

December 2009

Dear Parents,

Headmaster's Newsletter December 2009

It was good to see so many of you at the superb Carol Service at Temple Methodist Church which brought term to an appropriate conclusion. My sincere thanks to the Chaplain Rob Blackhall for putting together the service. Congratulations also to the Director of Music, Miles Quick and the choir who go from strength to strength and were outstanding.

Academic

Please find enclosed your son/ daughter's end of term report. On the whole these reports are extremely positive reflecting the huge amount of hard work that has gone on this term both in the classroom and in co-curricular activities. The first priority for all pupils is to have a well deserved rest and enjoy the Christmas celebrations. However, when they return in January the Year 11s have their trial exams and some Upper 6th and Lower 6th have A2 and AS modules. It is important that they find time to prepare thoroughly for these during the first week in January. I hope the Upper 6th have now received a number of offers from universities and know what their target grades are.

Sixth Form Distinctions

Congratulations to Amy Portman, Sophie Perry, Alex Longman (2), Carol Ann Cheah, George Musgrave, Billie Wilson, Carrie Lee, Harry Jeffrey, Catherine Wilkins, Marcus Wong, Megan Lewis and Jonathan Dale who have achieved 3 6th Form distinctions and have received book tokens from me.

Green Commendations

Congratulations to Shaneen Cureton, Helen Weaver, Annabel Clasby, Laura White, Clarissa Bole, Matthew Rowe, Rebecca Webber, Peter Marsh, Joe Wood, Harvey

Denning, Eleanor Mason, Maisey Shepherd, Ed Garvey, Josh Bolam, Will Fisher, Dan Moss, Maaz Akhter, Dan Chidgey, Kate Alger-Green, Henry Roberts, Poppy Turner, Rory Sear, Livvy Grant, Bea Davis, Tara Cheetham, Justina Zhang, Winnie Yu, Harriet Parratt, Ely Hayes, Pearl Wilson, Molly Joyce and Kate Marston who have 5 green commendations and have also received book tokens from me.

Congratulations to Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils who came top of the yellow commendation league table and were presented with book tokens in final assembly.

16 – Rebecca Wilde, Christopher Hedges, Rebecca Handford, Toby Griffiths, George Daniels. 17 – David Grenfell. 18 – Victoria Challes. 20 – Tess Turner, Ollie Brown, Charlotte Bowering. 22 – Chloe Bagge. 26 – Henry Cole and 28 Sarah Taraq.

It was with great pleasure that we were able to welcome back Christabel Lines who left Queen's in July 2009 to join us at the term's final assembly. Christabel who gained the top mark in A Level Chemistry in the country was presented with an award by Professor Dudley Shallcross from the Royal Society of Chemists.

Geography Association World Wide Quiz.

Our team of Emily Ruffell-Hazell, Maisey Shepherd, Charles Foot and Harriet Parratt did very well to finish a commendable third in the local round of the national competition.

Macbeth

Although the production of Macbeth features in the end of term drama report in this newsletter I would like to add a personal note of praise for everyone concerned with the production. There were some outstanding individual performances on the stage and many have been rewarded with colours and half colours for drama. The countless hours spent rehearsing were

clearly evident and the wonderful direction and choreography also gave a very strong feeling of team work. The set was superb and the music excellent, the set changes were very efficient as well as the stage management, the costumes, the lighting, make up and hair – all demonstrated tremendous attention to detail. Many congratulations to Mr and Mrs Evans and all involved.

Music

In the last week of term we were treated to an excellent Chamber Music Concert. Thank you to the soloists Tom Harris, Stephanie Cheung, Naomi Chidgey, Hannah Chidgey, Josh Coglan, Ben Rigg, Daniel Chidgey and Ele Morley along with members of the brass ensemble, the clarinet group and the flute group. On the final Friday of term we enjoyed an excellent informal concert – many congratulations and thanks to Lily Tang, Molly Symes, Maisey Shepherd, Charlotte Abrahams, Isabel Evans, Josh Coglan, Tessa Down, Sophie Perry, Ben Hughes, Molly Joyce, Harriet Parratt, Lucy Longbottom, Kate Johnson, Georgie Longbottom, Jess Johnson, Poppy Turner, Kate Marston, Gemma Sear, Ieuan Jones, Emma Cawley, Christopher Hedges and Asako Onishi.

Boarders

On the final Sunday of term the boarders enjoyed some Christmas retail therapy at Cribbs Causeway followed by their house entertainments.

Sixth Form

On the last Tuesday of term the Sixth Form enjoyed their annual Dinner Dance at Oake Manor Golf Club. My thanks to the Heads of Sixth Form, Mr Cooke and Mrs Schofield for organising the event.

Staff

At the end of term we said farewell to our two GAP students, Cameron and Ryan. They have done an excellent job for us particularly in the boarding houses and on the games fields. They have made many friends amongst the students and the staff and we wish them well for the future and thank them for their contributions to Queen's.

Sport

Cross Country National Cup Final Junior Girls competitions - out of 144 competitors Holly Brown came a magnificent 2nd, Keren Greenow 20th, Hannah Wilson 30th, Elen Falkingham 50th, Rebecca Wilde 69th and Katie Cross 81st. The team overall were 2nd. This is a wonderful performance at this very high level and I had the pleasure in presenting the whole team with their certificates in assembly.

Music

The Music Department has had a very active term with a wide variety of events. Early in the term a joint Concert was held with the Australian visitors from Camberwell Grammar School. This was followed by the House Music Festival which involved most members of the school in some capacity. An external concert (featuring the Chamber Orchestra and others) was held in the helpful acoustics of Honiton Parish Church - and the Jazz Concert (featuring in particular the Swing Band) was enjoyed enthusiastically by a packed Queen's Hall. Internal Informal and Chamber Concerts have also been enjoyed – giving the opportunity for our soloists and small groups to showcase their talents. A section of the College Choir played the role of angels in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Taunton Choral Society; the Middle School Orchestra played rousing carols and other music for the Rotary Club Old Peoples' Tea Party and the College Choir joined with the Drama Dept to produce an atmospheric Christmas Sequence at Selworthy Parish Church. Thank you to the many people who have contributed to Queen's Music this term – and we hope that the Carol Service will be an inspiring end to the term later on! Half Colours are awarded Georgie Mitchell, Isabel Evans, Henry Maxwell-Lyte, Laura Benham and Jade Geldard. Full Colours to Carol Ann Cheah, Hannah Chidgey and Asako Onishi.

Drama

The energies of students and staff have been channelled into the Senior School Production of *Macbeth*. The concept was born a number of years ago in a small compartment of Mr Evans' brain and kept on ice until the right cast turned up. Work started in earnest in June in the garden of the Evans Arts factory with set and costume ideas being planned and allocated to different members of the

ever growing production team. A key new member of the team was a resurgent Mrs Brierley fresh back from the birth of another tiny Brierley, she entered the fray and took responsibility for assisting with the direction of the piece. It was during this time that a new phrase came into being 'Brierleyisation'. In context "this scene has been roughly blocked out. Now what it needs is Brierleyisation". The results of Mrs Brierley's rather bizarre imagination could be seen in the witch scenes.

Rehearsals took place throughout the term and culminated in the first sell-out production we've had for a number of years. The leads Tim Urch and Annie Venn deserve a mention for their superb maturity and focus in coping with two of Shakespeare's most demanding roles as well as full timetables of A-Level work. The witches Gemma Bagge, Katy Gough, Isla Ness, Alicia Edwards and Sidi Duke also impressed many with their deeply disturbing and original characterisation.

In addition to the main school production a number of other arts events have filled the calendar:

Yr 10 students performed twice at Open Day and Selworthy Church.

Yr 11s finished their final scripted assignments with excellent productions of Blue Remembered Hills and The Crucible. In September some of them also provided a very moving performance in assembly of play which commemorated the Twin Towers terrorist attack.

Thanks must go to Mr & Mrs Evans, Mr Peter Evans, Mrs Ross, Mrs Brierley, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Chapman, Mrs Cole, Mrs Wedge-Thomas, Miss Burgoyne, Mr Marston, Mrs Marston, Mrs Hinds, Mr Henden, Mr Appleby and Mrs Robinson

Half Colours Re-awarded to: Sam Monks, Sophia Vahdati and Jack Kesterton

Half Colours to Henry Maxwell-Lyte, Isla Ness, Alicia Edwards, Gemma Bagge, Isabel Evans, Alex Dance, Jack Johnson, Dougie Herbert, Jade Geldard, Hero Suffield, Eolande Diaz-Phillips, Jo Duncan, Emily Brown, Jamie Watson

Full Colours Re-awarded to Katy Gough, Annie Venn and Tim Urch

Full Colours to Freddy Carter, Jake Evans, Jon Dale, Alice Alger-Green, Sidi Duke, Carol Ann Cheah and James Blackwell.

Rugby

After 110 days, many hours spent on the training paddock and 132 matches the season finally reaches it's sad close. The efforts and commitment that the coaches and the players have put in has been tremendous and all should be congratulated. With many players new to rugby in the **Under 12s**, the players were very eager to get stuck into their first matches.

Unfortunately, they gained mixed results but this just made them more determined to do well against Taunton School and with two outstanding victories on the day it was just what the players needed to build enthusiasm and confidence for the rest of the season ahead. As the season progressed and the sides gained some consistency in selection this led to a pattern of play being developed that suited the players. In all their matches the boys battled well and gained some memorable victories.

With a few positional changes and players moving to and from the A and B teams the **Under 13s** soon settled down to produce some fine rugby.

Their training sessions were intense and this led to an outstanding team spirit within the teams, which meant that regardless of the score line they never eased up. Excellent victories were gained and in the matches they did lose there was only a score in it on many occasions.

It was going to be a tough season for the **Under 14s** as a lack of numbers was always going to be a hindrance. That said, the players trained with determination and commitment and as the season progressed that determination was taken onto the pitch for matches. Despite narrowly losing both games against Taunton School, the matches did show the players how much they had developed during the season. They will all be able to approach next season with more confidence and should develop well as a year group.

After a less than satisfactory season as Under 14s, the **Under 15s** really turned things around this season. Under the guidance of Messrs Free, Palmer, Cheng and Sprangle the players were focused, determined and committed during training sessions and as a result of their individual and team skills all improving, there was real competition for places. On match days, their focus remained high and the players secured

some fine victories during the season, notably against Downside, King's Bruton, Dauntsey's and West Buckland. With draws against Blundell's and Exeter in games that the players felt they should have won, this has been a very encouraging season and an excellent platform for next year.

This was a tough season for the **Under 16s**, often playing against much larger and more physical sides. That said, they have worked hard during their practices to improve individual skills and team tactics and latterly have been more competitive in matches. With the amount of progress made this season they should all be looking forward to the rugby challenges ahead of them.

As ever, the **2nd XV** have worked tirelessly during practices making sure that the **1st XV** were aware they had competition for their places. In matches they fought hard and gained memorable victories over King's Bruton, West Buckland, Wellington and Exeter. When they did lose, it was only by a score and the matches could have gone either way. The side were exceptionally well led by Oliver Blake and he was ably assisted by senior pros, Oliver Welch, Alex Trolley, James Booker, Oliver Mitchell and Sam Day.

The tone was set at a very early stage of the pre-season training for the **1st XV** that this was going to be a season when only our best efforts would be good enough for our determined and committed coaches. Pre-season was intense and physical but we were rewarded with an excellent win over Kelly College before returning to school.

The start of the season was hampered by injuries and it wasn't until the sixth match that we managed to get consistency in selection. That said, the players did well to gain an away draw against Kingswood and a well deserved win over Downside when changes due to injuries were made just minutes before kick off.

Once the side became settled, the results started going our way, with good wins over Dauntsey's and West Buckland that were followed up with excellent winning performances against local rivals Wellington and Taunton. The side were disappointed not to have beaten King's and Plymouth, which were both very close games that the players felt they should have won.

Messrs Mann and Shepherd have both said what a pleasure it has been to coach such a dedicated team of players and have both

been delighted with the progress the side have made during the season. As captain, I feel privileged to have been able to lead and play alongside such a committed bunch of players.

In closing, I would like on behalf of all the rugby players, to thank the ground staff for their hard work in producing excellent playing surfaces and the coaches, Messrs Marshman, Candler, Stone, Hendon, Bowden, Britten, Palmer, Cheng, Sprangle, Edwardes, Smith, Alcock, Bates, Hamilton, Free, Shepherd and Mann for their commitment, dedication and the hours of hard work they have put in for our benefit.

Half Colours are awarded to Oliver Blake, Freddy Carter, Oliver Webb, George Musgrave and Jack Turner.

Full Colours to Tim Urch, Henry Louden-Griffiths, James Khodabhandeloo, Douglas Herbert, Marcus Browne and Freddie Biss.

Full Colours reawarded to Jack Kohler, Alex Pegg, James Sandow, Alex Smith and Alex Greenhalgh.

Hockey

The girls' hockey teams have enjoyed a successful term, with most achieving a greater number of wins than in previous seasons - but the way the game is played, with good team spirit, playing for each other, with skill and enthusiasm is sometimes more gratifying than the end result and these qualities can also be attributed to our teams. The only disappointment being the number of matches that have been cancelled due to near hurricane winds and driving rain, which in turn exposed the inadequacies of the old astro.

The first team squad have had a fantastic season. Boosted by the pre-season tour to Singapore and Australia, they ripped into an unsuspecting Taunton side and didn't really look back for the rest of the term. Their statistics are played 14, won 7 lost 5 and drawn 2. Victories were against Taunton, Wells, West Buckland, Richard Huish, Bruton, Prior Park, Exeter and two exciting draws against Kingswood and Wellington. These results are really pleasing because our fixture list is now much tougher; block fixtures versus schools who have greater numbers and who regularly feature in Regional and National competitions.

Our flagship team has been enthusiastically and efficiently led by Amy Alger-Green, ably

assisted by Ele Morley, who has completed her fourth year at first team level – thank-you both for being fine role models.

At second, third and fourth team, it has again been impressive to see the number of girls, who really enjoy the game and are proud to represent the school. They are all fiercely competitive, train hard and regularly and show a real sense of team unity. Well done to their captains: - India, Laura and Charlotte.

A much better season for our u15's. They won five of their matches. The u14's have shown much promise, the A team winning five of their games, the B's finishing the season with a win against Prior Park.

The U13's held onto their 'unbeaten' title right up to the last match of the term; they are a strong, athletic group, who will relish the chance to play more eleven a side games. A combination of year 7's and 8's played their socks off at the County Championships, finishing second having played some excellent, battling hockey.

The u12's are a formidable force, winning the majority of their matches and showing true potential for the future.

Thanks go to the coaches of the teams for giving of their time, expertise and patience: - Mr. Haley, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. Ross, Miss. Smith, Miss. Manley, Mrs. Drummond, Mr De Jaeger, Mrs. Brunt and Ryan, to whom we extend our best wishes for his future and a safe journey home.

Half Colours are awarded to Hattie Shergold, Sarah Grenfell, Gerogina Trivet and Alice Whitley.

Full Colours to Amy Alger-Green

Full Colours reawarded to Ele Morley

Elite Hockey Coaching

Two courses will be run during the Christmas holidays the first from 4th – 6th January for Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 and the second from 7th – 9th January for Years 6, 7, 8 and 9. Both courses will be held at Queen's. Places are limited so to book a place call Jonathan Prosser on 07890614862.

DoE

For future information the dates of some of the Bronze Expeditions are as follows: 1st May – compulsory practice expedition, plus one date from 9th – 10th May or 23rd – 24th May. All pupils will be expected to complete 2 expeditions in total.

Enclosures:

Term Dates, Year 11 Parents Evening details, Friends of Queen's College Quiz Night flyer, Information on Arts for Adults classes, Cossington Jazz Masterclass and Concert information, Termly Arts Calendar and Avon and Somerset Constabulary newsletter.

Overall this has been a very busy and successful term and Linda joins me in wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous 2010.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Headmaster





