



The QM Observer

THE TRAGIC PASSING OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest-serving monarch, sadly passed away on the 8th of September 2022 at Balmoral Castle in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. This marked the end of the second Elizabethan age. Her death was publicly announced at 18:30 BST.

From her service in WW2 to making the succession more equitable through the Crown Act of 2013, Queen Elizabeth II made numerous significant contributions during her life, which will be remembered forever. Over her 70-year reign, she has made 285 tours of 117 countries, meeting many people who will always cherish the moment they met her.

As a school, we are deeply saddened by the death of Queen Elizabeth II. A 2-minute silence was observed in school, in addition to the union flag being raised. Many of our staff wore black in mourning of Her Majesty. The school bell was rung for the first time in years, and Mr. Franklin presented a heart-warming assembly to commemorate Elizabeth II. Shortly after the Queen's passing, the QMGS History Society discussed the Queen's life, and this was attended by all year groups.

Many members of our school travelled to London to pay their respects and mourn the death of Queen Elizabeth II, who was lying in state at Westminster Hall. There was a 14-hour queue, which could be recognized as one of the longest lines in British history. Mr. Reynolds- the Head of History- attended.



Commenting on his personal experience he stated: "I went to bear witness to the end of the Second Elizabethan Age. On an impulse, I travelled down to London at night to see the Queen Lying in State and at 11 pm I joined The Queue. For 13 hours overnight I queued and zig-zagged through Southwark, South Bank and finally to Westminster to bear witness to the end of the Second Elizabethan Age. I wanted to study The Queue, to bear witness of a significant historical event. It also became a challenge to get through what seemed like a marathon- I was going to complete this mammoth task. Tired, cold- with an injured foot- I arrived into the magnificent 1,000 year old Westminster Hall where the Conqueror's son once stood and Churchill and Charles I had previously presented themselves. The solemnity was striking. The ceremony and pageantry was Britain's soft power at its best. A calmness and purposefulness was present. The ancient stone hall with oak roof fell silent bar the sound of the Royal Guard's staff echoing a change in the guard. Many were quietly emotional; all were respectful. After 13 hours, each person, with their own thoughts, had their individual one minute with the Queen. This was an occasion that surely will not be repeated in the foreseeable future."

Her eldest child of four, Charles III, succeeded her and is now King, with Camilla as Queen Consort.

Long live the King.

Keira Temple

CCF

CCF EXPEDITION AND REMEMBRANCE PARADE

After another successful Army Camp at the end of the summer term, where cadets were tested by both activities and extreme temperatures, recruits were eager to settle back into CCF life. This began with the first trip of the academic year: the Outward Bound 2 weekend. Intermediate walkers enjoyed orienteering exercises, including a walk in Diffwys in the Rhinogydd range, heralded for its rugged beauty, while another group ventured onto Arran Ridge. Those in attendance enjoyed beautiful views and tremendous group spirit.

On Sunday 13th November, the CCF gathered in Walsall town centre as part of the Walsall remembrance parade to pay respects to the fallen soldiers of both World Wars. The QMGS CCF conducted themselves with dignity and made the school proud. On the previous Friday, the school held its own memorial assembly including a 2-minute silence to honour those from the school community who gave their lives. The remembrance services proved to be powerful and memorable experiences for all involved.

Cadets now look forward to the upcoming Arctic warfare training weekend in December.



Naomi Marques-Wiggins

SPEECH DAY

It was an astounding return to form on the 20th October, as QMGs celebrated a fully realised Speech Day after a two-year absence.

It was wonderful to see all members of the School community in a cheerful mood as we traversed the path to St Matthew's Church for the morning thanksgiving service, during which students were delighted by a series of speeches by senior members of staff interspersed with hymns and musical performances. Of particular interest was watching how the school was able to modernise what is such a historic tradition, making it relevant to the growing School community. Reverend Jenny Mayo, Vicar of St Martin's Church, subverted the expectations of a typical thanksgiving speech, asking us instead to challenge our own perceptions of personal success, and to focus on what makes us unique. She spoke on how our resilience, kindness and humility will be the arbiters of our success; I could not help but feel deeply moved and inspired by her words.

The performance given by the choir of 'Amazing Grace' was another highlight of the morning, as was the contemporary arrangement of 'You Are My Vision', once more showing a reconciliation between the old and the new. The service concluded with another inspiring speech from Mr Langton, during which he asked us to reflect on what makes us unique and the importance of exiting our comfort zones: only then can we live our truth. The church then resounded with the sound of the school song as we exited.

The afternoon proceedings began with an engaging talk by this year's guest speaker, Andrew Peach. During his seminar to prefects and prize-winners, Mr Peach reflected on his journey from being a student at QMGs to his career as a radio presenter on BBC Radio 4. It was fantastic to see how engaged students were with Mr Peach's talk, showing them all to be great ambassadors to our school.

Joined by parents, senior members of staff and Mr Peach, the evening service commenced jovially in the school hall; it was so much more than just a prizegiving. From the inspiring speeches given by members of the PSLT to the piano solo by Bill Wong, the evening was a celebration of the School's achievements over the past year. Each speech was infused with pride and enthusiasm about what makes our School so special- it was a joy to watch.

Given the immensity of holding such an event, it would be impossible to thank all the people who assembled this year's Speech Day, so, on behalf of the entire school community, I would like to extend my gratitude to all people who assisted, no matter how small.



Harry Sandhu

SCHOOL SPIRIT

Welcome to the New Year 7s and Year 12s!

A massive welcome to the new Year 7 and Year 12 pupils joining QMGs this academic year. It can be quite daunting coming into a new environment, but hopefully this year will be an enjoyable and productive one. This academic year, there are a lot of activities on offer and many ways in which you can get involved within the School community. Extracurricular clubs include lunchtime sports clubs, music clubs, such as the skiffle band, and, for those interested in learning an instrument, Mr. Vause and the Music Department offer a wide range of instruments that you can learn, so please see him if you are interested in pursuing this. The See Yourself group, which is run by Mr Fadden, the Head of the English Department, is a great way to get involved in the conversation surrounding diversity and inclusion within literature. The See Yourself group aims to make the school's English curriculum more diverse by incorporating books written by people of colour. The progress they have made is already being seen, with authors such as Alex Wheatle and Zadie Smith being taught to pupils this year.



For the year 12s, there is an opportunity for you to join the CCF; which is QMGs's Combined Cadet Force, in which you can join either the army cadets or the RAF cadets, and, for all pupils joining this academic year, there is a chance for you to be the voice for your form by representing them in the School Council. In addition, there are many societies for you to get involved with such as the History Society, MedSoc, QM Alliances and PhilSoc, just to name a few. It would be wonderful to see all new pupils get involved with the many opportunities that QMGs provides. I wish you all a wonderful academic year.

Mariam Nachif

Reading for Pleasure

As an A-Level English Literature student myself, reading is a part of my daily schedule. Reading is personally something I look forward to and thoroughly enjoy. However, reading is not only an endeavour to be enjoyed but also provides many benefits. These benefits include increased comprehension, a larger breadth of vocabulary, greater general knowledge, a better understanding of other cultures and a greater insight into human nature and decision-making. These skills are not only beneficial throughout your academic education but will be needed and frequently relied upon for the rest of your life. Acquiring these great skills will stand you in good stead not just now but in years to come. There are many reasons why you should read for pleasure and not just due to the statistics. Reading is an enjoyable way to escape and enter new worlds, and can offer insights that you have never explored; they can be comedic, adventurous, thrilling and even educational, and the vast range of books on offer ensures that there is something for everyone. In QMGs alone, there are many books on display in our school library, from the 'Percy Jackson' series to 'A Life of Crime' written by High Court Judge Harry Ognall. There are so many books to excite interest and engage your mind. So, start today, simply pick up a book and see where it takes you!

Mariam Nachif



MANDARIN TRIP

On the 8th of October, 6 students had the opportunity to participate in the Mandarin Speaking Competition prize giving in London, delivered by the Chinese Bridge Club. These students achieved 1st prize winnings as well as 2nd prize winnings. Not only was this about receiving an award, but it was also an opportunity for the students to explore a variety of locations.

For instance, after arriving in London, they all explored China town, tried some Chinese bakery shop delights, and had a look at the Lego Shop prior to the prizegiving.

Joshua had the privilege to address everyone with a short Mandarin speech to round off the event.

Overall, this achievement represents an integral part of our school life.

Congratulations to all involved.

AYRIK

SPORTS UPDATE

Sports continue to be a key philosophy here at Queen Mary's, and as the Cricket season came to a close, we were once again accompanied by the traditional sports of Rugby and Hockey. Our Rugby team, as of recently, have prevailed in advancing to the semi-finals of the yearly County Cup, with a resounding victory of 40-5 over John Taylor. Similarly, our lower years won three consecutive games against Fairfax on the 26th, from Years 7 to 9, three of the best from our boys in red and blue.

Hockey too is making our team illustrious around the region; with several successes spanning over the term. Our First XI have seen victory and the agonising sentiment that is loss; yet it would be an ignorance of their courage to not highlight their grit and determination in both. Success and shortcoming go hand in hand.

Netball has been a sport launching into prominence this year, and what better way than to do so with qualification towards the regional finals, with dominance over QMHS and Streetly Academy. They've recently been on the victory path again with a 38-2 win to commence their Walsall schools campaign. A huge congratulations to all those involved.

And it goes without saying that achievement outside of school due to the hard work put in is always welcomed, and especially for cricketer Mani Parigi. Mani has been selected in the Staffordshire U18 Winter squad, to train at a county level. We wish to see many more follow in the footsteps of those who have been successful in their sporting ventures. Well done for another excellent term of sports!

BEN SIMPSON

MORGAN MOTORS TRIP

What materials would you expect a car to be made from? Steel? Rubber? Plastic? Maybe even carbon fibre? Well at Morgan Motors they specialise in building their cars out of wood, aluminium and leather; making their cars very unique and relatively lightweight in comparison to the modern alternatives. And on the 4th of November, A-Level DT students had the opportunity to tour the Malvern-based factories where cars are hand-crafted by a string of highly skilled staff and apprentices and are shipped all over the world. Students had the opportunity to see not only the manufacturing first hand, from forming Ash frames with hammers, to spray painting and designing the fully customizable Morgan Motor cars with different guns and tools, but also to see how repairs to cars that had been in accidents were repaired by hand and sent straight back to the owners. Students also learned about the company's efforts to enter different disciplines of motor racing like rally or touring car racing and although there wasn't too much success, Morgan Motors do still hold on to a 24-hour Le Mans race victory all the way back in 1962 - exactly 60 years ago. Although they give an impression of a company that can only produce old fashioned traditional looking cars, most of which without traction control or an automatic gearbox, even today the company produces high value cars that mature well and are a delight to own and to drive. Overall, the experience was definitely worth it and has inspired a few of us to consider going into the mechanical or automotive engineering industries in the next stage of our lives. A massive thank you to Mr Hughes, Mrs Cummings and Mr Taylor for making this opportunity possible for us.

LEON SANDHU



LANZAROTE TRIP

Over the October half-term break, I was lucky to be one of 20 students who visited the Spanish island of Lanzarote to complete their PADI Open Water Diving Qualification. The week began with a series of 'confined water dives' in the crystalline waters of the Playa Blanca cove, during which we practised important skills we would need whilst diving. After completing this first stage of diving, we then began our 4 training dives, which saw us swim up to 18m below the surface of the water. Although disconcerting at first, the experience of being underwater soon felt second-nature to me, as I loaded my 12L tank of oxygen onto my back and descended below the waves. Of course, one of the main motivations for attending this trip was to observe the bountiful marine life that Lanzarote is renowned for- and it did not disappoint. During our dives, we encountered octopi, camouflaged cuttlefish and even an angel shark- a protected species of the Canary Islands. The week concluded with a visit to the Timanfaya National Park, a truly astounding landscape which resembled the surface of Mars. We all watched in awe as plumes of water, warmed by volcanic rock surged out of the ground, all the while surrounded by the destructive beauty of the volcanoes. This trip was such a wonderful experience, and one that I will certainly never forget. From the enjoyment of evening meals as a group, to seeing an octopus crawl out of its burrow, every moment was unforgettable. On behalf of all the students who attended, we would like to extend our thanks to Mr Rendu and Mrs Mehta for all their trust and kindness that week, and also to the Canary Island Divers who instructed us patiently throughout.



HARRY SANDHU



SCHOOL SPIRIT

MUSIC REVIEW

It has been a busy term for our musicians, with performances at Speech Day and planned performance for the Christmas Concert. The Speech Day concert got off to an impressive start, with a musical solo piano piece by Bill Wong, 'Allegro, 1st Movement from Sonata in F minor'. The Clarinet Ensemble wowed the audience with the 'Song of the Wellerman', which had everyone stomping their feet to the beats. The vocal solo by Sophia Valmalette-Wright of 'I have nothing' by Whitney Houston was a powerhouse of a performance. The School Orchestra played 'Wade in the Water' and 'You Raise Me Up', highlighting some remarkable talent from across the year groups. The highlight of the evening was the Orchestra performance of 'Born To Be Wild', which finished with a brilliant bang. Bravo to all performers, and special thanks to the Music Department.

Note to readers: the date for the Christmas concert is Thursday 15th December at 7:30pm in the school hall, tickets can be purchased through Ticket Source, and the cost is £5.00 each – search 'QMGS Christmas Concert'. See you all there!

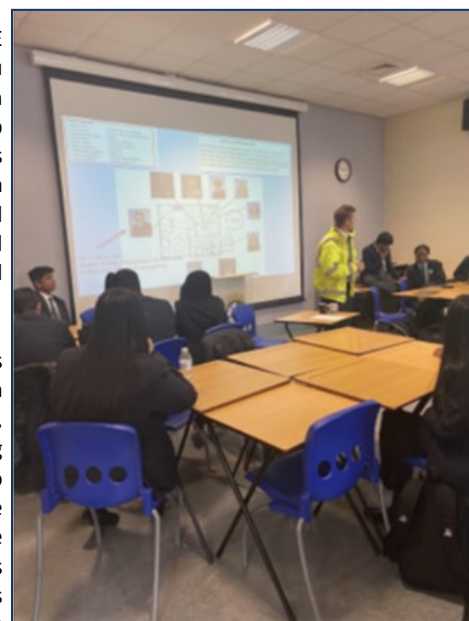
GAUTAM MENON



CHANGE YOUR MIND: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Change Your Mind is a Block E option, which for those of you who don't know, is another option you can pick in sixth form on top of your A levels. This involves QMGS pupils mentoring pupils in local primary schools around topics such as First Aid, Digital detoxing, Neurodiversity and more.

QMGS pupils give presentations on these subjects helping them build valuable communication, public speaking and wellbeing skills, which can then be used to help yourself and others. Change your mind this year has seen the highest number of students applying to take part, as well as the most number of workshops available. There have been new topics further First Aid and Neurodiversity sub-teams.



As well as this, many members of Change Your Mind received Level 3 First Aid training and conflict resolution training as part of their courses; adding qualifications to the Block E subject as well as looking good on CVs and university applications, and teaching vital skills that could fix a relationship or potentially help save a life. As part of the first aid training students learned how to perform CPR, use adrenaline injections, stop serious blood loss, reduce damage from burns, help people suffering from seizures, asthma attacks and heart attacks. Conflict resolution students learned about stress relief, emotional awareness and building healthy relationships. In addition to this, everyone in the Change Your Mind team has also gone through Safeguarding training with Mr Collins.

KAYLAN-ISHAN CHAUHAN

PRAISE BREAKFAST

To start the new year, QMGS had a praise breakfast, where one student from each year (Years 7-12) was selected by their head of year. To be chosen to receive this award these 6 students must show outstanding effort towards the school community, show increasing effort towards their academic purposes and also display the school's CREDIT values. The praise breakfast consisted of hot chocolate with a variety of cakes and sweet treats. The praise breakfast was attended by the headmaster and pupils from the senior leadership team. For the first praise breakfast the 6 nominated students were: Toby from 7X, Aryaan from 8Z, Ibraheem from 9X, Eran from 10M, Richard from 11A and Caden from 12MB. These students received an award for their excellent behaviour and outstanding effort.

The praise breakfast will be hosted every Friday with the nominees from each year being notified the day before at the latest. The students nominated will receive a slip of paper with instructions on where to go, what will happen, and why it was awarded. The breakfast will take place during form time on a Friday. So show a positive attitude and always try your best at QMGS because, who knows, you might be the next person to receive this award!

ADYAN AHMED



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