion and community, but now it's not. I don't watch it."

"At Bede's though, it still is."

This sense of a Footballing community at the school is something which Forrester is also



keen to emphasise.

"Every year when a new team comes together, you get to know each other, trust each other. I mean, when we won the IFSA National Championship in September, we'd just met as a team but we played really good football. And now, with all the fitness work, the training sessions in Seaford and all the games, everything has really gelled. And we really feel that the school's behind us."

Looking ahead, both captains have ambitions involving the IFSA Boodles cup and more national honours, but in spite of the temptation to play for local or regional teams, both seem somewhat hesitant.

"Sussex wants me to play for them this weekend," says Forrester, "but loyalty to the Bede's team keeps me here."

South is in a similar situation.

"I've been getting scouted," says South, "alongside Sophie Rudge, who now plays for Brighton. The thing is, in girls football it doesn't mean as much."

"It's not that it's sexist exactly. It's just... there isn't the sense of career progression, I suppose."

"What matters more to me, in a weird way," she continues, "is the wall of professional sporting leavers in the sports hall at Bede's. It's almost all men."

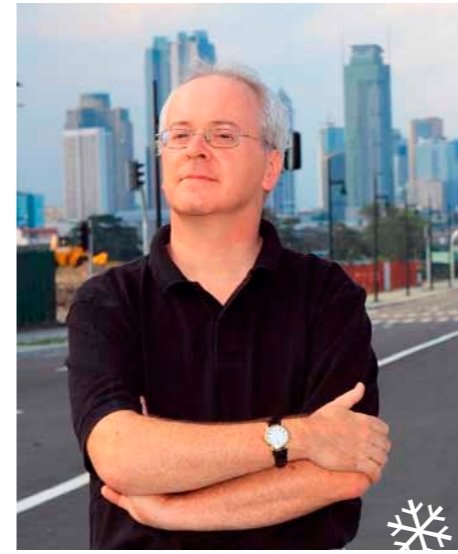
"I would love to be a photo on that wall."



EVENTS FOR NEXT TERM...



Author Andy Mulligan comes to Bedes 8 February 2013



Bede's is delighted to be welcoming author Andy Mulligan on 8 February. Andy's new book *Trash* is currently being made into a movie for release in 2013, with Richard Curtis delivering the screenplay, and Stephen Daldry directing.

Hailed by the Times as 'outstanding ... exceptionally satisfying', *Trash* is first and foremost a thriller. It tells the story of three dumpsite boys and an astonishing discovery they make amongst the city's refuse. Smart enough to know they have something truly special - truly life-changing - they try to stay one step ahead of a vengeful police force out to silence them.

The novel shifts rapidly from the squalid slums of a third-world city to its prisons and graveyards.

Andy is going to host a Q&A for Year 9 pupils, a media workshop with our 6th form students and then an evening talk with a reading from *Trash* open to parents and pupils.

Young Person's Question Time at the House of Commons 17 January 2013

Bede's is hosting A Level students from schools around Wealden and further afield at the House of Parliament in February.

Attendees will ask questions and debate with political figures including Baroness Neuberger, Stephen Lloyd MP, Baroness Whitaker and Charles Hendry MP.

The debate will be chaired by Charles de Chassiron, former Ambassador to Estonia and Director of Protocol and Vice-Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps.

Schools attending include St Leonards-Mayfield School, Uplands Community College, Michael Hall School and Heathfield Community College.



In this end of term mailing you should find a copy of the Bede's Book. This is a new publication which is going to come out on an annual basis.

We hope you will find it to be a useful reference point for all sorts of information about the school, with names of staff, pupils, job titles and contact details.

The Bede's Book will be circulated to all pupils, staff, Governors and parents and will be published in the Autumn Term each year.

If there is other information that you would like to see in this publication please let us know through school.office@bedes.org

