

THAT'S BELLY HARD WORK

BELLY dancing is a really good way of keeping fit. But it's the hardest type of dancing around.

Belly dancing is held in Marlborough. I always wanted to do belly dancing when I was a child, but I didn't know how hard it was.

On my first lesson it was really hard to get the positions right, and to multi-task using arms, legs and hips. The first lesson I started we went straight into dancing and got through the little things which were hard to get the hang of, then we started to put a couple of moves together to form a little routine then we added music to it to make it flow.

The next day after belly dancing my thighs and hips started aching, but it's good to know that it's keeping me and everyone else fit and that were doing it right.

There's a variety of people that go, some have a lot of experience, and some are beginners.

There's also a variety of age groups any ages can go. There's not many people in a class, about twelve people that go regularly. Because the class is small the teacher can help us all individually so we get a better understanding of what we need to do if we need the help.

Some people turn up for their first day and really don't enjoy it, because they can't get into it. I think that if you're determined to do it you'll do well, get there and enjoy it.

I go with my aunty and my cousin every Tuesday and it last's an hour but sometimes we over run. It was my mum and aunty that got me into going.

I really enjoy going, it's a really nice atmosphere a feeling of calmness everywhere, and everyone gets on really well.

But it's a real struggle if you can't get the hang of it. The trick is just to keep practicing and trying, because it's not something you can just pick up overnight.

Belly dancing is good for toned abdominal, thighs, glutes and pelvic floor muscles. Belly dancing creates strong core muscles and creates a flexible and confident woman. It's a great cardiovascular exercise.

Lena the belly dancing teacher said: "First and foremost it's great fun, secondly I have noticed that my stomach has become flatter and more defined which is definitely a bonus!"

Melanie Jones aged 39 that has been going for a couple of months says "It's great fun keeps you fit and in shape."

Charlotte Watson aged 12 says "I love it, but it's much harder than it looks!"

Rachel Walters aged 32 says "I went to Turkey and got dragged up to the dance floor and got completely humiliated. So I thought I'd give belly dancing a try ready for next year!"

• By Emily Smith, 15, The Ridgeway School

IF YOU are interested in belly dancing and want to book or need more information, contact:

• Lena on 07726 404548

• Visit <http://natarajartspace.com>

• Email bellydancenow@aol.com

• Classes are £5 an hour, from 7pm to 8pm



Write, that was simply smashing

ON March 2nd, 2009, Steve Weatherill, a popular writer for children's books, visited Peatmoor Community Primary School. He came to talk to the children about the books he had written. Some of them were: Baby Goz, Little Red Riding Hood, Three little pigs Steve showed us what some of the characters in his books looked like by drawing them for us. One of them was the 'Big Bad Wolf'.

We asked some of the children in Year 6, what they thought about Steve Weatherill: Holly, Anahita and Lauren commented: "We thought that he was an awesome artist and he was very friendly towards the children!"

Megan said: "Very funny, he has written some great books. The younger ones really enjoyed his performance!"

Rebecca said: "Very interesting, his drawings were very accurate!"

Georgia said: "It was very interesting, and I enjoyed watching him draw."

Natasha said: "Very funny. His drawings were amazing!"

Steve also writes political comic strips for adults and suitable comics for children 10 and over.

He also did some drama with the younger ones about the three little pigs. The children very much enjoyed his visit and hope he comes again to do some more amazing drawings and read some more of his great books.

• By Lucy and Natasha, Peatmoor Primary

Matisse – a cut above the rest?

HENRI Matisse's vibrant and exquisite work has managed to cut its way into Swindon after a wait of five years.

Matisse, pictured, was one of the 20th century's most experimental artists.

His colourful exciting bold work is praised for the colours and different designs he uses to create such imagery. An excellent sample of his work, Drawing with Scissors, which he did in the last four years of his life, is currently being featured in the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery on Bath road until the 14th of March.

Walking into the gallery I was expecting to see a display of textures and layers of colour however I was blown away by the modern lines and simplicity of

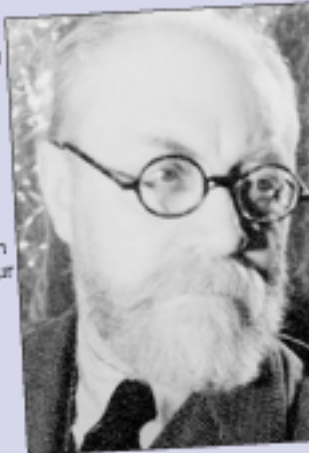
Matisse's work. He uses a combination of bold colour, intricate patterns and shapes which stand out on the page and make it fun and interesting to look at.

Even if you are not an art lover this is an exhibition not to be missed. Not simply because it is free and on your doorstep or because here is a chance to view the famous Blue Nudes, but because you might never have an opportunity to see such an extraordinary artist such as Matisse in Swindon again.

For the mini art lovers there is even a Matisse Magic trail around the museum, which will bag you a special prize! This

is an opportunity that cannot be missed.

• By Bethan Hire, 13, The Commonweal School



Currying favour – in the best possible way

ON Wednesday 4th March local businesses including Bombay Lounge, Caroline Collis and the Co-op supported Peatmoor Community Primary School in raising money for the school ECO projects.

Bombay Lounge sold Indian delicacies, Caroline Collis provided nail art and hair treatments and the Co-op served fruit drinks.

The delicacies were delicious, the drinks, refreshing and the nail art and hair treatments were fantastic. The event took place at lunchtime and proved to be a great success, raising over £80.

Mr Watermeyer our special projects co-ordinator felt that it was great to belong to a business community that takes an interest in its local schools and supports them.