

Polamite Press



Issue 6

Summer Special

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Grease

When I walked into the Liddiard theatre and sat down in my seat, the first thing that told me that this was going to be a fantastic show was the amazing set in front of me. Created by the pupils of Polam, their hard work and dedication had resulted in a dramatic backdrop worthy of any major theatre. In the middle of the floor was the band - who were brilliant and added a really good atmosphere to the show. Overall, the characters had been really well chosen and the actresses played them perfectly, whether with humour or attitude. This was a show filled with laughs and was enjoyed by everyone who saw it. It was colourful and energetic,

with great lighting, choreography and singing. The make-up and costumes were fantastic and very fitting to the play which helped to add to the magic of the show!

The cast was relatively young and yet they pulled off a truly great production. Thanks goes to the backstage crew which helped make the production so flawless and congratulations go to all those involved and many thanks to Mrs Sleightholme, Mr Woods and Anna Warren. The girls all deserved several encores especially Katie Atkins who played Sandy and Lucy Smith who played Danny.

And now...a short interview with Katie Atkins:

How did you feel when you found out you had got the part of Sandy?

Actually, my first reaction was shock. I was so surprised because I thought that there were so many other people who had auditioned and were more suited to the part than me. When I had got over the initial shock, all I was felt was happiness that I had been picked for such an important part.

Did you get nervous before the performances and how did you cope with those nerves?

On Thursday, I was really nervous but I just tried to remember everything from all the rehearsals and stay calm. The first night went really well so after that I didn't get so nervous.

What was your favourite bit about playing Sandy?

I've always loved the musical Grease and loved the character Sandy. My favourite bit was probably facing the challenge of playing Sandy and being able to make her my own character. The film is so popular and most people have seen it so it was good being able to play such a well known character and challenge the expectation that goes with that.

Of all the songs from the musical which was your favourite?

I think probably 'We go together' because there was so much energy in that song. Everyone was dancing and it was fun to have the whole cast in the same song.

The Time of my Life

The last day of Upper 6 was something that I had been looking forward to and dreading in equal measure. On the one hand, we were promised a day of laughter with our friends, and a final send off into the big wide world. On the other, we were to be sent off into the big wide world. How could we say goodbye to Polam? To the school, pupils and teachers who had been such a big part of our lives?

We decided to begin the day by taking our last reading and I was given the job of co-ordinating a dance for it. The ideas began to flow and all that was lacking was music to dance to. The problem was quickly solved, however; after seven years as a proud polamite, what could be more apt that "The Time of My Life"? After much sweet-talking, bribery and bullying, Tim and Peter were persuaded into purple lycra to join in with the ballet section, and Zoe and Tara provided Mrs. Breckon and

Mrs. Martin with gangster outfits and taught them the soulja boy dance. The reading went well; even Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Dobson joining in with our cheesy dance moves, and we returned to plant at 9.15 in high spirits.

Of course, we had to abide by the traditions of the last day of Upper 6. Girls donning their old kilts to add a few more to the fond memories of life in green. Girls bullying the boys into their spare kilts to add a few more to their memories of embarrassment. Our boys, however, wouldn't be seen in such a girly outfit, and in an effort to regain some of that masculinity that had been lost in the morning's reading, coupled the kilt with their old Hurworth blazers. A potential uniform if the Hurworth boys come in September I think.

Next came what we had been looking forward to for years: the chance to play

practical jokes on the school with the promise that the teachers would turn a blind eye, to show the school just how devious and creative U6 09-10 are, to go down in the unwritten history books of memorable Polam moments.

Problem was, everything seemed to have been done before. Cars parked at random around the grounds, fire bells activated, rooms covered in newspaper or turned, quite literally, upside down. And, what's more, whenever one of us had a flash of inspiration and came up with a truly brilliant and unique idea, it was deemed "inappropriate". I don't know why; removing all the tables and chairs from Mounsey and putting them on the tennis courts seems perfectly appropriate to me. The exams would just have to take place in the rain, that's all.

We finally decided upon covering the staff cars with toilet paper, and set off eagerly from Plant, to steal a stash from the Mounsey loos. We got to work "decorating" in the car park, only to be caught in the act and politely reminded that toilet paper and wet weather are not such a good combination.

Clingfilm, however, was a different story. As tempting as it was to wrap Miss Green's car in the stuff, we settled on simply sabotaging the entrance to the Old Building (and some of the Liddiard loos, for good measure). In the meantime, we had offloaded the (now useless) toilet paper on Zoe and Tara, who had slumped off to Mounsey to "return" it. Ten minutes later, I received a phone call. "Come to room 10, quick, and bring your camera".

Wondering what they could have done, I ran back to Mounsey and was greeted by a laughing Zoe and Tara, a whispered appeal to be quiet because Mrs. Harvey was in the next room, and a French room covered in toilet paper. In stitches by now, we barred the door with a hockey stick and continued to put up the beautiful white-ish bunting.

"Ok guys" I whispered, "I really think we should go, the bell's gonna go any minute"
"Ah you wuss, just a bit longer, we're not gonna get caught"

"No, really guys, let's go."

"A few more minutes"

"Mrs. Harvey's gonna be back any mo....
HIDE"

I dived under a desk, Zoe behind a locker door and Tara for the window as the door crashed open, hockey stick useless when faced with the wrath of an angry French teacher. Unsure of what to do, Tara stared wildly at the open window she'd been making for and I began to think that that escape route might not be such a bad idea after all. Thankfully, however, Mrs. Harvey had taken a few steps away from the door, which gave me and Zoe chance to dart through it, and a few moments later we were joined outside of Mounsey by a flushed and breathless Tara who had bolted after us.

4 o' clock came all too soon, and after the fun of the day, we were faced with the reality that we were no longer pupils of Polam Hall. For some, the sense was of liberation and excitement for the future, for others, it was tears and sadness that it had all come to an end. For me, it hasn't quite sunk in yet, I still feel as much a Polamite as ever. In fact, I've been into school every day since I officially left, (I just can't keep away from Mr. Bell's gorgeous lunches) and I don't think I'll really feel it until I sing Oh Brother Man for the last time on the 7th July.

The school's not perfect, I know that, but the last 7 years here have been, in so many ways, more than I could ever have asked for. And it's all come to an end far too quickly. So to quote an old girl, and old friend, Abby Glass, (who it seems has been gone no time at all, though it's been a year): "Love Polam while you still can", it's time that will be gone before you know it, and it really could be the time of your life.

Suzzie Millar

Is That From Topshop?



My family and I are vintage addicts, I confess, it is my shopping addiction. My sister and I love nothing better than rummaging through the rails of nearby vintage shops to try and discover a piece of buried treasure that we can breathe life back into once again. But time and time again when wearing vintage or second hand piece when out and about we are constantly asked that mysterious question “is that from Topshop,” “NO!” I want to scream. Topshop produce beautiful clothes that mirror trends perfectly, and like most high street chain store they make their clothes readily available in all major towns and cities, even over the internet; but maybe that’s why I want people to know that my clothes are not from there. I want to retain a

level of individuality only available from the bargain and beauty world of vintage shops and second hand stores. If people are asking about our clothes, likening them to the high street fashion God that is Topshop, then why do so few people still shop in vintage or second hand stores, admittedly they’ve become more popular recently, and no doubt the recession has helped but I call for more...more vintage lovers!

Everyone has heard the phrase “what goes around, comes around,” and clothing trends are no exception. Fashion is cyclical, there is always some style from the past that has been made new again, I bet no one thought that leggings were coming back and yet they did, even more popular than before. So it’s common sense that you might be able to find the original version of that style in a vintage item from that era. And when you purchase a vintage piece, you are getting something that you can wear in confidence that you won’t walk out the house and be confronted by 10 other people

wearing the same item from the same chain store!

But I urge you not to just look for vintage pieces to compliment the current fashion trends, use vintage to create your own style. With vintage you find classics that have never gone out of style, such as the beautiful black 60s shift dress I found in Rockit in London, or you can find unique, unusual pieces to set yourself apart from the mainstream, like the 1984 multicoloured dress featured in another post on this blog that my stylish sibling stumbled across at a Vintage Fashion Fair.

“But the clothes are old and used!” so many people cry. Remember that the items bought from the high street could also have been tried on by hundreds of people, some careful with them,



some not so; how often have you purchased an item to get home and notice a small make up stain on the inside, a conspicuous whole in the sleeve or the mysterious pen mark that's upon the inside. Not all vintage clothes look worn out or old. In the past, it's sad to say but, better materials and techniques were

used than are used today.

There was no 'fast fashion,' straight off the catwalk and on to the high street for us to snap up; people wanted their clothes to last. Therefore the emphasis was on clothing being well made, often handmade and owners really took care of their treasured items. The case isn't that of wearing

hand me downs, it is wearing a little piece of history; something already loved that will hopefully be loved for that little bit longer thanks to you.

If I still haven't convinced you, think on this, vintage really is the best deal you'll get! Better made, one of a kind, fashionable clothes and usually a bargain!

Top 10 Vintage Stores in the UK

1. *Beyond Retro - London*
2. *The Big Yellow Vintage shop - Birmingham*
3. *Rokit - London*
4. *King & Queen Of Bethnal Green - London*
5. *Top Banana - Birmingham*
6. *Blue Rinse Vintage - Leeds*
7. *Best Vintage - Leeds*
8. *Attica Vintage - Newcastle*
9. *Best Vintage - Newcastle*
10. *Deep - Middlesbrough*



Polam Hall History



Seventy-eight years ago Winifred Pickles arrives at Polam Hall for the very first time. Mrs Baines was the headmistress at the time and Winifred described how she was very 'motherly'. When Winifred first visited the school with 'mummy and daddy' she talked about how her parents were concerned about her settling in because she didn't know anyone. To this concern Mrs Baines replies that 'she knows me now' and so Winifred embarked on five years of boarding at Polam.

Earlier last month Winifred returned to the school. Now aged ninety, she described her time at Polam as the 'best years of her life'. Winifred had lots of

stories to tell about her time at the school and the names on the award boards in the Liddiard Corridor evoked many sparkling memories of her time here.

At her time boarding here between 1932 and 1937, Winifred recalled how, instead of an average PE lesson playing hockey or lacrosse, they would sometimes walk or run to the Croft Spa for a cup of tea before returning to school. She also recalled a punishment asking whether we still had a French Table. This is something which I had never heard of before and Winifred explained how it involved sitting between the French mistresses at lunch; although she suggested that the punishment had probably been scrapped because it was rarely seen as a punishment by the girls!!

Zumba

Zumba is a new form of fitness training that is sweeping the country. It was created in the mid-1990s by a celebrity fitness trainer and choreographer Beto Perez from Columbia. He came across the idea by accident – after going to a class and leaving his tapes at home he was forced to grab the tapes he had in his car and then went on to improvise to this new music. The tapes were a mix of traditional Latin salsa and merengue music and this is the basis for the zumba classes. Perez

had grown up with this kind of music, and he combined it with dance moves. The class soon became very popular in his home town and so he brought it to America in 1999. Since then the phenomenon has grown. The music is infectious and the dance moves are easy to follow. It is great fun and you can quickly feel the benefits. I would recommend it to anyone to try this summer!

Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

Setting off from Danby with bags weighing half our body weight we trudged along slowly. The straps dug into our sides whilst the sun burnt our skin. Two days later we arrived at Robin Hoods Bay, our aim had been to leave our bags and go down to get fish & chips and chocolate but, after walking up the hill with our bags, it seemed like such an effort to go back down again. Instead we sent two people down to the chocolate shop while the other two rested at the top!

After eight hours of walking on the first day we arrived at our first campsite. This was our longest day and we ran into trouble when one of our footpaths didn't exist - so we had to make a last minute change to our route! By the time we got to the campsite it was quite late and so we had little time to rest before we set up our tent, unpacked our things and got tea on. To save on things to carry we decided to take the one tent, which meant two very cramped nights – although we had

planned to make Lewis sleep outside if it was too hot! Luckily it wasn't too hot out although the ground was very un-comfy!

We began the second day quite early. It was really hot out and so we enjoyed lots of long breaks in the shade. This was good as it gave us a chance to rest although it meant the walk took us longer than we had thought! Before we reached our second campsite we went through a village where we bought ice creams and, discovering our inner child, we had fun on the bouncy castle, the swings and the see-saw in the adventure playground!

After another night camping we set off on our last day! The second campsite was clean, which compared to the first was a haven but unfortunately it didn't match up to the ones on our practice expedition! We walked quickly knowing that at the end of it we could eat chocolate, fish & chips and go home! As we had expected we walked faster, filled with determination and looking forward to going home!

Wimbledon

After two weeks of superb tennis, Wimbledon is finished! That means no more sitting in the sun to watch the play, no more reasons to eat strawberries and cream and at last the BBC will show other programmes than the tennis!

There has been some brilliant tennis played from many of the players. Some of us have even enjoyed watching the matches at Wimbledon itself! Many players have tried their hardest to get throughout the rounds and there have been surprising games from the Isner vs Mahut match to the Nadal vs Petzschner match.

This year, the men's final was between Nadal and Berdyc, with Nadal claiming the title for the second year running.

Federer was knocked out in the Quarter finals this year by Berdyc who was ranked 12th! Murray was knocked out in the Semi Finals by Nadal – dashing English dreams of having a Wimbledon winner again!

In the women's final, Serena Williams played Vera Zvonareva and Serena won the match 2 sets to nil. Venus Williams lost in the Quarter Finals to Tsvetana Pironkova.

Guide to summer!

SO much time, so much you can do!

A thought we all adore after a long, hard, stressful and tiring year at school.

What to do with all this free time?

Here is a mini guide to some great things to do and great places to see over the summer.

1. Flamingo Land & Lightwater Valley- Theme Parks are so much fun, especially in the sun with your friends. Flamingo Land is one of the best theme parks in the country and definitely the best for something close to home. Lightwater Valley is another thrilling place close to home with some great new rides!
If you can travel further why not go to Alton Towers for the ultimate day out! There is also Thrope Park, Drayton Manor, Chessington World of Adventure and Legoland which offer hair raising rides and great days out!
2. Live Bands in Darlington Market Square- Head down to Darlington Market Square on July 10th to see live bands play live music. Local boys "Maybe Next Time" will be playing.
3. Leeds Festival – There are so many to choose from: *Glastonbury*, *V Festival*, *T in the Park* and many more, but with the fantastic line up this year including Paramore, Pendulum, The Klaxons, Blink 12 and many more Leeds is where I will be. For something on a smaller scale why not check out *The Castle Calling Festival* in Richmond or *Keswick Calling* in the Lake District.
4. The Affordable Vintage fair- these fashionable fetes take place all year round, but why not take the chance to visit one this summer in Leeds, York, Durham or Newcastle. Check out : www.vintagefair.co.uk
5. Many activities this summer will be taking place in Darlington Market Square such as the temporary town beach which comes every year! For more information log on to <http://www.darlington.gov.uk> or visit the tourist information office.
6. There are many productions on at the civic over the Summer including *Billy Elliot*. There is also a Theatre in the Park, and *Macbeth* will be performed in South Park. At the Art's Centre, many films are shown – if you missed them at the cinema it is a great chance to see some amazing films for a small cost – about £3! I will be going to see the *Princess & The Frog* and *Where The Wild Things Are*. To see what's on go to http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Culture/Arts/whats_on/

Reviews and Summer Recommends!

Book Reviews:

Frenchman's Creek by Daphne de Maurier

This is a less well known book by the author of *Rebecca* and *Jamaica Inn*, however the quality and beauty of her writing is still very apparent. First published in 1941, the writing style is, as you would expect, more old-fashioned than some of the other books I have reviewed. However, I have found that this book is fairly easy to read once you get into it, due to the lyrical language and captivating storyline. A favourite extract from the book is as follows:

"Why are you a pirate?" she said at last, breaking the silence.

"Why do you ride horses that are so spirited?" he answered.

"Because of the danger, because of the speed, because I might fall," she said.

"That is why I am a pirate," he said.

The Forgotten Garden by Kate Morton

This page-turning book seems a little confusing at first, as it jumps from different time periods and places. However, I recommend that you stick with it because it's well worth reading to the very last page. Full of twists and turns, you'll never know what to expect. This book involves everything from history to romance, fairy tales to mystery, but most importantly, it is a story about finding out who you are.

This is Kate Morton's second book and comparing it with her first, I would have to say that they are equal in their high standard of story-telling. However, Richard and Judy obviously didn't think that *The Forgotten Garden* quite matched up to *The House at Riverton*, which won Richard and Judy's Summer Read 2007.

The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ by Phillip Pullman

This is a new take on the story of Jesus Christ and it offers an alternative idea behind the story. It is written in a simplistic style, but I found this very easy to follow. The chapters were short and it was interesting to read as Pullman referred to biblical stories whilst putting a new twist on them. This was a very interesting and enjoyable book!

Summer Recommends:

- Garden Spells by Sarah Addison Allen (for older readers)
- The Righteous Men by Sam Bourne
- Size 12 Is Not Fat by Meg Cabot
- The Other Hand by Chris Cleave
- Magic Flutes by Eva Ibbotson
- The Short Second Life Of Bree Tanner by Stephanie Meyer

Music:

Festival Season has begun!

Wow! Summer has officially kicked off as festivals galore hit the country. Already there have been many festivals going on – from *Evolution* back in May to *T4* on the beach and *Wireless* just last weekend! Many huge artists are playing at a variety of festivals this summer. There are numerous ‘in the forests’ concerts with JLS, Status Quo, James Morrison, the View, the Saturdays and Katie Melua starring.

There are lots of concerts across the country this Summer - to name a few: *Richmond Live*, *Lovebox*, *V festival*, *T in the Park*, *Leeds*, *Reading* and *Glastonbury*. All of these festivals have fantastic line-ups! Tickets sell out fast so make sure you get yours early – whether it is just for the day or for overnight camping!

There is an Underage Festival for young people aged 14-18. It is in London but, if you can get there, it will be a great day to meet new people in a safer, and adult free environment! If you want to see what's on go to:

www.viewlondon.co.uk/festivals.aspx

www.efestivals.co.uk

Summer Recommends:

- Club Is Alive - JLS
- Planet Jedward - Jedward
- Aphrodite – Kylie Minogue
- Euphoria - Enrique Inglesias
- Teenage Dream - Katy Perry

TV:

Cook yourself thin

The self-acclaimed best cookery programme on TV is agreeably a must see! Host Gizzy's girlish charm and sixties look only add to the charisma of the programme. Different from most cookery programmes which simply tell you to eat salad if you wish to be healthy, or alternatively encourage you to eat fatty food. This programme tells you how you can eat the food that you love and still stay thin by making simple changes like using much less butter, swapping full fat foods for low fat alternatives. Using natural colours and flavours rather than artificial ones and avoiding putting too much salt in food. Using less sugar, low fat chocolate and adding nuts or grated fruit to cakes for great flavour but in a healthy way. I have tried out several of Gizzy's recipes which can all be found on the Cook Yourself Thin website:

www.channel4.com/food/recipes/healthy/cook-yourself-thin/

This cookery programme is fantastic for first time cooks as well, and you can learn to eat great food and keep off the pounds!

Film:

Robin Hood

This action packed film is full of action, adventure and anticipation. It is a very different story to the usual tale of Robin Hood – instead of describing the legend of Robin Hood and his Merry Men who steal from the rich and give to the poor, the film depicts in detail how Robin moved from fighting in the Crusade to being an outlaw in his own country. The different take of the story adds to the suspense of the plot as it leaves you unsure of what is to happen.



The film stars Russell Crowe as Robin, and the actor went through a lot of research and training to play the role. Originally he didn't like the script and so he spent 10 months researching the story of Robin. The script originally depicted a heroic Sheriff of Nottingham but it was rewritten into a story about Robin Hood becoming an outlaw.

Crowe did four months training with a bow and arrow before filming and this preparation clearly paid off as he was able to hit a target from 45 metres away! Cate Blanchett also stars in the film as Lady Marion, and other actors include Oscar Isaac as King John, Mark Addy as Friar Tuck and Kevin Durand as Little John.

The film also mentions Darlington as it describes the destruction to many Northern towns including our home town! It is a superb film and Crowe's passion can clearly be seen. I fully recommend this film!

Cinema Summer Recommends:

- Toy Story 3
- Get Him To The Greek
- Harry Potter 7 Part 1
- Eclipse
- Shrek Forever After

DVD Summer Recommends:

- Alice in Wonderland
- Princess and the Frog
- Sherlock Holmes
- Dear John
- Lonely Bones