

SPEECH NIGHT

Speech Night means that yet another school year has been completed. A chance to reflect on the success of the year gone and to look towards the year ahead.

Speech Night has become an important occasion at Tommy's, and we are led to believe that it originates from Victorian times. The school archives state that annual Speech days have taken place at our present site since its opening in 1964. Interviewing the Headmaster, he said that his favourite part about Speech Day was that it reminded the School about its values and its fundamental purpose, 'to provide pupils with the best education and opportunities we can'. There were also stories of how neighbours could hear the singing from their homes, something which reinforces these values!

Special guests, past pupils and their parents are invited back to the School to see how it has developed and to celebrate the achievements of current pupils.

The smart dress worn by those who attend gives a sense of occasion, giving prizewinners a sense of importance and pride at achieving the award that they have won.

This year, the special guest was Professor Richard Kerswell, who studied at Cambridge and then at the University of California before moving on to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to take a PhD. Currently working at the University of Bristol's School of Mathematics, Prof. Kerswell has undertaken a lot of research into Fluid Dynamics. Impressively, he has achieved a fellowship of the Royal Institute for his efforts within his field.

During his speech, Prof. Kerswell firstly reminisced on his experiences of the School, remembering several teachers that particularly inspired him to become who he is today. In particular, he thanked his maths teacher for the kind encouragement that he gave to him during his time at the School.

Secondly, he gave a message which perhaps all of us should take on board for the future. To get to where you want to be, you must work hard. However, the hard work will not be so bad if you find something that you are interested in, as your work will not bore you as it would if you are working on a project that does not interest you. I am sure many reading this can empathise with these wise words!

The evening concluded with time for refreshments and a chance to talk to other prizewinners, as well as a number of special guests. We look forward to another Speech Night next year, but for now the hard work begins!

R Birch

