



## Simply ‘Outstanding’

### Reports by Joanna Harper and Matthew Turner

The school’s recent Ofsted inspection thoroughly tested all aspects of our school and its community, and we are glad to report that the results were terrific! “We think that overall you go to an outstanding school. Standards, which were already very high, are continuing to rise as more students achieve the very highest grades”. Our school did not score below a 2 or ‘good’ grade in any of the numerous areas that were analysed. The inspectors were particularly impressed with how well motivated the students are, and the effort and drive with which they push themselves to achieve their goals. The following Tuesday the school had its first ever school non-uniform day and a celebratory lunch as a reward for these excellent results.



### International Relations

The school is making the most out of its specialist Language status and international vision as it branches out to expand its foreign portfolio even further. We are very happy to announce the arrangement of a 10-night tour of China in July 2009. Though still in its early stages, it promises to be an exciting and thoroughly educational experience of the Far East and its many delights. It will also be an excellent opportunity for Mandarin students to test out their knowledge and ability to converse. In addition to this, we were privileged to welcome another group of German exchange students to the school this October.



### Fireworks night goes off with a bang

The School hosted its annual Fireworks evening on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Many new features appeared this year, for instance an inflatable football game which went down extremely well. Many people supported the event and were not disappointed as the fireworks were dazzling. A large sum of money was raised on this evening.

### Dance the night away

Another fundraising achievement for the school was the Barn Dancing Evening held in October. High numbers attended and the evening was a complete success providing “Fun for all”. The dances suited everyone, whether you were a beginner or slightly more advanced and every person that attended said that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Even Mr Swain got up and had a dance! The funds raised from both events will go towards paying for the new laser cutter in the DT department. This is a very worthwhile addition to the school as it makes design work easier and more fun. It has already been used to cut and engrave key rings and iPod holders, and will no doubt be used many more times in the future.

## Hockey 1<sup>st</sup> XI victorious –

See back page for details

# Pupil poets light up school

## Wood wins overall prize

### A Celebration of Winter

The annual poetry competition commenced this term with many high standard entries. It had a seasonal theme of winter and festivities and many new and original ideas developed out of this, leading to a very tough final. In the end Gregg Collett was chosen as the winner of the senior competition and Aniiil Sinita won the junior competition. The overall school trophy winner was Steven Wood with his brilliantly written poem exploring two very contrasting perspectives of snow.

#### Snow

*As Christmas comes, the snow doth fall  
Atop the winter trees standing so tall.  
Down upon the rooftops and the gardens around;  
A glimmering layer of white across the ground  
The children stand and stare and cheer  
In their homes so warm and with their family so dear.*

*A hot cup of cocoa in one hand,  
In awe at the sign of the snow covered land.  
The family gather round the fire  
And sing merry songs until they tire.  
They go upstairs to rest their head  
To fall asleep in their snug cosy beds  
Will wake to gifts and stockings full  
With large meals to eat and crackers to pull.*

*But what of those who at Christmas time  
Do not sing songs and drink red wine.  
Those who are not tucked up in a bed at night  
To whom the snow brings nought but fright  
Who sleep upon the streets so white*

*And cling to their blankets, oh so tight,  
Who pray to the Lord with all their might  
That they will wake after this night.  
And those who pray they won't...  
Who wish not to spend another bitter cold day  
Amongst a world of others so gay.*

*So as you wake to gifts and stockings full,  
With meals to eat and crackers to pull,  
Do you stop to think at all  
Of the anguish brought when snow doth fall?*

By Steven Wood 11S

## Cadets show their worth

CCF is an important part of the Queen Mary's community and many opportunities come about through it.

This term Tom Hillitt gained the position of RSM, a rank regarded with extremely high respect. It is his job to ensure that the standards of drill and turnout are kept by all 250 cadets and also to organise the weekly training. This position will set him in good stead for the future as he aspires to join the Royal Engineers.

As part of Queen Mary's responsibility as one of the largest voluntary, non-commissioned contingents in the country, the army and RAF sections of the CCF took part in the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade. It was an honour to support this important event to remember the sacrifices of many lives of soldiers for this country, throughout history. The cadets obtain a sense of pride from representing their school and town in this parade every year.

CCF always opens up opportunities for willing students, such as the six that competed in an orienteering competition on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October. They had to navigate their way round a series of points in the fastest time possible and achieved first place! David Gelder was also runner up in the individual orienteering contest. They hope to be able to compete again in the future as it boosts fitness and is team strengthening. Sectional activities such as orienteering take place regularly with the CCF.

## Sixth formers enriched

This term a new sixth form enrichment scheme has been launched in Queen Mary's to encourage the sixth formers to take up more than just their academic subjects. The school has recognised the importance of extra-curricular activities as the competitiveness for universities in England now means that students need to have more to offer than just their subjects. This scheme will enable sixth formers to do that and discover new talents at the same time as it offers all 6.1 pupils the opportunity to choose an enrichment activity and study option in their private study periods, after school or in their own time.

During the autumn term, there have been tutor-led sessions in philosophy, medical ethics, physical education and Latin. Nine pupils have also undertaken and successfully completed a Rugby First Aid qualification and have been attending home rugby fixtures in a medical support capacity.

In addition, over seventy sixth formers have shown an interest in the Open University YASS scheme which will allow them to study an undergraduate level module in one of the Arts, Science or Technology faculties.

These, and many other ventures, are clearly exciting developments and offer huge opportunities for sixth form students at QM.

# What's been going on this term?

## So Many Opportunities

### LitSoc

Literature Society has been very successful again this term with a number of pupils attending from the sixth form. It is run by Katherine Morgan of Year 13 along with Mr Lax and Mr Thomas. The books that have been set this term were '1984' by George Orwell and 'Catch 22' by Joseph Heller and the pupils found the books and the discussion both thoroughly enjoyable. These two literary classics provoked debate amongst the pupils about the key issues within them, for example, the circular logic of Catch 22 and the totalitarian regime in 1984.

### Book Club

Mrs Nicholls and Mr Thomas set up the QMGS Junior Book Club this term and have had the first two meetings. There has been a wonderful response from pupils in the younger years of the school and they have enjoyed reading the first book this term which was 'Star of Kazan' by Eva Ibbotson. They are looking forwards to their next meeting and their next book which is 'Divided City' by Theresa Breslin.

### Ready, Steady, Cook

A new cookery course has been opened for sixth formers this term in order to prepare them for independent living at university. There are a number of pupils participating during their free periods every fortnight and they have all found that it is a fun and useful activity to advance their cooking skills which will be invaluable in later life.

### 'Clever Clogs' succeed again

Mr Elsdon took two quiz teams to King Edwards Grammar School, Edgbaston to take part in the Regional Schools quiz competition. Team B (Matthew Wells, Robert King, Imiose Agboaye and Michael Jevon) managed to beat Solihull School B team but unfortunately conceded defeat to King Edwards Grammar School A team. However, Mr Elsdon wrote that they fought well and showed great depth of knowledge.

Team A (James Gilliland, Thomas Small, Alex Weate and Oliver Jevons) qualified for the semi-finals, losing out to King Edwards Grammar School A team in a hard match where the two schools were very close until the last 5 minutes. They then managed to beat King Edwards High School A team in the play-off for third place, and hence finished third overall, matching the previous best performance in 2006.

### The School of Entrepreneurs

Mr Sunley deserves at least three cheers for his work in organising enterprise week this year, which was a huge success! There were a range of different enterprising activities going through the week for all years, from investing in a virtual stock market to making soap. It is important, especially seeing as we have a 'Business College' status that we encourage enterprise within the pupils and participating in this global enterprise week was a wonderful opportunity to do so. Many students learned new skills, took part in new activities and learned new ways to make money. This will surely be useful for them later on in life!

### The Sport of Kings

Chess club has accumulated even more members this term and is going strong. Organised by Mr Thorpe the club meets every Thursday at lunch time to practise, for the forthcoming matches. There has been one match this term for years 7 and 8, against Camp Hill. The outcome was a draw which we see as a pleasing result because Camp Hill is a formidable opponent.

### The Apprentice

The QMGS Apprentice began just after half-term as Mr Walton began his search among Year 12 for the perfect apprentice! Arranged to replicate the 'Apprentice' television show this competition continues until Easter with pupils being set fortnightly tasks and one (or more) pupils from the losing team being fired at the end of each assignment. This is designed to encourage enterprise and team-building skills within the pupils, with the winning team receiving a prize each week and the overall winner receiving £100, a sum worth fighting for!



Hannah Butler and Aiden Dhadli cook up a feast.



Mr Thorpe imparts his wisdom!

## Helping Charitable Causes

'My Ubique' is a charity run by disabled ex servicemen who challenge poverty in Jesus' name. It is in association with the Junior Christian Union and all money raised goes towards providing clean water and improving sanitation in selected parts of Ghana. After a visit from David Studdard, a leading member of My Ubique, Year 9 has chosen to adopt this as their charity for this year and will soon be organising fund raising events.

In recognition of Enterprise week we were also visited by Kevin Davis, Chief Executive of the Vine Trust. The Vine Trust is a social enterprise as it is a business from which the profits are invested into society. He entered into this charity because he desired to give back to his community. Queen Mary's is helping him to do that by supporting the Vine Trust in various ways. Every Monday a group of pupils visit a Vine Trust centre to mix with other children from different backgrounds. This is an extremely rewarding experience for students because they gain the satisfaction of socialising and helping many hard-to-reach youths. Mr Tippins is also have a great impact teaching in the 'Second Chances' school at the trust.



## Jabbal stars as U18s romp to victory

### Boys' delight at Staffordshire Cup Victory

By Joanna Harper and Matthew Turner

Queen Mary's Grammar School's outstanding hockey season peaked with a brilliant 5-1 victory over King Edward's, Lichfield in the Staffordshire Cup Final. Kavaldeep Jabbal was the star of the show with a stunning hat trick and Gagandeep Sandhar chipped in with the other two. It is the first time since 1994 that we have won this prestigious trophy. Things could get even better! Our U16 team recently hammered Chase Academy 13-1 in their Staffordshire Cup semi-final. Watch this space!

## Sports Shorts

### Rugby

The rugby team has had a fantastic series of results in their matches this term. The 1<sup>st</sup> XV won a number of matches against considerable oppositions, and have reached the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the Daily Mail Vase. They have beaten Warwickshire College Of F.E, Brooke Weston Technology College, and King Edward VI Camp Hill School and are soon to play King Edward VI Aston School. The U15s reached the 3<sup>rd</sup> round but unfortunately bowed out to King Edwards School Stratford, after winning two very challenging games against Litchfield Cathedral School and Rawlett Tamworth with Marek Barnes being the man of the match in round 1.

### First Aid

This term there has been a rugby first aid course held for the sixth form, which lasted two weeks. Nine people took part, along with Mr Taylor and Mr Lilley. It was a practical course, paid for by the school, with a short exam at the end. All of the pupils passed the assessment and have received a qualification in Rugby First Aid. They are now attending the final rugby matches of this term as the first aid attendants as a means to apply their new skills.

### Hockey

This season the 1<sup>st</sup> XI have performed exceptionally well combining good team play with the emergence of Kavaldeep Jabbal to provide impressive leadership with the absence of Alex Dallaway due to injury. They have won a number of matches which have led them to the final of the Staffordshire Cup, a most prestigious event.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI captained by James Ferris have made a steady start to the season with a notable 10-1 win against King Edwards School Camp Hill. We hope that they will continue to perform at this standard.

### Girls' Boxercise

A new initiative from the head of girl's welfare, Mrs Chapman, was introduced to provide the girls of Queen Mary's with a sports programme. Every week an instructor visits the school and leads an adrenaline packed workout. It has been a great success so far.

### Cricket

It is an exciting time for budding cricketers. Mr L Taylor has big plans to revolutionise cricket at QM. To this end there have been numerous opportunities for boys this term. The fruit of which will be seen in the summer!

