



The QM Observer

Autumn Term Newsletter

Friday 16th December 2011

Powerhouse performances in QM Double Bill



Curtain Call: Shaman Sandhu-Gill and Hassan Ali in *Hamlet*

In News:

Farchynys better than ever

Target 2.0 Triumph

QMGS through Fusties' eyes

A turning point in the QMGS Poetry competition

QMGS takes the law into their hands

A packed term with the CCF

Bhargav Rambhatla writes: To put on two works which are so widely recognised, and performed professionally is no mean feat. The actors from QMGS had set themselves a very high standard to achieve.

As soon as the thespians took to the stage, the audience was captivated. The story was perfectly captured in a series of vignettes, with a narrator to guide the audience. The sound effects and lighting were precisely timed, with the voice distortion of Imiose Agboaye as the murdered *Hamlet* being especially chilling. The acting was consummately professional, and special mention should be given to Shaman Sandhu-Gill, whose portrayal of *Prince Hamlet* was at once languid, haunting and captivating.

The second of the plays, *Much Ado About Nothing*, was a spectacular finish to the billing. Again, the actors were thorough in their performance and delivery, with Molly Carpenter being particularly eloquent. The story was light-hearted, a refreshing change from the sombre tone of *Hamlet*, with, again, a narrator, Dwayne Wilson, who provided much humour with a tongue-in-cheek performance. The dénouement of the story created a sense of finality, as if the evening held a spark of talent which was unique, never to be seen again. Those who saw it were fully satiated, and those who did not missed a true showcase of dramatic ability and power. The actors had set themselves a high standard, and they did not fail to meet it.

In Sport:

Starting anew: cross-country after Mr Johnson's departure

Exceeding expectations: The captain's account of the rugby season

QM Runners find the way in orienteering success

Carol Service 2011

Richard Ng writes: 13th December saw an evening of celebration and music at St. Matthew's Church, as it played host to the QMGS Carol Service 2011. The choir performed various songs - including a couple written by the school's last Director of Music.

There were also some outstanding solo performances on voice and instrument. The Carol Service was rounded off with readings from the Headmaster and the Captain of School amongst others. All in all, a triumphant evening and a fitting celebration of Christmas!



Four members of Year 7, Keval Nathwani, Sarjan Hayer, Ben Hopton and Samuel Shackelton have been asked to share their thoughts on how they found their first term:

Learn to Learn week:

"On Wednesday, a man called Dr van der Spoel (a psychologist) came in to all of the year sevens, in the gym, and we were there all day, doing different activities. The doctor was talking about how to focus your mind on challenges, and we filled in a booklet with targets and how you felt, then played many games both in the booklet and around the gym."

"We had an activity day with various different activities such as tower climb where we had to climb an elastic tower and try not to fall down and we also had to get a ball to the top."

"I was welcomed warmly by Yr 7's head of year (Mr Collins) as well as my form tutor Mr Ridler."

"The first week at school (except Friday) was a 'learning to learn' week where we had no lessons and we did team building and leadership activities. These activities were very important as it helped me make new friends in other forms more quickly. It took me only a few weeks to settle in to my new school and routine, and this was the same outcome for most, if not all, of my classmates."

"At first this can seem a bit confusing, but eventually you get used to working on a two week rota. We had normal lessons as well as meeting our subject teachers. It takes time getting used to the different teachers and subjects especially the amount of homework but if you are organised you should have no problem."



Above: Year 7s at Farchynys Open Day

Farchynys Open Day:

"We went on a tour around the grounds, seeing the excellent views of the Mawddach estuary. Afterwards, we walked back to the house, where drinks and cakes were served by the QMA. Farchynys was an enjoyable day for all, and all of the year sevens cannot wait for our summer visits!"

Fireworks:

"The games there were fun, especially the 'gladiator' game. When the fireworks were set alight, the whole sky lit up with an array of colours. The atmosphere at the school was immense!"

"It was a great social event and really enjoyable, I'll definitely come next year" and "It was epic!"

are quotations from children at the event."

Sports:

"I was selected for a rugby match against Newcastle-under-Lyme school at QMGs. This match will be a match that I will remember for a long time to come because it was one of the most physical games I have played."

Looking Ahead:

"I have heard people say that your schooldays are the best days of your life..... I cannot wait for what lies ahead of me at QMGs!!"



"Stop And Think, Words Can Hurt"

Bradley Glover reports: This term saw our annual Anti-Bullying Week, from November 14th - 18th, which was celebrated successfully and continued to pass on its useful message to the school. This year's theme - 'Stop and Think, Words Can Hurt' - was focused on stamping out verbal bullying, reminding students to remember the difference between friendly banter and hurtful insults.

Activities this year included the traditional selling of anti-bullying wristbands (thanks to both the hard-working year 7 team who sold them and those who were willing to buy one and show their support) and presentations on the dangers of bullying in year assemblies. The Anti-Bullying Committee, headed by Mrs Lupton, worked incredibly hard all week to pass on the most important message of the week; bullying will not be tolerated at QMGs.

What's Been Happening at Farchynys?

Matthew Fielden writes: Each year, AS geographers head off to Wales to carry out practical geography and the first of these trips occurred this term. Departing from QM, the group drove to Carding Mill valley to measure valley profiles and river velocities. Battling with intense rain the group managed to get some good data (and avoided the wanton destruction of river banks that previous trips have caused).

Returning to the minibus the group did not stop learning that geography is 'out the window' as Mr Law's commentary was unrelenting.



Next morning, the group went to Morffa Dyfren to carry out their sand dune evaluation (above). After climbing up near vertical sand dunes and counting the different number of plant species present in a set area the group was thoroughly exhausted and ready to return to the West Midlands.

Shaman Sandhu-Gill recalls: With deadlines, exams, coursework and terrifying teachers, school can seem scary at the best of times. Not scary enough for the English department it seems, with English Literature students embarking on a Gothic Weekend to Farchynys from the 25th to the 27th November. Mr. Thomas, Mr. Fawson and Mrs. Baker pulled out all the stops to make sure the weekend was both as scary and as educational as possible including a torch lit walk to the wooded gazebo that overlooks the estuary to read extracts from *The Woman in Black* and late night showings of the film adaptations of *The Turn of the Screw*.

¡Viva España!

Jack Gorman writes: This term a new Spanish club took place on Friday lunchtimes with the aim of both educating pupils about the culture and history of Spain whilst also teaching some Spanish vocabulary along the way.

Some themes explored so far have been the extremely popular 'tapas' where pupils learnt the names of some typical Spanish cuisine and then got to taste some, with huge thanks going to Mrs Franklin and Mrs Dabbs for the effort they went to in providing the food.

In a similar vein, this term also sees the arrival of the Spanish Exchange from Vigo who will be going to places such as Birmingham, Cadbury World, The Black Country Museum and Walsall Leather Museum.

Zain Iqbal writes: Inflation at record high levels, youth unemployment over 1 million and colossal government debts threatening to push the UK economy back into recession - four Queen Mary's students have the solution! Alex Weate, Zain Iqbal, Bradley Glover and Jeevan Sahota presented their proposal on how the Bank of England should set their monetary policy to a panel of professional financiers judging the regional heat of the Target 2.0 competition. The competition is a long standing initiative run in order to encourage wider economic understanding. The QM team performed brilliantly, beating the local competition which consisted of nine other teams and impressed the judges with their cool-headed approach to answering some very technical questions. They now move onto the next round in the new year.

Last year I was the winner of the QM Apprentice, and attempting to persuade Queen Mary's students and teachers to part with their hard earned cash is indeed one of the most difficult things I have ever done! Yet looking back on all those difficult

tasks I can truly say that it was worth it. I was able to build on many useful skills not to mention the monetary reward of one hundred pounds! Having taken part in many initiatives at QM I would recommend this one above all else, not only does it allow you to experience the thrills of business but also looks great when it comes to applying to Universities. Watch this space for the 2012 version!



London Transport quiz

Mr Matley reports:

At the end of November, five pupils, Amil Sinha, Jack Whitehouse (yr10) Tom Walker, Wilson Lau, Joe Palmer (yr11) took part in the presentation day of the Transport for London competition. This involved them designing a transport solution for an area of London. The team made a sustainable plan, based on Boris Johnson's cycling crusade. The presentation was nerve-wracking, but the team did well.

The judges liked the professionalism and effective use of a video as part of their panel presentations. It was with some disappointment then that the judges obviously(!) made a mistake by leaving the team just outside of the top 3 (of 12 schools). We did receive a prize for some of our work on the initial workshop day at Aston University in October.



CCF

Matthew Fielden writes: The Autumn term is always very busy and important in the life of the CCF as the new recruits from year 9 join up. The first few parades of the year are hectic, and trying to get them up to a decent level of drill is vital.

At Field Day, the RAF section undertook operations in built up areas, room clearances and close quarters fighting. It was a first for the section and was made possible thanks to the RAF TEST NCOs who came in to run the Year 10s training for the day.

Air Experience Flying and Gliding has occurred this term with around 20 cadets taking the opportunity to travel to RAF Cosford and get some flying time logged.

Aaron Holmes writes: My first term as RSM was a busy one and included a lot of challenges including helping to organise Field Day at Nescliffe and Remembrance Sunday to name just two. Fortunately, both of these events were well attended and with the help of all the NCOs and Officers ran extremely smoothly.

Right: Members of the QM CCF on parade in Walsall for the Remembrance Sunday service

Students on trial

Sayyid Ahmed reports: On Saturday 26th November, a group of sixth form students (pictured below) along with Mr Briars travelled to the Birmingham Crown Court to take part in the National Bar Mock Trial Competition. This annual prestigious event consisted of 16 schools from all over the region. They battled out mock criminal trials in real court rooms, gaining an insight into the workings of the legal system. Nerves kicked in before the trials began, but the weeks of preparation, along with the expert help and advice from the barrister, Ali Tabari, helped each and every member of the team to play their roles in the court room with confidence. Although QM didn't manage to get to the next stage of the competition, it was a valuable and enjoyable experience for all.



QM Poetry Competition

Richard Ng writes: On Thursday 10th November an audience gathered in the school hall for an evening of poetry, as seventeen of the school's finest poets ranging right from Year 7 to the Upper Sixth were brought together for the QMGS Poetry Competition 2011. The theme chosen for the poems this year was 'The Turning Point' and it sparked a tremendously wide scope of ideas and styles: from crime, to cricket, to conquest! Although all the poems were unique, they were all of a consistently high standard.

The evening also saw the return of two much-loved members of staff with almost three decades at QMGS between the two of them, as Mr Buckley and Mrs Smith (former Head Caretaker and former Head of Drama respectively) were presented with the unenviable task of judging.

The eventual winners were:

Junior section: Namir Chowdhury

Senior section: Sean Moffatt

A cross country perspective

Hassan Ali writes: The 2011/12 cross-country season had an interesting start, but changes to a well-established routine have not shown in our runners' times; many are in fact improving dramatically, motivated by stellar performances from the captain and also Sean Moffatt, winner of the senior inter-house cross country competition. One must mention Daniel Hawkesford when writing about improvement as his dedication to training has recently seen him out-kicking the vice-captain (me!). In short, QMGS is enjoying the comfortable positions of 5th and 3rd for the A and B teams respectively, and have plenty of time to creep ahead. I think I speak on behalf of the entire team when I say I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenge this season has proved to be, to thank Mr Lax and Mr Law for their time and effort, and that the future looks bright for the QMGS XC team.

Rugby in Brief



Stephen Paddock reports: There had been talk that QM's 1st XV would suffer this season with the loss of many key players last year, particularly in the backs. From the off the team proved the sceptics wrong with an unexpected, first game victory over John Taylor. They continued a strong winning streak with victories over Prince Henry's and Friary. The team also saw a strong run in the Daily Mail Vase, reaching round four. Full match reports for all the matches can be found on the QMGS 'Pitchero' website. This half term also saw the presentation of rugby colours, this year going to Stephen Paddock, Arron Loey and Adam Clark.

Editorial Team

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The year 9s set out with enthusiasm for their inter house cross country race.

Orienteering triumph

Sayyid Ahmed writes: On the 8th of October the QM orienteering team went along to the New Forest in Hampshire with Mr Sunley to take part in the British Schools Orienteering Championships. Achieving fantastic individual scores were Russell Hickman and Luke Burgoyne who came 20th and 24th respectively out of the 40 runners. The team's sheer determination and team spirit are clearly apparent and it saw them come 6th out of the 19 schools which took part in the Upper Secondary Boys category. Furthermore, on the 27th of November the team took part in the Regional Event & WM League in Cannock Chase. They once again proved their love and commitment for the sport with Alex Hackett coming 6th out of the 25 runners in their category. The team are showing rapid signs of improvement and they look forward to many more enjoyable races in the future!



Standing: Vishal Patel, Alex Hackett, Sayyid Ahmed, Marcus Raiyat, Aran Bajwa, Zakir Amin, Michael Jevon, Abdul Mahate, Luke Burgoyne, Mr Sunley (from left to right)

Kneeling: Hassan Ali, Russell Hickman (from left to right)