

A DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENTS HELD BY THE PTFA

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Most of you (hopefully) will have experienced this from one side of a stall or the other. It's the usual sort of Christmas Fayre – visits to Father (or Mother) Christmas; sale of cakes, stationery, gifts, etc.; games of chance; sale of refreshments (cold - cakes, sandwiches, rolls and hot – jacket potatoes + fillings, soup) – and is held in mid-November. In past years we have sometimes clashed with Darkes Fayre at the United Reformed Church (Tilbury Hall) but we have both come to see that this can play to our mutual advantage as we are both at the same end of town and we now advertise each other's event on the day. This is our main fundraiser of the year and help is always needed.

Pupils are usually given a non-uniform day on the day before the Fayre on the proviso that, in return, they bring in a contribution of something we can raise money on at the Fayre. Some dedicated helpers are in school from early on that Friday to receive and sort gifts and then to set up tables etc. for the next day. On the day itself final preparations are made before the Fayre which is open from 11.00a.m. to 4.00p.m. During the day there are all sorts of jobs (manning stalls, serving refreshments etc.) and finally there is the clearing up at the end of the day. You don't have to be there all the time – any spare time you can give is valuable but, please, please, especially on the day of the Fayre, if you have agreed to help at a given time do turn up because (unless we have hundreds of volunteers – sadly not usually the case!) your absence can cause problems.

This year (and for future years) we must make a special plea for strong male help especially for setting up and clearing up – we store things in the storage area under the stage and passing things up and down from there via the trapdoor into the hall really does need male help. Last Christmas we had only one stalwart male helper for this and we must have more this year –so, **MEN** please bring your muscles along.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Obviously we are required to hold an AGM to report to our members and to elect new officers and the AGM is held in mid September near the beginning of the Autumn term. Sadly, attendance is usually rather poor and we would love to see more people attending – rest assured that coming along does not mean you will be trapped into committing yourself to a lifetime sentence! Over the last couple of years we have adopted the pattern of holding the AGM on the same evening as the session held for new Year 7 parents on helping their children with their learning. The AGM is held from 7.00p.m. until 8.00p.m. in the canteen at which point we adjourn to the School Hall to join the Year 7 parents and staff for a taster evening where you can sample the kind of food produced by our chef and his team. You could therefore come to the AGM straight from work if necessary in the comfortable knowledge that something good to eat awaits you at 8.00p.m.. Equally the Year 7 parents attending the session in the Hall can meet the PTFA afterwards, knowing they do not need to rush off to get something to eat.

PRIMARY SEVEN A SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

The PTFA started this many years ago and it has been running successfully ever since. Indeed, many of you with young footballers in the family will already be aware of it through your primary school, although you may not have been aware that it is a PTFA event. It is currently sponsored by the Rotary Club Brookmans Park and we are very grateful indeed for their support. The PTFA makes and sells refreshments at the event – burgers, sausages, bacon, cakes, tea, coffee, soft drinks and sweets.

POTTERS BAR CARNIVAL

POTTERS BAR COMMUNITY DAY

As the local community school we always ensure we have a presence at these events – we take a stall selling cakes and providing a card game of chance. We make a small to decent profit but the main aim is to have a local community profile. Indeed, by being stallholders we became eligible to bid for the small grants made by the Carnival Committee for local projects and have been lucky enough to be granted money by them to purchase a book trolley for the School Library and two specialised laptops for the Special Needs Department for which we are very grateful to the Carnival Committee.

GARDEN PARTY (historical – has not been held recently)

This year, as a celebration of the school having passed the fiftieth anniversary of its arrival on the Mount Grace site, we held a garden tea party on a Sunday afternoon in July. We provided a traditional tea and prepared a small exhibition of pictures and other information on the school and the site.

Attendance was somewhat disappointing as we had hoped for larger numbers but those who did come had a wonderful time and begged us to make it an annual event. If we do so, hopefully word of mouth advertising will encourage those of you who missed a lovely afternoon this time to come along next time.

INDULGENCE EVENING/CRAFT FAIR (historical – not held recently)

So far this event has met with only average success but we hope that the next one is planned at a better time and season and that hordes of you will attend!

SUPPER QUIZZES

These are family quizzes – children of secondary school age are welcome with their families. You do not need to be of Mastermind candidate level – great fun is had by all and our regular quizmaster Richard meets the approval of all levels of quiz attendees. Included in the price is a high quality supper of cheese, pate, French bread plus a variety of accompaniments.

ELM COURT ATTIC SALES AND CAR BOOT SALES

Elm Court, a local youth and community centre, holds sales (indoors in winter, outdoors in summer) fortnightly throughout the year. They receive the fees paid by sellers for their stalls and local organisations are allocated dates for catering, parking control, collection of entry fees and clearing up. For outdoor sales one organisation looks after the catering (provides and sells the refreshments indoors and outdoors and takes the profits) and a second looks after parking control, entry fees and clearing the field at the end (they keep the sellers' entrance fees); in winter one organisation is responsible for everything. This event can be quite lucrative especially if one is lucky with the weather. Again, many hands make light work so all offers of help are appreciated.

MEAL EVENINGS (Historical – not held recently)

So far we have held three meal evenings, all of which have been successful and very enjoyable and all catered by our wonderful chef Mike Hays and his team. The first was an Italian meal, the second English with a sing-along afterwards and the most recent was an Indian buffet with a fun sari-putting-on competition hosted by Mr Bhura. Again, hopefully word of mouth advertising will increase attendance. Bring a group of your friends along for a cheap – but very high quality – meal out and bear in mind that if your friends' children attend other secondary schools you can be totally assured of being one up on them because our Mount Grace cuisine is by far the best locally!

GARDENING SESSIONS

The Rose Garden (below the front of the canteen) is a remnant of the old grounds of Mount Grace House - if you attended the Garden Tea Party you may have noticed photographs of it in those days. We hold occasional sessions tidying up and collecting and applying locally donated manure!

REFRESHMENTS

As well as our regular events, we are sometimes asked to provide a presence or simple refreshments at school events. Also we will have some possibility of providing and selling simple refreshments for some of the organisations who hire the School Hall.

100 CLUB

The aim of our Club is to raise money to purchase mini-bus(es) for the school. 100 members pay £12 a year and are entered in monthly draws with prizes of £20, £10 and £5. Half the income pays for the prizes and the other half goes into our mini-bus fund. The school, with so many competing needs for money, would probably never find money in their budget to purchase a mini-bus so the existence of these – nowadays very necessary vehicles – is entirely down to fundraising by the PTFA.