



Oh! What a Lovely War

Saffy Andreae

Oh! What a Lovely War is a satire aiming to show stoic optimism in a devastating time in our country's history, and really, Notting Hill, as Ms Whitmarsh pointed out, couldn't have produced our version at a more poignant time. So soon after the Paris shootings, there were levels of uncertainty about how appropriate it was to be putting on a play that deals with the horrors of war (and set in France at that). However, I think that Notting Hill, as per usual, managed to pull it off. It was a moving, sentimental, production that had many of us sobbing into our bags of Traditional Sweets (provided front-of-house) but also one which made us think.

It's shockingly difficult to perform a play that relies so heavily on the tenuous link between humour and horror, sadness and, well, a bit of silliness. I think the success of the production lay in the contrasts which provided perfect balance. Beccy Bollard, as a hoarse voiced and somewhat opinionated sergeant, compared with the stunningly touching grace of Elisa Defries' ballet performance, and

there were many other examples, left us feeling bereft and devastated by the ghastly events that took place, but at the same time the production served as a comedic act of remembrance for our 'chaps'.

The poppies cascading down the wall of the theatre entrance, each told its own tale of sacrifice and loss. Just one poignant example; the story of Reginald Earnshaw. In 1941 he lied about his age and signed up as a Merchant Navy cabin boy. He died when German planes attacked his ship the SS Devon, on July 6, 1941. He was just 14 years, 151 days old.

Stories like this, and every other act of selfless nobility we forget to acknowledge, really hit home and for me, are why I loved *Oh! What a Lovely War*. I think it reminded us to acknowledge, to respect and pay tribute to those who died and still die for each and every one of us today. I hope this reminder, this lesson, stays with all of you, as I know it will with me.

Year 8 Art Trip

Marcia Teusink



All of Year 8 went on an Art Department trip to the Victoria & Albert Museum in December to do research for an upcoming project inspired by shoes. The girls explored the 'Shoes: Pleasure & Pain' exhibition by sketching a wide variety of inventive and sometimes extreme shoes, from rainbow platform boots to a crystal slipper. They also designed surreal shoe sculptures based on all kinds of objects in the museum's permanent collections and went on a scavenger hunt which encouraged them to experience the wide range of objects the V&A has to offer. Winners of the scavenger hunt competition will be announced in January!

Royal Society of Chemistry Global Experiment

Andy Crame



Two groups of girls from Year 7 took part in this year's Royal Society of Chemistry Global Experiment.

This involved looking at water



uptake by the hydrogel absorbent found in disposable nappies and comparing this to that obtained with the equivalent size of cloth nappy. Students were asked to predict, from their results with the

cloth nappy, what the water uptake by hydrogel would be and they also looked at whether or not water absorption varied in different parts of the nappy or if there was a uniform dispersal of hydrogel.

Their results have been posted on the RSC web site <http://rsc.li/ge-water> along with sample results from all over the world.

Hans Woyda Competition

Hannah Croft



This term the following girls have competed in the prestigious Hans Woyda competition: Mithra Kumaran, Ella McNeill, Eve Harrington,

Cecily Bell, Jemima Bradley, Anouschka Rajah, Bella Wong, Hannah Lefroy, Ellie Williams and Catherine Farrow.

This is a fun but tough competition and the girls undertook some challenging Mathematics. Although we didn't emerge triumphant, our score increased with every round showing great improvement from the girls.

International Hour of Code

Phil Nelkin



On 9 and 10 December, NHEHS celebrated the International Hour of Code across two lunch time sessions. A large group of girls were taken through the process of designing a *Star Wars* game using JavaScript.

Samar Al-Haddad in Year 9 reports " ... First, there was a video explaining why we celebrate the Hour of Code and

then we set off. After some guidance from the site, we started writing our own bit of code for a *Star Wars* game. I thoroughly enjoyed creating my own world with code blocks and JavaScript as the site made it very easy and efficient. I hope we can do it again!

Thank you for organising it for us Mr Nelkin!"



Working at Height

Mr Barrett rigs drapes from the roof of the Hall as it is transformed for *Oh! What a Lovely War*



Dress Rehearsal

Ready to go—the cast of *Oh! What a Lovely War*



Props

Weeks of work behind the scenes



Pi Club

This half term the members of Pi Club have enjoyed some mindful mathematical colouring, inspired by the new book by Alex Bellos *Snowflake, Seashell, Star – Colouring Adventures in Numberland* (A copy is now available in the school library)

This book is a 'field guide for the mathematical adventurer and a therapeutic exercise book designed to bring insight and illumination through the meditative experience of colouring in'. We were thrilled when Alex replied to our tweet (@nhehsmaths) and he subsequently signed a copy of his book for us during the recent maths festival at the Science Museum. In the new year, Alex would like us to tweet him some of our designs.

Helen Critcher



Geography Club

Sixthformers have been running geography club this term. Events such as a brilliant scavenger hunt, a competition to design a new planet and a geographical cake decorating competition have ensured a great turn out.

Louise O'Leary

Charities

Louise O'Leary



This half term has been exciting and successful for NHEHS Charities – not only have we seen the introduction of #NHEHSCharity on @nhehs (we hope you've been following us) but also the opportunity for our budding journalists to blog about their events on Firefly.

Following Year 11's epic and inventive fundraising events before half term, Year 10 were not lacking in ideas. They have treated us to an extraordinary array of events and, of course, cake sales, before mocks and Christmas festivities brought Charity Weeks us to a temporary halt at the beginning of December.

10JJP gave us 'Teacher's Strictly'; 10RC 'Are you Smarter than a Teacher' and 10AB 'Mad Hatter's Day' –in support of Mind; Breakthrough Breast Cancer, and The MS Society respectively.

10CM gave us an own clothes day, cake sales and a rather energetic tombola in aid of Brain Tumour Research.

Ms Baboolall and Ms O'Leary would like to congratulate and thank all girls, parents and staff for their good tempered support, hard work and enthusiasm. In total you have raised an incredible £2,976.34 since September for your chosen charities. Thank you!

Christmas Charities

A retiring collection was taken at the Senior Carol Concert in aid of The Upper Room, a local charity helping the homeless in Ealing and the surrounding area. On 16 December Junior and Senior staff and girls joined forces for a Christmas Jumper Day to raise money for MacMillan Cancer support, Make-a-Wish UK and Save the Children.

NHEHS Parents' Guild

Michelle Levman



Quiz Curry Night on Saturday 14th November was our first event of the academic year. A great night was had by all with delicious hot curry served with craft beer or wine and the chance to master some fairly tricky questions. The winners were Catherine Taylor Burden's table - well done! They won the coveted Quiz Night Trophy and a bottle of bubbles! Many thanks to everyone who attended. The next quiz night will be in the Spring Term 2016.

The Christmas Bazaar this year was even bigger than usual as we spread our festive wings and incorporated a Garden Food Court with an outdoor BBQ serving burgers and hot dogs as well as a stall serving hot chocolate with marshmallows. We were once again blessed with dry, crisp weather and the Parents' Guild would like to thank parents, staff and girls for their support, enthusiasm and

generosity which makes the NHEHS Christmas Bazaar such a lovely experience. There were lots of smiling children, laughing adults and families enjoying themselves. We had a super attendance level welcoming, feeding and entertaining our guests whilst raising a tremendous sum of money.

Many parents contributed very generous prizes to our Christmas Raffle and we would like to thank those who donated and those who bought raffle tickets - the raffle was a great success and the winners were delighted! Especially Elisha Kotecha in Year 5 who won a Giant Polar Bear bigger than herself !!

Overall we raised £10,000 which will go towards new retractable seating in the Recital Hall. This will introduce additional flexibility to the space and both Junior and Senior School pupils will benefit at events of all kinds.



On the final Saturday of term the Parents' Guild Christmas Tree Sale brought a final round of festive cheer with mulled wine, mince pies and a snow machine!

So, now it just remains to thank you all for supporting us throughout 2015 and we wish you and your families a happy and healthy New Year.

A Creative Christmas

Sarah Davies



The theme of this year's Room Decorating Competition allowed plenty of scope for invention and interpretation and the judges, Mrs Raraty, Mr Nelkin and myself were intrigued to see what the girls had made of 'A Creative Christmas'.

The standard was really high. It was particularly nice to see such a strong overall performance from Year 7 so early in their Notting Hill & Ealing careers and we look forward to seeing their future offerings.

The sixth form had come in at the crack of dawn to complete their 'Gallery of Christmas Masterpieces' and Year 11, who traditionally don't enter the competition as they have been slaving away on their mock examinations the week before, surprised us with 'When the Mocks Stole Christmas,' a collaborative effort showing real humour and spirit. Year 10 went to extremes – as ever – to impress, and their efforts had either a shock or a wow factor.

The judges were also hugely impressed by the number of staff supporting their forms, risking their dignity and really getting stuck in to the magic of Christmas at NHEHS. It wonderfully underlines that the real point of this particular competition isn't who wins, but the fun and camaraderie of taking part. Saying that, it's always a very hotly contested competition so here are the results: *(see next page)*

A Creative Christmas—The Results

Sarah Davies



Honourable Mentions:

Year 11 for 'When the Mocks Stole Christmas' – very witty, very creative, a great collaboration

To various staff who sportingly got involved:

Miss Gordon – for accompanying her form so beautifully

Ms Esler – for agreeing to get tied up in tinsel

Miss Hardy – for being so convincing when crying for her form's 'When Christmas Went Wrong'

Mrs Duns and Mr Trickett - who acted out the 'Man in the Moon' John Lewis advert

Ms Johnson - who dressed up as Father Christmas

Mrs Maynard – who joined in with her form's multicultural Christmas

Miss Evans – who drove a sleigh
And finally

Mr Cheney - who donned a tutu and wings as the Christmas Tree Fairy

The Winners:

1st place – 7H for their Willy Wonka Chocolate Factory, complete with dancing Oompa Loompas

2nd place – 10 JJP with their very dark 'Creepy Christmas' – a real House of Horrors!

3rd place – the sixth form – who recreated an entire gallery complete with Christmas Masterpieces



Festive Fascinators

Year 8 had great fun making 'festive fascinators', adorning headbands with felt, pipe cleaners and netting amongst other sparkly crafts. Many of the girls added their own festive flair by bringing in personalised Christmas additions and the overall designs were extremely creative.

When all the fascinators had been completed, Ms Davies arrived for the judging, announcing she would wear the best fascinator during the end of term Christmas assembly. She reported that it had been 'extremely hard to judge such inspired and imaginative creations'.

Congratulations to Ruby Barrett and Ursula Cornelius who won first prize for their festive, yet classy, fascinator and well done to Sabah Malik and Zareen Hyatt who were runners up in the competition.

Harriet Hardy



House News

There have been many exciting new House competitions this term including a 'scavenger hunt' organised by the Geography department, a Poetry competition for National Poetry Day, a Christmas Song writing competition and a Christmas card design competition. It has also been an exciting term for inter-House sport with all three Houses producing wins. (Nightingale in Year 7, 8 and 9 netball and in the Year 8 swimming; Hepburn in Year 10 netball and Year 8 football; and Eliot with a hat-trick (Year 7, Year 9 and Year 10 football.)

Distinctions have been flying in with Year 7 achieving an impressive 281 distinctions in total! The term started slowly for Nightingale, who sat at the bottom of the leader-board for the first couple of weeks; however, Nightingalians very quickly regained control scoring the most amount of distinctions out of all three Houses; an impressive 144 in total.

As we break for Christmas the scores are:

1st 4210 points – Eliot

2nd 4190 points – Nightingale

3rd 3780 points – Hepburn

Next term the Classics and Chemistry departments will be organising new House events. Judging by how close House results have been so far, (and the fact that the end of the school year is still a long way off) there will be all to play for!

Harriet Hardy

Geography Field Visit to the Chilterns

Christine Maynard



On Wednesday 25th November the Year 10 Geographers made a visit to the River Chess near Amersham, Buckinghamshire, to study its changing characteristics from source to confluence. The work they undertook related to the 'River Features and Processes' topic which is part of their GCSE course.

The visit was led by members of the Field Studies Council. They provided excellent tuition, instruction in interesting fieldwork techniques and useful local knowledge ensuring all our students got the most out of the experience.

Upon our return to school,

students were asked to write up their fieldwork and research as a practice Controlled Assessment. This is useful preparation for their 'real' Controlled Assessment which is undertaken in the Autumn Term of Year 11 and includes fieldwork done in Dorset.

As a postscript it is interesting that, when studying this topic, students also learn about flooding and flood management. Given recent devastating events in the north of England, it is clear that geographers are able to understand and appreciate the relevance of what they learn in a real world context.

Medical and Dental Preparation Evening

Philip Sheldon



A career as a doctor, dentist or vet is tough and anyone considering entering one of these professions needs to understand what it entails as fully as possible. These are highly competitive courses at university for which excellent grades at GCSE and A level are pre-requisites. Most universities now also demand that their applicants take one of two entrance tests, UKCAT or BMAT.

Evidence of motivation, work experience in a medical context and committed volunteering are some of the things that are sought by universities in the UCAS personal statement. The final hurdle, prior to being offered a place, is an interview process which can range from a traditional panel interview to multiple mini interviews (around 10, 5 minute interviews). And then it is just a matter of getting those A level grades.

At the Medical and Dental Preparation Evening on 1st December we were fortunate enough to have six eminently qualified people come into school to give advice and interview practice to our Year 13 candidates. Representing a wide spectrum of experience, they were Hafsa Malik (2nd Year Dentistry undergraduate and NHEHS Old Girl), Katharine Hunt (Consultant Anaesthetist, NHEHS Old Girl and parent), Hugh Mather (retired Consultant Physician), Roseanna Hailstone (GP and NHEHS Old Girl), Alex Barry (Junior Doctor and NHEHS Old Girl) and Iqbal Malik (Consultant Cardiologist and NHEHS parent).

Each candidate received three interviews from panels comprising two interviewers. In addition, and a complete novelty for us, was a role play exercise in which each

aspiring medic or dentist was offered the chance to see one of two Year 12 'patients' Millie Boyse or Catriona Barnard. Millie and Catriona played different types of patients each offering different challenges and requiring different approaches in terms of skills such as empathetic listening or asking questions.

The evening session began with two short talks about medical careers to which all students from Years 10-13 were invited. Alex Barry, at the start of her career, is moving around getting a wide experience of different placements, a hospital GP at the time of writing but about to start the long, antisocial hours of accident and emergency. Resilience and tenacity were two of the characteristics shown by Katharine Hunt, now a senior consultant at one of the five medical schools that rejected her when she first applied to study Medicine. Describing herself as a pioneer of the gap year, she successfully got onto a course in the second year of applying.

On behalf of our students, I would like to thank all those who so generously offered their time and expertise.

The Boar's Head

Elizabeth Broekman



The Boar's Head Procession has been part of Notting Hill & Ealing life for over 100 years and is well and truly established as one of the Christmas traditions of the school. So far, however, we have not been able to establish when or why it started here, especially since its origins lie in 16th century Oxford! One thing we do know is that in 1911, the GDST Council deemed it 'inappropriate' (no reason given!) ... but, more than a century later, we are still celebrating it.

The origins of the carol and procession are unclear. Legend has it that while a student from Queen's College, Oxford was walking through a forest on his way to mass, he was so engrossed in a scholarly book that he did not notice an angry boar approaching until it

threatened him. Having no other weapon to hand, he rammed the book down the gaping throat of the animal and suffocated it. Its head was later served at dinner with appropriate ceremony!

From early times, boars were regarded as ferocious beasts and were readily hunted and served at banquets. Serving a dressed and garnished boar's head at Christmas was thought to symbolise the triumph of the Christ Child over sin.

As far as we can establish, very few schools include the Boar's Head Procession amongst their traditions. In fact, it appears that there are only two schools in England - Hurstpierpoint College in West Sussex and NHEHS – although it continues in several

institutions in the USA. Notting Hill & Ealing is however unique in that it seems to be the only girls' school in the world to hold this ceremony.

Here at NHEHS the boar's head we use is made from papier-mâché. In our final assembly of the Christmas term it is carried by the Head Girl, followed by a procession of Year 13 girls each carrying a candle and all singing the beautiful Boar's Head Carol. Originally published in 1521, this is thought to be the first carol to be printed in England. It is a very special event and an integral part of a Notting Hill and Ealing Christmas to see these resolutely 21st-century young women move through the darkness, voices rising in a carol whose origins lie somewhere in medieval England.

Microscale Movies of Myoglobin

Philip Sheldon



Helen Ginn is an NHEHS Old Girl who left about 8 years ago to study Biochemistry at the University of Oxford. She returned on Tuesday, 9 November to give a talk to sixthformers about university life and her research.

X-Ray diffraction is the best technique available to determine the positions of each of the many thousands of atoms in a protein: this information is needed if we are to understand how a protein works. Traditionally though, the technique is not conducive to seeing the protein in motion and therefore in action.

Helen is part of a group who are developing methods of using high energy X-ray lasers to take 'movies' of a protein in action. The principal focus at present is getting the technique to work and to this end they are studying myoglobin, a protein in muscle which carries oxygen. It is similar to, but simpler in structure, than the haemoglobin which transports oxygen in blood. The group have studied how the protein changes conformation when it binds to the toxic gas, carbon monoxide.

With her day-to-day work involving advanced Computer Programming and Maths, Helen's talk could easily have become bogged down in minutiae. However, she brilliantly managed to communicate the work to her audience with great clarity. We look forward to hearing about the future progress of her career and research.

National Youth Orchestra Success

Julia Flint (Year 11) has been accepted into the National Youth Orchestra. Over 700 teenage musicians from across the UK apply to win a place in this prestigious orchestra. All play at Grade 8 Distinction standard and are assessed by some of the UK's very best orchestral tutors. Only 64 are offered a place. A truly impressive achievement. Congratulations Julia!



Linguistics

Some of our sixth form English Language students organised a trip to the University of Reading to hear one of the country's foremost writers and lecturers on the English language. Fifty years after helping to set up a linguistics degree there David Crystal returned to the university for a public lecture in which he discussed the changes he's seen in linguistics over this period. Professor Crystal is pictured here with our students.



Senior Team Maths Challenge

The NHEHS team of Anouschka Rajah, Eleanor Williams, Natasha Sharma and Catherine Farrow pictured at the Senior Team Maths Challenge which this year took place at King's College. They spent 3 hours working with huge enthusiasm and out of the three rounds did best in the cross number, scoring 58/60.

Helen Critcher

Year 11 History Trip to Berlin

Médéa Nikolov



From the Brandenburg Gate, the starting point of our 3-hour walking tour, our guide took us round the sites of Berlin providing us with an emotional insight into both monumental buildings and memorials. Not only were we able to see the very buildings where Hitler held rallies and outlined his 'Final Solution', we were also able to visit the concentration camp at

Sachsenhausen on the outskirts of Berlin. It is now a museum and memorial and the stories which we were told by our guide were brutal and raw, leaving many of us speechless at the atrocities committed in the very rooms where we were gathered.



However, our trip was not solely focused on the Second World War in Germany, but also on the divide between Capitalist West Berlin and the Communist East and its effects on German culture and people's lives. Our visit included monuments such as



Checkpoint Charlie and various scraps of the Berlin Wall which are scattered around the city. We also visited a 1970s bunker underneath a car park, built in preparation for a possible nuclear Holocaust between the USA and the USSR.

Year 11 History Trip to Berlin ../Cont'd

At the Stasi Headquarters, we learned how the Communist leaders developed ideas such as cameras in coat buttons and spied on people in their own homes to ensure that the party was supported by the people. Yet, for me personally, the part of the trip with the most impact was a visit to an old Stasi interrogation prison. It had once used for enemies of the Nazi regime, and we were appalled by the conditions including the miniscule cells which would each have held more than 11 prisoners.

It was here that we met the most notable character of the trip, our guide on the tour of the prison. He himself had been a prisoner of the Communists due to his attempt to escape from the East by travelling to the Bulgarian border. As he told us of his experience in the prison, no one uttered a word; here was, in front of us, a man who had endured psychological interrogation and arguably torture, looking back on his own imprisonment with emotion that rendered many of us close to tears. It left a significant mark on all of us, yet his message of hope was both encouraging and inspiring, knowing that he now led a happy life in a united Germany.



Each day brought a vast array of visits and information to be absorbed and the trip was emotionally exhausting at times. On a lighter note though, Berlin is also a lively, modern city, and we were able to recuperate after long days with activities such as bowling and a trip to the TV Tower to drink 'mocktails', as well as a very brief moment of shopping at the end.

It was an exciting and vibrant

week and by the time it was time to return home on Friday, we were all sad to leave. Speaking personally, I loved the trip, both for the incredible itinerary organised by Mr Pepper, Ms Eells and Ms Croft, as well as for the opportunity to visit one of the most diverse and beautiful cities in Europe whose rich, dark and strong history appears to grow with each decade.



Art History

Year 12 art history students visited the V&A in early December. The focus of the trip was the creative process – the way in which artists' use of different materials and techniques affects the appearance of their paintings or sculptures.

We spent most of the time in the main sculpture galleries, comparing, for example, delicate German limewoods with Rodin's sensuous bronzes, and Eric Gill's totemic woman/goddess in stone.

The trip finished with a visit to the Cast Courts to view the life-size plaster version of Michelangelo's colossal David.

Theresa Morgan

Chinese Speaking Competition

Dhruti Vijay, Eshana Sarkar and Flossie Morris



On Friday 4th December, 8 of us headed to Central London to take part in the annual HSBC/British Council Mandarin Speaking Competition. This was the first time our school has taken part.

We had two individual entries; Chloe Braganca Vasconcelos (Year 8): Individual Beginner and Kimran Viridi (Year 12: Individual Advanced. There was also a group entry, consisting of three of us from Year 9 and three from Year 10. Since October, we had all been hard at work, creating a story from scratch (which had to be completely in Chinese) and perfecting our pronunciation.

There were 35 schools in our heat (two heats mean a total of around 70 schools have

taken part). Watching all the speakers was very encouraging. Everyone was really good, especially those in the advanced category, and it's great to think we could also be that good one day.

Overall, we all performed very well, and it's amazing news that our group entry (Cassia Fillingham, Gabby MacConnol, Bella Szczech in Year 10 and Dhruti Vijay, Eshana Sarkar and Flossie Morris in Year 9) has got through to the final at the British Museum in February!

We will be competing against 12 other schools. The prize is a trip to China and we are all very excited and very much looking forward to it!

GDST App Design Challenge

Phil Nelkin



In the summer, Elizabeth Down and Daphne Argyropoulos, (Year 10,) entered the GDST App Design Challenge. In November the girls learned they were through to the next round and gave a presentation to a team of judges over Skype which earned them a place in the finals.

The girls, accompanied by Ms Baboolall, were invited to the BT Tower to present the App idea at a Showcase and Awards Ceremony. The setting was spectacular and the Elizabeth and Daphne presented their App in an extremely professional way.

They won the Best Design award although overall their App was not one of the winning three. We are very proud of them and hope they will continue to design and build Apps in the future.

Sixth Form News

Rebecca Irwin

This is a busy time for Year 13 with university applications and interviews in full swing. However, the run up to Christmas is marked with a bit of 'down time' including a pyjama day and a Christmas Song Competition which this year saw tutor groups perform songs such as *Feed the World* and *White Christmas* and compete for prizes rewarding musicality and power of performance! On a more serious musical note they have also taken part in what is for many one of the most memorable rites of passage marking this, their final year at school. The performance of the Boar's Head Carol (see page 10)

Year 12 girls have been making applications to work with staff as Subject Secretaries. Formal letters of application are required and these leadership opportunities at the top of the school can include helping to run subject surgeries for younger girls, looking after visitors, representing the department at open days or leading assemblies.

A2 Text Day 2015

Sophie Greenstreet



This term, we, the A2 Latin students, went to a day of lectures on our set texts: Tacitus' *Annals Book 4* and Virgil's *Aeneid Book 6*. We are learning about the scandalous rise and fall of Sejanus during the Emperor Tiberius' reign in Tacitus, and Aeneas' descent into the underworld to see his father Anchises in Virgil.

The first lecture was on the biography of Sejanus and how unusual his rise to power was. As an equestrian (a middle-ranking Roman), he served as consul at the same time as the emperor also held consulship, an honour

normally reserved for men of higher status. The lecturer attempted to debunk many of the myths surrounding Sejanus, including that he poisoned Tiberius' son Drusus.

The second lecture discussed the intertextuality between Tacitus and Sallust and the parallels between Sejanus and Catiline, who both plotted against the state. Both Tacitus and Sallust went against the traditional grand language of Cicero, which had been adopted as the official language of the state, to show their anti-establishment, nihilistic view of the world. The third

lecture discussed the dichotomy of the underworld having a dream-like quality, yet having substance to it. It also dealt with one of the greatest mysteries of the *Aeneid*: why Aeneas exits the Underworld out of the gate of false dreams? The lecturer suggested that Aeneas' experience of the Underworld was not a false dream, but that the world above was inhabited by false dreams.

The last lecture was on the sense of place in the Underworld. The lecturer demonstrated that the places mentioned in the text do exist and discussed the significance of the places Virgil had named, such as the lake Avernus, called the entrance to the Underworld because it gives off sulphurous gases strong enough to kill birds. That was how it got its name: from the Greek *ἀόρνος*, without birds.

It was an enlightening day which has significantly broadened our understanding of the texts.

Economics Lecture at the Royal Institution

James Adams

Year 12 and 13 economics students went to the Royal Economics Society Annual Lecture at the Royal Institution. This year's lecture, by Professor Rachel Griffith of the University of Manchester, was entitled 'Does Starbuck's pay enough Tax'. This is a topical subject often covered by the media and the girls were very interested to hear it discussed by an expert in fiscal policy and learn more about the management of government revenues and expenditure and how they influence economic growth and employment.

Top of the Bench

Fiona Johnson



On a very cold and dreary evening at the start of November, four talented Chemists from Years 9-11 braved the elements and walked over to St. Benedict's where they competed in the Top of the Bench competition.

This annual competition, organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry, was attended by

over 20 schools from across the South East and saw students competing in teams of four. They completed a range of activities which challenged their teamwork skills, theoretical knowledge, practical ability and problem-solving skills, and ultimately our girls scored a fantastic total of 80%. Unfortunately this wasn't quite enough to see us through to the next round, as only 2 schools out of the 20 go forward to the nationals, but we're already setting out sights on an even higher score next year!

History Trip to the National Archives

Kitty Scales

Sixth form history students spent a day at the National Archives in Kew for a workshop linked to their A Level coursework and dealing with different interpretations of the US civil rights movement.

They were able to study a vast range of primary sources from Most Secret government documents to extracts from the press at the time. We also studied British interpretations on the "crisis at Little Rock". The girls were taught how to handle these original objects with care (not using white gloves!).

At the end of the afternoon we were treated to a surprise and shown TWO copies of the American Declaration of Independence held by the Archives. Only around 200 copies were printed on July 4, 1776 and there are only 26 known surviving copies worldwide. The last time one came up for sale it fetched over \$18 million!



Young Enterprise

Our three Young Enterprise teams made up of girls from Year 12 are now fully up and running

Saffy Andreae who is MD of one of the groups provides an update on her teams progress: "My group are making portable, re-usable, coffee cups, they're well insulated and have our logo 'Cuppa' on them in black and white. We're going to be selling them for £7.50 which perhaps gives us a little less revenue than we'd like, but we'd rather have our product at an affordable price and ensure sales.

Our product will be sold in brown paper bags with a stamp of our logo on, and we will cushion the mug with shredded newspaper so all the packaging is recyclable. We have currently signed up for two trade fairs, one in the W12 centre and one in Spitalfields. We are excitedly waiting for our product to arrive and when it does we've set up a lot of online advertising, on blogs, on Instagram and so on. On PR we've also been in contact with local cafes in Ealing that sell merchandise, for example the Electric Cafe in Ealing Broadway. Everyone has been very friendly, but, understandably, want to see our product before agreeing to any selling schemes. We are also in contact with an NHEHS Old Girl who runs a fitness blog with over 15000 followers. She has agreed to promote our product so when talking about the health benefits of green tea she will use a photo of our product."

China Trip

Gabby MacConnol, Cassia Fillingham, Alisha Godhania and Lucy Psaila

Over half term, 52 students and six teachers visited China to finally experience the country whose language we have been learning for the last four years.

We were greeted by our very cheery tour guides and after a long plane journey, most of us hadn't slept, our first experience was a Chinese supermarket, where we bought the entire stock of Evian water in preparation for the rest of the trip. Then it was off to Tiananmen Square which amazed us all with its vast size. After experiencing the overwhelming street sellers, there was then much excitement in a health-and-safety-nightmare rickshaw ride through the Hutongs, the backstreets of Beijing. For dinner that night we joined Chinese families for traditional meals.

On the Wednesday, we went to visit the iconic Forbidden City. The sheer scale of it was incredible. After this, we went to the fabulously beautiful Temple of Heaven. We then experienced Pearl Market, where many people stocked up on fake handbags, purses etc. It was a very different experience to any market we had ever been to before.

Thursday came around with two of the most famous sights of our trip: the Great Wall and the Olympic Park. The Great Wall is over 3,000 miles long and we visited the Ba da ling section of it. Everyone



picked the harder route up the Great Wall. This meant that it took us longer to reach the highest point, but it was worth it for the unique sweeping views of rural China. We then headed back to the city, to visit the Olympic Park, and then finished the day by going to see an acrobatics show.



China Trip .../Cont'd

On Friday, we were the guests of Beijing 80 School. We got to speak not only to Chinese students, but also international students studying there. It was very interesting to find out what it was like for them to go to this school, given that our school is planning on having an exchange trip there. We finished the day with a Peking duck dinner, which was many people's favourite meal of the entire trip!

On the Saturday, we went to Beijing Zoo, where we got to see none other than the pandas! They were quite active when we went, and we saw them playing on climbing frames. We then headed to the Summer Palace, before saying goodbye to Beijing for two days and departing for Xi'an on the sleeper train.

We arrived early in the morning and were met by our two new tour guides, Diana and Dary. We had a quick breakfast in our hotel before rushing off to go to see the Wild Goose Pagoda and Bell and Drum Tower Square. There was then an optional bike ride around Xi'an's city wall. After realising that the wall had in-fact 8 sides rather than 4, and wondering if we had managed to get lost on a one route track, we had to pedal hard to make it back in time to watch the famous Tang Dynasty Show,



before a dumpling banquet dinner.

On our second day in Xi'an, we got to visit the most talked about place in the city: the Terracotta Army Museum. It was amazing with thousands of warriors in the vast rooms. We then went to the Banpo Museum which is part of a Neolithic site.

After the return trip to Beijing on the sleeper train we were greeted by our two original tour guides, Cheer and Cherry. They took us first to the Lama Tibetan Buddhist Temple which was built in the late 17th century. Here we saw the largest free standing wooden statue in the world. We then went for a last shopping trip to Wangfujing Street, which is the main shopping street in Beijing.

We left early on Wednesday morning to go to Beijing Airport.

We were all very sad to be leaving as the trip had been so amazing but were looking forward to being back home and a meal without rice!

We would like to say a special thanks to Ms Cheng for originally organising the trip and of course to Mrs Swift for taking over from her and coming with us along with Ms Hunt, Ms Luo, Miss Genge, Miss Webb, Mr Quarmby and Mr Schneider.



Plaques and Tangles

Philip Sheldon



instances of families in which there is a pattern of early onset of Alzheimer's. With the gene now identified, it is possible to test at an early age whether a person will develop the disease in the future.

A group of sixth formers went to see *Plaques and Tangles* by Nicola Wilson at the Jerwood Theatre Upstairs (The Royal Court). The play explores the life of Megan, who discovers, days before her wedding, that she has a 50-50 chance of developing early onset Alzheimer's.

By all accounts, it was an intense and thought-provoking evening. However, I now feel rather like the writer whose review of the play he purports to have seen fails to mention the minor detail that the theatre burnt down during the performance: unfortunately on the day of the trip, I became unable to attend. I am therefore deeply grateful to my colleague Joshua Schneider, who stepped in at the last minute to take the trip. Given that he and the girls returned to school the following Monday unharmed, I assume that there was no fire. We look forward to the appearance of a full review, spoiler included, by Natasha Sharma and Hannah Lefroy in the next School Magazine.

Alzheimer's currently affects 850,000 people in the UK. This number is predicted to increase to over 1 million in 10 years and 2 million by 2051. The current annual cost is £26.3 billion a year.

When post mortem examination is carried out on affected patients, the disease is marked by the appearance in the brain of plaques, which are clumps of precipitated protein and tangles, twisted strands of another protein within the dying nerve cells. It is not entirely clear yet whether this pathology is the direct cause of the disease or the body's response to combat it. Whilst effective treatments are at an early stage of development, significant progress is being made in identifying genetic factors causing the disease. There are some, fortunately rare,

Modern Maths

Year 10 had the pleasure of listening to some fascinating talks on how maths made the modern world happen during their recent day of 'Maths in Action' lectures in central London.

James Grime (of YouTube 'numberphile' fame) started with a demonstration of an original Second World War enigma machine. His talk on secret codes showed how maths has been used to save many millions of lives by shortening wars. This was followed by looking at some of the beautiful patterns in Pascal's triangle which can lead to finding complex probabilities.

After lunch, we learnt that maths is good for your health as knowing the geometry of a virus is increasingly important in medical research. Chris Budd from Bath University then explained some of the maths behind the devices we all rely on in the modern world and the day finished with some entertaining lateral thinking puzzles.

Our students were lucky enough to be sitting at the front, from where they readily contributed ideas and well done to Lisa Vashchenko who was on stage as part of a human computer in the afternoon session.

Helen Critcher

The National Council of Young Women Conference

Maya Biswas-Whittaker



A conference for the National Council of Young Women sounds like a very formal event, however when we, seven sixthformers, reached Northwood College (after taking four- or was it five trains? We lost count somewhere in the middle) we found it was quite the opposite.

Initially, there were talks from the previous president of the National Council of Women and one of the founders of the National Council of Young Women. In one of the speeches,

it was mentioned how the fight for women's rights and the fight for girl's rights- though very similar- should not be completely synonymous; the discrimination women and girls face is not exactly the same in every aspect – for example, child marriage- and so the measures taken to eliminate that discrimination need to be tailored to fit.

The food for thought was accompanied by actual food, in typical GDST style, as we then sat down with coffee, tea and biscuits before beginning a workshop, splitting up into groups with girls from JFS, RMS and Northwood College.

We were told about CEDAW- something none of us had heard of before. The acronym stands for the "convention of elimination of all discrimination

against women" and was set up in 1979 by the UN General Party as a sort of international bill of rights. Each of the governments that signed it (90% of the UN Members) pledged to address the issues "named and shamed" by the Convention- and as we discussed each point, we realised how little has been done to put CEDAW into effect. The fifth article asks the governments to provide "freedom from sexual stereotyping"- but by simply flicking through a newspaper, we can see that that has not come into play.

The list of promises that hadn't been met went on and on (rather unsurprisingly) as did our conversations- however we were encouraged by the news that the NCW would be convening in New York with the United Nations to discuss how these measures can be applied.

Football

James Adams



Congratulations to our Year 9/10 footballers who were quarter finalists at the Brentford FC Football Festival organised by the Football League Trust: Female Football Development Programme. Over 130 girls from schools in west London took part.

Other recent successes include a 3-1 win over Kew House and a 6-0 win over St Augustine's.

Year 12 Maths Trip

Helen Critcher



How big is infinity? Bigger than you think! This was one of the fascinating subjects which 40 Year 12 mathematicians enjoyed thinking about during a recent trip to a day of lectures at the Institute of Education.

The day started with a puzzle – what is a quick way of finding the prime factors of 4891? Why bother you might say? Later in the day we heard just how vital prime numbers are to modern day cryptography.

The day had started with Simon Singh talking about Fermat's Last Theorem, celebrating the fact that it is 20 years since a proof

was published. It was great to hear about this famous problem again and I highly recommend the Horizon programme, first broadcast in 1996 and now available on iplayer, which tells the fascinating story of how a proof was found.

It was such a pleasure hearing all of the speakers and we went away thinking about how we need to be cyber-healthy, that we need to meet a new idea in maths a few times until we feel comfortable with it, and that the simplex algorithm solves almost all optimisation problems.

STA Swimming

Ella Valero, Simran Sandu Hutchinson, Ellie Cooper, Ele Love, Olivia Wong, Elena Colato, Ciara Paris, and Amelia Adams have qualified as STA swimming teachers. This award qualifies them to teach swimming to up to 10 beginner/improver level children on their own and assist a fully qualified swimming teacher with larger classes and more advanced skills.



Ashcloud Apocalypse

World GIS Day is an international initiative where geographers across the world take part in various projects and activities to demonstrate the real-world applications and impact which geography information systems have in today's society.

As part of this initiative Mr Raphael Heath, the Head of Geography at our GDST sister school the Royal High School in Bath, has created an interactive activity: the Ashcloud Apocalypse. So far, approximately 30,000 students from every continent have signed up to take part and Ashcloud Apocalypse is likely to become the largest geography school mapping activity ever.

From 16th to 20th November, students at NHEHS were challenged to use a series of specially curated online maps to calculate the level of risk to their home location from a mega volcanic eruption. They considered the complex global implications of a large scale volcanic eruption and were able to enjoy an excellent opportunity to use modern mapping systems, increasingly a tool of choice for the modern geographer. They also examined the level of risk in their home area relating to the disaster event eg. distance from the eruption, data about their home area such as land heights, population density, wealth and distance from hospitals.

Christine Maynard

More information at <http://gisevent.wix.com/gisday2015#!event-details/cee5>

The Odyssey

Georgia Lyons

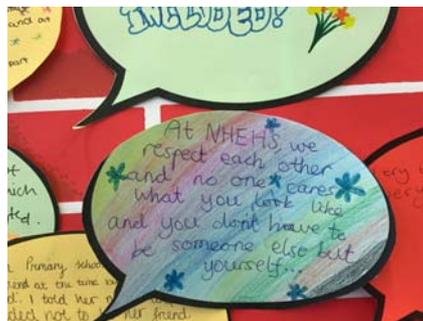


On Thursday 12th November, the Almeida Theatre produced a reading of *The Odyssey* in its entirety, following a similar event for *The Iliad* which took place in August. As we'd been so inspired and affected by this event in the summer, we wanted to find a way to incorporate *The Odyssey* into the school day and were lucky enough to be able to show the livestream of the production at lunchtime. Armed with

"Ancient-Greece themed food" – grapes, golden-apple cookies, and some completely irrelevant Pringles – we headed to Room 9. Mr Smith put the official Twitter feed on the projector as well, which turned out to be a punderful idea (cue sounds of dissent from everyone else). All in all, it was a great way to bring some more Classics into the school week, and was enjoyed by all of us.

Anti-bullying week

Elly Nicoll



The theme for this year's Anti-bullying Week was 'let's make a noise about bullying'. The week

started with an assembly on the importance of assertiveness – in both speech and body language – with some tips from Miss Eells and Ms Whitmarsh. We built on these ideas in form-time and PSHCEE sessions. As a grand finale, the girls decorated NHEHS' 'talking wall' with their own ideas about what we, at NHEHS, have made a noise about to combat bullying.



Senior Maths Challenge

On Thursday 5th November, a group of sixth form students took part in the Senior Maths Challenge. This is a national competition which is organised by the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust.

Overall the students achieved 3 Gold, 12 Silver and 7 Bronze certificates.

GOLD: Eleanor Williams, Annazita Barry and Catherine Farrow

SILVER: Eliza Argyropoulos, Aisha Hussain, Ka-Men Siu, Emma Kingsbury, Pooja Gupta, Amy Swift, Emma Claxton, Natasha Sharma, Bella Wong, Kimran Virdi, Rebecca Eckles and Hannah Lefroy

BRONZE: Naomi Lefroy, Ella Buckroyd, Jana Todorova, Anais Najera Groeninckx, Rebecca Bollard, Nichola Greenhalgh and Anouschka Rajah

Well done to all of the students who took part and a special mention for Eleanor Williams for being the 'Best in School' for the second year running and Natasha Sharma who was 'Best in Year 12'.

Helen Critcher

Hockey Highlights

Annette Greenslade



Our Year 10 and Year 8 hockey teams took part in the Independent School Hockey Cup this year. The Year 10 team were knocked out in the first round by Felsted School from Essex. The Year 8 team got a bye in the

first round, then played Forest School, London in the second round and won 5-0. In the third stage of the competition they lost to Surbiton High School, but were pleased to have reached the final 16 schools.

Teams from Years 7 and 8 took part in Latymer School's 7-a-side annual hockey tournament in October. The Year 7 team won the Plate Competition, beating Godolphin & Latymer School in the final. The Year 8 team came

second in the Plate Competition, beating Kingston Grammar in the semi-finals and then losing to Tormead School in the final.

Our U 14 team entered the Middlesex Hockey Tournament in November and finished in a creditable mid-table position.

Finally, many congratulations to Natasha Jones (Year 7) who has been selected for the Middlesex Hockey team.

Sharp Shooting!

Diane Dunkley



Our netballers were excited and very privileged to welcome Jo Harten, England international netball player, to run shooting workshops for girls from both Junior and Senior Schools

Jo played in the 2007 and 2011 World Championship and the 2010

and 2014 Commonwealth Games, and has so far earned 49 caps for her country. She competed in the 2011 World Netball Series, where she won a gold medal as a key member of the England team. She also co-captained the 2012 team, picking up a silver medal.

As someone who can play both GA and GS she certainly knows what makes a good shooter and her workshops were full of tips for developing skills and perfecting training techniques.

Thank you Jo – the girls loved it!

Swimming Update

Rob Bent



Three teams from NHEHS entered the English Schools Swimming Association (ESSA) relay competitions at Whitgift School on September 28th. The Juniors (Years 7-9), Intermediate (Years 10 and 11), and Seniors (Years 12 and 13) all swam very well with the Juniors qualifying for the national finals on 21st November held at the Aquatic Centre, Olympic Village, in Stratford. Imogen Barter, Jenny Read, Isabella Stevens and Madeleine Taylor represented NHEHS on the day.

At the GDST swimming gala held at Oxford, our two teams Juniors (Years 7, 8 and 9) and Seniors (Years 10 - 13) both swam very well. The Juniors qualified for the finals in the individual backstroke (Isabella Stevens),

freestyle (Jenny Read) and both the medley and freestyle relays, (Isabella Stevens, Maya Johnson, Imogen Barter, Anel Utepova and Jenny Read) and came in fourth place overall out of the 18 GDST schools taking part.

The Seniors qualified for the backstroke final (Pooja Gupta) and the freestyle final (Ele Love, Pooja Gupta, Iola Ryland and Olivia Williams) finishing in joint sixth place out of 15 schools.

We also enjoyed a friendly fixture against Francis Holland winning by 16 points and teams from Years 7 & 8 entered the London League where in the first round, held at St Paul's School, they performed very well and showed themselves a force to be reckoned with.



Life Saving

Congratulations to our own Mr Bent who has received the Bar to his Service Award from the Royal Life Saving Society. The award, in recognition for services to lifesaving over many years, was presented by 2003 Olympic bronze butterfly medallist Steve Parry at a ceremony at the Guildhall in London



Water Polo

We have recommenced water polo training sessions this term, venturing over to Alleyns school in Dulwich on a couple of occasions and we are really beginning to understand the task ahead of us for the ESSA competition early in the New Year. Water polo is a great game and the girls thoroughly enjoy playing it. We hope to match last season's achievements and qualify for the national finals again. Good luck girls!

Rob Bent