

News, opinions, short stories, pets, photos and more!

# MEOPHAM MONTHLY

Meopham School's Student Magazine



Cover Art by Maia New

ISSUE 11: MARCH 2023

WORLD  
**BOOK**  
DAY  
ISSUE

# WELCOME

Hello! Welcome to our March issue of Meopham Monthly. This issue we have focused on Meopham's enrichment successes with the new Community Scheme and appreciation of our Student Leaders programme. We have also celebrated World Book Day, with an amazing article on literature by Mr Vilday as well as some intriguing book reviews by students.

If you would like to submit a short story, article, drawing, poem, photos or anything else for our future issues, please get in touch with the team at [MSS-magazine@swale.at](mailto:MSS-magazine@swale.at) or come along on a Thursday lunchtime to 6F1.

**We hope you enjoy this issue!**

**Editor: Robyn Fitzpatrick (Yr 12)**

## NEWS JUST IN!

In this issue, we celebrate the launch of a new COMMUNITY SCHEME, aimed at bringing the local Meopham community together. Find out more on page 5.



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**With thanks to everyone who  
contributed this month:**

**Muhammed Ali-Qamar (Yr7)**

**Nshira Ansah (Yr7)**

**Miss Biscombe**

**Charlie Gannaway (Yr7)**

**Lola Gardner (Yr7)**

**Harry Gower (Yr8)**

**Mrs Greenwood**

**Olivia Hamblyn (Yr7)**

**Mrs Jasnoch**

**Lawrence Kitchen (Yr8)**

**Sienna Lee (Yr7)**

**Lucinda Martin-Cooke (Yr8)**

**Adam Nachyla (Yr7)**

**Maia New (Yr12)**

**Harriett Pritchard (Yr7)**

**Lily Ricketts (Yr13)**

**Amelia Rogers (Yr7)**

**Izzy Stewart (Yr8)**

**Ella Taylor (Yr7)**

**Mr Vilday**

# ST. PATRICK'S DAY

By Charlie Gannaway (Yr7)

St. Patrick's Day, what is it? This is a day where celebrants wear the following three colours: green, white and orange. Now, do these three colours mean anything? Let us find out!

## Where did St. Patrick's Day originate ?

St. Patrick's Day originated in 416 AD by a man who was unsurprisingly nicknamed 'Patrick', however his original name was Maewyn Succat. He was known for bringing Christianity to Ireland.



## Why do celebrants wear green ?

On this day, people wear the colour green to represent the Catholics of Ireland. They may also wear orange, which symbolises the Protestant population, or white, which shows peace between those two religions.

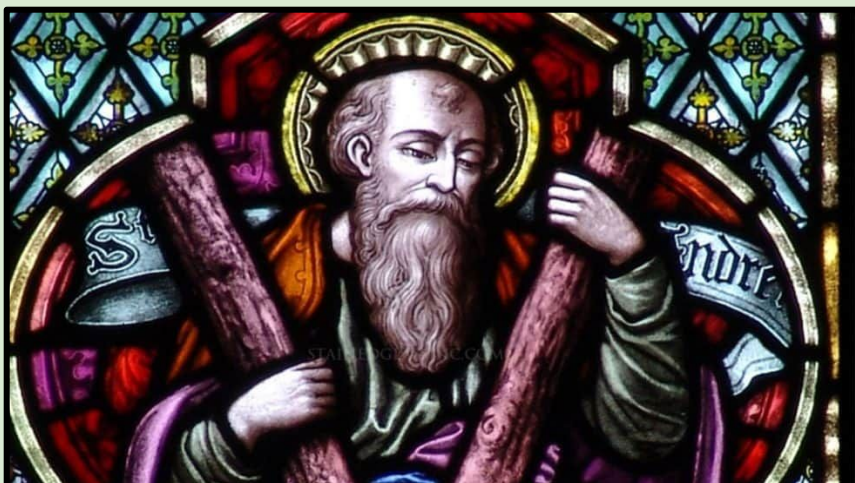
## What actually is St. Patrick's Day ?

This day is the 'Feast Day' of Ireland's patron saint, Patrick.

### KEY FACTS

The real St. Patrick was born in Britain.

The first St. Patrick's Day parade was held in America.



# COMMUNITY SCHEME LAUNCH

By Mrs Greenwood



On Thursday 9th February, we launched the **Meopham School Community Scheme** to the public. Students that are part of a weekly lunchtime club had been using their meetings to plan the launch since before Christmas. Preparing for the launch meant creating a vision for the scheme, then producing leaflets and presentations that shared this with our visitors. Students also took part in listing local companies to be invited and drafting emails that were used to contact businesses from Meopham and the surrounding areas.

The official launch took place after school and was led by Mrs Greenwood and some of our Student Community Leaders, with the support of **Miss Biscombe**. **Otis Hinsley-Kidd, Rhys Marshall, Lucy Hodges and Zackary Mitchell** represented Year 7, while **Tudor Nechita and Travis Kmita** supported the event representing Year 10.

The launch targeted both business owners and local organisations to share our aim. Our aim is: '**to bring together the local community** in a network that benefits all participants, with the school as a central hub of resources and communication. Everybody in our community has something to offer, something to share with others, our students included. We want to give our students the opportunity to contribute to the community and build their character and portfolio for the future at the same time.'

All members of the community that attended the event were extremely enthusiastic about the Scheme and signed up to take part. Local schools, the parish council and the surgery are all keen to be a part of future projects that will benefit our students as well as members of their organisations. We also have interest from businesses in the area to sponsor the Scheme and specific future projects.

If you would like further information about the Scheme, or know a local business or organisation that would like to get involved, please contact Mrs Greenwood at [emily.greenwood@swale.at](mailto:emily.greenwood@swale.at). The club meets on Thursday lunchtimes in Art 3.



# MR VILDAY'S VIEW

## Views from a latter-day Viking

A question I'm often asked in class is 'How do you know all that?' when I've recalled some fact or other about history, geography, science, football, music, or any other topic being discussed.

Part of the answer is simple: reading.

Perhaps the greatest gift I have ever been given was being the guinea pig for my sister in her early dreams of herself being a teacher. She helped me to learn to read at a very early age and before I had started infant school, I was already on to the junior school library.

The more I read, the more I discover, the more I learn. Knowledge is so important in this day and age. Any fool can google something, but there's no point doing that unless you can understand what you are googling.



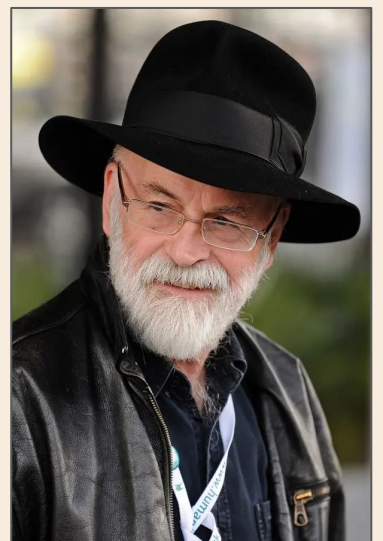
### Enid Blyton

My early reading centred around Enid Blyton, especially the *Secret Seven* and *Famous Five*. I often think the love I have now for exploring the British countryside comes from reading these stories.

Short, simple but entertaining tales. They created for the 5 year old me, a world I wanted to live in with people I wanted to hang around with. Those are still the things I often look for in a book.

### Terry Pratchett

Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* books started out as a parody of fantasy books, but they grew into describing a world that was loosely connected to our planet but not quite. Discworld is a flat planet carried on four giant elephants who stand on the back of a giant turtle swimming through space. The regular characters include a cowardly wizard, witches, a librarian who has turned into an orangutan, a six-foot tall dwarf and a 98-year old barbarian hero. The origins of rock music, marmite, Shakespeare, Greek philosophy, and tourism are all made clear in the funniest way possible.



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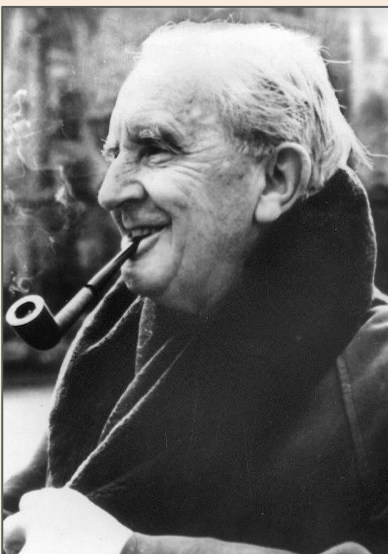
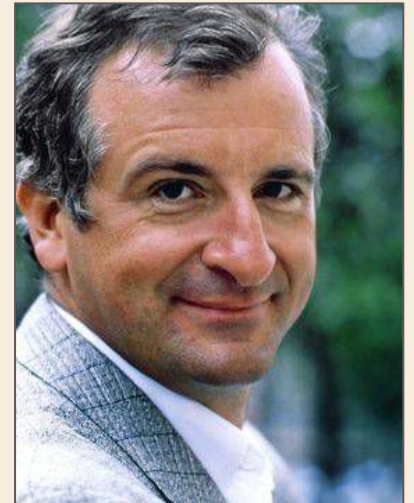
## Sylvia Plath

*The Bell Jar* is one of the most remarkable books I have read. It somehow manages to be immensely sad, shocking and uplifting all at the same time as it charts the journey of a girl going into adulthood. The novel deals with some very serious issues and the effects of mental illness on the main character and while there is a kind of happy ending, there is still a cloud hanging over it.

## Douglas Adams

A perfectly ordinary man wakes up one day to find his house is about to be demolished for a bypass, his best friend is actually an alien from Betelgeuse and to cap it all, the Earth is about to be demolished for an intergalactic bypass. What's not to love about the fantastic five book trilogy, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. It is easily the best story ever to be written after the author slept in a field after a drunken night out.

Douglas Adams is one of the funniest writers I have ever come across. Each book is far too short but to me they make you see perfect sense in an increasingly mad world. And of course, the answer to life, the universe, and everything is obviously 42.



## J.R.R. Tolkien

The master of fantasy writing. *The Lord of the Rings* is the finest book of its genre and one of the most popular books ever written. It is not a story of battles and war but at heart, a tale of courage, faith and love. Tolkien was a perfectionist. The Lord of the Rings was based on a language that he invented and a world that his imagination created. He was an Oxford University professor of language and all the languages he created for his books were properly structured and even now, devoted fans learn them and speak them.

*The Lord of the Rings* is a book I can lose myself in. My imagination can recreate the world that his words describe and, for a short while, I am living in that world. I would love to have the ability to create in that way.



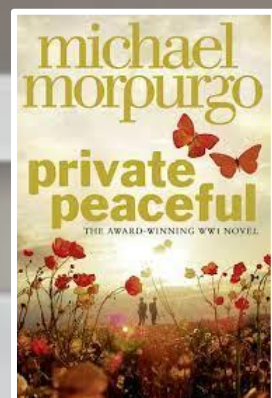
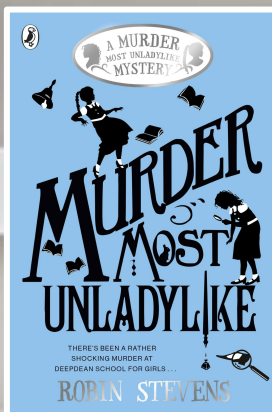
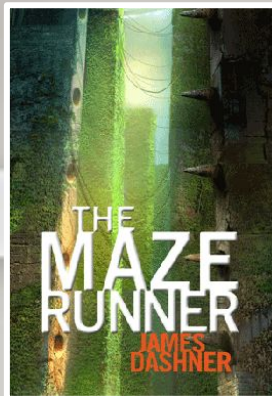
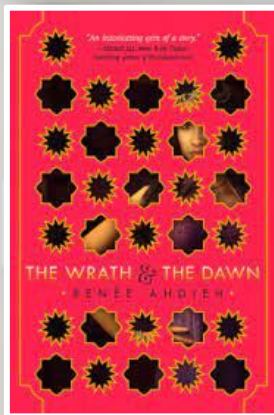
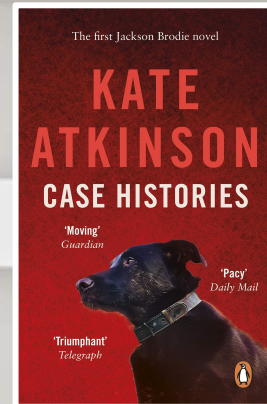
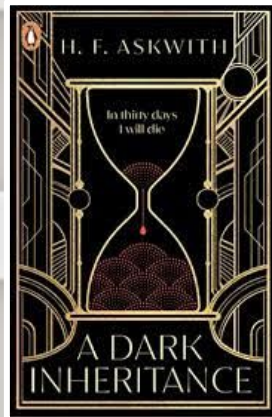
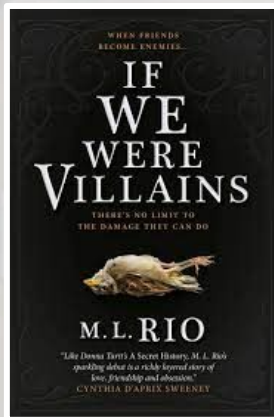
# THE GALLERY



Photos by: Ella Taylor, Sienna Lee, Nshira Ansah, Muhammed Ali Qamar

# BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

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Year  
12/13

11

9/10

7/8

# BOOK REVIEWS

## *I Know You Did It* by Sue Wallman

Review by Adam Nachyla (Yr7)

*I Know You Did It* takes place in a secondary school. Ruby, a new student who just moved, is having suspicions about the school's safety. Suddenly, she sees a message on her locker, it says "I KNOW YOU DID IT" in bloody letters. At that point, she knows she has made a horrible mistake...

This book is beautifully narrated and written. The amount of suspense and discovery this book has is unexplainable. I would definitely recommend this book to other people, especially people who enjoy crime and mystery fiction.



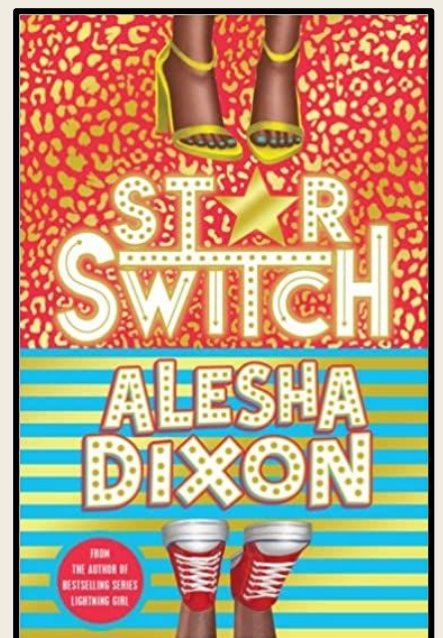
## *Star Switch* by Alesha Dixon

Review by Nshira Ansah (Yr7)

*Star Switch* is about two young girls named Ruby and Naomi. Naomi Starr is a record-breaking superstar and Ruby is her biggest fan. Unfortunately, Naomi is sick, tired, and bored of the constant shows, abroad flights, early morning dance rehearsals, etc. She wishes to be a normal girl, one that doesn't have to travel the world, doing exhausting concerts.

Fortunately, for Ruby, she meets her idol unexpectedly and both girls switch bodies. Ruby is soon plunged into the world and life of fame, and Naomi has to experience what life is like in Ruby's body.

This book talks about how it isn't that bad to be a pop star and a normal girl at the same time.



# BOOK REVIEWS

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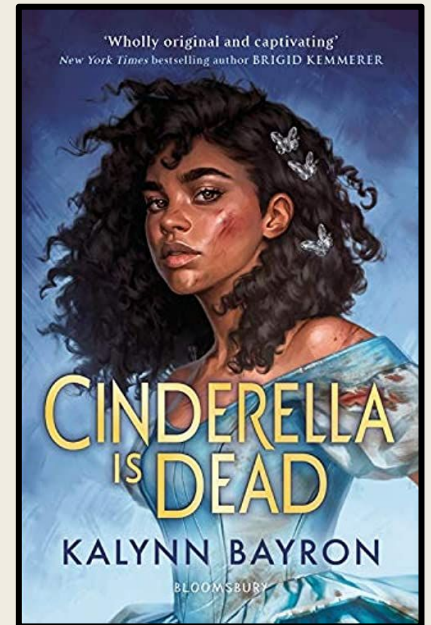
## *Cinderella is Dead* by Kalynn Bayron

Review by Harriett Pritchard (Yr7)

*Cinderella is Dead* was incredibly interesting and captivating. It is about drama, love, royalty and magic.

Sofia, the protagonist, is brave, confident and courageous, making her an inspirational female lead. She is a rule-breaker and defies the King in order to live life the way she wants. At first Sofia likes a girl called Erin, but as the story continues she develops feelings for someone else.

If you want a book that has drama, death and a book of of mystery, then this is the book for you!

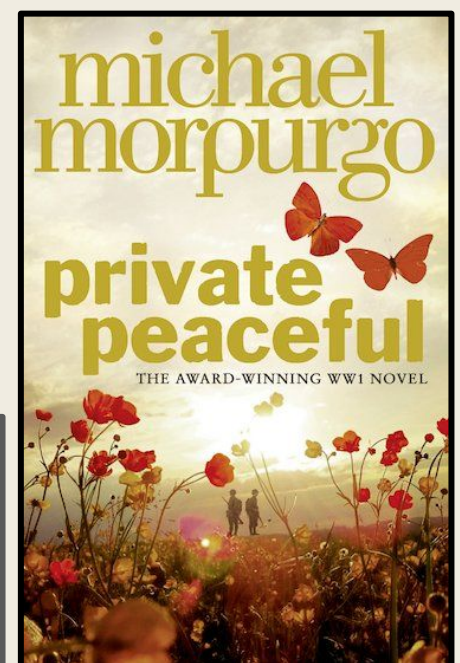


## *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo

Review by Muhammed Ali Qamar (Yr7)

I read the book during term 3. This story is about a WW1 and the main character was Tommo. This book has other characters like his brothers Charlie and Big Joe.

It took place at the school during WW1 and a Farm.



Being his real brother I could feel I live in his shadows, but I never have and I do not now. I live in his glow.

—Michael Morpurgo

# STUDENT LEADER LIFE

By Kaya Akyuz, Dilpreet Dhesi and Harriet Pritchard

## What is a student leader at Meopham?

Student leaders are a group of students who volunteer their time to help the school, they set a good example to others and they come together to make positive changes to our school. Anyone can be a student leader – at the moment we have around 140 student leaders from all year groups.

## What kind of activities do student leaders get involved in?

Student leaders do a variety of different roles – some big and some small. Some examples are: going to the village war memorial on Remembrance Day to represent our school, taking part in EcoAfternoons to make the school environment more pleasant and visiting the Gravesham Food Bank with charity donations. Student leaders also welcome new students by giving them a tour of the school and answering their questions. Student leaders also consulted on the school uniform forum.

## What kind of rewards do you get?

You can earn badges for the amount of work that you do. The badges are bronze, silver and gold stars. You need to do three jobs for a bronze, five for silver and ten for gold. You can also get certificates at the end of term. Some jobs happen during lesson time so one reward is doing something different to being in the classroom. The best reward is making our school a better place for everyone.



# ...continued



## What skills and qualities does a student leader need to have?

Student leaders have to be hard working and determined. They need to show respect to the school environment, the teachers and the whole school community. They need to be motivated to make positive changes for everyone.

## What are the benefits of being a student leader?

You go home knowing you have done something positive for your community and it is nice to get praised for being helpful. You can put this on your CV and college and university applications because it will show you are a hardworking and dedicated person.



## How do people sign up to be a student leader?

The first thing you need to do is contact Miss Biscombe. Then you will get added to the student leader google classroom, where you will see the adverts for all the different opportunities. If you see an advert you like, you show your interest by commenting on the post and Miss Biscombe will randomly choose the volunteers.



# WELLBEING CORNER

By Maia New (Yr12)

## Recognising exhaustion:

### Knowing when it's seriously time to stop and take care of yourself

It's hard to recognise when you're mentally exhausted, instead of just "lazy". If you keep overwhelming yourself, you can become both physically and mentally drained, so it's important to know the signs to avoid burnout!

⇒ **you feel self conscious about things you used to be okay with**, and are no longer sure if you are good at what you do. Everything feels a bit wrong, blurry and out of place.

⇒ **you frequently feel anxious over-thinking about "doing things"**, even things you used to enjoy before. With time, the list of things that make you anxious only keeps growing, and your efforts to avoid them start to be no use.

⇒ **you feel "hurried" to do everything**, things that should be relaxing make you annoyed, and you have no patience with other people or with your own physical limits - which makes your life difficult and demotivates you to do essential tasks and try new things.

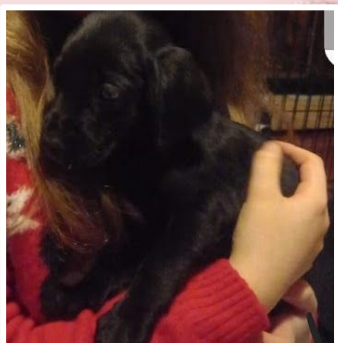
⇒ **you frequently feel like your body is heavy**, and sore: headaches, migraines, stomach aches or neck pains, are becoming more frequent.

⇒ **your sleep schedule is really messy**: you either can't sleep properly when you'd like to, or sleep way too much, resulting in more fatigue over time.

⇒ **you often daydream about running away**, abandoning your current life, disappearing from the lives of people you know, being someone else, or imagining yourself in situations that would change your life completely.

If you identify with three or more of these signs, you should take time to carefully analyse the source of your stress and try your best to deal with it in the best possible way. It might be time to take a break from things that occupy your daily life, such as people, activities, or your current lifestyle as a whole.

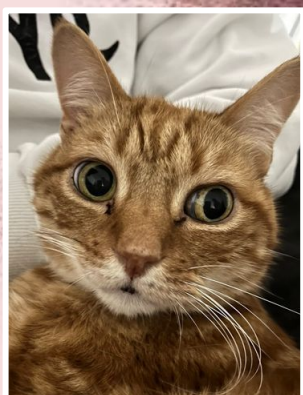
# THE MEOPHAM (PET) FAMILY



**Fenn - Olivia H**



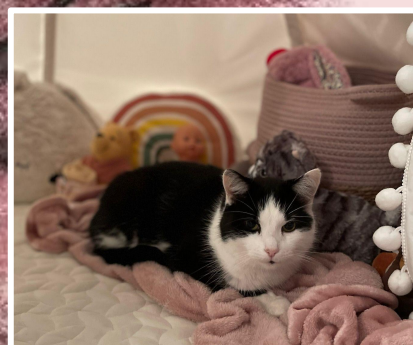
**Jackson - Izzy S**



**Tom - Robyn F**



**Kenny - Lawrence K**



**Felix - Mrs Jasnoch**



**Ziggy & Pancake -  
Miss Biscombe**



**Tommy - Ella T**

**If you would like to share a pet photo for a future issue, email it to [MSS-magazine@swale.at](mailto:MSS-magazine@swale.at), along with a note of your pet's name.**

# MARCH IS HERE

*By Sienna Lee (Yr7)*

Once again, Spring is here!

Soon the cold weather will disappear.

Colourful flowers will light up the ground

And birds will sing that lovely sound.

The sky will shine clear like a diamond  
and everyone will have a smile that is vibrant.

Spring is the start of something new  
and is filled with the things we love to do!

Spring walks and talks are the best  
whilst listening to the birds sing above our heads.

Spring is the start of something new and what a wonderful time it is too.



**Art by Lily Ricketts**