

Meopham Monthly



Cover Art by Laura Cooke

Meopham School Student Magazine
Issue 30: MAY 2025



Welcome

Welcome to the May issue of The Meopham Monthly. This issue features updates and pictures from the latest events around school, reviews, artwork, short stories and poetry by the inspirational Pat Roberts.

If you would like to submit a short story, article, poem, photos or anything else for our future issues, please contact the team at MSS-magazine@swale.at or come along on a Thursday lunchtime in to EN4.

We hope you enjoy this issue!



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With thanks to everyone who contributed this month:

Nshira Ansah (Yr9)
Mia Colledge (Yr9)
Gracie Cooke (Yr9)
Laura Cooke (Yr10)
Darcy Cooper (Yr10)
Charlie Dalton (Yr7)
Dilpreet Dhesi (Yr9)
Isla Eloie (Yr7)
Charlotte Gorton (Yr9)
James Holden (Yr7)
Jack Hollis (Yr9)
DG Kneif (Yr7)

Amelia McShane (Yr10)
Mr McQuillan
Mrs Nicolaou
Sia Palmer(Yr8)
Pat Roberts
Amelia Rogers (Yr9)
Mr Savory
Miss Slingsby
Molly Turner (Yr7)
Mrs Wahab
Mrs Williamson

Comedy Corner

x

HA!
HA!

MORE!
MORE!

Why did the scarecrow win an award?

Because he was outstanding in his field.

What kind of tea is hard to swallow?
Reali-tea.

How does NASA organise a party?
They planet.

So, there is a police investigation. A man brings a big rock to the investigation. The detective said: "Why did you bring a rock?" The man replied: "You said to bring concrete evidence."

RIP boiling water.
You will be mist.

HA!
HA!

Bravo!

Globe Theatre Trip

**By: Darcy Cooper &
Amelia McShane (Year 10)**

On Friday the 28th of March, a group of Year 10 students went on a school trip to the Globe Theatre to see Shakespeare's 'Macbeth.' They had previously been studying this in their English lessons so it was a great opportunity to see it live, especially with the upcoming mock examinations!



The students made their way to the Globe Theatre via coach and were all very excited for what was to come, with it being many students' first time visiting the Globe. They soon arrived, got seated promptly and patiently waited for the play to begin!

All of the students were engaged with the fun-filled play. Several of the students were stunned at the witches' unexpected acrobatic skills that were performed on stage. Molly in Year 10 stated that: "It was an unbelievable experience and it was amazing to learn how actors express themselves on the stage."

Overall, it was a great way for the year 10 students to get a deeper understanding of the storyline, characterisation and key themes of 'Macbeth'!



Mr McQuillan's Musings

Spring has sprung!

Spring is my favourite season because it is the Goldilocks season: not too hot and not too cold (this is also why Autumn comes a close second, for me).

After a long cold winter, there is something very uplifting about seeing the days getting longer and warmer, the trees showing their blossom and the plants starting to grow again.

Apparently, Spring was known as 'Lent' in old English. This word meant 'Lengthen' which it is thought referred to the idea that the days were literally lengthening. From the 14th Century onwards the season became known as 'Springing time' - a reference to plants springing back to life. This was then shortened to Spring-time and finally the word Spring we use today.

Knowing the history of, and where the everyday words we use come from is known as etymology. Studying the history of words can give us a lot of information about how our society has developed and changed over the years.

For example, in the 19th Century lots of new words entered the English language from India - words like Pyjamas - which means 'leg-covering' in Hindi, and the colour Khaki - which comes from the Urdu word meaning dusty. These words entered the language because there was a growing interest and interaction with Indian culture and history at this time.



Continued...

Going back even further - a lot of the language we use is from the Norman French or Saxon languages. Most words we think of as being 'posh' come from the Normans (who were the new rulers of England after 1066) Many of the more basic words we use come from the Saxons, who were downgraded and ruled over after the Norman conquest - and so then seen as not 'posh'.

Compare the Saxon word we use for 'door' and the Norman word 'portal' for the same thing. or the Saxon derived word 'water' compared to the Norman word 'aquatic', and finally the Saxon word 'buy' compared to the posher sounding 'purchase'.

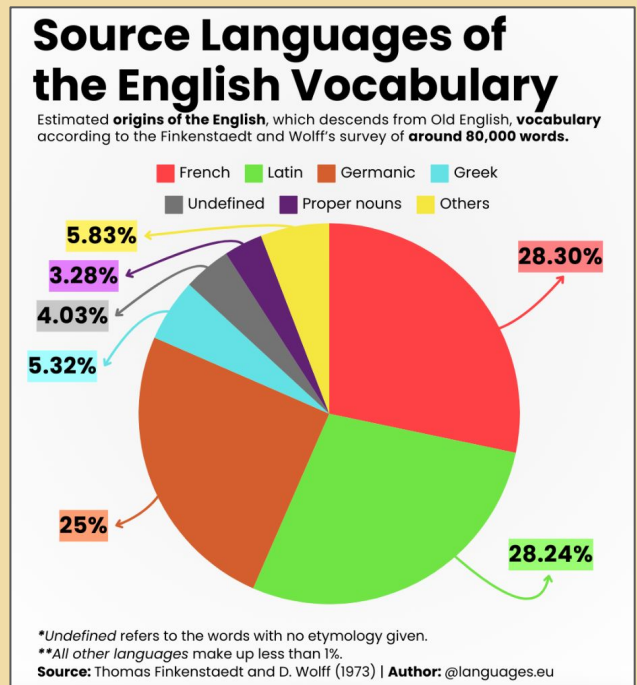
Going back even further - the Romans left a mark on England that can still be seen today in the place names we still use - for example any place ending in Chester had a Roman army camp or fort - so we know the Roman army was based locally in Rochester.

Even our surnames have interesting word histories; Last names can be derived from occupations (e.g. Smith, Thatcher), locations (e.g. Hill and Marsh), personal characteristics (e.g., Young, Short), or our father (e.g., Willson, Johnson). Many of these English names were given so they could collect tax from the right person in the village during medieval times.

Some other last names relate to religious meanings - for example the most popular surname in Nigeria is Chukwu, which means 'God' in the Igbo language, and Singh, which means 'Lion' in the Sikh religion.

For my surname - Mc means 'Son of' - so McQuillan is an Irish name meaning 'Son of Huguelin' - The McQuillans were 'Lords of the Route' in Ireland, and even had a castle. (it is still there, but derelict now)

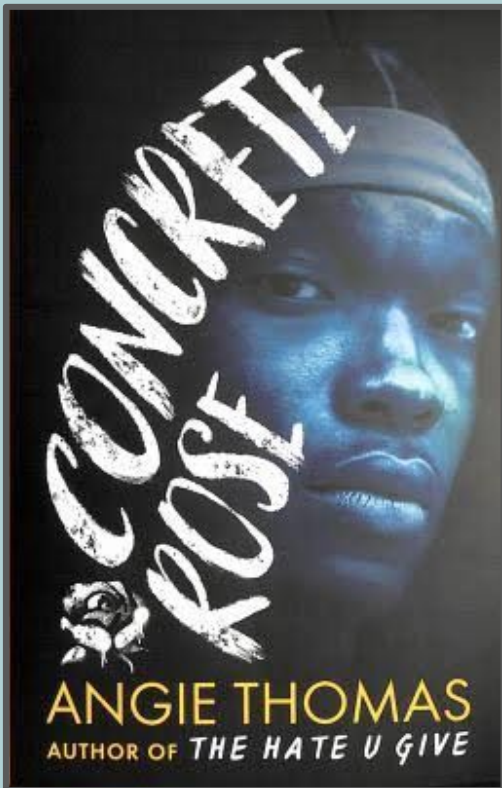
There are lots of free websites where you can find out about family names and their histories - why not do some research about yours?



Concrete Rose

By Angie Thomas

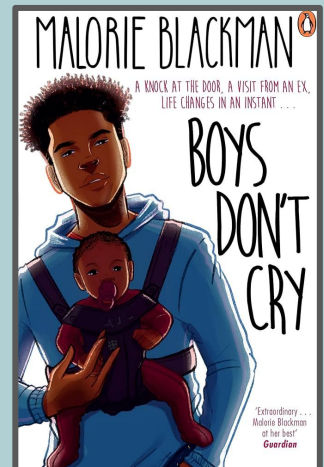
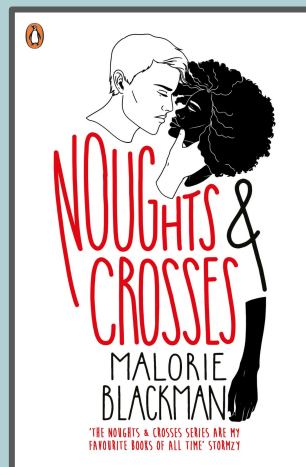
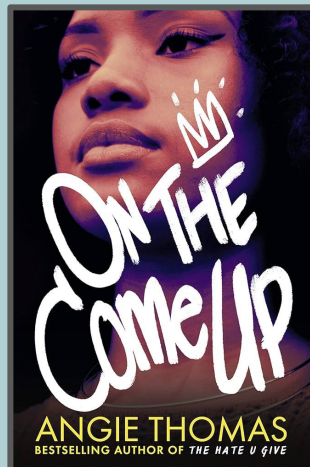
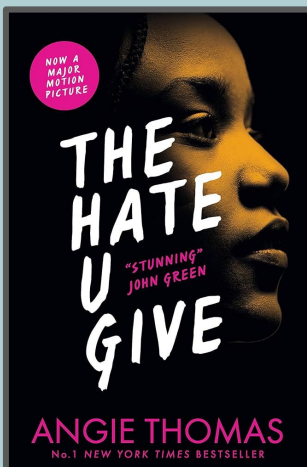
**Book Review by:
Nshira Ansah (Yr9)**



If there's one thing that 17 year-old Maverick Carter knows, is that a real man takes care of his family. After finding out that he's a father, Mav decides to help out the only way he knows how: Selling drugs for the King Lords. With this money, he's also able to help his mother, who works two jobs while his father is in prison. The ultimate meaning of Concrete Rose is that it is a metaphor for all those that grew or are growing up in a tough environment or situation, but still find that strength and courage to get through it with adversity to thrive and succeed.

I highly recommend this book to all years because if you love books which talk about racial inequality and rights then you will love this!

If you liked that, you might like...



FC Mobile 25

Game Review by:
James Holden (Yr7)

Play football as real footballers!

Score, pass, tackle and celebrate as players like Jude Bellingham and older players like Pele and David Beckham.

Win Leagues, build a lineup and sell players.

Features 690+ teams and over 30 leagues.



Hidden in a Plain Sight - Part 2

That was when the idea popped into my head. I was going to sneak out...

The next morning, I woke up and thought of the plan I had made. I took off my visible pyjamas and replaced them with my only invisible clothes that I wore when the accident happened. I was surprised they still fit me because they were starting to get small. I looked into the mirror in my room. I stood there for a few seconds, gazing at the image. I longed to be able to see myself but it just wasn't possible. Although I could picture what I looked like in my mind, no one would be able to see me. If I could change that I would.

I went downstairs and into the kitchen. My mum was singing to herself while baking some banana bread. It was in the oven. My mouth watered as the heavenly scent slowly drifted towards me and I was tempted to take a piece out of the oven. Banana bread was my favourite and the best part was the smell. It reminded me of clear blue skies on a summer day... and a racecar. The memory swirled around in my mind and I remembered the pained cries of Sarah. I suddenly jolted back to the present and my mind focused on the plan I had made. Luckily, my mum was singing so loudly to herself I was able to sneak out into the garden without her noticing. The plan had begun.

I softly shut the door, turning the handle slowly to avoid creaking. I carefully slid on my blue crocs from last summer and tiptoed through the garden, avoiding the thorns that had dropped from the white rose bush that grew on a spiral on my house wall. Petals had scattered on the grass, making it hard to see the thorns that lay in wait underneath. My crocs were thin and worn so they wouldn't protect me from the sharp thorns. Along with the fresh scent of the breeze that blew through my hair, I smelt the comforting scent of the snow-white roses. Suddenly, a voice startled me. I thought it was my mum but the young, soft, female voice was too sweet and delicate to be hers. I listened to the gentle humming but couldn't figure out who it was. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't piece it together. Last summer the house had been put up for sale. Could it possibly be a new neighbour?

I stood on my tiptoes trying to catch a glimpse of who was over the fence but my head hit a tree branch. Crestfallen, I scanned the garden for something I could stand on. Suddenly, an idea came to me. I could climb the tree.

continued...

**A Short Story by:
Isla Eloie and Molly Turner (Year 7)**

I always watched films that have people climbing trees in them. They make it look easy, but trust me, it's not. Sadly, I learnt the hard way. I slipped off my crocs and tried to find a reachable branch to climb on. I wrapped my arms and legs around the trunk like a koala but was unsuccessful; I ended up sliding down with a few bumps and bruises. When I finally reached the top of the tree I clambered around for a while until I found a branch that was strong enough to hold my weight on its own and went over into the next garden.

However, I soon realised that there was something strange about that specific branch. There was a large thick rope that was wrapped tightly around it. The rope looked old and worn with a little bit of fraying but it was still sturdy enough to hold whatever it was attached to. The knot looked so complex I couldn't even figure out how it might have been tied. To me it just looked like a bunch of twiddles and twists. I looked over the branch and that's when I saw what was attached to it on the other side. I wasn't really expecting it, but attached to the rope was a swing and sat on it was a girl.

She looked about my age. As she swung back and forth, I was mesmerised by her long golden locks that swung in time with her. My stomach flipped for a second. She looked so beautiful sitting there and her voice was so sweet that I climbed along the branch a bit more to catch a better glimpse of her. I was about to touch her glossy hair but I quickly pulled myself away from the idea. Suddenly, she stopped swinging and stared directly at me. It was almost like she was gazing through my soul as if her blank blue eyes never met mine.

"I know you're there." she said. Her voice was soft and sweet. Her words echoed through my head and I tried to figure out how she managed to find me.

"Y-You can see me?" I replied shakily.

"No I'm afraid, I'm blind."

Later, I found out her name was Cara and she moved next door just a few months ago. I continued to visit her every couple of days. I'm so thankful my mum hasn't found out yet and I hope she never will. Cara was my only and best friend. I can't express how grateful I am to have a friend who won't judge and bully me for being the way I am. Although she didn't know, I didn't plan on telling her anytime soon. Every time I sneak back into the house, I always felt a tingling sensation in my stomach. I think I am falling in love.

Gallery



Year 7 DT projects

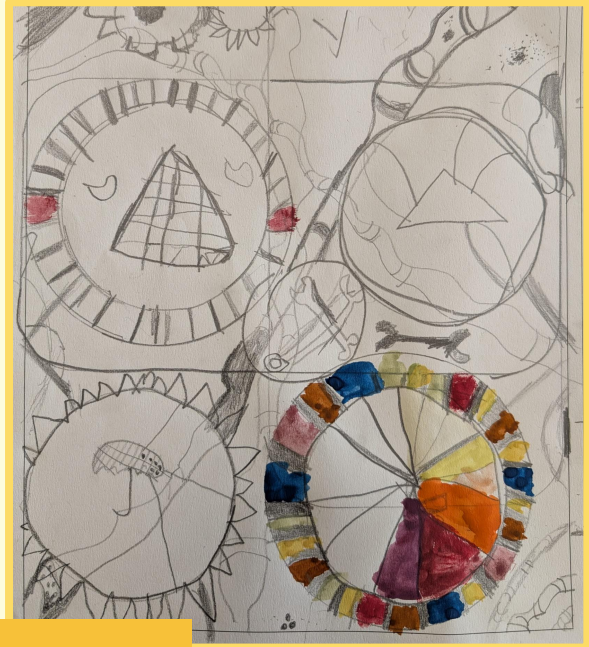
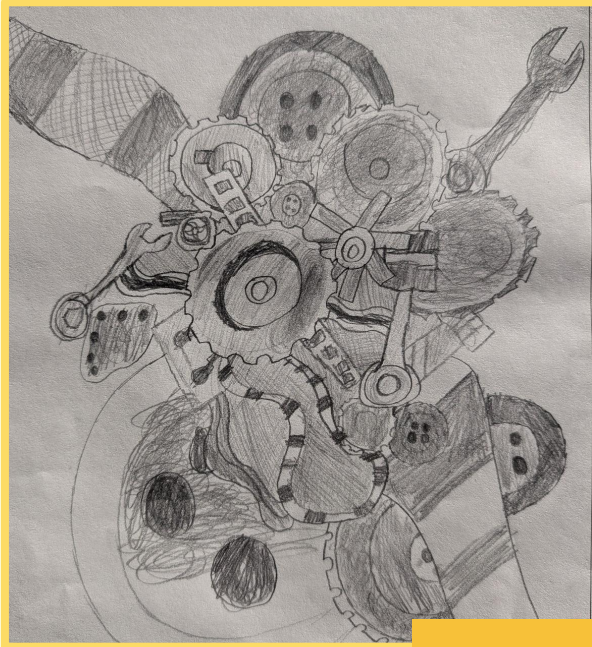


Thank you to Miss Slingsby for sharing this work.

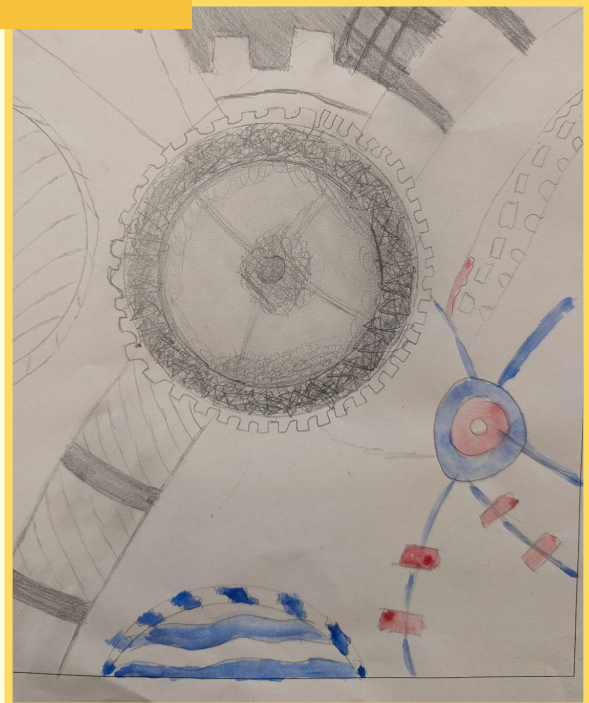
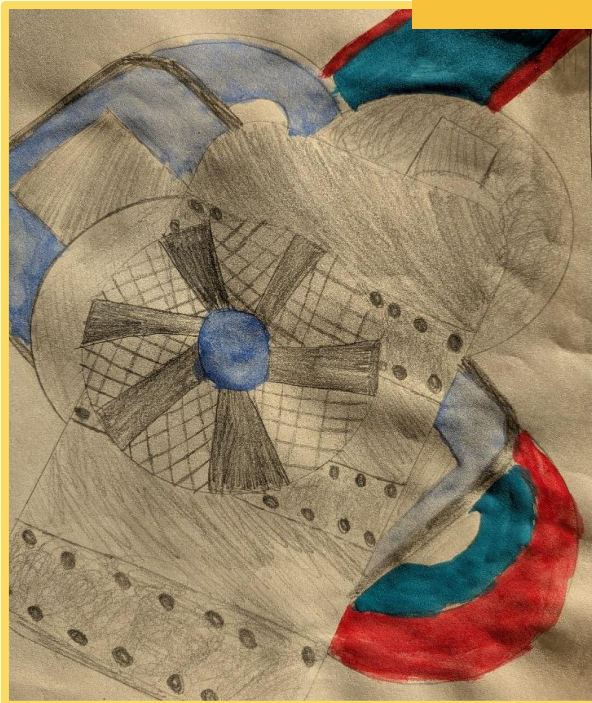
Gallery

Riley Boyd, Millie Gadd and Kian Blake have all recently demonstrated effective use of line and tone to represent a range of mechanical objects using a range of media.

Well done to all my Year 8 students who have enjoyed learning how to represent a range of shapes and line to appear more abstract like the artist Eduardo Paolozzi.



Year 8 artwork



Thank you to Mrs Nicolaou for sharing this work.

Death at Dinner

Part 3

The air hung heavy with tension as the room remained deathly silent. Each face bore the weight of suspicion, eyes darting from one person to another, searching for cracks in facades. Ron stood motionless, his fists still clenched, his gaze locked on Beetle's lifeless form. Vengeance coursed through his veins, but so did a chilling sense of betrayal. Someone in this room was responsible, and they were among them, breathing the same air, pretending to mourn.

Diane's voice cut through the silence. "We need to examine the grounds—every inch of this estate. Whoever did this knows these halls well." Her eyes flicked to Ophelia, whose expression faltered, her delicate mask of composure slipping for a brief moment.

"We should start with the servant quarters," Bailey suggested, her voice devoid of emotion. "It's the least conspicuous place to hide... or to plan."

Ophelia's head snapped up, her eyes blazing. "Are you suggesting one of my staff—"

"I'm not suggesting anything," Bailey interrupted smoothly. "But secrets don't keep to themselves, Duchess. And neither do murderers."

A chill danced through the room. Weasel's shoulders sagged, his grief-stricken face becoming more pale by the second. "We're all suspects then?" His voice trembled, the fury from earlier reduced to a whisper.

"Until we find the truth, yes." Diane's words were as cold as the stone walls surrounding them. "And make no mistake, we will find it."

Bailey's gaze lingered on Diane a moment longer than necessary, curiosity flashing across his features before vanishing. "We should begin now. The longer we wait, the colder the trail becomes."

They dispersed, tension crackling like static as pairs formed reluctantly. Bailey took charge of the study, inspecting every inch of the room where the blood-streaked handkerchief had been discovered. Her fingers traced the edge of the desk, lingering on a groove too deep to be a scratch. It was deliberate, almost as if someone had pressed something into the wood, something sharp.

Meanwhile, Ron wandered the corridors, memories of stolen whispers and fleeting touches haunting him. He could still hear Beetle's laughter echoing softly, see the shy smile that never failed to ignite warmth in his chest. But those memories now carried the sting of loss, a cruel reminder that someone had stolen his future.

continued...

A Mystery Story by: Amelia R & Dilpreet D (Year 9)

A movement caught his eye. Ophelia, gliding down the hallway, her movements hurried, almost frantic. He followed her, his footsteps silent, his heart pounding. She slipped into a room, the door clicking shut behind her. Ron crept closer, pressing his ear to the door, straining to hear.

Muffled voices. Urgent, low, and panicked. He couldn't make out the words, but the tone was unmistakable. Someone was afraid, terrified, even.

He leaned in, his heart racing as he caught a name. A name that sent ice through his veins.

Beetle.

Ron staggered back, his mind reeling. Why would Ophelia be whispering about Beetle? Why would she sound so guilty?

He stumbled down the corridor, the shadows seeming to stretch and twist around him. Everything he knew, everything he trusted, felt like it was crumbling.

Was the enemy closer than he ever realised?

As the clock struck midnight, its chimes echoing ominously through the halls, one thing was certain: no one could be trusted. Not even those who loved him?

- **Why was Ophelia whispering Beetle's name behind closed doors and who was she speaking to?**
- **Is Ron letting grief cloud his judgment or is he finally beginning to see the truth?**
- **Why did Bailey focus so quickly on the servant quarters and what was she really hoping to find?**
- **And if no one can be trusted... then who's hunting who?**

These questions demand answers. But in the next part, will the truth finally surface or will it slip deeper into the shadows?



VR Games Review

By: DG Kneif (Year 7)

Gorilla Tag is a game about parkour and socialisation. The aim of the game is simple: to tag everyone!



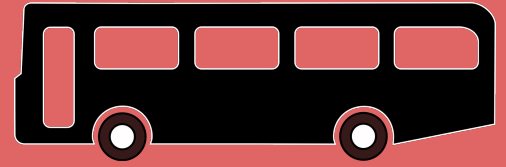
Animal Company is a popular virtual reality game created by MonkeMonkey and other developers from Spatial and Wooster Games, inspired by Gorilla Tag and Lethal Company. It's a cooperative horror game where players explore various locations, avoid monsters, and collect valuable items to sell for money.



Meta Quest 3S features the same mixed reality experience as Quest 3, with 4.5 times the resolution and colour compared to Quest 2. Quest 3S includes a spacer for your glasses if you need them. If you want custom prescription lenses, learn more about Zenni MR prescription lenses.



Bus Rally News for May 2025



By: Charlie Dalton (Year 7)

Saturday 3rd May until Monday 5th May:
Llandudno Transport show, located in
Bodafon Fields, Llandudno, North Wales



Sunday 18th May: Essex bus day at the
museum of power which is in Maldon,
Essex. The timings are 10am until 4pm. It
is all about Essex buses and coaches.



Sunday 25th May: Oxford Bus Museum
Ernie's Retro wheels classic bus day in
Oxford and there are free bus rides and
the timings are between 12:15 and
2:15pm.



Tuesday 27th May until Friday 30th May:
Weekday Opening of the trolleybus
museum at sandtoft Lincolnshire.



Review

With thanks to anyone who joined the Heritage Transport Show on Saturday 5th April 2025 and took the X25 from Gravesend to Detling showground. I traveled by 1st Bus Stop X25 from Gravesend. The bus was FJ57 CZA 1st Bus Stop swoop. There will be another heritage transport show coming on Saturday 11th April 2026. Last year on Saturday 6th April 2024, I took the 1st Bus Stop X24 from Bluewater. The bus was BU51 TOP (LJ04 YWZ) Volvo B7TL ALX400 EX Arriva London VLA70.



Birthstones



By: Sia Palmer (Year 8)

Hello! Welcome to the Birthstones page where I tell you what each birthstone is for each month in the year. This month, I will be focusing on May's two birthstones: Emerald and Agate.

Emerald

This gorgeous green gem is known for symbolising peace, loyalty and new beginnings. Some call it 'The tears of God' or the 'Jewels of Kings'. Legend says that it has the ability to foresee the truth.



Agate

This dreamy crystal is known for its beautiful swirls and lines engraved in it from many years of production in a humid environment. Agates are seen to provide emotional balance and a good mindset. In Persian tradition, magicians burnt agate to ward off storms, using it as a protective charm.

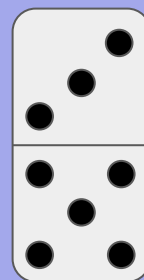
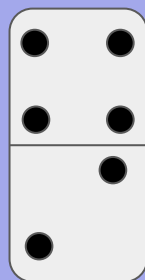
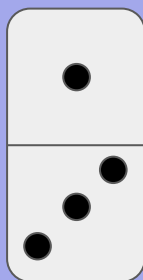
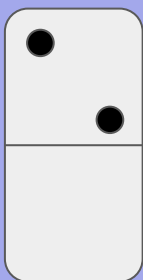


PUZZLE TIME!

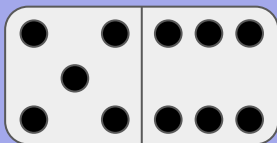
By: Mia Colledge,
Charlotte Gorton &
Gracie Cooke (Year 9)

Can you find the missing domino?

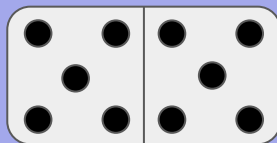
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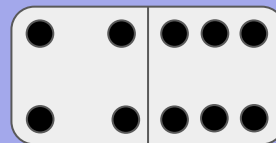
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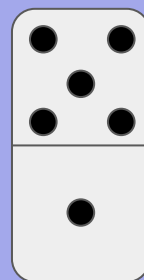
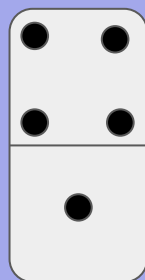
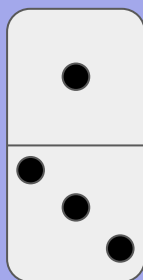
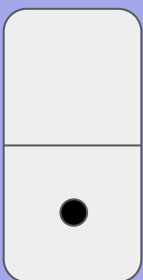
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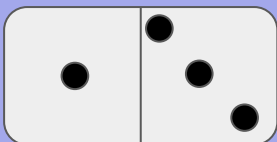
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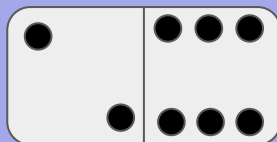
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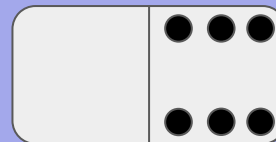
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C



Last issue answers:

Boggle: We found 137 words. How many did you find?

Pat's Poems

Lipogram: a piece of writing from which all words containing a particular letter have been deliberately omitted.

Can you guess which common letter is missing from this poem?

Miss You Now

"You'll miss them when they've left sir,
You will hear their voices loud and clear,
You will miss their amusing, trying ways,
Their cheeky responses and their ability
to turn a deaf ear.

You'll think about them sometimes
and wonder how they've done.
You will have formed your own opinions
about what jobs or careers they should
take.

And in the years to come -
you could be looking at their son!"

Pat Roberts has worked as a cleaner at Meopham School
for over 20 years! She is also a keen poet.

If you have a poem or any other contribution for the magazine, hand it in to your English teacher or Mrs Williamson, or come along on a Thursday lunchtime to EN4.