



Government in Action

Richard Petty

At the beginning of term, Year 12 Government and Politics students attended a very useful workshop on select committees held at the Houses of Parliament. It was highly relevant to their curriculum and was brought alive by a fantastically funny and passionate facilitator.

We then embarked on a tour of the Palace of Westminster during which the girls were torn between excitement at visiting the Chamber of the Commons (as visitors often remark, surprisingly small, if not quite as small as a tennis court) and gazing in apparent fascination at the MPs' pigeon holes on the wall outside!

Our guide entertained us with the origin of some of the fascinating traditions that rule Westminster, such as the 8-minute period allowed for MPs to reach the aye or no lobby from anywhere in the Palace of Westminster. This apparently relates to a rather corpulent MP in the 19th Century

– it was decided if he could make it in eight minutes, then so could anyone else.

Having been initially disappointed by being unable to look at the Lords, we were delighted on this occasion to be able to watch a debate from the Public Gallery in there. This fabulous opportunity had not arisen on any of our previous visits and we have taken a sixth form group to visit Westminster each year for 7 years!

We were very pleased to see that there was a majority of female peers in the Chamber, debating the International Development (Gender Equality) Bill, with Baroness Hodgson of Abinger giving a particularly impassioned speech during our period of listening in.

Westminster is always interesting but this visit was a particularly remarkable, memorable and most fascinating experience.

Who will you be?

Charlie Altman and Christine Maynard



The NHHS Careers Convention is one of the biggest events organised by the Parents' Guild and the evening of Tuesday, 4th February saw the most successful Convention to date with over 80 professions represented.

Very few other schools put on such events and we've never heard of one that's on the scale of the NHEHS Convention. It relies on the generosity and good will of NHEHS parents, Old Girls and friends of the school who give up their evening to represent their professional fields and to share their experience and advice with the girls.

It is also the culmination of a huge amount of work year round by Simon King Cline, Patrick Harrington and the team from the Careers Committee. They work closely with Mrs Maynard at school to ensure that not only the careers in which girls are most interested are represented but that they are also given a real breadth of possibilities and the chance to learn about some careers they may not have considered before.



We were delighted to be holding the event in the new school hall for the first time and the extra space made a huge difference. The evening was entitled "Careers Who ..." a Dr Who theme and particularly popular were the two quick fire 'Tardis' sessions held in the Studio Theatre where seven NHEHS Old Girls described their career paths in under one and a half minutes each.

Despite foul weather and a tube strike there was still a huge turnout and at 9.30pm when the event was officially due to end several advisers were still going strong!



***Advertising to acting,
economics to engineering,
psychology to publishing and
many more***

Keynes Society at Eton College

James Adams



Despite lots of flooding the A Level Economics group managed to make it to Eton College in January to hear Robert Chote, the head of the Office for Budget Responsibility

(the Government's fiscal watchdog), talk about the financial crisis and its implications for government debt.

It was quite a complex talk but the girls enjoyed the challenging content as well as the visit to one of the world's most famous schools.

Year 12 Geography Fieldwork

Sally Cohen



On the last weekend before the end of term the Year 12 geographers braved the flood conditions in the south west to visit the field study centre at Slapton Ley in Devon.

The flooding led to a late change in travel plans and we went via Exeter, rather than Totnes, and were collected by coach from there as the railway line at Dawlish Warren had collapsed.

We were able to complete all the work that we had planned – studying rural rebranding in Dartington and Totnes, urban rebranding in Plymouth, crowded coasts in Torquay and coastal processes and management in Start Bay.

Despite challenging winds and floods, the girls were really upbeat and positive and are now very well set up to complete Unit 2 AS Geography.



Junior School Book Week

Year 9 girls visited Year 4 and 6 classes in the Junior School to help them celebrate Book Week



They worked with the younger girls to help them prepare performances based on their favourite books



Highlights included interviews with Harry Potter and a re-enactment of the story of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.



A Level Computing

While it's all about getting to grips with the algorithms behind the coding it's also useful to understand something of the hardware too.

A Level Computing students from Years 12 and 13 explore what's inside the grey box.

Phil Nelkin



Daumier (1808-1879): Visions of Paris

Juliet Learmouth



Year 12 Art History students paid a visit to the Royal Academy of Art to view an exhibition of work by the French Realist artist, Honoré Daumier.

An impressive range of works by Daumier, including paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures,

provided us with a revealing commentary on Parisian society under the rule of King Louis-Philippe and we were left in no doubt about Daumier's republican zeal when viewing his biting satirical lithographs featuring Louis-Philippe as an avaricious giant. However, such was Daumier's versatility, that he was also capable of producing works in oil of great beauty and timelessness. His dignified and dutiful laundress ascending the steps from the river Seine with her young companion was one of the most memorable images of the exhibition and a brilliant demonstration of his technique of painting figures "contre jour" or silhouetted against an illuminated background.

Chrystall Prize Finalist

Joe Pepper



The GDST Chrystall Prize for Public Speaking is an annual competition involving girls from all 26 GDST schools.

The semi-final was hosted by Heathfield earlier this term and Notting Hill's Leila Sackur (Year 11) wowed the judges with her scathing attack on the royal family, making her the winner of a fiercely competitive semi-final.

We look forward to cheering Leila on when NHEHS hosts the Final on Friday, March 7th.

Minimus Teaching – perspective of a “sixth form teacher”

Olivia Will



This year I was lucky enough to take part in the Minimus Programme. At NHEHS this involves Year 11 and sixth form Classics students teaching Latin to girls from in Year 4 at the NHEHS Junior School and Years 5 and 6 at North Ealing Primary School. Generally classes are before or after school or at lunch time.

Before my first lesson I was quite apprehensive, worried that the children wouldn't understand the Latin, or worse (as I'm not taking Latin for A Level, just Classical Greek) that I wouldn't understand! Luckily both my fears were unfounded – I was able to remember my GCSE Latin, and I was even more impressed with my students. They grasped the basics frighteningly quickly – most of them knew a few of the myths, or had read the Roman Mysteries books, and eagerly volunteered information and

made enthusiastic contributions.

Every week three of us student teachers have to present to the class – which was actually quite scary the first time. I definitely have a new respect for teachers now, especially primary school teachers, after I realised that catching and holding the attention of a class full of children isn't easy.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't a little jealous. The Minimus Programme is a fantastic introduction to Latin. While my first experience of the language was learning about Quintus sitting in the study and Grumio working in the kitchen, these lucky students got to learn about a real family living at Vindolanda, a fort near Hadrian's wall. The cast includes Flavius, the fort commander, his wife Lepidina, the three children, their cat Vibrissa and last but not least, the hero of the course, Minimus

the mouse. In our lessons we've been introduced to the family, learnt how the Romans celebrate birthdays, had a go at writing our own birthday cards in Latin, and gone through the story of Medusa and Perseus (you can see some of North Ealing Primary students working away under guidance of Sophie Raby).

This year's Minimus course was actually over-subscribed, which just goes to show how many children really want to learn Latin and doing Minimus for us student teachers has been great fun. I have really enjoyed spending time with my pupils, who are actually incredibly enthusiastic about Latin. And it's not over yet – we still have the final project 'the play' to practice with our classes. This year we're going to faithfully depict the story of Odysseus and Polyphemus, the Cyclops who tries to eat him and his men. My class, overcome with enthusiasm, decided to make our play a musical – rather ambitiously, as we now realise we'll have to write lyrics in Latin!

So you see Minimus is both a challenge and a greatly rewarding experience, and I would encourage Year 11s to get involved next year. Trust me, it's worth giving up your Monday lie-in for.

Burns Night

Tracy Newman



The Parents' Guild were delighted with the success of the annual NHEHS Burns Night Supper, hosted for the first time in the grand new hall at the Senior School where over 120 guests enjoyed haggis and music from the Aldbrickham Band.

We're grateful to the organisers Michelle Levin and Amanda Stanley for such a great evening and a special thank you to the

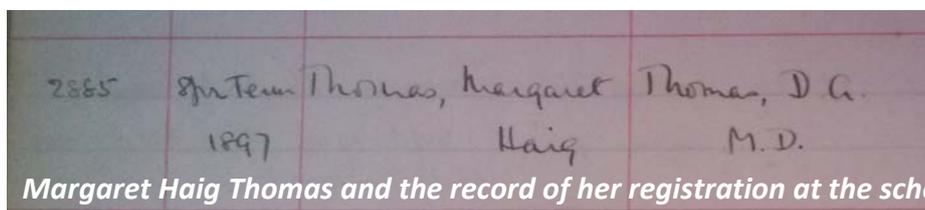
NHEHS Facilities and Caretaking teams. Without their support, these events would just not be possible.

Look out for future NHEHS Parents' Guild Events to be announced next term including:

- Kids Quiz Afternoon
- Quiz Night
- Junior School Disco
- Junior School Fun Day

The Welsh Boadicea

Elizabeth Broekman



Margaret Haig Thomas and the record of her registration at the school



Old Girl, Margaret Haig Thomas, was the subject of a recent documentary on Welsh TV. The programme was part of the Mamwlad series on s4c looking at the lives of women who have played an important role in Welsh history.

Margaret Haig Thomas, later Margaret Mackworth, Viscountess Rhonda, attended Notting Hill High School from Spring 1897 until July 1899. She continued her education at St. Leonard's School in St. Andrews,

and Somerville College, Oxford.

The programme describes an eventful life. She joined Emmeline Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union and became a militant campaigner for votes for women. Her actions included bombing a letter box, for which she was sent to prison. Later she was aboard the *SS Lusitania* when it was torpedoed and through initially believed dead when pulled from the water went on to make a full recovery.

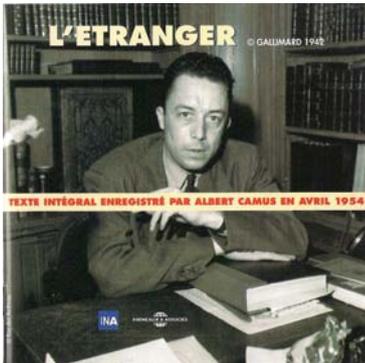
She was a campaigner for women's rights up to the time of her death. When her father, Viscount Rhondda died, she tried to take her seat in the House of Lords but was unable to do so as at the time only male heirs were allowed this right. After a long campaign, she lived to see the passing of the Life Peerages Act in 1958, but died just months before the first women took their seats as life peers in the Lords in October the same year.

Watch on 'catch up' (with subtitles for non-Welsh speakers)

http://www.s4c.co.uk/clic/e_level2.shtml?signed=1&programme_id=512513133

L'Etranger

Daisy Bidault



On the evening of the 7th of November, the Year 13 French students went to see a dramatised reading of *L'Etranger* by Albert Camus at the Southbank Theatre. This one-off event, held to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the author's birth, coincided perfectly with our A Level study of one of the greatest novels ever written. It featured five actors, live *oud* music and photographs from Algeria, all of which set the scene perfectly.

We had started to analyse the book in class so we thought we knew the characters well and were confident about the plot and themes. However, we found the reading very useful indeed. There was a reader for each character and this changed the way we pictured the storyline, for example I now remember in detail themes

and specific descriptions that had escaped me during my own reading of the book.

Coming out of the theatre, we all agreed that the portrayal of some of the characters were not how we imagined them at first but it was good to view them in a different light.



In addition, the backdrop of photographs of Algeria portraying the different places where the scenes were happening as well as the beautiful music from the live musicians on stage, allowed us to visualise the novel better.

This was an enjoyable evening and we all found that the dramatisation helped our understanding of *L'Etranger* and really made it come to life.



Backstage Pass

This term has seen the start of the drama department's Technical Club with a small group of girls meeting on Thursday lunchtimes to learn about the technical elements of theatre.

We have begun by concentrating on the basics of lighting, learning how to rig and focus lanterns and some basic programming. There have also been sessions on sound and working safely on the tension wire grid in the Studio Theatre. The girls are really enjoying these opportunities to explore the new facilities and equipment now available to them.

Students attending the club are all working towards their 'Backstage Pass'. As they demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge each completed section of their passes is signed-off. When all sections are complete they are then eligible for a lanyard with a Backstage Pass badge showing that they have completed their training.

Students will be presented with these passes (which also feature a handy glossary on the reverse to remind them of important key terms!) and their names will be displayed outside the Studio Theatre, so that everyone knows who to go to for advice. Holders of a Backstage Pass will be able to take responsibility for design and technical elements in both curricular and extra-curricular drama.

Next half term we are going to focus more closely on sound and how it can be used to support performance

Rebecca Keane



Highly Commended at MUN

Four Year 12 students spent the first weekend in February at an absorbing Model United Nations conference held at the Lady Eleanor Holles school.

On Saturday debates in committees included drug smuggling, human trafficking, the issue of overpopulation, combating international militant extremism and the use of drones. In the General Assembly on Sunday, delegates debated under-age marriage, shark finning and modern day slavery, before being called on to respond to an emergency crisis of a viral epidemic in southern Asia.

The team of Resham Khan, Antonia Mathias, Emelia Newton-Jones and Annabelle Minkova (pictured above) were awarded the prize of Highly Commended Delegation for their excellent work in the General Assembly. As Japan, they put forward a number of resolutions on world issues, and all spoke confidently in front of a large audience.

Erin Holder from Year 10 joined us for the opening night of the conference, during which we enjoyed a fascinating talk by the Business Secretary Vince Cable on the role of the UN in today's world.

Joe Pepper

To Think This is England

Debbie Whitmarsh



On 23rd January the Drama and Theatre Studies A Level class became the first group to perform the Unit 3 Performance exam in our new Studio Theatre. Their original devised piece entitled *To Think This is England* was a hard hitting piece of verbatim theatre aimed at challenging the audience to consider the state of Britain's care homes.

The devising process had been true to form: full of fulfilling creative moments offset by moments of frustration. The verbatim style meant students going out into the community to collect personal testimony from a wide range of people to form the basis of their script. Interviews were conducted with care home workers, residents of care homes and politicians; their words creating the framework for this innovative, thought-provoking show.

The performance clearly benefitted from our cutting edge equipment and it was satisfying to see the girls explore a range of possibilities for communicating their ideas and experiment with the technology that we now have available. The use of the school's IRIS camera technology in their performance provided an interesting opportunity for the audience to watch their own reactions to key scenes from a live feed projected on the cyclorama; a fitting tribute to the theatre practitioner Artaud who inspired this idea 'Theatre should be a mirror of life'.

After the performance the girls took questions from the audience. With many pertinent issues raised the Q&A session will provide an excellent foundation for the written coursework assessment which demands from the students a detailed analysis of both their process and performance.

Did You See?

Hannah Reid, NHEHS Old Girl (2001-2008), who with guitarist Dan Rothman and drummer Dominic Major make up the band London Grammar have added a Brit Award Nomination (British Breakthrough Act), to a best-selling album and appearances round the world from Australia to the Isle of Wight.

Year 10 French Trip to Paris

Priyanka Sethurajan



After school on a Friday at the end of November, a group of 15 Year 10 girls set off on the tube to Paddington to catch the *Eurostar* to Paris. We arrived in the late evening and took the Metro to our hotel before crashing onto our beds and going to sleep.

Two action-packed days followed and we began Saturday by walking through Paris. We walked to the *Musée d'Orsay* and saw *Les Invalides* and the Eiffel Tower on the way; as well as leaving our mark on the *Pont des Arts*.



After lunch in the *Quartier Latin* we took the metro to the *Sacré Coeur*, headed up the steps to *Montmartre* and split up into our groups to look around, most of us also stopped for crepes and hot chocolate. After a quick rest back at the hotel we headed out for a classic French dinner at the *Café du Commerce*. It was filled with lively French people and the food was great but just as we were waiting for our dessert a huge spider ran across the table causing a couple of girls to scream. This captured the attention of the whole restaurant and we were then bribed with more dessert so that we wouldn't disturb anyone else.

On Sunday we awoke bright and early, walked down to *le marché de Grenelle* and began our market mission to buy lunch. Each group

had to buy ingredients for their lunch with a budget of 50 euros per group. We then walked to *Champs de Mars* and queued for the Eiffel Tower. We were all stunned by the view and took the opportunity to snap plenty of photos. We were also lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a man preparing to propose!

We ate lunch in the park in the shadow of the Tower and team *Les Fous-Folles* was awarded with the Best Lunch Prize. Then it was another stop for more crêpes before heading back to the hotel, collecting our suitcases and taking the Metro to the *Gare de Nord* and the Eurostar.



On our journey home there was an impromptu prize-giving, with Maya and Ciara winning the Best Spoken French prize and Simran the Tackiest Souvenir prize.

We had a great trip. Many thanks to Miss Genge, Miss Romero and Miss Webb for taking us and for making the weekend so incredibly enjoyable.

Year 11 French Trip to The Courtauld Gallery and Wallace Collection

Bella Bissett

After leisurely arising at the highly acceptable hour of nine o'clock, the Year 11 French students piled onto the tube, some opting for the 'comfortable' accommodation on the floor, and set off for central London.

On arrival at the Courtauld Gallery, in the elegant setting of Somerset House, we were met by our guide, a native French speaker. She led us through the beautifully restored and decorated rooms, flooded with colour, brush strokes and beautiful landscapes. She introduced us to the works of renowned artists, such as Degas, Monet and Manet and in French, told us of the history and meaning of some of these wonderful works of art.

Then working in groups we selected our favourite painting and prepared a presentation on it for the class. This had to describe the painting, explain its meaning and give the reasons for our choice, all in French; which proved to be quite challenging! After hearing these presentations, we moved onto role-plays, based on themes such as family relationships and travel, and using the paintings, delivered and performed these pieces to each other. These tasks were a great



way to improve the grammatical accuracy and fluency of our spoken French - and our accents!

My favourite presentation dealt with the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*; one of Manet's most famous paintings, painted in London in 1882. Manet's paintings of café scenes are observations of social life in nineteenth century Paris, and this stunning and complex canvas is one of his most famous.



After lunch we headed to Manchester Square, to visit the Wallace Collection; a more traditional, privately owned collection. An introduction to the history and founding of this beautiful gallery was delivered in French, providing interesting information about the difficult

processes involved in establishing the magnificent collection. We then headed upstairs to immerse ourselves in the paintings and sculptures, beautifully presented as a house filled with the treasures of pre-revolutionary France. This was an exhibition which truly contrasted the experiences of the wealthy and the poor and for me the most intriguing pieces on display were the pottery privately owned by Marie Antoinette herself.

Finally, we headed down the royal, very 'Made in Chelsea' staircase, and back to that slightly less opulent place called 'home', having enjoyed a day of insight into French culture and the chance to enhance our delivery of the French language.



Custard!

Andy Crame



Science Club started the term by seeing if we could find the best aerodynamic design for a paper aeroplane, measured by who could get their plane to fly the furthest and then we spent two sessions playing with custard!

In the first week the girls made bouncing custard balls (we go way beyond lumpy custard) and held a competition, judged by Mr Tricket, to see whose ball could bounce highest. The next week we looked at how a suspension of custard powder could be made to behave as both a solid and a liquid

Continuing the food theme, the girls followed their custard



experiments by successfully extracting DNA from strawberries, a very simple but exciting procedure involving mashing up strawberries and extracting the DNA with washing up liquid. Finally, we ended the half term by making card models of molecules and crystals.

Science Club meets on Mondays at lunchtime. All girls in Year 7 are cordially invited.

City Prize

Rebecca Irwin

Many congratulations to Zara Berry (Year 13) who has won a place on the Nomura First Step Programme which will take place at Easter. This highly competitive programme is an introduction to the corporate environment, provides interactive skills sessions, group project work and networking events as well as careers advice and guidance.



Classical Art

A group of teachers and students with interests in a wide range of subjects came to Classics Club to listen to our guest Professor Matthew Bell, speak about the 'father of history of art', Johann Joachim Winckelmann.

Professor Bell covered theories about the very purpose of art – to provide a beautifully selected reflection of reality whilst also instructing or informing. We were given a short quote from Horace, *ars poetica* (lines 333-334), which still resonates today about the purpose of art:

*aut prodesse uolunt aut delectare poetae
aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere uitae.*
Poets wish to benefit or to please,
or to speak at the same time what is both
pleasant and appropriate to life.

Winckelmann was profoundly frustrated with 18th century art collectors and those on the so-called 'Grand Tour' (basically the wealthy elite who visited Italy on an elaborate 'gap-year') and who cared little for the history and significance of the classical art works they viewed or the archaeological sites they visited. They wished to simply 'tick off' what they'd seen. Winckelmann's aim was to develop appreciation of art through consideration of its historical context combined with a sense of its inherent aesthetic appeal.

Professor Bell's talk ended by getting us to think about the true significance of art with a quote from Schiller (*Letters upon the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Letter XV.9): *For, to speak out once for all, humans only play, when in the full meaning of the word, they are human, and they are only completely human when they play.* So art, in fact, satisfies our basic instinct to play.

Alex Smith



Chamber Concert

The programme for this year's Chamber Concert on 12 February was even more varied than usual, beginning with Purcell and ending with Mr Jeanes' arrangement of Piazzolla's *Libertango* – a rousing finale!

The Chamber Orchestra played with confidence and a round tone in the Purcell and when accompanying Ellen Coleman's accomplished performance of Handel's *Lascia ch'io pianga*. There were other notable solos from Maya Caskie (Debussy: *Claire de Lune*), Hinako Suzuki (Borowski: *Adoration*), Eleanor Williams, (Haydn *Trumpet Concerto, 2nd mvt*), and Priyanka Datta (Charlie Parker: *Donna Lee*).

Hinako Suzuki, Amelia Wang, Erin Holder and Flossie Strickland played Telemann's *Concerto for Four Violins* – a great achievement! The penultimate piece in the concert was the theme from *Poirot* with Priyanka and the Chamber Orchestra who played with gusto!

This was an exceptionally accomplished concert, hugely enjoyed by the audience and a very great credit to all who took part.

Caroline Watts

Debating

Joe Pepper



NHEHS girls exhibited their rhetorical skills in two prestigious competitions this term: the Oxford Union Debating Competition, and the English Speaking Union Public Speaking Competition. At the Oxford Union (at Kingsbury School), six Year 12 students showed the impressive progress that NHEHS is making in Debating this year. Antonia Mathias, Olivia Will, Annabelle Minkova, Resham Khan, Shayna Lewis and Leila Sharafi all performed admirably. Being given a topic 15 minutes before the debate starts is challenging enough, but the topics given this time (termly limits for political leaders, and

the ethnic makeup of schools) were especially tricky.

At the ESU Public Speaking competition (at Villiers High School), three Year 10 girls were teamed with students from other schools to present a hugely enjoyable evening which covered a range of topics. Erin Holder (Chair), Natasha Sharma (Main Speaker) and Anna Dobson (Questioner) were very all impressive. Through Natasha we learned all about whether parents should choose the sex of their children, whilst Erin and Anna teamed up with a student from Greenford High, on his topic of science and atheism.

Special thanks go to Anouschka Rajah who helped to prepare the girls for the evening and offered her support on the night.

Cross Country Championships

Congratulations to Olivia Will (Year 12). Following her success at the recent Middlesex Schools' Cross Country Championships, Olivia has been selected for the Middlesex county team to compete at the English School Championships which will take place at Donnington Park in Leicestershire on 15th March.

Henry Wermuth - The Survivor's Story

Richard Petty



On Holocaust Memorial Day, Monday 27th January, we were offered a remarkable opportunity to hear from Henry Wermuth a former inmate of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the

man who is also the last surviving person to have taken part in any assassination attempt on Hitler.

The talk, which was attended by all girls in Years 9 to 11 as well as many sixthformers and staff, was given by Mr Wermuth in the format of a question and answer session with his daughter. This made it easier for him to talk for an hour.

His amazing story went far beyond the life-changing experience of being in a Nazi death camp and was moving,

informative and ultimately a tremendously warming and positive experience. It roused, and indeed invited, some quite direct questions from his audience, such as "did you lose your faith?" and "who do you forgive?"

Mr Wermuth kindly stayed on to sign copies of his best-selling book *Breathe Deeply, My Son*.

We are very grateful to Joanna Warwick for her help in facilitating the contact which led to this most memorable of talks.

Sixth Form Shadowing

Christine Maynard



Year 10 girls have spent some time this term looking beyond GCSE to the sixth form. The Sixth Form Shadowing Programme gives them a

chance to sample sixth form life at NHEHS and the opportunity to explore a subject they might be interested in taking at A Level. As well as spending time in the Sixth Form Centre they attend a lesson with a sixth former studying their chosen subject. This gives them a taste not only of what the subject entails but also of the different style of teaching that they'll experience as sixthformers.

The programme has been much appreciated by Year 10 who've

been impressed by small A Level groups, the enthusiasm sixthformers have for their chosen subjects and the warm relationships between staff and students that is such a feature of the NHEHS sixth form. The food and the friendly atmosphere in the common room were also a hit!

Thanks to all the sixthformers who were so helpful and so generous with their time, talking to and advising their Year 10 colleagues.

EPQ

Colin Porter



From the reasons the coalition lost the War in Afghanistan to an exploration of the role of the hero in *Paradise Lost* our sixth formers have chosen some wonderfully varied and challenging subjects for their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Whatever subject they have chosen, all have been awarded an A* or an A for their projects since the qualification was first introduced at NHEHS in 2011, – a superb record!

Most projects take the form of a 5000 word essay but an alternative is to produce a non-written project or artefact. For example we have seen an 8-minute film adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and an exhibition of 20 mounted photographs exploring the relationship of the photographer and the subject through portraiture.

So, why do the EPQ? In strictly practical terms most universities see it as a positive contribution to a student's Personal Statement,

and value the way it broadens skills, independent thought, research methods and planning. It may also provide something to discuss at interview. **Megan Soper**, one of this year's EPQ students, explains more:

"What really appealed to me about the Extended Project was that it offered a unique opportunity to delve into whatever subject area I desired: the only problem being, how do you choose what to do. Given the endless possibilities, what was perhaps the most exciting period in the process was the summer where EPQers get to read and immerse themselves in books and lectures. I began to develop and refine what I wanted to do from a vague concept concerning propaganda during the rise of the Nazis in Germany, to a more specific interest in the role of the press in the period before the National Socialists, the Weimar Republic.



Extended projects give you an excuse to do all sorts of things ranging from getting a reader membership at the British Library

to emailing experts in the field of your choice. For me it was also a perfect opportunity to develop my writing and to become more able to deal with 'university-style' work.

The trick to the EPQ is to find an area which you are fascinated by and everything will follow. With me, once the reading was done, although the writing was a challenge, it was also overwhelmingly rewarding as I saw the final work emerge. I could never have seen my final product coming at the beginning; perhaps that's the best thing about the EPQ as you never know what kind of interesting topic you will end up discussing."

An integral part of the EPQ is a presentation on the final project to an audience which will include staff and the student's EPQ supervisor. The presentation is followed by a question and answer session. Our current EPQ group have completed their projects and will be making their presentations before Easter.

We wish them every success!

Contemplating Rothko's Seagram Murals ...

Juliet Learmouth



"I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions - tragedy, ecstasy, doom and so on - and the fact that a lot of people break down and cry when confronted with my pictures shows I communicate those basic human emotions... The people who weep before my pictures are having the same religious experience I had when I painted them."

These words, spoken by the Abstract Expressionist artist, Mark Rothko, inspired the Year 13 History of Art students to seek out Rothko's Seagram Murals in Tate Modern during our Monday afternoon lesson on 3rd February. They sought to find out for themselves whether or not they would be overcome by emotion before these vast fields of translucent colour, each canvas composed of blurred

rectangular openings framing a view of the infinity which seemingly lies beyond.

The nine works exhibited at Tate Modern were originally intended to adorn the walls of New York's most glamorous restaurant, the Four Seasons, in the Seagram building.

However, Rothko notoriously decided against exhibiting his work in the restaurant after dining there himself and observing New York's jet set chat and laugh over their oysters and champagne.

Such brooding works of contemplation were hardly suited to the capitalist kingdom of the Four Seasons but they do appear to earn the reverence they deserve in the more appropriate setting of Tate Modern.

Did we emerge tear-stained from our experience? ... Perhaps not literally, but I think it's fair to say that a reverential hush overcame the class as we sat contemplating these monumental and moving works.



The Alexander Mosaic

In late January, around twenty classics students from Year 9 to Year 13 joined Professor Bert Smith from Oxford University for an exploration of the Alexander Mosaic. The mosaic was originally part of the dining room floor in Pompeii's *House of the Faun*. It measures 272 cm x 513 cm and is made up of roughly 1.5 million tesserae. It shows a detailed and striking picture of an epic battle between Alexander the Great (a Macedonian) and the Persian army. No one is exactly sure which, if any, actual battle it depicts but the central figures are Alexander and the Persian prince, Darius.

Macedonian paintings have become something of a hot topic in recent generations of classical archaeology and Professor Smith described how the basic idea behind the mosaic was the winning of an empire by conquest.

The mosaic details the victory of Alexander and his cavalry and has captured almost an entire battle in one moment - from the spearing of the Persian prince to the inclusion of his spare horse (perhaps a veiled insult alluding to the fact that historically he would escape from battle if he felt he was in danger). The mosaic is an incredibly realistic representation of a battle field event and we all enjoyed hearing about the different theories people have about what it shows. The most prevailing is that, rather than being a faithful representation of a specific battle, it shows Alexander's army executing a sophisticated and technical battle field manoeuvre of the type he is described in various accounts as using to win several battles against the Persians.

*Ella Sowerbutts, Maria Gorniok
and Hafsa Khan*

Hockey

Beth Lowen



On a horrifically wet and windy day the U15 Hockey team travelled up to Northampton for the U15 GDST Hockey Tournament. With games in the group stages only lasting 12 minutes each way, goals are notoriously scarce. However our first match against hosts Northampton resulted in a 2-0 victory for NHEHS - a great start to the day, with goals from Ellie Benson and Megan Burns. Our next game against Streatham and Clapham resulted in a goalless draw. With Miss Lowen keeping a close eye on the scoreboard we faced our next opponent needing at least a score-draw to definitely qualify for the semi-finals, otherwise we would be nervously watching and relying on the outcome of the other game in our pool. After an impressive performance we achieved a 1-0 win against Wimbledon, going through to the semi-finals where we were drawn against Norwich.

However, despite a brief burst of sunshine it was not meant to be. After 3 quick goals in the opening 5 minutes from Norwich we struggled to get ourselves back into the game. Despite a much stronger performance in the second half we couldn't manage to get the goals back and so gracefully bowed out of the tournament. Norwich then went on to beat Shrewsbury in the final and we finished in the top 4 out of 20 teams.

Congratulations to the team of: Elena Colato, Yssie Richards, Ellie Benson, Hannah Brisley, Amrit Sandhu, Georgia Killick, Nichola Greenhalgh, Ciara Paris, Becky Bollard, Beth Wigney, Megan Burns, Georgia Bentley, Lily Obadia and Imogen Kurek-Smith.



GDST Gala

Two squads from NHEHS, a junior group of five Year 8 girls and a senior team of six girls from Years 10 to 13, were among teams from more than 20 schools competing in the GDST swimming gala held at Northampton High School on February 11th. The competition at this event is always of a very high standard but our girls managed to qualify for eight out of the twelve finals. Four of these were for the finals of the relays and the teams were:

Junior Freestyle: Rinda Naresh, Maya Yate, Romy Caton-Jones, Jasmin Hall.

Junior Medley: Jasmin Hall, Rinda Naresh, Romy Caton-Jones, and Olivia Williams.

Senior Freestyle : Pooja Gupta, Bethan Hall Jones, Ele Love and Olivia Wong

Senior Medley: Pooja Gupta, Ele Love, Bethan Hall-Jones and Olivia Wong

Our first finalist in the individual events was Pooja Gupta (backstroke 31.71secs), while Romy Caton Jones achieved 38.50 secs in the breaststroke final and Bethan Hall Jones made 30.86 secs in the butterfly. Olivia Wong went on to win the freestyle final in 28.97secs

Well done everyone! There were great performances all round and we finished sixth overall in the junior competition (out of 19 schools) and fourth overall in the seniors (out of 15 schools).

Rob Bent