



The QM Observer

Goodbye Y13 and Welcoming the new PSLT

It is once again the time of year when we must say goodbye to another excellent cohort of Y13s, who have been role models to the rest of the school of the Marians they could become. Especially as someone in Y12 who has seen the faces of some of the Y13s since my very first day in school, it will be a strange adjustment to longer see those faces which I have become so accustomed to. We congratulate them for their efforts during another tough exam season and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Though this is a time of reflection for those leaving, it also represents a fresh start for our Y12s who will be entering into a new age of responsibility as the oldest students in the school; for many this being their first time since Y6. This theme of responsibility is especially heightened for our new PSLT who, having gone through two rounds of challenging interviews, were selected just before their end of year exams began. Acting as the bridge between their peers and staff, each new iteration of the PSLT hopes to leave their legacy to QM - and this year is no different. Already, they have been instrumental in planning QM's inaugural ArtFest, happening on 8th July, and have sat in a meeting with the school's new Post-16 governor to discuss how the school's Sixth Form provisions could be improved. It is clear then that this year's PSLT aim to be one of the most successful yet and we cannot wait to see what they do when their posts are more formally committed in September.

Thomas Sharma, one of the new Captains of School, stated that he was most excited about 'working with the rest of the PSLT to have a positive impact' on the school, and that though the time commitment can sometimes be quite extreme, he knows that he has a 'strong team' for support. Having been elected by both their peers and staff, it is no wonder the PSLT sometimes feel overwhelmed by such high expectations, however they have all said that they will endeavour to create as positive an impact as possible.

Harry Sharma

24 Hour Maths Challenge

The Twenty Four Hour Mathematics Challenge was a remarkable initiative taken on by 20 dedicated Year 12 students in order to raise money for Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity. Between 9am on 13th July and 9am on 14th July, these students participated in twenty-four consecutive maths lessons. The driving force behind this ambitious event is the collective belief of Mr Mitchell and Mr Finch, the organisers, that our close-knit community at Queen Mary's Grammar School will raise money to benefit our local hospital and make an impact on the lives of young children. Some of the students involved have personal experiences of the hospital and raising donations can be seen as a heartfelt gesture of gratitude, while others empathise with our children and are passionate about making a change. Birmingham Children's Hospital plays a crucial role in the lives of countless children, treating an average of 90,000 young children



every single year. These contributions, no matter how big or small will go towards providing patients with a "child-friendly environment" and supporting their families. Children are proven to have successful recoveries if the atmosphere before and after surgery reduces their anxiety, and this is only one aspect of the incredible work the charity carries out. Furthermore, it gives the hospital the means to conduct research into overcoming childhood diseases and treating patients with state-of-the-art medical equipment. Together we can make a tangible difference in the lives of these children. Let us recognise the determination the students have shown and support them in this fundraising endeavour.

Pranathi

Sports Day



Monday 26th June and Thursday 29th June were notable dates for the QMGS calendar as they marked the start of Sports Week and Sports Day, respectively. On the first day, there were 400 students participating in football or softball, and on the second day indoor dodgeball and handball events took place. The enthusiasm soared as over 300 pupils took part in either volleyball or swimming on Wednesday, adding a splash of excitement to the already vibrant atmosphere.

An intense battle of tug of war between the Sixth Form declared the beginning of Sports Day, which was surprisingly accompanied by pleasant weather and ice cream in the afternoon. The unwavering competitive spirit continued as students from all houses gave their best performances and actively stepped in for their peers when necessary. The anticipation and excitement surrounding Sports Day were evident from the soaring cheers from the spectators who watched in awe of the remarkable display of skills and determination exhibited by the participants. A sense of unity was created with students from different years and houses coming together to celebrate each other's accomplishments and act as exemplar representatives of their house.

Whilst Aragon won for the Sixth Form, Gryphon emerged as the triumphant house, securing the 2023 House Cup. They had victorious outcomes in a range of field and track activities like javelin and the relay races. In second place was Aragon, followed by Petypher and then Darby.

It was the first Sports Day for some students, including myself, and the experience was enlightening as it introduced me to the true sense of community that can be felt at Queen Mary's Grammar School. This day provided a platform for every student to showcase their sportsmanship and challenge their limits, so everyone who contributed should be proud of themselves for representing their respective houses, and themselves with pride. Furthermore, 29th June served as a great epitome of what Queen Mary's school spirit represents and embodied the values of CREDIT as well as resilience, and a passion for excellence. Undoubtedly, this event was an opportunity that served as a testament to the indomitable spirit and enthusiasm that exists within the school.

Pranathi



BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

From Tuesday 23rd to Friday 26th May, forty-five Year 9 students, along with Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Kolaric, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Hughes, and Mr. Rendu went on the annual Battlefields Trip run by the History Department.

On Monday, we all arrived at school nice and early at around 7:30am. After having our passports collected by Mr. Reynolds and conducting a quick register, we set off on the coach (thanks to our legendary driver Derek). Stopping at a services along the way, we arrived at Dover port after around three hours of driving. Luckily, customs went smoothly. We then boarded a ferry which took us to Calais in North France. Following our arrival, we reboarded the coach and drove straight to our hotel in Ypres, Belgium. We stayed at Ypres Lodge and after getting there, we settled in and later that evening (after dinner of course), we had a demonstration from Steve, a friend of Mr. Hughes, who showed us some weapons and memorabilia from the First World War.

Wednesday morning, we had a refreshing start to the day with breakfast served to us in the cafeteria. We then set off to Ypres town Centre. First, we held a service in remembrance of the Old Boys at St George's cathedral, followed by a visit to the 'In Flanders Fields' Museum. We then had some free time to browse shops within the town square, including a brief visit to a renowned Belgian Chocolate shop where we saw an amazing salesman at work.



After sitting down in the town square for lunch, we re-boarded the coach and went to Sanctuary Wood (the Hill 62 Museum) to visit the most well-preserved trench cutouts in Europe. After getting very muddy, we visited Tyne Cot British Cemetery, which is the largest British Commonwealth War Cemetery in the world. After this, we felt it was important to additionally pay respects to the German soldiers too, visiting Langemark German Cemetery.

We then returned to the hotel for an early dinner, only to depart again to return to central Ypres to attend and take part in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate. Following the ceremony, we had a little bit more free time before returning to the hotel at 9pm.

Thursday morning had an early start with breakfast at 7:30am. Leaving the hotel at 8:30, we boarded the coach and went to see Vimy Ridge, a Canadian memorial park. We then arrived at the Somme area, where we first visited Newfoundland Park (Beaumont Hamel). After that, we visited the Ulster Tower, which is built on the old German front line. Following this, we saw Thiepval Memorial and Visitors Centre, placed at the heart of the Somme battlefield. We departed the Somme area at around 4:45, to then have a substantial amount of free time at the Hotel.

On Friday morning, we had breakfast as normal and left the hotel for the last time at around 8:30. At 10:00 we arrived at Talbot House, a museum and garden in Poperinge, a resting town for soldiers. We also visited the Shot at Dawn Post to remember the soldiers who were shot for cowardice or other crimes during the War. We then drove to Calais, took another ferry home, and (due to lots of traffic) arrived back at school at around 9:45pm. The Battlefields trip was an amazing experience because, not only did we gain valuable experience in taking care of ourselves, seeing the memorials and war graves helped put into scale the destruction of the Great War. Thank you to Mr. Reynolds for organizing this trip, and a huge thank you to Derek for being the best coach driver we could have ever asked for.

Alex Hill



RAMADHAN EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

The Ramadhan Experience took place on Thursday 30th March and was an amazing way to end the spring half term. An incredible opportunity to celebrate the month of Ramadhan with the wider community of QMGs. Students of different faiths and cultures learned about the value and importance of fasting, and activities were organised encouraging an understanding towards their Muslim friends and peers. These included word searches, quizzes about Islam, Islamic geometric designs for colouring, stories of the Islamic way of life and a display of traditional and cultural clothing for students to try. Fundraising also took place with the sale of traditional items of oud (perfume), incense sticks, Palestinian Medjool dates, raffle tickets (Zak Y7 with 1st prize Ramadhan hamper), and henna designs were created by Areebah with Gurneer assisting.

Kudos to Adam (Y12) for leading the congregational prayer where students participated to experience one of five Islamic pillars. An amazing £785.62 was raised after costs to donate to the charity, Penny Appeal to support families and victims affected by the Turkey and Syria earthquake disaster. Ahmad Boston Director of Communications & Marketing and Jamal Sheikh Midlands Community Fundraising Manager (with Y12 volunteers, Ishaal, Edwin, Areebah, Ayaan, Keisha & Nampreet), attended the school on 22nd June to speak to Y12 about the aid work the charity has undertaken in Turkey.

The event would not have been possible without the hard work put in by Mrs Butt and our big group of Y12 student volunteers. The Ramadhan Experience was an unique event to QMGs this year. A remarkable occasion to celebrate the diversity of the school community.

Areebah & Habibah



CCF TRIPS

The April half term saw the CCF RAF Annual Camp at Inskip, where they undertook many exciting activities, such as utilising the flight simulator on the base. In addition, they took part in a drill competition, and enjoyed some adventure training. The cadets enjoyed some climbing and abseiling, alongside a paintball CQB (close quarters battle) stand! Cadet Warrant Officer Sam Baugh described it as "an enjoyable last camp, one to remember!". The Mini Regional Air Squadron Trophy was a good opportunity for the younger cadets, and some fantastic experience for the year 12 NCOs. Despite valiant opposition from Barr Beacon and Malvern Schools, QM B and QM C teams finished first and second respectively, with Queen Mary's dominating 5 out of 6 stands

Both sides of the contingent had a visit to Farchynys for Outward Bound 4, where cadets were challenged to, and succeeded in climbing Cadair Idris.

On the green side of things, the army and air cadets has been regularly parading and sharpening their skills in preparation for their attendance on CCF Central Camp, in Nesscliffe Training Area, hosted by the CTT. The two platoons' worth of cadets spent the week bolstering the practical element of their learning, with a fieldcraft exercise and a range day being the highlights for many. QM dominated the shooting element of the competition, with Glazebrook winning the Indoor laser shotgun competition, and Singh and Baugh placing first and second respectively in the long range package competition. For many cadets, the exposure to the way these camps function allowed them to really gauge the mindset we build on a weekly basis, surrounding courage, discipline, respect, integrity, loyalty and selfless commitment.

Harnaam Singh



CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

BLETCHLEY PARK TRIP

I will try to recap the Bletchley Park trip for those who haven't been reading the QMO. During the trip, students are randomly chosen to learn about the life and work of those who were chosen to decode the Enigma code, including how Alan Turing helped defeat the Nazis with the aid of the Bomb. With me being lucky enough to visit there, I can give you a first-hand account of what it was like.

Miss Mohammed and Miss Tariq were our supervisors on one of the buses (there were two). Funny story, we came to Bletchley just in time to eat our lunch and a gaggle of geese attacked us when we proceeded to eat.

After the attack, I was taken away with the rest of my group, to Hut 8, where we learned about decryption methods, and later left to the mercy of the interactive boards, which were a chore to use.

Then we had the tour, provided by one of the Bletchley Park staff. It was informative and told us much more about the park than any recreation of it shows. It also told us about the otherwise overlooked stories of those related to and not to Alan Turing. My group then learned about how the Bomb Machine works, and after a lot of guessing, let's just say we didn't really get it.

At the end of our trip, all of us who were there met back up to learn, and fail, about how to decrypt Morse Code. Then we took a coach ride back to school. We learned so much, I honestly recommend you visit yourself.

Zakariah

YEAR 7 FARCHYNYS WEEKS

As per annual tradition, all Year 7 students (with their individual forms) recently enjoyed five days at the school's Farchynys site. Throughout the week, students enjoyed a range of activities which developed their geography, history and even cooking skills! Amongst the cohorts who visited, typical activities included trips to Barmouth Castle, tours of the nearby slate mines, hikes at Cadair Iris and visits to 'CAT' to learn about sustainable living.

Students were taken back to the 13th Century with their visits to Harlech castle, where they received an idea of what life would have been like under siege and how to defend a castle from attack. On the same day, some students were treated to a tour of the Llanfair slate caverns where their geology knowledge was developed by the expert guides who provided very informative tours.

The 'Centre for Alternative Technology' showed students how different methods of creating renewable energy could lead to a more sustainable future, demonstrated by solar, hydro and wind displays. Furthermore, a range of different walks through the Welsh countryside were enjoyed across the different form groups, including walks up to Llyn Cau, Cadair Iris, Coed y Brenin and the Precipice Walk.

Of course, there was still time to enjoy ice creams and football on Barmouth Beach, and also to explore the expansive grounds of Farchynys. One group even bought ingredients to make and taste test their own soups!

Overall, Year 7 had an amazing visit to Farchynys which ended their first year at QMGS on a very high note. A massive thank you to all of the staff who were involved in organising the visits!

Joe Waterman



2023 OPEN EVENING

The 8th June was a pleasant Thursday evening which saw the return of an integral event in the school calendar: the whole school open evening. On the night, the school welcomed over 1500 visitors onto the site and gave them a taste of the Queen Mary's experience. With the help of 160 students, all the visitors indulged in everything that Queen Mary's has to offer. From the thrilling practicals of the Science department, a tour of the school's extensive sports

facilities and live drama performances from the Queen's Players, the school was on best form. The night was a chance for the school's new PSLT to settle into their new responsibilities by playing a vital role in the logistics alongside Mr Kolaric.

Overall, the night received plenty of positive feedback and perfectly encapsulated how the students and staff at this school continuously go above and beyond to enhance the QM experience at every opportunity.

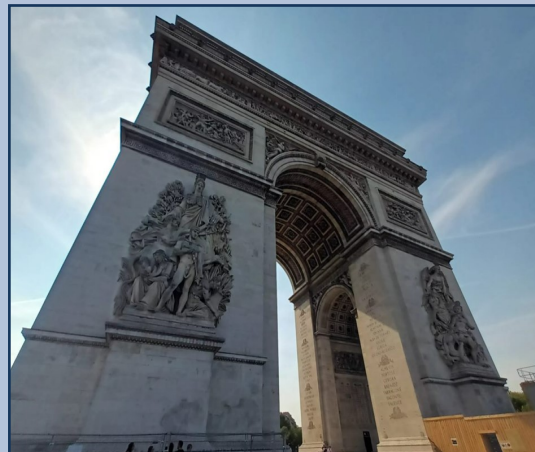
Patrick Cullinane

PARIS SCIENCE TRIP

From 12th to 16th June, 40 students from Year 10 visited Paris. Our first day consisted of travelling via our coach to Dover, whereafter we boarded the ferry to Paris across the English Channel. The ferry had several cafes alongside great views and had shops for people to buy from.

Upon arriving at the hotel, we finished unpacking and were briefed on timings for the following day. The second day started with a tour of the River Seine onboard a large ship, on which we were taught about the history of Paris and its points of interest. Following this, we visited the Eiffel Tower and reached the very top floor to observe amazing views and visited its shops. Afterwards, we had dinner, visited the Montparnasse Tower, and observed Paris and the Eiffel Tower as the sun set.

The third day consisted of us visiting the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, a science museum in Paris. The museum consisted of a phytology segment (being the study of plants), an area based on crowd control and natural behaviours, a sector about astrology and space, as well as an area dedicated to the study of artificial intelligence and technology. After this, we were given two hours' worth of free time to roam around the streets of Paris. Our group visited the famous Shakespeare book shop, some dessert shops, a jewellery and gifts shop, alongside the famous church that was damaged due to a fire, Notre Dame. We had dinner and then sat alongside the bank of the River Seine as sunset approached.



The final day of exploring Paris started off with our visit to the Arc de Triomphe, which holds the eternal flame in remembrance of those who were not identified in World War One. We then explored the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, a popular road which contains a lot of shops. Our group visited bakeries and shops and bought a lot of souvenirs and gifts for family and friends. We then walked to the popular Louvre Museum and explored it. Even if we looked at each art piece for 2 seconds, it would take 2 months, day and night, to look through all of them. In the Louvre, we saw the Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo, Liberty Leading the People and much more. After dinner, where we ate snails, we visited the Sacre Coeur Basilica cathedral where we visited the shops and admired the relaxing view over Paris. The fifth day was another day of travelling all the way back to Walsall, where we finally arrived home.

Ayrik Jahedi



MEP TOURISM PROJECT

The Year 10's have been busy this term with the MEP (Mandarin Excellence Programme) Tourism Project! On Friday 9th June, they began this project, which would include both learning and creativity. For the first day, the students began with an online course, which taught them how to create a good advertisement for tourists. This involved analysing marketing strategies and persuasive techniques for posters use to be more attractive and effective. In the afternoon, the students learnt useful vocabulary, which culminated in being able to plan their own posters to advertise a local city.

The following day, the students returned to school to continue the project. Despite being a Saturday, the students worked diligently on their posters, expressing what they had learnt in creative ways. While the desks were strewn with colours, papers and mandarin characters, several appealing posters were forming from amongst the chaos. A chaos which was further modelled into great work by doughnuts for everyone who came! After the doughnuts had disappeared, and a game of football was played, it seemed that the posters had been completed!

Wonderful creations had formed, and the students continued the online course, which built on from the previous day, and showed the Year 10's more ways to write greatly in Mandarin. The new knowledge armed the students with the ability to create a digital itinerary and slogan to accompany their poster, which would describe a trip to their city of choice – mostly for our own Birmingham!

For the third and final day on Monday, the students completed the online course, which told them how to create a great video. In this video, they would put all their creativity into a final two-minute clip exploring their city, advertising it for tourists. With a few days of focus and creativity, several entertaining videos were made.

But why did they do this project? Well, on 28th June, the MEP students went on a trip to Birmingham University, where the winner of the MEP Tourism Project competition was declared. This year, QMGS won! With a fun and entertaining video, well-made poster and diligent work, we congratulate our winning team: Joshua Abraham, Anas Ahmad, Jasmeher Gabba, Zayan Pannun, Idris Rafiq, Shamas Sarwar and Steve Thomas!

We also thank MEP, the Mandarin department and Birmingham University for the fun Tourism project, time and opportunities given to the Year 10 MEP students!

Zayan

HOUSE UPDATE

Now it's time for the house update. Aragon is currently in the lead with 10,599 points and Darby is close behind with 10,484 points. Third would be Gryphon with 8,227 points and in last place is Petypher with 8,270 points. A house's points are added by points culminated in three distinct categories, consisting of House Points, Community Awards and success/

failure in competitions. In this term, sports week was held in the week beginning 26th May and proved to be a valuable week for accumulating points regarding competitions. In the community awards and the competitions, Darby surpasses Aragon so there is hope yet. Personally, I'd rather Aragon win because that's my house.

Look at the table below for more specific scoring.

	House Points	Community Awards	Competition	TOTAL
Aragon	4700	3575	2324	10599
Darby	4500	3650	2334	10484
Gryphon	4300	1825	2102	8227
Petypher	3950	2175	2145	8270

Young Enterprise Challenge

The Young Enterprise Challenge (also known as 10X) is a four week long business event, where teams of up to 4 students design, manufacture and sell products to their school or local community, starting with only £10. If you can make back what you invested you can keep it, any extra is donated to charity. This year, the event ran from February 27th to March 14th. Four groups of students participated: two sold sweets, one held a raffle, and I chose to work on my own and sold tennis ball holders. Bodhin's group - Sweet Treat – won, raising over £100 for Red Nose Day!

I started my 10X journey by brainstorming ideas to do with tennis balls, thinking of ideas such as tennis ball rubbers, but I eventually settled on the jackpot: tennis ball sharpeners, desk holders and hooks. Using my £10 I had invested, I brought three metal sharpeners and 12 tennis balls, as well as some suction cups and post-it notes. I also created "shrinkie" accessories for the balls. A few days into week 1, I began selling and some people came over to have a look, but only a few sales were made. However, in the case of huge demand, I brought some more materials and restocked ready for week 2.

At this point, competitors began selling, and this is where Sweet Treat took the school by storm. They raised a large amount of money within their first week, nearing £50! At the same time, demand for my products picked up, with some teachers being interested. Throughout week 2, Sweet Treat would become the best selling group, and this trend would continue until week 4.

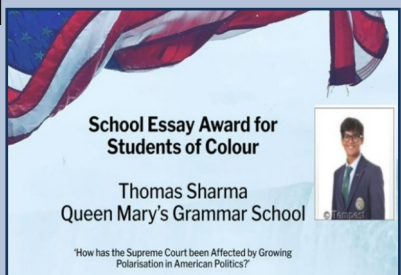
Week 4 came, and I took the opportunity to sell some Mother's Day themed tennis balls to my friends at the church I go to and managed to sell the rest of my stock at school. In total I raised £105 profit, which was donated to Red Nose Day.

If you ever get the chance to participate, I would strongly recommend that you take it as it is a fun teambuilding exercise that is a whole lot of fun for you and your friends. Give it a go!



BAAS COMPETITION

The BAAS (British Association of American Studies) is an organisation of university academics founded in 1955 which exists to promote and encourage the study of the United States in universities, colleges and schools. Recently, an essay competition was hosted by this organisation and students in our school took part and achieved amazing standings. Two students reached first and second prize, Thomas Sharma of Year 12 and Rohan Noble of Year 13, respectively. Rohan Noble wrote on the topic of "How far has the African American fight for equality really come since the 13th Amendment?". Thomas Sharma wrote on the topic of "How has the supreme court been affected by growing polarisation in American politics?" Their skillfully written essays allowed them to take first and second place. Furthermore, Mr. Reynolds's efforts surrounding the teaching of American Politics in the curriculum has earned him a well-deserved commendation. The commendation is called the Monticello teaching fellowship award, in which Monticello was the home of Thomas Jefferson, but now is an education facility. Because of this, Mr. Reynolds will have the opportunity to visit Virginia and undergo a continual professional development course with scholars of the organisation. These individuals claim to promote ideas of Thomas Jefferson and democracy.



Ayrik Jahedi

NEWSLETTER

Is there a topic you are passionate about? Do you wish your personal research could be published? If so, the QMO's new sister newsletter, 'QM Scholars', is for you!

This new newsletter will be published monthly beginning in October 2023, and will provide students with an avenue to conduct research on a topic of their choice, before submitting it to be published. Each month, the best 5 articles will be chosen and awarded with a prize!

We hope that you are as excited about this new project as we are, and we can't wait to read all of your new articles!

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