



The QM Observer

Spring Term Newsletter

Thursday 26th March 2015

A true spirit of enterprise at QMGS!



Royal Mint design competition

When Mr Hughes set his students the challenge of entering the Royal Mint's competition to design the new £1 coin, few would have thought what might happen next. On Monday 16th March, David Pearce of Year 11, was summoned to the Headmaster's study to be told a phone call was waiting. That call was from George Osborne, informing David that he was the winner of the competition! The following 48 hours were a whirlwind of media interviews amid national interest in the story. David, along with Mr Hughes, Mr Swain and runner-up Cody Gill of Year 9 (pictured left) travelled to 10 Downing Street to meet the Chancellor and see his design. He will collect a prize of £10,000 and then have the honour of seeing his design on millions of coins from 2017. The success is testament to David's sense of hard work, but also to the relentless spirit of enterprise in the Design and Technology department.



Project Horizon

UK Youth Parliament

Alabama Trip

Mr Coghlan writes: The Sun Chaser team were invited to visit Birmingham's Planetarium as the experts in a 'Meet the Experts' session. The team (below) talked to the public about their upcoming mission, their roles and Project Horizon's history. The video footage from past missions stopped people in their tracks and the 'Doodle Zone' gave a lot of young visitors the chance to illustrate what had inspired them about the project. The project was very popular and the Planetarium is keen for the team to visit again next year.

Namir Chowdhury reports: After two weeks of intense campaigning and canvassing for votes, plus another two nervously waiting for the results, I was honoured to be elected as a Member of the Youth Parliament, in order to represent the young people of Walsall. It's already an incredible experience and will hopefully allow me to improve my communicative and listening skills. I would encourage everyone to get involved and to even run for the UK Youth Parliament in two years time. A massive thank you to everyone who voted and supported me, and huge congratulations to Balraj Jhooty for being elected Deputy.

Look out for progress on the latest mission of Project Horizon — 'Sunchaser' - an attempt to capture footage of the Sun's rise over the horizon of the planet from the Stratosphere.



Lewis Ward tells us: In February, a party of 43 pupils departed for Huntsville, Alabama, in order to complete a 6-day Space Camp, along with other activities. Whilst at the Space Camp, the pupils completed the Advanced Space Academy programme, which consisted of engineering challenges, Apollo history, team building and mission training, as well as the opportunity to experience the Multi-Axis Trainer and to build rockets in teams. All students thoroughly enjoyed the trip and are very grateful to Mr Elsdon, Dr Ramalho and Mrs Sharp for making the trip possible.





Biology Olympiad

Miss Alam writes: 26 sixth form students took part in this year's Biology Olympiad and 21 have qualified for a certificate. This includes 14 medals; the highest number we've had in recent memory. Notable achievements include Amil Sinha's high score meaning that he qualifies for Round 2, which will take place in May as well as Aaron Nijher, who has scored highly enough to receive a medal whilst still in 6.1. Massive congratulations to the gold medal winners, Amil Sinha and Jack

Engineering Society

Mr Hughes tells us: This term the engineering society was as busy as ever with new competitive challenges ready to grasp the attention of all who attended. It was great to see how students of all age groups were able to take a specific situated task and create something new and exciting. The pupils were enthusiastic every week and seemed to show early signs of key attributes, such as being able to work in teams, lead groups and use a range of practical skills, which are crucial to becoming a successful engineer.



Biology Society

James Walkerdine informs us: Bio Soc has been aimed at those with an interest in the subject. We encourage members to give presentations on interesting topics. These have ranged from the rotavirus, to motor proteins and neurobiology. We have also carried out fascinating dissections and we hope to do more practicals in the future.

All Aboard Competition

Mr Hughes: On Friday 13th March at the NEC, the All Aboard final took place as part of the National Big Bang Fair at the NEC. A Year 11 team came up with a product to help make a bus journey better for blind and deaf people, and advertised and presented their idea for it to be judged. They produced a superb display that was set up in the Big Bang Fair at the NEC and created an excellent Power Point presentation that they presented to the panel of judges, including Baroness Kramer.



Geography G&T Event

Amanraj Garewal: On Friday 13th February 10 pupils travelled to High Arcal School in Dudley to take part in Geography day, which began with a lecture on the impact pollution has on the environment. The presentation was followed by a series of workshops; one focused on emergency planning, the second workshop involved investigating the problems associated with the Yangtze River in further detail and preparing a mock presentation about our findings. Our final workshop was based around forensics where evidence can be used to locate a crime scene. Different stations allow us to evaluate different samples of evidence in order to track the place where the crime took place.

Geography fieldtrip



Mr Langton writes: The Year 12 Geography groups headed to Farchynys over two successive weeks in March, revising key physical topics and collecting fieldwork data for their skills exam. The weather was kind and the groups displayed an impressive work ethic, making the most of the opportunity to be in the field. Sites visited included the Nant Ffrancon, the sand dunes at Morfa Dyffryn, Ironbridge gorge and the micro hydro plant at Bontddu.

Intermediate Maths Challenge

Mr Litchfield states: Congratulations to all pupils receiving certificates from the Intermediate Maths Challenge. 23 Gold, 24 Silver and 14 Bronze! 14 pupils have also qualified for the Kangaroo competitions, with Kaa-Yung Ng "Best in School".

STEM Ambassadors

Mr Hughes writes: DT students were awarded STEM ambassadorial roles at the beginning of September allowing the students to help the younger years to use technology (STEM allows students to mentor in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) or run groups in order to help younger years. The award has led to the creation of the Engineering Society but also helped many of the younger students in the school to reach their potential in DT lessons.



STEM Ambassador Matthew Doyle helping year 7 students.

Theatre trip

Hannah Grennan writes: On 3rd February, Mr Fawson and Miss Timmins organised a trip to the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry to watch a production of 'The History Boys'. It was very enjoyable and brilliantly staged, as well as particularly beneficial to our AS Literature studies on comedy, as we were able to see how comedy is staged rather than just focusing on how it is written.

Chemistry lectures

Amanda Dhliwayo and Lauren Powell: Sixth form Chemists have had the opportunity to attend lectures hosted by Birmingham University this term. Whilst developing our knowledge we were able to learn new aspects of chemistry beyond our specification. Topics have varied, including themes such as drugs in sport

French Exchange

Keval Nathwani Writes: After an enjoyable visit to Albi back in October we eagerly awaited the arrival of the French at QMGs. They attended English/Geography/History lessons before a tour of the school by a Year 10 French class. They loved the school and are desperate to return! After lunch they walked into Walsall to see the sights. It was great to catch up and remember the value of language and friendship.

Spanish Exchange



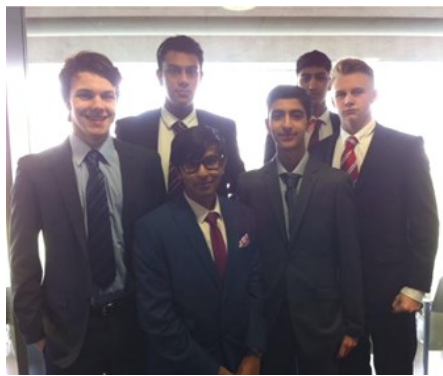
Jack Mellor Reports: On Tuesday, 3rd February we departed from Birmingham airport for Oporto and then Vigo in North-West Spain. During our week in Vigo we visited numerous museums, the capital of the region, Santiago de Compostela, and other points of interest throughout the city. Along with good weather it made for a fantastic week in which all 12 students had a chance to enjoy the Spanish culture and way of life and improve their language skills. Many thanks to Mrs. Franklin and Mr. Canning who accompanied us on the trip.

English breakfast club

Alex Storey reports: This year has seen the introduction of the English breakfast club, headed by Mrs Phillips and a group of 6th form English students; the club invites KS3 students to stretch their literacy skills, which the students certainly have due to their dedication to the club and their work. Hats off to Mrs Phillips for creating the perfect atmosphere for learning and providing great food!

BASE Competition

Taher Ravat and Dilan Patel reports: On 6th of March, a group of six budding economists departed QMGs in order to test their economic and business mettle at the venerable ICAEW BASE competition. The task in hand involved analysing a plethora of lengthy documents and then presenting in front of other schools and industry leaders. As a team we were fastidious, driven and determined to win. Despite a strong presentation where we held our convictions, the relentless time constraints lead to our narrow loss by a mere two points. The team found the trip very rewarding and a valuable insight into the broad range of business and finance opportunities that exist.



Debating at QMGs

Miss Richards writes: In February, Shayan Ahmed and Rhys Llewellyn represented QMGs in the second round of the Mace Debating Competition. Their performances were inspirational. Many other students have already shown great charisma and eloquence in the Queen Mary's School Debating Contest, which is currently underway for years 9 and above. The Final will take place shortly after Easter. Also the Debating society has gathered some real momentum this year with some new budding additions to society. We have witnessed some truly memorable debates such as 'Young people have never had it so easy', which naturally was met with some fierce opposition. I hope the society continues to grow within the coming years.

German competition

Big congratulations to Zayed, Rayyan, Nick and Pranay who are off to the regional final of the German Spelling Bee. Mrs McPhee

Guitar music concert



Josh Nicholls writes: On Friday 13th February, a group of 9 guitarists and a handful of vocalists entertained an audience in the 6th form lecture theatre, featuring a mix of classical to rock songs. The concert provided a good opportunity for performers to taste playing to a small audience, which will help in gaining experience for future and bigger performances.

History Initiatives

Elisha Rowell explains: A group of sixth form 'chefs' have been putting their culinary skills to the test by trying to whip up a meal direct from the court of King Richard II. On the menu was Pea Purée, Chicken Hotchpot, Parsnip and Apple Fritters, Leek and Mushrooms and Lombardy Tart, served alongside a thought-provoking side dish of 14th century food-based contextual knowledge, delivered by the students themselves.

The Year 7s were set the challenge of building a castle from the 1300s. It was based on the Motte and Bailey castle which William the Conqueror had invented. After 2 lessons, all the groups had drawn the design of a castle from the 1300s and present them to the 'Dragons' (made up of a panel of staff) to judge the winner. Overall, the Year 7s had a fantastic time and learnt about what castles were like in the 1300s.



Hockey



Tom Bunn reports: The 1st XI's (above) season has continued to stutter throughout the spring term with the team struggling to find a period of good form. However, recent victories against King Henry VIII and BMet college have ended the season well. Thomas Bunn, Luke Boniface, Ravi Patel, Rishi Patel, Simran Patel, Cameron Bains, Omar Akhtar and Oliver Hanson have all received colours for their contributions to the team.

The 2nd & 3rd XIs have continued with the good form from last year, winning the majority of matches. The new 4th XI has grown throughout the year and will continue to develop in it's second season next year. There have been 56 senior hockey players this year, which has been a great turnout for the school.



Lower school hockey has seen some good success for all of the teams, with the U16s, 14s, 13s & 12s all reaching the final of the Staffordshire Cup. Despite all of the teams losing in the finals it was a wonderful achievement by all of the teams and the school. Joe Popple has been an outstanding performer for the U13's scoring 23 goals, 7 of which came in one game. Ben Hopton and Seth Huyskens have been star players for the U15s and 14s respectively. The U12s (above) have performed well despite relative inexperience to the game. The future of the game in the school looks bright and the teams will be aiming for success in the county finals next year.

Rugby



Mr Francis reports: There has been success for some of the junior school teams in a variety of tournaments. Headlines include the Year 7 team finishing 3rd out of 30 schools in the Staffs Cup, with Man of the Tournament being Jai Verma. The Year 8 Team (above) lost the final of the Walsall Schools Tournament on a 'golden try' against Shire Oak.

Cricket

Mr Gibbons and Arjun Patel write: Cricket training for all year groups started this term in preparation for a busy season ahead. We are looking forward to a full fixture card including entry into the Staffordshire Cup Competitions. Moreover, exciting times are ahead for the Seniors with the reintroduction of Saturday fixtures, entry into the National Schools T20 and the Bablake T20 Tournament. Finally, a number of 6th Form volunteers have attended a Young Leaders Course led by Staffordshire Cricket to help build their confidence and competence when assisting Mr. Gibbons with Junior training sessions. Attendance at these sessions (Year 7 below) has been very promising (despite some early starts!) and we are all looking forward to the season ahead.



Samuel Jephcott says: Over half term we attended the Senior Cadet Instructors Course after an opportunity presented through the school's CCF and learnt how to teach and command in the field and the classroom; a key step in my advancement within the CCF and an amazing experience. We arrived on Friday, worried as to what the week would involve and with the risk of failure looming over my head, we began. A week later I had passed and had met a group of new friends and learnt a mass of new skills and techniques for both my cadet career and civilian life.



Cadet Command and Control Trainer

Kodi Beveridge-Smith Explains: This year, the CCCT was thoroughly enjoyable for everyone involved. From signaller to commander, everyone felt as though they had learnt something new and developed many existing skills. On the Sunday morning the team worked together seamlessly to control the battle and by putting together

everything we had learnt we completed the mission to a large degree of success. Thank you to all staff involved.