



The Queen Mary's Observer

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Editors' Note: After a very busy and eventful first term, we hope you enjoy reading the first edition of the QMO for this year!
From expeditions from over summer, to new events and clubs, there's plenty to read about!

ROBERT PEACOCK

Year 13

2019 HIMALAYAS EXPEDITION

In July, QMGS students set off on an unforgettable expedition across the world. After months of fundraising and training in preparation, the two teams arrived in Delhi, jetlagged but excited. The first stop was the beautiful town of Leh in the mountainous region of Ladakh where we spent a few nights acclimatizing to the altitude of 3000m. Our next task was constructing a greenhouse for a small village so that they could grow crops over the winter, a rewarding exercise despite

the intense heat of the Summer. Inspired by our brilliant local guides, we took a week gaining height up to 5000m above sea level at basecamp; where we were able to train with crampons on glaciers and working as a team. When summit day finally came, the teams set off at midnight by torchlight. Unfortunately, heavy snow led to dangerous conditions which curtailed our attempt. The final week of the trip was spent visiting historical sites, not least the Taj Mahal. The trip was superb.

Thanks go to Mr Rendu, Mrs Mehta and Mr Sepede for coordinating the expedition.



QMA TASTES OF THE WORLD

ZAYAN PANNUN

Year 7

On Saturday the 7th of December, Queen Mary's Grammar School hosted the first 'Taste of the World' QMA event. This event celebrates the cultural diversity of QMGS and is a big step in the right direction of acceptance and understanding. The evening was a massive success with around 200 people coming and raising an approximate total of £4000. This money will go towards the Geography department who plan to invest in tablet computers for pupils. The evening was enjoyed by all and we received encouraging feedback on the event and how to further improve it for the future.

The evening kicked off with a professional Bhangra and Dhol performance by the 'Lions of Punjab'. This was fun-filled and energetic as many audience members ended up on stage dancing alongside the troop. The food stands opened, allowing people to try an amazing variety of North Indian, South Indian, Mexican and Filipino food; each option was as delicious as the last! Next up was the 'Open Mic Performance' where pupils from QMGS showcased their amazing

talents ranging from singing to playing the Indian flute to playing the Dhol. The audience voted on their favourites leaving Manveer and Harjeet Wilkhu the victors, closely followed by Karina Foster and Pranav Ragmanu. However, all performances were as entertaining as each other and required a lot of talent and hard work. A dessert stand, bar, raffle ticket stand, activities and henna artist were all available throughout the night. Finally, through the MEP, many students from QMGS and other schools involved in the programme put on an amazing show, broadcasting their talents. It was a lovely opportunity for family and friends to see the results of the student's time and effort. This included poem recitals, kung fu demonstrations and choir singing. Here is a first-hand account by Zayan Pannun who was part of the MEP performance that day,

"On the same day as the event, the MEP were to go to a Saturday intensive learning day. Some of us had decided that we wanted to be part of the MEP performance at 8:00am. On the day, we learnt two things for the performance; jingle bells and a poem in Mandarin. Then came

6.00pm. For some reason nerves did not hit me at all; maybe it was the food! However, it got to 8:00pm and we were on... and we nailed it! So, all-in-all, I really enjoyed the event. I really hope everyone who turned up enjoyed the day as well!"

The evening could not have been possible without the efforts of everyone involved. A massive thank you to every single volunteer and performer who were the glue that kept everything together and running so smoothly. This thank you is outstretched to the tech crew who were invaluable and put in a lot of time and effort to making this all possible. Not to mention, the dedication and generosity of the QMA committee, and Mr Langton who oversaw the making of the whole event. Thank you to all staff and students who supported the event, including Mr Collins, Mr Larvin and Mr Brown and of course the site team. Furthermore, a thank you to the PSLT, namely, Chris McHugh, Temmy Ojerinde, Zac Elliot and Cerys Wilson who worked with the QMA committee to set up the event. Congratulations on everyone's efforts. Here's to hoping next year will be even bigger and better!

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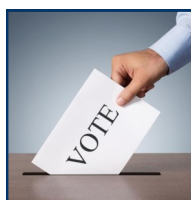
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MOCK ELECTION

MIA RASHODA

Year 12

In the lead-up to the general election, we decided to hold our own mock election within school, in which the pupils of each year group were given a ballot paper, asked to tick their party of choice and place their slip into a ballot box; simulating the real voting process. School wide, we saw Labour win a landslide, receiving 53% of the vote, followed far behind by the Conservatives, who only managed to get 16%, following closely by the Green Party, who took 15%. These results definitely didn't mirror the results of this year's general election, however, when asked 'Who do you think will win?', 51% of the pupils did say Conservative.

MADRID TRIP

KAYLAN CHAUHAN

Year 9

This year as part of the Languages department, Year 9, were given the opportunity to go on the annual trip to Madrid. They were able to visit landmarks, like the Royal Palace, and watch cultural dances, such as the Flamenco. The students enjoyed the local bowling alley and shopping in the city's many malls!



GENEROUS IN APPROACH

WILLIAM STEVENS

Year 8

This term, the pupils of QM have been showcasing one of the school's pillars; being generous in approach. The 24 hour Maths Challenge raised £1780 for the Birmingham Children's Hospital. In the library, all fines collected in December are going to the Book Trust 'Just One Book' appeal, aiming to give vulnerable children a book for Christmas. Furthermore, samosas were sold to raise funds for Project Phoenix. Always popular, they sold out within minutes. House Competitions like the foodbank also showcased our generosity. Petypher got 310 points, Aragon got 81, whilst Gryphon got 24 and Darby a huge 1512.

HORIZON UPDATE

MUSTAFA AL-ROBAE

Year 10

On Friday 28th June, 8 pupils accompanied by Mr Sepede set off to launch a helium balloon attached to a payload fitted with cameras to record a full day-night cycle. The pupils, ranging from Year 9 to Year 13, launched the payload at 18:30pm where they followed

its path until 3:00am the next day where the payload landed in the middle of a farm field. The pupils had to carefully trek across fields in order to recover it. Although it was 3.00am, everyone's morale was high and when the payload was finally found everyone got a well-earned rest and satisfaction at the completion of the mission. Well done to everyone involved and thank you to Mr Sepede for continuing to support Project Horizon.

OXBRIDGE PRESENTATION

CHRIS McHUGH

Year 13

November 7th saw students across the Mercian Trust being given the excellent opportunity to learn about the Oxbridge interview process. This interactive presentation was kindly delivered by the Head of Outreach, Jane Doe, from Oriel College, Oxford. Jane led Year 13s through a range of example interview questions and provided some useful hints and tips. A great tip given to students was to know their personal statements inside out: all of those books featured and academic interests highlighted need to be kept in mind! Usefully, Jane busted some

myths of the coveted Oxbridge interviews - you really don't have to wear that tweed suit, or worry about the handshake with your interviewer! Jane's presentation comes as a part of the Mercian Trust's wider Oxbridge preparation strategy, providing students with the excellent opportunity to attend an interview with a well placed teacher at one of the MAT schools. Interview decisions for Oxbridge applicants will be sent out throughout November, with final decisions being made in January next year. Good luck to all Year 13s in the coming months and many thanks to Jane for delivering an informative presentation! Special thanks also goes to Miss Weston for organising the talk and the wider Oxbridge preparation programme.

MATHS TRIP

MUSTAFA AL-ROBAE

Year 10

On 14th November, 40 students went on a trip to Warwick University to listen to lectures being conducted by professional mathematicians. They discussed a wide variety of topics including: Algebra, The Dark Web and Problem Solving/ Riddles. Amongst these professionals was famed celebrity Bobby Seagull who provided good experience on applying maths practically in the real world. Overall, the students really enjoyed the trip and we would like to thank Miss Fahmida and Mr Collins for organising the trip.

LONDON DESIGN MUSEUM

DIL PATEL

Year 9

In October the DT department took 20 Students to the Design Museum in London for the Design Ventura project. They were able to look around the museum to get ideas for their products as part of their project, with the option to look at design icons from the past and present. In the museum, they were able to look at products from Apple, Sony, Dyson and many more to see how their product design has evolved over time to what we know today. We would like to thank Mr. Hughes and Mr. Taylor for taking us.

HARRY POTTER TRIP

AHNAF ARIF

Year 8

Year 8 went on a trip to the magical Warner Bros Studios in London. Here, we had a lesson on scripting and how to make movies, something which we found very interesting. I was stunned by how much detail and effort they put into just designing the entrance. We were even taken into a cinema room where three of the main actors told us about their 10 years in the film industry. In one section the teachers gave us permission to have the butter beer! Finally, we saw an enormous model of Hogwarts and then at last, we visited the shop, where we were able to purchase film memorabilia to take home with us.

CCF REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

MUSTAFA AL-ROBAE

Year 10

On Sunday 10th November, the CCF gathered in Walsall to pay respects to the fallen soldiers of both World Wars. The QMGs CCF handled themselves with dignity and did the school proud. On the following day, the school held its own memorial during the 2 minute silence to honour those from the school community who gave their lives. Year 9 Cadets held images of these former pupils in the quad. It was a powerful experience for all involved. We Will Remember Them!





RAINBOW SOCIETY

CERY'S WILSON

Vice-Captain

January saw the launch of the Rainbow Society, a student led club with the motive to create a socially inclusive environment for the whole school. Overseen by Head of PSHEE Mrs McPhee, several teachers across the school have been involved. The society includes a diverse group of people from the LGBTQ+ community supported by allies that want to be educated further.

Regardless of year group, gender or sexuality, members are empowered to discuss prevalent and important issues on a weekly basis. However, no one is pressured to speak in front of everyone nor are they pressured to speak personally about their identity. It is a safe and supportive atmosphere at each meeting.

In the meetings, student presentations are designed to create awareness on topics such as personal opinions on pride parades and LGBTQ+ representation in the media. A particularly significant week featured a presentation on Polari, the British secret language used by the gay community to safely communicate with one another in the early 20th century.

Hate and judgement has no place at QMGS and newcomers are encouraged to speak up for what they believe in.

The society meets every Friday lunchtime at 13.20 in Q9 and welcomes all.

CHANGE YOUR MIND

PARDEEP SANDHU

Year 9

Running since 2016, the QMGS developed scheme, "Change Your Mind" has been a huge success and 2019 is the first year that has involved other secondary schools. After an induction day on the 27th November, schools as far as Durham and as close as Walsall are now receiving workshops. But what is Change Your Mind? It's a Block E option, like EPQ or further Maths. It's a team of 30 Year 12 volunteers who deliver mental health workshops across the UK. This academic year there are 57 workshops planned at the moment, 32 primary schools involved and 1600 pupils involved. It is already exceeding expectations, with 6 more secondary schools involved than targeted and a partnership with Walsall School Nurses.

What about the future? Well, another induction day, more PSHEE tailored workshops, first aid training at our school and others and a further spread of Change Your Mind across all 4 corners of England. So, the future is bright! Because of all the fantastic work that Change Your Mind has done, Ross Morrison McGill asked our school to be part of his new book, "Just Great Teaching" which has seen the programme gain international awareness and publicity.

POETRY COMPETITION

Mr DRYHURST

English Teacher

In October, QMGS marked National Poetry Day with a competition. Over a hundred students rose to the challenge of writing a poem on the subject of truth, making a welcome evening's work for judges Mrs Walker and Mr Dryhurst. Below are some of the entries which won prizes of praise, pride and chocolate.

*Truth, so brittle but hard;
Truth, so harsh though sweet;
Truth, to be handled with caution;
Truth, the hardest of poisons:
Good and bad, truth and lies,
They're a mirage of the brain.*

*Truth, the creator of Death;
Truth, the creator of life;
Truth; Truth; Truth:
Honest or not,
Truth is the truth.*

Ajay Jabbal (Year 7, Darby)

*After our Sun,
Beyond the lounge that turned our lives,
Into an orchestra of fights,
When we bowed for the end;
Behind the screaming silence,
Behind the cliché 'I am OK',
Behind the fake smile and sick hugs,
Behind the thoughts of not being together
again,
Lies a truth that I don't want to admit.*

Mikaeel Khan (Year 8, Petypher)

*Truth is (for some)
A four letter word
That is rarely spoken
And even less heard.*

*Truth has real power.
Relentless and bold,
Truth will come out
Just as foretold.*

*Facts, they are stubborn.
They don't go away.
They live in plain sight.
They get in the way.*

Harpatap Virk (Year 9, Darby) – Overall Winner

DENISON SOCIETY AND QM SCHOLARS

HARJEET WILKHU

Editor

This term hosted the return of the Denison Society and the beginning of the QM Scholars Programme for Sixth Form. The Denison Society is a debating society, and was extremely popular this term considering the current political situation and General Election. The QM Scholars

*Her talons choke an empty wine glass.
It's not the first time it's happened -
But it's the first time she's asked.*

All night she's been preparing; lying in wait.

*She's been alone at the table,
Nearly four hours straight.*

He stumbles through the door then kicks off his shoes,

*Reeking not only of beer
But of drugstore perfume.*

She recognises the scent: it's not changed in three months.

*A ring on her finger lies
That he'd loved her once.*

*She knew he was a liar
Right from the start. But that didn't stop her*

From letting go of her heart.

*It had been so perfect, so very cliché.
For a moment there,
She believed he could change.*

Nate Rees (Lower Sixth, Petypher)

*What is truth? A fascination,
A bending of imagination.
Why stick to truth? When you can find
A little lie and you'll leave your life behind.
A little white lie can save a life,
Defending you from lots of strife,
"Oh yes Granny, this dinner is nice."
When it's actually jam-packed full of lice!
A little lie can defend a mate,
From a little late, or a terrible fate.
A story of insane longevity,
Will leave your teacher apologising greatly.
So now you know of all the damage,
A little white lie can definitely vanish.*

Joe Hughes (Year 11, Gryphon)



Programme for Sixth Form is a new initiative to increase the wider knowledge of sixth-form students. It is a great opportunity to participate in the academic lectures presented by a different teacher each week. This term's topics included lectures on Wagner and the importance of the alphabet in human life. Both are great opportunities and we look forward to future events.



RUGBY REPORT

MANJEEVAN CHEEMA*Year 13*

It has been a great rebuilding job for the rugby squad after being deprived of some crucial players from the previous year. The squad has remained composed under the stewardship of new captain Joe Popple and have displayed signs of quality in their run of games this season. Highlights include a 50-19 win against Walsall Academy and a 38-19 win against Kinver HS. This was described by Mr. Taylor as "one of the best performances I have seen by a QM 1st XV - absolutely stunning handling and running by all." Another highlight was playing on an artificial grass pitch at Butts Park Arena, home of Coventry RFC, in

the 3rd round of the U18 National Vase. There have been some great performances from the players this season, including Harvir Dhahan and Gabriel Ekpa making a good impact on their returns to the team. It seems they can only go up from here.



HOCKEY REPORT

MANJEEVAN CHEEMA*Year 13*

After losing various members of last year's XI to universities, the hockey team have had a great season so far. Under the captaincy of Kharam Auluk, the team have been scintillating in front of goal, as proven by scores of 4-3 and 7-0 against KES, 7-1 against KE Camp Hill, and 9-0 against KE Aston, as well as a hard-fought 1-1 against Warwick. Vishal Puligari, Eduardo Bisconti, and James Fearon have all stood out this season with their performances. The 2nd XI have impressed this season against the likes of Wolverhampton Grammar, KES, and OSH, with Syed Hassan, Dane Westley, and Karam Rai performing exceptionally well. The 3rd XI are not to be left out either – with a special mention to Jackson Fraser with a 5-goal-haul in a 5-0 win against KE Aston. The teams have had some superb unbeaten runs, and it is safe to say to further success awaits.



Year 11 cross country team came 2nd in the team competition in Walsall schools event.

CROSS-COUNTRY REPORT

MANJEEVAN CHEEMA*Year 13*

The cross-country team have been exceptional this season; with 5 out of 5 wins in the head-to-head against every school in the league, including a 15-point margin of victory against the defending champions Adams Grammar, and a victory in the pairs race with the fastest overall time. QM looked poised to win the league until the team's transport never showed up for the individual race showpiece at Cannon Hill Park against all the other competitors in the league, denting their title hopes in the process. Captain Daniel Swain has led by example, winning 4 of the 5 head-to-heads along with a 2nd place, and a victory in the pairs race alongside Dominic Smith of Year 11, who has been very impressive this season. The team can hold their heads up high. Robert Davidson, Robert Peacock, and Calum Feenan have consistently put in performances, and Kyle Corbin, having joined later in the season, has been running well. With 5 more races to go, including a relay finale, the team are fired up and ready to claim the title that they deserve.

FOOD BANK

MRS MEHTA*Director of Houses*

This term, QM took part in the Food Bank Competition, a House competition where students brought in various cans and jars of food and toiletries for the Glebe Centre. Here a variety of services are delivered that serve vulnerable adults and families in Walsall. This year we beat last year's total of 720 by posting a tally of 929 items, with Darby coming 1st with 413 items followed by Gryphon, Petypher and Aragon 4th. The staff at the Glebe centre were very thankful and wished for their appreciation to be forwarded to all the members of the school community. Mrs Mehta would like to thank everyone who contributed especially members of 10G along with Kamran Khan and Sevak Bansel, who helped with the delivery of 55 heavy boxes to the Glebe Centre. Look out for more house events taking place including Basketball, Futsal, Rugby and other charity events including the Christmas Jumper day, Doughnut/Samosa Sales, and QMA events.



Thank you to all who donated to the Food Bank!

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