



**The BRAVE Trust**

**Newsletter Summer 2015**

## **THE CHAIRMAN WRITES**

### **THE HEART OF THE MATTER**

Please read the very positive reports from our Schools workers, Margaret MacCormack & Martha Boutros. They demonstrate why I am always astonished and delighted by the extraordinary work which, under Margaret's and Martha's obviously inspiring guidance, the pupils produce. They display some wonderful and moving spiritual insights which one would not necessarily expect. This prompts in my mind the much-debated question of whether and how children are endowed with some innate spirituality and openness to a transcendental sense of God. We are told by neurobiologists that no 'God gene' exists, and that it would be fruitless to look there for an explanation of this phenomenon, and I do not challenge that. I don't know the answer to this except to suggest that this openness may arise before the hard discipline of scientific materialism is conveyed, bringing young people into the strictly empirical concept of knowledge and truth, whereby the only things that can be taken as 'real' are those which can be proved by the scientific method. In its proper fields, the scientific method is an essential tool in the advancement of knowledge. However, since God's existence cannot be 'proved' by science, so many people conclude that God cannot exist. Fortunately, there are thousands of distinguished scientists in the world who are Christians and who publically insist how misleading it can be when we allow science to be the sole arbiter of all forms of truth, whether metaphysical for example, the declaration 'I love you' or the religious statement that 'God exists'.

You may have better ideas on this mystery. It's very relevant to the work of The BRAVE Trust. Please let me know your thoughts! E-mail me at [RichardGenochio@gmail.com](mailto:RichardGenochio@gmail.com)

### **PROGRESS TOWARDS SURVIVAL**

You will recall that in 2013 we launched 'Operation Survival' to ensure that we did not have to shut down at the end of 2014. I am pleased to report that we continue to make considerable progress. Our future is assured in the near and medium term – provided that:

- Income from individuals and churches continues to grow steadily but achievably from lows of £5,816 and £5,648 in 2013 to £11,000 and £7,250 respectively by 2017.
- We are successful in attracting grant-funding averaging £ 7,500 per year until 2017 and must assume that we have exhausted sources of grant income thereafter.

So we are not entirely out of the woods yet, but if we can meet these targets – and I think we can - we should be able to see our way through at least to the end of 2018. The challenge remains for everyone and every church to increase their support, so that the BRAVE Trust can act as your agency in supporting Christian teaching in local schools. I am convinced that our work will be given the resources it needs.

### THE TREASURERSHIP

Mike Maze has served in this post with great distinction since the very beginning. Quite understandably he has said he would like to hang up his abacus. Good Treasurers do not go on trees. If you know of anyone (including yourself) who could take on this role, please contact me on 01763 287549, or by e mail as above.

Richard Genochio

"The challenge remains for everyone and every church to increase their support, so that the BRAVE Trust can act as your agency in supporting Christian teaching in local schools."

### MARTHA REFLECTS ON THE SUMMER TERM...

The new term got off to a flying start in all the schools that we are in, building relationships with both new staff and pupils alike.

The Roysia assemblies went well. We had the opportunity to promote our lunch time group during part of one assembly and had some of our regular attendees sing our praises in their own way. They devised their own promotion based on dance and poetry, and all to advertise our group. It seems to have worked as we had a few more turn up and we have found our usual allocated space available. We are always keen to explore new ways to support the R.E. curriculum and held a meeting with the Head of R.E. Wendy Visagie to discuss this at Roysia.

These meetings do pay dividends as was shown at Greneway. We spent a lot of time discussing how we would approach our teaching over the Easter period and how we could incorporate a poetry competition! We both ended up teaching a series of sixteen lessons over two weeks for years five and six. We initially focused on the Easter story and then on expressing through poetry our understanding of what happened. I had numerous handouts that I left for reference with the pupils, including Psalm 22 which points to the coming Messiah and all he must endure, all prophesied 1000 years before Christ!

The teaching culminated in an end of term assembly where we announced the winners of the poetry competition. One winner was chosen from each class, therefore 8 in total. We

**Under that palm tree, the one blowing in the breeze, lays a man buckled at the knees.**

**Bleeding from the head and slashed on the back, he lays motionless, like a wolf separated from his pack.**

**He waits for the people, the people he dreads, the people who wear much more than loose threads. Hardly breathing and all alone, he waits for the time he's going to lose his home.**

**Three days after the day that he died, people realise he has survived. He has returned from the skies, to bless all our lives.**

Year 6 Greneway pupil - one of the poetry competition winners.

managed to arrange an extended assembly so were able to talk a little on the Christian meaning of Easter and also include an illustration (Holy Spirit inspired!) of the Holy Spirit by some of the most challenging year 8 boys. It all went amazingly well. The Acting Head spoke to us afterwards and complemented us on the presentation. Jess Ward also sent us an email thanking us for the teaching and assembly and said she was very pleased with the results.

Edwinstree lunch time group has been very well attended, the children are eager to learn more about the Christian faith and have currently been exploring Jesus' teaching on sin, temptation and

forgiveness, which we illustrate through discussion, quizzes and drama.

I've observed that the schools seem to have a disjointed approach to Relationships and Sexual Education. Nobody seems to really want to deal with it, (and the government are saying they want it to be implemented at an earlier age). I have found an organisation which provides training in delivering faith sensitive RSE lessons and hope to explore this further with a view to delivering these lessons within the schools that we visit, and may perhaps interest Freeman College, if it can be tailored to fit into sexual ethics, which is part of the 'A' Level Religion and Ethics curriculum.

### **MARGARET WRITES.....**

The Easter lessons at Greneway were a great success and the students' poems/letters to God at the end of sixteen lessons was a real testament to God speaking into the children's lives. I taught the lessons under the title of Jesus words when he said to his disciples "Who do people say I am?" It was indeed revealing as the children could also express who they thought Jesus was and is. We discussed that people have always debated who Jesus is and still do, but have we analysed the evidence found in the Bible? The exploration was found in reading the Bible and discovering what Prophets said about Jesus many hundreds of years before he was born and how these prophecies came true. I played some modern Christian band music and invited them to express their own ideas as the music played in the background.

The assembly for Easter went very well and the students designed and wrote some stimulating Easter poems that had been judged by year 8. Since Easter we have had many more students in the U2 and SPACE group. I had 26 in the U2 group for the years 5 & 6 and they were keen to ask more questions as they had done in the lessons before Easter.

Equally the children at Roysia are always very enthusiastic and some of them have become firm members of the BUDS group from Christmas when they did an amazing sketch for the Carols for the Community. We had the opportunity to do a great Easter assembly and other assemblies including a drama from the Buds group.

### **SUMMER COMPETITION**

Which numbers could replace the question marks?

3	?	7
	4	
?	4	15

Entries to Simon, Newsletter editor (simonQrice@gmail.com). First correct entry wins a eco-friendly wind-up torch for being a bright spark! Editor's decision is final.

## SUPPORTING THE BRAVE TRUST'S WORK



### My Response

I would like to make a regular\* donation of £.....each.....or I would like to make a one-off\* donation of £.....

I am a UK taxpayer and want the BRAVE Trust to reclaim the tax on this donation, any donations I have made in the past four years and all future donations:

**YES / NO\***

\* Delete as appropriate

(To qualify for Gift Aid, you must pay an amount of Income or Capital Gains tax at least equal to the tax that all charities & Community Amateur Sports Clubs reclaim on your donation in the appropriate tax year (currently £0.25 for each £1 given). Other taxes such as VAT or Council tax do not apply.

Print name.....Signed.....

Address.....Post Code.....

Email address.....Date.....

Please return your completed form with a cheque if a one-off donation to our Treasurer: Mr. Michael Maze, 16, Shrubbery Grove, Royston, SG8 9LJ

Mike will send you a standing order form to complete or you can download one from our web site **www.BRAVETrust.org**