

QUEEN'S *speech*

Newsletter of The Queen's School, Chester  Spring 2014

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Ensemble Magic

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Headmistress's Welcome

By Sarah Clark

As I read through the content of this term's magazine, it struck me that girls here really do make the most of all the opportunities we give them.

The utterly stunning production of *Macbeth* saw over 40 girls from Years 7 to 10 eagerly take on really challenging roles - and with superb results. The same goes for our Lower School girls who performed in no less than three magnificent Christmas productions and our older girls who performed *These Shining Lives* with a beautiful delicacy. This term I have listened to some fascinating lectures from our Holdich pupils and also from those girls taking the Extended Project Qualification. I've learnt much about everything from neuro-linguistic programming to the Spanish Civil War.

Yet again, the congratulations page is testament to the sporting skill of our girls, but this is not the only arena in which they compete. Notably, Shreya Jauhari stood for election in the UK Youth Parliament and was an outstanding candidate.

Our Lower School Young Voices choir will compete in both the BBC and the Barnardo's Choir of the Year competitions. Mrs Corlett has done a fantastic job and we wish them every success.

Queen's continues to provide an exceptional environment for girls to try new things, to have a go, to push themselves and I'm enormously proud that they are taking on these challenges with such obvious success.

Offers come flooding in

By Claire Dillamore

The expert advice and personalised support delivered at The Queen's School for university applications has again paid dividends.

An average of 8% of girls from Queen's go on to study at either Oxford or Cambridge each year, and 12% go on to study Medicine. This year, around a quarter of Year 13 students have applied for Medicine and girls already have places at Cambridge, Birmingham, King's College London and Exeter. Two girls are also

holding unconditional offers for Veterinary Medicine - one at Cambridge and one at Bristol. 86% of applicants for other university degree courses - everything from Architecture, Classics and Modern Foreign Languages to PPE - are holding offers from Russell Group universities and 82% from Times Top 20 institutions. Two

girls have unconditional offers from Birmingham to study Geography with Economics and Biological Sciences. We are delighted, too, that well over a quarter of girls are already holding offers from all five of their chosen universities. We wish them all every success wherever they plan to study next year.



New Head for Lower School



The Lower School will welcome a new headmistress in September when recently appointed Mrs Rachel Cookson joins the staff at Queen's.

Currently Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery at Terra Nova School, Mrs Cookson brings a significant level of experience to her new post. Having worked in junior and infant education for Cheshire and Bristol early in her career, she went on to play a key role as a member of the original infant department at The King's School, Macclesfield

where she taught for 13 years. Mrs Cookson is highly creative and as well as her passion for inspiring and guiding others, loves to learn for herself. She has represented the country at swimming and running, but now enjoys other sports together with music, the fun and pace of family life, and long walks with her dog Charlie.

Further recognition for Queen's girl

Not only has a Year 11 student and England Lacrosse Squad member secured a coveted athletics scholarship at a prestigious US university, she has been awarded the largest academic scholarship possible for an international student.

She will study biology and maths at Mercer University in Georgia, enabling her to realise her dream to train over the Atlantic.

Furthermore, she hopes to put her latest skill into practice - she has taken her expertise beyond playing the game to being fully qualified to coach it. A two day course saw her securing

her knowledge of the strict safety procedures necessary in every match as well as honing her skills at guiding players of all ages, from reception to adulthood. She hopes to coach and pass on her passion for the game at lacrosse camps during the summer holiday before embarking on her US adventure.



Classicists soak up culture and sunshine

By Eugénie Fernandes

Thirty girls from Years 9 to 13 spent six wonderful days admiring some of the world's most exciting and priceless works of ancient art and enjoying the glorious Greek sunshine.

Athens was our first stop. Here the group climbed the Acropolis to the Parthenon and visited the New Acropolis and National Archaeological Museums.

Cape Sounion, where Lord Byron carved his name on the Temple of Poseidon, came next before a stunning journey to the mountain village of Delphi,



home of Apollo's oracle. A delightful drive through the olive and pomegranate groves of the Peloponnese led the group to the coastal village of Tolo, base for a thrilling tour of Greece's most ancient sites including Mycenae, the 16th century BC citadel of Homer's Agamemnon with its majestic Lion's Gate. The girls took turns to stand on the platform from which St Paul preached to the Corinthians, and some even declaimed tragic verse in Epidaurus' magnificent ancient stone theatre.



Youth Parliament

A Year 11 student really wants to make a difference to young people living in the region.



Over the past few weeks she has been campaigning as one of five candidates standing for a place in the UK Youth Parliament. Elections are held every two years and anyone aged between 11 and 18 can vote via ballot papers distributed at local schools. In a filmed hustings, she pledged to listen carefully to her peers and to do all that she can to respond helpfully to their queries and requests. Successful election would see her representing Cheshire West until the end of February 2016.

Queen's girls top of their game

Two former Queen's pupils have each been recognised for excellence in their field.

One student (below right), who left Queen's last summer to study Art Foundation at the City and Guilds of London Art School, has recently been presented with a prestigious national art prize. Despite a record number of entries to the National Open Art Competition, the judges - who included critic Brian Sewell, Scottish painter Barbara Rae and gallerist Michael Hoppen - selected her for the Piran Strange Award. Her winning, exquisitely intricate and philosophical etching entitled *Order* is currently on display at the Royal College of Art.

Head of Art Alistair Tucker said: "She is a very talented young artist and was a joy to teach. Passionate about art and dedicated completely to her work, she is probably one of the best students I have taught in 18 years and is sure to go on to great things. This prize is just the start for her. We're all very proud here at the school." Another student's academic diligence and talent has also been acknowledged. Not only did she graduate last summer with a First Class Honours Masters in Civil Engineering from Imperial College London, she was awarded a prize by the

Institute of Civil Engineers for top student on her course. The talented student also received the Laing O'Rourke prize in Systems Engineering and Innovation for her outstanding final project and dissertation entitled *Analysing Greenfield Ground Response to Tunnelling*. She now works for Atkins. Her mother commented: "We continue to be thankful for the happy time our daughter had at Queen's and the excellent teaching and encouragement she received there."





Intellectual rigour from our Holdich Team

By Nia Tunnicliffe

The Cilia of Cells, Neuro-Lingusitic Programming, The Cosmetics Industry, The Sport Gene, The Rubik's Cube and Nature versus Nurture - these are the titles in a fascinating series of enrichment lectures to be given throughout the spring term by members of the school's Holdich Society.

While students will deliver 90% of the presentations, members of staff and external speakers will also contribute to this intellectually inspiring and challenging yet supportive forum.

The lectures can be seen by visiting our YouTube account, which can be accessed by clicking on the YouTube icon on The Queen's School homepage.



Arts Fair winners

Almost 50 girls from the Senior School exhibited work at the Chester Arts Fair where local artists awarded prizes for their favourite pieces in three categories.

A Year 12 girl won the Key Stage 5 award and also £50 and an opportunity to exhibit at next year's fair.

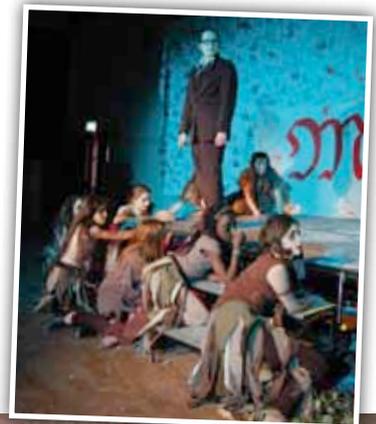
Year 11 and Year 9 students attained the Key Stage 4 and 3 prizes respectively. Congratulations to them all!

The Scottish Play

Ensemble, the name of the Senior School drama company made up of students from Years 7 to 10, says it all: its gripping, visually glorious production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was indeed a wonderful collaboration of all who wanted to get involved.

In fact, as there were 42 young actresses all eager to participate, inventive director Jo Band decided to cast 32 witches so that everyone had a part - and compellingly menacing 'weird sisters' they proved! It made for an innovative and exciting spectacle, chillingly

atmospheric through dramatic use of sound and lighting. Five months of rehearsal ensured excellent performances all round; no wonder members of the audience commented on the professionalism of the production and described it as 'amazing'.





Queen's embraces Fitness For All

By Paul Virgo

Whether raising funds or enjoying a range of exciting new activities beyond the normal Queen's sports curriculum, the whole school community has keenly embraced *Fitness For All*.

Alongside the initiative, the PE Department has organised a *Fitness For All* Challenge encouraging Senior School pupils to monitor and record individual physical activity - from competing in a challenging match to simply enjoying a brisk weekend walk. Fitness is also a key focus at The Lower School where a vast range of extra-curricular activities are available: from break dancing to fitness club, cheerleading to Zumba. The school pool is, of course, always a favourite. Meanwhile we have developed a strong partnership with the Royal Chester Rowing Club which, as well as offering ample opportunity to train and compete, has run several excellent *Learn to Row* courses. A generous grant from the MBNA Foundation has enabled us to purchase five indoor rowing machines, which the girls are busy using

to train for the forthcoming regional indoor rowing finals at Chester University in March. Those who would prefer to feel the wind in their sails meet at Chester Sailing Club, where a number of girls plan to take their Assistant Sailing Instructor's Award. In the summer we hope to run the RYA training weekends for girls at the Lower School which proved so popular last year. While our skiers and equestrians meet regularly off-site, the Senior School itself is the venue for the Beth Tweddle Gymnastics Academy, which now boasts over 100 members, and an increasingly popular Fencing Club run by local expert Valerijis Scipanova. In fact, last month we were delighted to welcome a national fencing champion, David Gregory, who helped at the latest taster course supported by Pentathlon GB following two successful biathlons at the Lower School. Later in the year, the Senior School hopes to introduce weekly lunchtime yoga sessions run by Head of English, Robin Wilson, and in July

eight members of staff will accompany nineteen intrepid pupils from Year 11 in Queen's to Queen 2. Following the tremendous success of the Q2Q and Offa's Bike challenges, they aim to cycle from Chester to the Tower of London in just six days. Fundraising, too, has been tremendously successful from the sale of Slovakian Christmas gingerbread decorated exquisitely by the Kiselyova family to the staggering £38,000 raised at the glittering Gala Dinner. This excellent evening was hosted by television celebrities Louise Minchin, Nick Hancock and Adam Partridge with guests of honour, sporting legends Michael Owen, Rebecca Romero, Beth Tweddle and John Barnes. A huge thank you to all who have contributed in any way to *The Fitness For All* Appeal: the response has been superb.





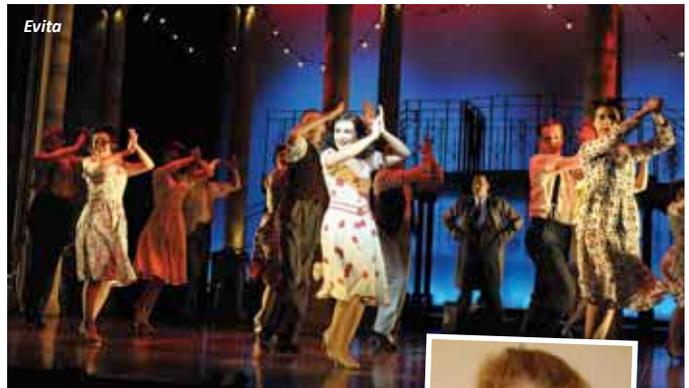
Cambridge visit for young maths students

Four eager mathematicians in Year 6 managed to secure a thoroughly well-deserved place in the final of the prestigious National Young Mathematician Award. Demonstrating superb teamwork during the qualifying stages, the girls had soon devised a solution to the multi-layered, high level problem they had been challenged to work out. An impressively presented explanation of their findings saw them qualify, as one of the five top schools to compete, for the final at Cambridge University.

Stars of stage and screen

Two Queen's girls have both been making quite an entrance recently: one on stage; the other on children's television.

Taking the role of *the unnamed child*, a Year 5 student charmed audiences at The Lowry Theatre in Manchester and Stoke's Regent Theatre with her touching solo in the opening verses of *Santa Evita*. Her form teacher Rhiannon Morgan commented: "She is a wonderful, talented girl who shines when she is on a stage. We are all very proud of her." Meanwhile, last month a Year 9 pupil made her television debut playing the part of *George*, the happy-go-lucky 'human' sister of the main character *Vlad*, in CBBC's *Young Dracula*. All the hours of filming in a disused old school in Liverpool during the summer holiday must have seemed



worth it when the first in the latest series of the teenage Gothic drama was aired at the end of January. She enthused afterwards: "It was an amazing experience; the cast and crew were fantastic. Making TV drama is a big team effort and I was so happy to be part of it."



She appears in 8 of the 13 episodes and is now completely hooked on a career in acting.



On set in *Young Dracula*.



Random Acts of Kindness

Here at Queen's we took a very positive approach to National Anti-Bullying Week, when pupils and staff were encouraged to post details of any thoughtful deeds they had witnessed or received on a special Random Acts of Kindness board placed at the entrance of the Senior School.

Almost immediately a host of messages appeared recording all kinds of considerate acts so typical of the girls at Queen's: lending a sympathetic ear or sharing a snack at break or a brolly in a downpour. As Deputy Headmistress

Irene Jones commented: "Sometimes it is easy to forget that small acts of kindness like holding a door open, helping a new girl who is lost or paying a friend a compliment can have a huge impact on the recipient."

BBC appearance for our Young Voices

By Margaret Corlett

The twelfth semi-final of the BBC Songs of Praise School Choir of the Year competition is eagerly awaited at the Lower School.

Our very own *Young Voices* will compete against five choirs from around the country to impress a celebrity judging panel including singer, TV presenter and classically trained musician Mylene Klass and renowned choral guru Suzi Digby.

Music is such an important part of school life at Queen's and we could not be prouder of the girls for the effort they have put in to get to this stage. We have already won the Spirit of Christmas Choir competition with opposition from schools

across Cheshire and Flintshire, and we are also finalists in the Barnardo's Choir of the Year competition to be held in March. The girls are thrilled at the thought of being broadcast to the nation on BBC One, so please look out for us in April!



Perfect performance

Two spellbinding performances of Melanie Marnich's *These Shining Lives* left audiences struggling to hold back the tears.

The Epic Theatre Company, made up of pupils from Years 11, 12 and 13, retold the heart-breaking story of four courageous young women who were gradually poisoned by radium as they painted illuminated watch faces in a factory in 1920s Illinois.

The tale of how they pursued their case to the Supreme Court, thus playing a crucial role in the reformation of US employment legislation, was conveyed superbly; the characters portrayed with a stage presence rarely witnessed in a school production.

Head of Drama Katharine Larder enthused: "I am so very proud of this excellent young company which tackled such an emotive and controversial storyline with admirable empathy and professionalism from start to finish."



Barcelona trip

The biennial trip to the iconic city of Barcelona gave 52 girls from Years 8 and 9 a wonderful opportunity to experience Spanish language, art and culture first-hand.

Inma Ruiz from the Modern Foreign Languages Department led the group in a packed itinerary which included visits to the open-air and science museums and Montserrat, with its striking sacred basilica. The visitors enjoyed strolling along Las Ramblas, took

in Gaudi's breath-taking architecture in Park Güell and were given a guided tour of the magnificent Sagrada Familia, where they used iPads to explore its history. The Catalunya F1 circuit and the magic fountains of Montjuic, where the girls were thrilled to witness a real, movie-style marriage proposal, were particularly popular. There was plenty of opportunity to practise the language and to try local dishes such as paella and delicious chocolate con churros. The evenings proved just as much fun with a host of exciting activities such as aqua gym, basketball, a disco and a salsa-dancing workshop.



Congratulations

- Frances and Richard Lennon on the birth of their daughter Aoife.
- Steve and Carol Houghton on the birth of their daughter Ava.
- Katy and Kaz Yousaf on the birth of their daughter Jemima
- U19 hockey team: Cheshire champions and third in the North West in the U19 National Schools Tournament.
- U16 hockey team: Chester and District U16 Outdoor Hockey Tournament champions.
- U15 hockey team: Chester and District U15 Indoor Hockey Tournament champions.
- U13 hockey team: Chester and District U13 Indoor Hockey Tournament champions.
- Year 8 hockey team: winners of the Moreton Hall Invitation and Packwood Haugh Invitation U13 7-a-side tournaments against teams from Cheshire, Shropshire and the Midlands.
- Year 8 indoor athletics team: runners-up in the Chester and District U13 Sportshall Athletics Championships.
- Year 7 indoor athletics team: winners of the Chester and District U12 Sportshall Athletics Championships.
- Years 10/11 netball team: runners-up in the Chester and District U16 Netball Tournament.
- U14 badminton team: winners of the county final of the U14 National Badminton Championship and selected to represent Cheshire in the North West competition.
- Years 5/6 swimming team: winners in U11 50m breaststroke and U11 freestyle relay at the AJSJ swimming gala in Lancashire.
- Years 8/9 swimming team: 3rd in the Chester and District Swimming Gala.
- Queen's rowers: qualifiers for the county final of the Rowing School Games.
- Nicola Kiely (Year 12) and Kimberley Meredith (Year 11): selected for the North Lacrosse Squad.
- Leah Gough and Holly Illingworth (Year 7): placed 5th and 7th respectively in the Cheshire Schools Cross Country Championships and selected to represent Cheshire.
- Hâf Morgan-Read (Year 10): selected for the Girls U16 Welsh Football Squad.
- India Edwards (Year 7): selected to join the Royal Yachting Association Zone Squad.
- Lucy Thomson (Year 5): won the highest score overall at the Holywell Swimming Gala.
- Aarthi Aravind (Year 4): selected to play chess for Cheshire and U9B North West champion.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEB	Fri	14	INSET - no school for pupils		
	Mon	17-23	Half-term		
MAR	Wed	5	Years 10 and 11 Careers Convention	9.10am - 12.25pm	Senior School
	Sun	9	The Queen's School Festival of Music		Senior School
	Tue	18	Year 10 Parents' Evening	5-7pm	Senior School
	Tue	25-26	Cabaret Evening	7pm	Senior School
	Wed	26	School photo		Senior School
	Fri	28-30	Christian Union at Cloverley Hall Year 4 residential trip to Kingswood		Senior School Lower School
APR	Tue	1-2	Years 12 and 13 Physics trip to Cern		Senior School
	Wed	2-9	Years 10, 11 and 12 exchange trip to Brittany		Senior School
			Daffodil Service at Chester Cathedral	10am	Lower School
			Term ends	12.25pm	Senior School
		9-11	Year 10 Extreme Physics trip		Senior School
	Tue	22	Summer term starts		
Mon	28	Year 8 Parents' Evening		Senior School	
MAY	Fri	2	Commemoration Service at Chester Cathedral	2pm	Senior School
	Mon	5	Bank Holiday		
	Fri	9	Years 11 and 12 study leave	3.45pm	Senior School
	Wed	21	Year 13 study leave	1.30pm	Senior School
	Fri	23-26	Running Club visit to Vienna		Senior School
	Mon	26-2	Half-term		

Queen's School Parents' Association

- **Tuesday 25th February:** Event planning meeting; 7.30pm at the Senior School - all welcome.
- **Tuesday 4th March:** Fashion/Trashion Evening; 7pm at the Senior School.
- **Friday 14th March, 16th May and 13th June:** Lower School Coffee Mornings.
- **Friday 21st March, 9th May and 27th June:** Senior School Coffee Afternoons.
- **Wednesday 26th March:** Easter Bingo; 5pm at the Lower School.
- **Tuesday 29th April:** Event planning meeting; 7.30pm at the Senior School - all welcome.
- **Saturday 28th June:** Annual Garden Party at the Lower School
- **Friday 4th July:** Golf Day

The QSPA has an active events group which is always looking for new members. Please see the website for more details of forthcoming events or email qspa@queens.cheshire.sch.uk for more information.

Alumni news

- **Saturday 15th March:** introduction to WebALUMNUS for Class Reps; 2pm at the Senior School.
 - **Saturday 24th May:** Oxford tour and lunch.
- For more details contact: alumni@queens.cheshire.sch.uk

