

The autumn term is always a very busy time of the academic year. The Sixth Form is a hive of activity during the first few weeks of September, as returning students adjust to a very different life in post-16 education and joining students adapt to a new environment all together. It is a time for consolidating old relationships and for making new ones: it is a really exciting time for everyone involved.

We want to let you know what we have been doing in the Sixth Form since September in order to give you a flavour of what it is like to be part of the QMHS Sixth Form community, and to show you that there's much more to Sixth Form life than just the academic studies!

We are also keen for you to celebrate in our successes, so we've updated you on some of our events too.

September

Induction Day

Our Year 12 students and some of our prefect team took part in the induction day on Tuesday 3rd September.



The day was an opportunity for our returning and joining students to get to know one another, meet their form tutors, the members of their Houses, and some of their teachers. It also gave the joiners the chance to familiarise themselves with their surroundings. After a welcome assembly at 8.45am, they had a busy day together, led by Dr Darwood, Mrs York and the prefect team

taking part in activities and workshops and competing in an alternative Sports Day in the Arboretum.

Whilst it wasn't the warmest of September days (and we did have a little rain), we had loads of fun and even managed a pizza picnic sat on blankets in the Arboretum. Admittedly, it took the delivery man a while to find us, but it was well worth the wait.



Duke of Edinburgh

Our Silver and Gold DofE students completed their qualifying expeditions in the Yorkshire Dales in late September.



Well done to all of our students on completing their expeditions, and a special well done to Emily, Gabby, Fiona, Gurdit, Lauren and Michaela who completed the Yorkshire 3

Peaks as part of their expedition. We look forward to celebrating our Sixth Form students' achievements with them when they gain their awards in the near future, just as one of our Year 13 students, Nishi Sockalingam, did earlier this term.

Nishi has the kudos of being one of a handful of students to achieve her Bronze, Silver and Gold awards during their time at QMHS. Nishi was awarded her badge and certificate for her gold by Mr Hinks earlier this term after having taken part in a challenging expedition in the Yorkshire Dales, completing a residential at a community centre in Dudley, and volunteering in a charity shop. In addition, Nishi developed her skills with the violin, and has taken part in drama and theatre based activities to complete the physical section of the award.



"The most rewarding aspect of completing my award was being able to lead and take part in activities and workshops on my residential placement," says Nishi.

"I gave a presentation about Gandhi to younger residents at the centre and led workshops based on philosophy and mythology in the Indian culture, which is really my bag."

Nishi is shortly to receive an invitation to London to celebrate her achievements in the company of royalty. Congratulations Nishi!

Battlefields Trip

Our biennial trip to the battlefields of Northern Europe left for France in September, led by Mrs Ralston and Miss Lindsay. As always, students were given the opportunity to visit sites



poignant to the major battles in the First World War, including Ypres, a beautiful town in Belgium which saw huge human loss in the conflict. They were also able to visit the

cemeteries in the area, and some students were able to search for the graves of their own family members who died in the battles.

The trip was a wonderful, yet humbling experience for all who took part. Thank you to the History Department and all the staff involved in making this an invaluable experience for all.

MacMillan Coffee Morning

Aliya Levene in Year 13 was our MacMillan Coffee Morning star. Thanks to her hard work, in collaboration with Afiya Hameed, a vast array of homemade (and some not-so-homemade) cakes and baked goods exchanged hands in the Sixth Form Centre, raising a princely sum of £330 for a wonderful and very worthy cause.



MedSoc Day

Back on 11th September, our prospective medical students experienced what it is like to take part in an interview for a place on a degree course in Medicine. The afternoon gave the students a real insight into all aspects of the interview process, and provided them with an opportunity to experience some of the activities for themselves.

Miss Bailey and Miss Holland assisted Mr Rendu at QMGS with the afternoon's proceedings, and all students found the afternoon to be an informative and valuable experience.

October

Wicked!

Mrs Rochfort and Miss Houlder led a party of Drama students through the bright lights of the "Big Smoke" to see a production of *Wicked* at London's Victoria Apollo Theatre earlier last month. The cast included Helen Woolf and Alistair Brammer, who gave stunning performances in the lead roles.

The students, including the anti-bullying ambassadors, had a thoroughly "wicked" time despite the early start and late arrival back at school. Thanks to all of the staff and students who attended and made this trip a wonderful experience.

House Charity Lunch

This month saw the first of many House Charity lunches to be held during the course of this academic year. As usual, the event was really well attended, and raised £729.92 to put towards buying a defibrillator. Thank you to all the Austen forms, the Year 13 House Captain and the Year 12 Vice-Captain, form tutors and to Miss Butlin for making the event such a success.

Iceland Trip

Thirty students from Years 10 to 13 visited Iceland for five days during the October Half Term on a trip led by Miss Beech, the Head of Geography. On the first day, they visited the 'Bridge between the Continents' before heading to their accommodation in the beautiful city of Reykjavik. After dinner, they were fortunate enough to see the Northern Lights just a five-minute walk away from their hotel. The next

few days brought visits to everything from stunning waterfalls to glaciers, geysers, bubbling mud puddles, basalt columns and black beaches.

A fascinating experience for all involved with memories that will last a lifetime. Well done to all of those involved!



November

The Senior Maths Challenge

November saw the mathematicians in the Sixth Form take on the Senior Maths Challenge, run by the UKMT. This involved all the students in Years 12 and 13 studying Maths here competing under exam conditions against other mathematicians all over the country in the hope of being awarded certificates in the bronze, silver and gold categories.

The top 1000 students nationally are given the opportunity to compete in the first round of the Maths Olympiad: good luck to all our students in being selected for this enrichment opportunity!

Lessons from Auschwitz (by Fatima Ahmad, History Prefect)

As part of the national Lessons from Auschwitz Project, all QMHS historians in Years 10 to 13 were privileged to attend a History conference at which we had the opportunity to learn more about the Holocaust and the lessons that we must still keep in our hearts today.

The conference was organised by Year 13 historians Gabrielle, Katie, Aqsa and Harkiran who visited Auschwitz earlier this year, having been chosen by their teachers for this project. They delivered the first part of the conference, where they presented their findings and opinions following their emotional visit to Auschwitz and the follow-up seminars. The students spoke engagingly on the history of anti-Semitism and the idea that it was certainly not a new notion when Hitler came to power in 1933. We also learned about the different roles played by those involved in the Holocaust, the 'perpetrators, collaborators and by-standers'. Interestingly, the students then finished their introduction by discussing the controversial role of the Sonderkommando, a group of Holocaust victims that have been largely ignored throughout recent studies or portrayed as perpetrators, rather than victims, by some historians.

The second part of the conference was delivered by a

Holocaust survivor, Mr Ivan Shaw. The audience felt honoured that he was willing to travel from London to share his story with us, which was entitled *A Survivor's Tale*. Ivan had been born in the former Yugoslavia but emigrated in 1945 to the UK to be adopted by his aunt and uncle, having survived the Holocaust through an incredible mixture of luck and determination.



He told of being hidden by a family relative, whilst his parents were rounded up and taken to Auschwitz, and his subsequent betrayal by a neighbour who told the Nazis where he was hiding. Following his own arrest as a 5 year-old, he was incredibly rescued by his aunt, just as he was being marched to an unknown camp himself and a German guard 'looked the other way' to allow the child to be rescued.

It was an incredible story which we all found to be truly touching and inspiring. One moment that particularly stands out for me is when he became visibly moved at the mention of his mother who passed away in Belsen just as it was being liberated by the Allies. This made us realise that even after 75 years, the devastating impact of these events still pained him daily.

Through this conference, we learned that the Holocaust is still a reality for the victims and in order to honour them, we cannot forget the Holocaust. It should be remembered so that



such acts cannot be repeated again. It is our duty as human beings to speak up against the Genocides taking place in the world today so that History does not repeat itself.

EES Project

The Engineering Education Scheme at QMHS is supported by the Engineering Development Trust and Industrial Cadets. Through the EES we are able to promote the interest of students in engineering university degrees and apprenticeships. After an initial introduction to the scheme at ALSTOM, an international train service company last month, this year's team of engineers, Eisha Masood, Sophie Phung, Sonya Kainth, Mehar Kular, Zaynab Abrar and Lana Ahmed, will work to develop the sustainable heating system for a diesel train engine, supported by the engineers at the company and the University of Birmingham.

The project completed by last year's team has been used to improve the electronic sensors of the water pump of the Virgin pendolino trains. Emily Dawkins, Fiona D'Silva, Olivia Griffiths, Anushka Odedra and Afifa Quadri were awarded the Industrial Cadets Gold Awards, and will celebrate their success during the national Industrial Cadets Awards 2019 ceremony in London on the 21st of this month.

Sixth Form Open Evening



Open Evening was a wonderful celebration of all we do in the Sixth Form here at QMHS. The event, held on Wednesday 20th November was a busy, vibrant affair, with many students from our Year 11 and from other schools in

the area coming together to see what opportunities, both academic and non-academic, are available to them post-16.

As part of Dr Bruton's address, Gabby, Katie and Afiya, our Head Girl team gave a moving account of why QMHS has meant so much to them, and our joining students Abigail, Sami and Wari shared their positive experiences of life in the Sixth Form since arriving here in September.

If you missed the Head Girls' speech, you can watch it again using the link on the school website. Don't forget to submit your online application at tiny.cc/qmhs by **10 January 2020** to join us next September.

Enrichment

Friday afternoon's in Sixth Form means enrichment. All Year 12 and 13 students have had the opportunity to take part in a number of activities already this year, including

- "Kissing it Better" at Manor Hospital
- British Sign Language
- VESPA workshops
- Community projects
- Spanish Culture and Language



Future activities will feature First Aid with St. John's Ambulance Service, and workshops led by members of Aston University Outreach team.



Forthcoming Events

November 28th

Year 13 RS trip to Coventry Cathedral

November 29th

QMHS Christmas Fayre

December 3rd

House Charity Lunch and Foodbank Collection Day led by House Prefects

December 10th and 11th

Junior Show: Key Stage 3 students perform *A Monster Calls*, directed by members of the sixth form.