

Meopham Monthly



Cover Art by K (Year 9)

Meopham School Student Magazine
Issue 32: JULY 2025



Welcome

Welcome to the last issue of the year, packed with reviews, photos, history, sport, poetry, stories and artwork! Thank you to all of our amazing contributors this year, from year 7 to 13 and all of our staff - YOU ARE AWESOME!

If you would like to submit a short story, article, poem, photos or anything else for next year's issues, please speak to Mrs Williamson, contact the team at MSS-magazine@swale.at or come along on a Thursday lunchtime to EN4.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

Meopham School Values

TENACITY RESPECT UNITY EXCELLENCE

T **Tenacity** - Try your hardest

R **Respect** - Respect comes first

U **Unity** - Always be ready to listen and help

E **Excellence** - Make the right choices

Contents

Welcome and News	2
Contents and Contributors	3
Pig Heart Boy Trip review	4
Mr McQuillan's Musings	5
Historical Events in July	6
Birthstones	7
Film and Game Reviews	8-10
Sports Day and Football	11
Art Exhibition Photos	12
Sports Day Photos	13
Hidden in Plain Sight - part 4	14
A Mystery of a Night Bus	15
Football Heroes	16-17
Death at Dinner- part 5	18-19
Buses Monthly Update	20-21
Poetry Corner	22-24

With thanks to everyone who contributed this month:

Evie B (Yr9)
Archie B (Yr9)
Charlie C (Yr9)
Charlie D (Yr7)
Dilpreet D (Yr9)
Isla E (Yr7)
James H (Yr7)
Will H (Yr7)
Maciej J (Yr7)
Jack H (Yr9)
Sienna H (Yr9)
Ms Kesby
DG K (Yr7)

Albie M (Yr7)
K M (Yr9)
Kyle O (Yr7)
Mr McQuillan
Mrs Morgan
Vesta N (Yr9)
Sia P (Yr8)
Pat Roberts
Amelia R (Yr9)
Archie S (Yr9)
Cameron S (Yr10)
Molly T (Yr7)
Mrs Vincent
Mrs Williamson

Pig Heart Boy trip

By: Charlie D (Year 7)

On the Friday 6th June 2025, after Term 6 started, a group of Year 7 students went to the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury to watch the play version of Pig Heart Boy. During TAC Time, we went to the Quad to take the register, then we got on the coach and we drove off from Meopham to Canterbury. The coach parked near the bus station and we walked to the theatre from there, past the cathedral and through the streets of the city! The show was very funny and fun, and the theatre was packed with other schools, including primary and secondary schools like us.

The original novel of Pig Heart Boy was by Malorie Blackman and adapted by Winsome Pinnock. In the theatre, we saw the pig heart boy doing scanning like a hospital X-ray. When the teacher was teaching maths, the boy did act like a pig. The doctor replaced the patient's heart and put the pig heart in him.

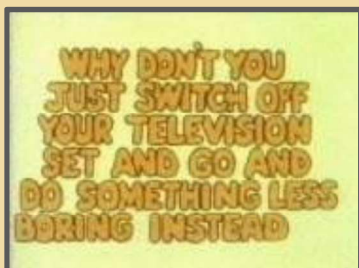
All our year 7s enjoyed It! Overall, we found it very nice seeing the theatre, with comfortable seating, and the show we watched was funny!



Mr McQuillan's Musings

Whenever I mention that teachers work long hours during term time, my friends always tell me 'yes, but you get all of those holidays' - and it is true, that just like our students, unsurprisingly, teachers love the summer holidays!

This is not just because it gives us time to relax and spend time with family and friends, but also because it gives us space to plan and prepare for the new school year, as well as reflect on what has gone well in our lessons this year, and what we might change. Teachers never actually get all of their holidays - there is always some planning, marking or preparation to do - but I admit that the lie-ins are one part of the job I really like. Personally though, I sometime find the longer holiday boring - after a few weeks of winding down, reading and doing a bit of gardening, or decorating, I start to get bored and miss the busyness and buzz of being in school.



When I was younger there was a programme on TV during the school holidays called 'Why Don't You?' and the theme tune used to say 'Why don't you turn off your TV set and go out and do something less boring instead?' My brother, sister and I would complain to our mum 'we are soooo boooooored', to which the response was always 'only boring people get bored - go and do something more interesting'.

Things have changed a lot since the 1980s - families don't gather around the TV as much anymore (unless it's a big news event) and most young people tend to access social media and films through their mobile phones. I am not a Luddite (look it up) as I think mobile technology has made our lives easier in so many ways - but I do think we have lost something too; we notice our surroundings a lot less and don't speak to each other as much as we are too focused on the bit of plastic and glass in our hands.

Two things that really made me think about this: I went to Rome on a break and saw the Trevi fountain. There were hundreds of tourists using their phones to take a photo and then walk away looking at it - rather than actually standing to admire one of the greatest and most famous sculptures in the world.



Secondly, I lived in Birmingham for many years, a city with more canals than Venice. A lady walked down the steps in the city centre and straight into the canal - because she was glued to her phone. She just didn't notice the murky depths of the canal in front of her. Fortunately, the locals helped her out of the water, but of course the CCTV footage made it onto Youtube.



So, my advice to students and teachers alike this summer holiday is to use your phone and social media to plan some great days out, book a ticket to somewhere new, or buy a book to read; but don't spend all of your time just gawping at a screen. Let's be honest, how many hours of Tik-Tok reels, memes or pictures on Instagram do we really need? Whether you are going on holiday to Greece, caravanning in Wales or just visiting Margate - put your phone down, talk to people, look around. You will love your summer holiday even more!

Historical Events that Happened in July

By: Archie B (Year 9)

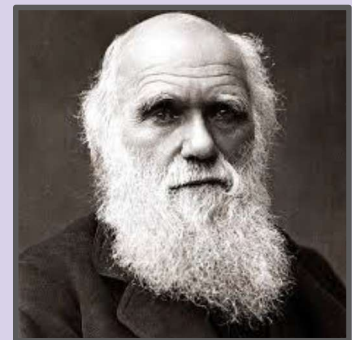
On 28th July 1540, Henry VIII had Thomas Cromwell beheaded, his chief minister who had loyally served Henry for 6 years. He was beheaded for treason and heresy, primarily because Henry thought Anne of Cleves was much less pretty than in the paintings, and it was Thomas who got Henry to marry her.



On 31 July 1667, the second Anglo-Dutch war ended after the Dutch destroyed the English fleet at the raid of Medway. The invasion of the Spanish Netherlands rushed the Dutch to end the war, so England got control of the Dutch American possessions but relaxed navigation laws and returned Dutch South American colonies it had taken in the war.



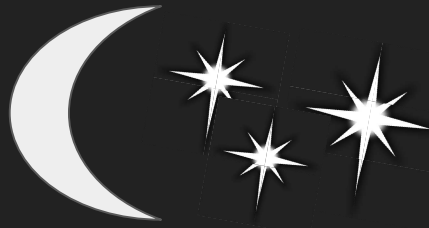
On 1 July 1858, Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace sent a joint letter to the Linnean society in London explaining their theory of evolution. This shook the beliefs of Victorian London and outraged the devout Christians of the Church.



On 1 July 1916, the Battle of the Somme began - the bloodiest battles of the Great War, that saw the first use of tanks. Over a million were wounded or killed and although the Entente only pushed 6.2 Miles, the Germans began unrestricted submarine warfare which helped bring America into the conflict. At times, the battle could be heard from London.



Birthstones



By: Sia P (Year 8)

Hello! Welcome to the birthstones page! This is where I write about the history and facts about birthstones. This month's page is about July's birthstones!

Ruby

This daring gem is known to resemble passion and protection. Its vibrant red symbolises the sun and has been called the inextinguishable flame. It is the birthstone for the zodiacs Capricorn and Cancer.

Onyx

The gorgeous birthstone onyx is one of the most ancient crystals. It was used as an amulet in weapons when fighting, but in other cultures it is seen as the 'Bad luck stone': some people thought it would provoke sadness. Although, on the other hand, it is also seen as the best talisman for protection and confidence. How confusing...



Film Review

By: Archie S (Yr 9)

How to Train your Dragon

On the rugged isle of Berk, a Viking boy named Hiccup defies centuries of tradition by befriendng a dragon named Toothless. However, when an ancient threat emerges that endangers both species, dragons and humans must work together and prove that dragons and humans can live together in peace.

This movie is a stunning, shot for shot remake and is so much better than other remakes like those Disney and other companies have made over the recent years. It has an amazing cast of talented actors and has the same director as the animated movies. You should definitely watch this absolute masterpiece while it is still in cinemas.



Game Recommendations

By: Will H (Yr 7)

Animal Company

Animal Company is an adventure game where you can enter any map of your choice and fight monsters easy or hard, mine ores, collect items and more!

Animal Company offers weekly updates every Tuesday, usually always giving new content, or sometimes just bug fixes.

The most recent one includes an event when you first log in, with the whole map bugging. You then go into a portal that turns everything back to normal, but the R.A.M machine fails, causing the huge dam to explode revealing a whole new adventure with new monsters and more!



Update includes:

- 2 new monsters
- lobby revamp
- new broken dam map
- underwater movement
- new teleport gun item
- new portable teleporter item

Game Recommendations

By: Maciej J (Yr 7)

Forsaken

Forsaken is a Roblox that is a horror but not a scary one. Forsaken includes various Roblox hackers like 1x1x1x1, c00lkidd and John Doe. You can also earn currency which you can buy a lot of skins and emotes and characters you can also get survivors (the characters that get money for doing tasks and to remove time).



Survivors

These are the main survivors in the game. The survivors have different perks like Chance has a chance for a speed boost, Builderman has an ability to build turrets to defend people and Elliot has an ability to heal people and to quickly run away.



Natural Disaster Survival (NDS)

By: Kyle O (Year 7)

What is the game about?

Natural Disaster Survival is an old game that is still good to this day and I like to play with friends. The main goal is to survive natural disasters (if you read the title of the game). In this game there are many natural disasters such as: sand storms, meteor showers, acid rain, volcanic eruptions, tornados, fire and more.

How to play

As you are playing, the disasters will happen and if you survive for a period of time you win. In the game there are plenty of different maps that you can play on with some being quite unique, such as the rocket map where you can climb up a quite big ladder to get in the rocket which usually ends up in the water and you would lose.

Top tip

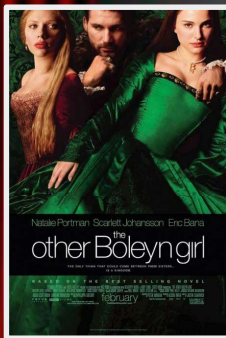
A top tip in the game is to not go near the tornado. And don't think you can go on the dirt on the edge, you will fall through and lose!



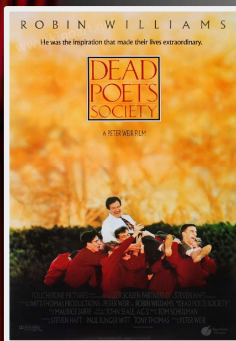
FILM RECOMMENDATIONS



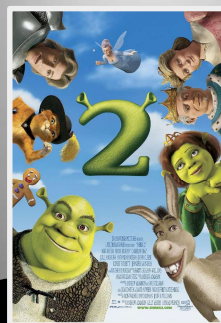
**Year
12/13**



11



9/10



7/8

Recommendations by Evie B (Year 9). If you have a recommendation, or would like to write a review for a future issue, email us at MSS-magazine@swale.at



On Tuesday 24th June 2025, everyone at Meopham School went to the field for our annual Sports Day. We did games like basketball, rounders, volleyball, relay, sack race, long jump, high jump and other PE Games!

In the morning, year 7 and 8 had races around the track. We had lunch early at 11:30 am until 12:30pm. When lunch finished year 7 and 8 did basketball, rounders and volleyball, like I did. The older year groups did running, long jump, and high jump. At the end of the day, the winners from earlier raced against each other.

Thank you to the Mr Knight who played the music and did the announcements, and most of all to the PE Department who organised and supported this event.

Year 9 Football Success

By: Charlie C (Year 9)

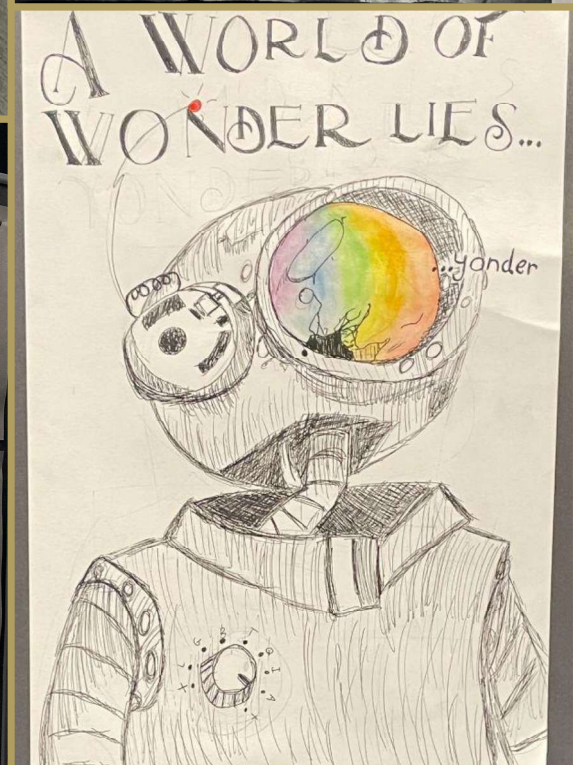
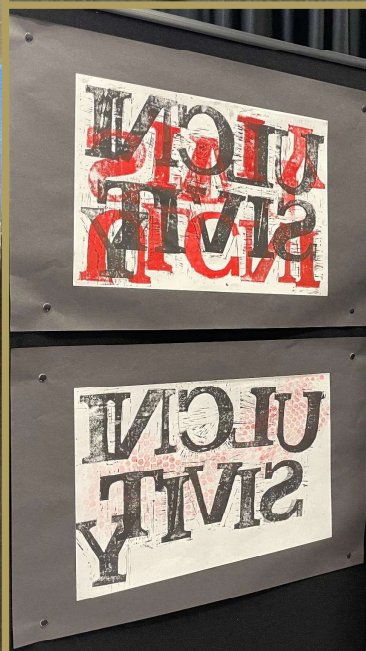
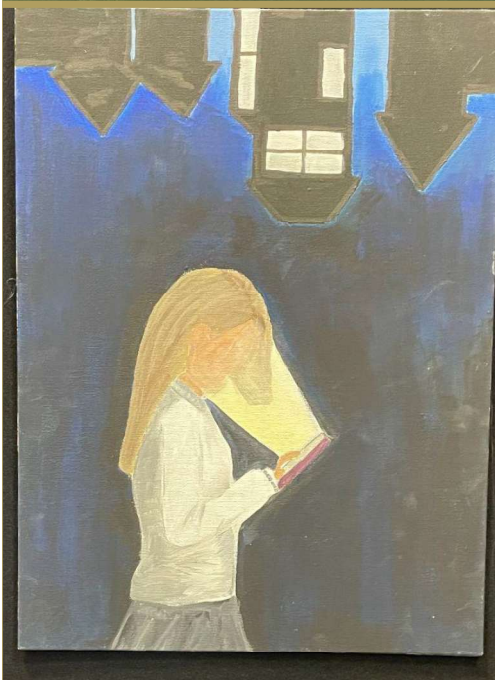
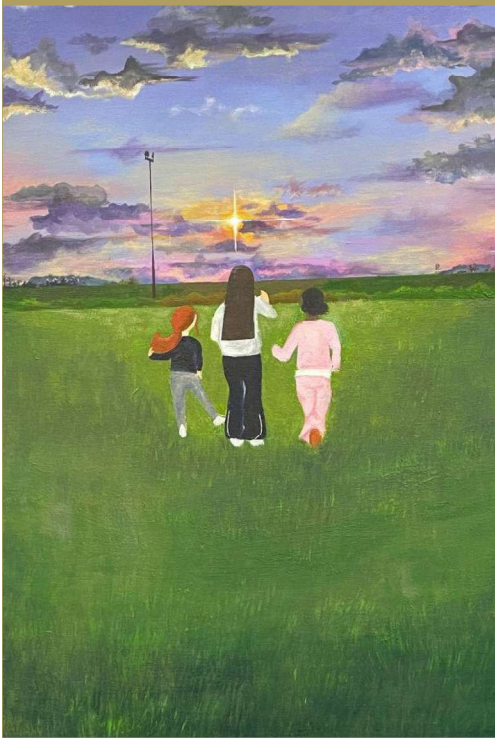
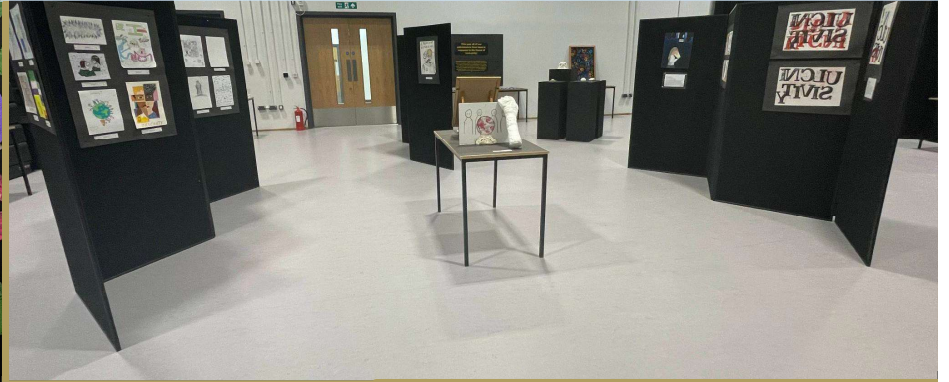
Mr Whittle took the Year 9 boys football team to success as they faced the team from NTC. Meopham beat NTC 5-1 in a league game for last season!

Mr Whittle's unstoppable team:

- ★ Gk: Ethan F
- ★ Rb: Frank M
- ★ Lb: Will C
- ★ Cb: Kenzo A
- ★ Rm : Rojus P
- ★ Lm: Will S
- ★ Cm: Charlie A
- ★ Cm: Zac B
- ★ Cam: Finley W
- ★ St: Charlie Cooper
- ★ St: Teddy-Joe B



ART EXHIBITION - 'Inclusivity'



SPORTS DAY



Hidden in Plain Sight - Part 4

A Short Story by: Isla E and Molly T
(Year 7)

Cara blurted out the news I never thought I would hear. "I brought you here to tell you some news." She grinned, gripping my hands tightly, "I'm getting my eyes lasered, I will be able to see you!" My smile dropped... the room went deathly silent.

Cara's blue eyes stared at me for a while until her smile slowly started to fade. "A-Aren't you happy?" she asked stunned, sounding a little hurt. I didn't say anything, I was lost for words. I was speechless. What was I meant to say? I wanted to feel happy for her but it felt like a stone had dropped in my stomach and invisible weights settled on my shoulders, making me want to drop to my knees. Tears started to prick my eyes, making my vision go cloudy. Then I did something I wished I hadn't. My hand slowly slipped out of hers and I ran out of the treehouse, leaving Cara desperately trying to grab hold of me as I slid down the ladder. As soon as I scrambled over the fence, that's when I heard her crying and I looked back, she was sobbing at the end of the ladder, calling my name as if she was trying to find me. "I'm sorry, did I do something wrong?" she blurted out. "You know you can tell me." I paused, had I just lost my only friend.

Later that evening, I was laying in my bed, thinking of what had happened. I was silly to run away but it was as if something inside me seized control and dragged me away. The thought of her getting her eyes lasered made me feel sick. When she gets her eyes lasered, she won't be able to see me. What if she doesn't want to be friends with me anymore? If she found out my hidden secret, would she still like me the way I liked her? ~~Does she even like me that way anyway? I hope so...~~ A part of me wanted to apologise but another part of me didn't feel ready, like I didn't quite forgive her yet. What had she done? Even I don't really know.

How was I meant to fix this? Could I fix this? ~~I guess I did deserve my invisibility.~~

The next day, Cara and I were meant to meet up again (we have a weekly pan). The tricky thing was, if I didn't go, then my chance of staying friends with Cara could potentially be crushed. But what should I say? She means so much to me and if I said sorry, it just wouldn't be a true apology. I stared up, while laying above my duvet, on my bed. My mum always said I can be dramatic - I try my best not to be but I feel as if I am not being like that in this scenario.

I stare. Light fades from my window. I keep on staring. Pitch black. I continue to stare. Light shines in again. My alarm clock rings. I don't bother to stop it. I don't bother to move. The night has passed, and I'm still staring. Then, out of nowhere, a face, a familiar face appears at my window. Cara?

A Mystery of a Night Bus

Chapter 2

**A Mystery Bus Story by:
Charlie D (Year 7)**

When people woke up from the hotel at 3am, they booked plane tickets to China. They checked out of the hotel and went on the bus in the middle of the night, but the roads were packed with traffic.

Everyone shouted “We are late to the flight!”. The bus driver said “Let’s go to another road, because this is chaos.”

The bus was at the motorway and suddenly we slowed down again. Up ahead was a huge accident with a car on fire. There was the AA Man, police, ambulances and fire engines all stopped and so the bus stopped for a while too.

The firefighters put out fire using their fire hose and a fire extinguisher with powder and, when they finished, they put the patient who had crashed the car on to the ambulance and took him to the hospital. The AA Man towed the car, taking it to the service centre.

When the accident was over, the bus driver decided to stop at a motorway service to give people breakfast and fill the bus with diesel. The people ate croissants and other breakfast foods they eat costa coffee and enjoyed it.

When they left the motorway services, the driver stopped at Shell Petrol station. The driver got out of the bus, filled the bus with diesel and he went to Shell Select to pay at pump. Once they left the motorway services, they were driving for an hour until they got to the airport.

They got out of the bus and went to passport controls and through security checks. They waited until boarding, then they got on the plane, putting the suitcases on board too. The plane was ready for take off and the pilot said “Please wear your seatbelt and we will serve food if anyone is hungry.”

When the plane had taken off, it flew up to the sky and took nine hours. During the flight, people enjoyed the flight and they were eating food. When the sky was dark, people slept and could finally relax.

Lionel Messi

By: James H (Year 7)



Lionel Messi is a legendary player, who has won a variety of different trophies and has scored loads of great goals. Messi was born in 24th June 1987 in Rosario in Argentina, making him 38 years old. His salary is 12 million USD. When he was younger, his friends said he will not make it into professional football, but he proved them all wrong as being one of the best footballer in football's history. He has scored a massive 872 goals and has a whopping 384 assists for his clubs (Barcelona, PSG, Inter Miami and Argentina). He has won 46 trophies including: the World Cup, 8 Ballon D'ors, 4 champions leagues, 6 golden boots, 3 FIFA club World Cups and many more.



Erling Haaland

By: Albie M (Year 7)

Erling Braut Haaland is a Norwegian professional footballer who plays as a striker for Premier League club Manchester City and the Norway national team. Considered one of the best players in the world, he is known for his speed, strength, positioning, and finishing inside the box.



- Born: 21 July 2000 (age 24 years), Leeds
- Current teams: Manchester City F.C. (#9 / Forward), Norway national football team
- Dates joined: 2022 (Manchester City F.C.)
- Height: 1.94 m
- Salary: 27.3 million GBP (2025)
- Parents: Alf-Inge Haaland, Gry Maritha Braut
- Nationality: English, Norwegian

Erling Haaland has won a total of 10 trophies. This includes 2 Premier League titles, 1 Champions League, 1 FA Cup, 1 Community Shield, 1 UEFA Super Cup, 1 FIFA Club World Cup, 2 Austrian Bundesliga titles, and 1 Austrian Cup.

Death at Dinner

Part 5 - the end!

The house groaned under the weight of silence. The moment Ophelia vanished, Ron sprang into motion, his pulse pounding like a war drum.

"She's still here," he rasped. "There's nowhere left to run."

Diane, Weasel and Bailey exchanged uneasy glances, but determination was flaring in their eyes. Together they swept through the house, tearing open doors, overturning furniture, searching.

Then—

A creak. Faint, almost imperceptible, but enough.

Weasel stiffened. "Here! The study. There's a door behind the bookshelf!"

Ron rushed over, heart hammering, as Weasel ran his fingers along the edge of the shelf. His touch found a groove, a hidden latch. With a sharp tug the entire bookshelf groaned and swung inward revealing a narrow passage bathed in flickering candlelight.

The air was thick with dust and something metallic: blood.

At the end of the corridor Ophelia stood waiting.

She didn't run. Didn't fight. Just smiled.

"Clever," she murmured. "But too late."

Ron stepped forward, chest heaving. "Too late for what?"

Ophelia tilted her head, the candlelight casting eerie shadows across her face. "To understand."

Diane took a shaking step closer. "Then explain. Why did you kill Beetle?"

A sigh, long and drawn out. "Because he was weak."

Weasel's voice trembled with anger. "Weak? Beetle was the bravest of us."

Ophelia chuckled. "No. He was desperate. He thought he could uncover the truth and survive. But knowledge without power is a death sentence."

Bailey, silent until now, narrowed her eyes. "What did he find?"

Ophelia's smirk faltered. Then, for the first time, her gaze flickered, just for a moment.

Ron saw it. He pressed forward. "Tell us Ophelia. What was Beetle trying to expose?"

A long silence stretched between them before she finally spoke.

"He found the ledger," she said softly.

The room seemed to contract around them.

continued...

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

"The ledger?" Weasel repeated, voice barely above a whisper.

Ophelia gave a slow nod. "The records of the money. The bribes. The people who were paid to keep their mouths shut. The people who disappeared when they didn't." Her lips curved but the smile never reached her eyes. "Our family's wealth wasn't just built on business. It was built on control. Fear. Power. And Beetle, in all his foolishness, thought he could expose that and live."

Ron's stomach twisted. "So you killed him?"

Ophelia exhaled almost disappointed. "Is that all you think he found?"

The question sent a cold shudder down Ron's spine.

Diane took a step back. "What do you mean?"

Ophelia's smile returned, sharper this time. "There were other things. Darker things. Things I'm sure you'd rather not know." She let the words settle, savouring their effect. "But Beetle did know. And that was his mistake."

Ron's mouth went dry. "What things?"

Ophelia's expression turned almost pitying. "If you really want to know," she murmured, "you'll have to keep looking."

The silence stretched, heavy with something unspoken.

Then Weasel moved. Swift and certain, he lunged forward, grabbing Ophelia's wrists and yanking them behind her back. She didn't struggle. Didn't flinch.

Only smiled.

"Enjoy your victory," she whispered. "But remember, some secrets refuse to stay buried."

A shiver ran through Ron. Something in her voice, something deeper than words, made his stomach turn.

As they led her from the passage, the candlelight flickered, then died. The house groaned once more, its shadows stretching long and hungry.

And though Ophelia was caught, her words clung to the air like a curse.

Some secrets refuse to stay buried.

The party is over... or is it?

Find out in the sequel: Hostile Holiday. Coming next school year!

History of Sapphire

SAPPHIRE
brought to you by Arriva

By: Charlie D (Year 7)

In 2014, Arriva started the Sapphire and created a Sapphire enviro 400 for the first Sapphire double decker bus in the UK. In 2016, Arriva Sapphire created Wright Streetlite, Wright Pulsar 1 and Wright Gemini 1 and 2. At 2017, they created an Enviro 400 MMC, with a new Sapphire livery, inspired by Wright Streetlite Hybrid. In 2018, Arriva Sapphire added a Wright Streetlite Hybrid with a new livery. In 2020, Arriva Sapphire created a new livery for all Sapphire buses.



SAPPHIRE
brought to you by Arriva

ARRIVA Sapphire
a **DB** company

2014-2022

2022-Present

Thanet Bus Running Day and Brands Britannia

By Charlie D (Year 7)

There is a Thanet Bus Running Day on Sunday 13th July and they have free bus rides. The location is at Godstone Green and they will drive around everywhere, just like Gravesend and Dartford Heritage Bus Running Day last year on Sunday 13th October 2024.



There is also Brands Britannia on Sunday 31st August 2025. It is all about classic cars, buses and more things. There is a playground for little ones from toddler to 14 and there are go karts for 8+. There is a vintage taxi display, british track parade, brands bus tours, classic car and supercar display, car clubs, special demos and vintage bus display and trade stands. There is free car parking, just like at the South East Bus Festival and the Heritage Transport Show.



Poetry Corner

Death's Embrace

~ By Cameron S (Year 10) ~

Life's tapestry, a woven scene,
Of vibrant hues and moments keen,
Yet shadows lurk, a sombre plight,
Where death's embrace dims all the light.

In every breath, a fleeting trace,
Of mortal coil, time's swift pace,
We build our castles, grand and tall,
But death's decree will claim them all.

The flowers bloom, their colours bright,
A symphony of pure delight,
But petals fade, their beauty gone,
As death's cold hand moves swiftly on.

The mighty oak, with roots so deep,
That shelters dreams while mortals sleep,
Will crumble too, its strength defied,
By death's relentless, endless stride.

The oceans roar, their waves so vast,
A timeless dance that's meant to last,
But even they will meet their fate,
As death reclaims what they create.

We chase our dreams with fervent zeal,
Our hearts ablaze with passions real,
But death's dark veil will intervene,
And steal the treasures we have seen.

The laughter shared, the tears we weep,
The promises we vow to keep,
Are fragile threads, so easily torn,
By death's arrival, sharp as thorn.

Though we may fight with all our might,
Against the darkness of the night,
Death's victory is ever sure,
A truth that we must all endure.

So let us cherish every day,
And find beauty in our stay,
For life's a gift, though tinged with pain,
And death's embrace will come again.

In the face of life's cruel design,
Let kindness be our guiding sign,
For even though death always wins,
Love's light transcends our earthly sins.

Note: Cameron used AI to develop the vocabulary, rhyme and rhythm of his poem.
He typed in his own work, then asked AI to make the vocabulary more sophisticated.

Poetry Corner

I want to write a poem...

~ By Sienna H (Year 9) ~

I want to write a poem that
comes from the seams,
That allows people to follow their dreams
Without feeling unseen.

I want to write a poem that
Teaches anger to cry,
Teaches kids how to try,
And makes a rainbow in the sky.

I want to write a poem that
Is boundless,
That feels free and limitless,
With no pressure to be seen.

I want to write a poem that
Can't fix the world -
But tries,
That stitches up the shattered dreams
With ink and hope and skies,
A poem that doesn't pretend to have answers,
But one that stands and cries.

Pat's Poems

Miss You Now

~ By Pat Roberts ~

"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!"

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.