

30<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Dear Parents,

### **Headmaster's Newsletter September 2011**

As I compose this letter summer has returned or should I say started with temperatures almost up to 30 degrees. This has certainly put a smile on our faces although it has provided challenging conditions for our sports teams and those out on D of E.

It has been an excellent first few weeks of the school year with a good deal of achievement to reflect on in this newsletter.

#### **Academic**

Congratulations to Jason Chow who has achieved 6 Sixth Form commendations and has received book tokens from me.

There have been a number of academic trips which all appear to have gone very well. The Geography department have taken the Sixth Form to Exmoor, Year 11 to Porlock and Year 7 to the Quantocks.

Sixth Form English students went to Stratford and the Performing Arts students have attended local productions of 'Macbeth' and 'Oh what a lovely war'. The Sixth Form English students also attended the Taunton Literary Festival. Thank you to those parents who also supported the events held at Queen's. The Sixth Form Politics students also had the opportunity to hold a question and answer session with David Blunkett MP who was presenting a talk in aid of St John's Ambulance.

The top university group hold seminars weekly for Sixth Form students who are hoping to apply to the top universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Seminars to date include, 'Adding value to applications' – Mrs Evans, 'Aiming high – Dr Taylor, 'Meta-cognition – Tim Joliff, 'Does language mean anything?' - Mrs Brierley, 'The nature of

proof' – Mrs Pawley, 'The boundaries of privacy' – Mr Wheatley, 'What is scientific law?' – Mr O'Donnell and 'Why do humans laugh?' – Mr Paul.

Sixth formers and Year 11 students have also attended two excellent careers evenings. The first with a group of OQs who returned to Queen's to host question and answer sessions on their universities and courses, as well as employment. The Queen's Conference Centre was also the venue for a Careers Evening held by Musgrove Park Hospital. A number of our Sixth Formers and Year 11s listened to presentations from consultants, surgeons, general practitioners and nurses from Musgrove Park Hospital, and both occasions proved to be very informative. Our students came away highly motivated.

There will be presentations by the GCSE Geography students on the trip to the Alps in the summer holidays including the fieldwork notebooks kept during the trip based on observations. There were some outstanding submissions which were carefully presented and reflected considerable inquisitiveness. The best five were Evie Phillips, Hannah Clarke, Holly Brown, Romilly Simmons and Molly Symes. I had pleasure in presenting each of them with a book token in assembly.

#### **Sixth Form Society**

Sixth Formers had the opportunity to quiz and challenge a UKIP MP in their first meeting and in the second received a presentation from explorer John Sullivan who spoke about his adventures in all sorts of remote environments including tracking down cannibals in the rainforests of Papua New Guinea.

On the evening on the 9<sup>th</sup> September we were treated to an absolutely superb Old Queenians and Friends concert in aid of the Sidney Lawton Trust. My sincere thanks to Jonty Hedges who had planned the event over the last three months. Many of our very talented musicians from the past decade returned to entertain us. It really was a remarkable evening and it was with great pride that I was able to reflect on the quality of the musicians that have passed through Queen's. Not only are they very talented but they have been inspired by the teachers and extremely well coached.

My congratulations to Weng Soon Tee who on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September was invited to play in the Piano Masterclass at King's College with the famous Bach pianist Roger Woodward. Weng played a demanding prelude by Rachmaninov and in Mr Quick's unbiased opinion was easily the most polished performer of the afternoon. My sincere thanks to the choir who sang the Viennese Mass at Selworthy Church communion service on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October. My particular thanks and congratulations to Tom Howe, Weng Soon Tee, Izzy Evans, Georgie Mitchell, along with our GAP student Becky Kirkham who played the organ and conducted the choir and of course our Director of Music Mr Quick. Thank you also to the Chaplain for his contributions to the service.

### **Chapel**

In addition to the events at Selworthy our boarders have attended the Harvest Festival service at Temple Methodist Church. The service was led by the new minister Rev Stephen Mears and I will be welcoming him to Queen's in due course. My thanks also to the chaplain for hosting our All School Worship and boarders services at school and to Mr Paul who preached at the boarders' service.

The first Crossfire debate of the term was led by Mr Mark Wallace who offered his reflections on the events of 9/11 ten years on. There followed a fascinating discussion.

### **Drama**

Many congratulations to the Year 11 GCSE Drama students who put on a superb performance of extracts from 'Midsummer Night's Dream' on the front lawn of school. Despite the chilly evening the warmed the

audience with some wonderful comic timing and delivery. It is a remarkable achievement to put on such a polished performance with only two weeks of rehearsals. My congratulations to Flora Whitmarsh, Patrick Thorpe, Clarence Nichols, Alex Hoskins, Hope Turner, Molly PRIORITY, Callum Brunton, Kate Johnson, Elliot Floyd, Hannah McLeod, Georgie Maclachlan, Ollie Lintott, Richard Venn, Ben Hughes, Melinda Beaumont, Alex Chilcott, Gabe Evans, Beth Hobbs, Alice Hughes, Jonny Mudge, Piers Naylor, Rhys Robson-Edmunds, Zoe Sanders, Adam Tanner, Weng Soon Tee and Amy Paterson.

### **Quartz**

The Quartz Arts Festival is now well underway. Once again we are hosting a magnificent exhibition of art and sculpture. My thanks to Charlotte Lampard and Ann Mahlich who have undertaken most of the work in putting together the exhibits. It has been good to see so many of you viewing the exhibits but those who haven't yet been around please take the opportunity. Many thanks to Lacey Sear and her team of parents who are staffing the café along with all of you who have provided delicious cakes, scones etc. Do please visit the café which is in the Conference Room adjacent to the PAC where the art exhibition is. Thanks also to David Hanmer and the Friends who are staffing the bar in the Queen's Hall for the evening performances. The first evening featured a brilliant piano recital by Alexandra Dariescu, the Rumanian pianist. She also held a master class for our top pianists in the afternoon. On Friday evening a packed Queen's Hall enjoyed Adrian Edmondson and the Bad Shepherds playing 'punk music on folk instruments'. A great time was had by all. There are four further events this week and tickets are available from the Quartz box office. My thanks to Keith Wheatley and John Marston who have worked so hard over the last year putting together this year's festival which is proving to be a great success.

### **Open Day**

Open Day is on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October. You should all have received a letter about Open Day encouraging you to invite friends with school age children to come along and have a tour of the school and meet staff and pupils. I will also be giving a presentation twice during the morning. All our pupils have

been asked to be available on the day to assist as tour guides or help with displays in departments or other activities. Thank you for your support it is always appreciated.

### **Sport Hockey**

Many congratulations to the following players on their selection for the Exeter Leopards at the English Regional Tournament. Boys U15 Patrick Free, U16 Richard Venn, Girls U15 Laura Fry, Lolly Stanhope-White, U16 Imogen Allen, Flora Whitmarsh, U17 Emily Ruffell-Hazell, U18 Ruby Kite. Further congratulations to Flora Whitmarsh who has been selected for the Tier 2 JRPC U16 futures cup and Laura Fry who was selected for the U15 Tier 2 HIPSC – a wonderful achievement.

### **Cricket**

Congratulations to Dom Alcock- U16 and Ben Stevenson – U13 who have been selected for the Somerset County Cricket winter training squad.

All the hockey and rugby results and match reports are posted on the website, but particular congratulations to the U15 and U14 girls hockey teams who remain unbeaten. The U15s won the Sherborne Tournament beating Prior Park 5-1 in the final. They didn't lose a single game in the tournament and were more skilful, more disciplined and fitter than all the other teams. I had the pleasure of presenting the trophy to Captain Katie Cross in assembly. Since then they have beaten Kingswood 4-1, Bryanston 5-0, King's College 3-2 and Wells 4-0.

The U14s are also enjoying a very successful season. They thrashed Wellington 6-0, drew with Sherborne 2-2 in the Short Game Tournament and since then have beaten Kingswood 1-0, Bryanston 4-0, King's College 2-0 and Wells 8-0.

### **Rugby**

Pride of place on the rugby field goes to the U13s who are also unbeaten, they beat Kingswood 15-0 and QEH 31-14.

### **Equestrian**

Our equestrian teams have been doing extremely well lately. Many congratulations to Emily King who came an impressive 7<sup>th</sup> in the European Three – Day event championships in Portugal. There were 60 riders from 11 countries taking part, Emily was the youngest in the Great Britain team

of 6 and ended up the 3<sup>rd</sup> best overall. She led the dressage stage and she had a great cross country round maintaining her lead, but unfortunately she had two fences down in the show jumping to drop to 7<sup>th</sup> – but what a great effort. Congratulations also to Georgina Ewell who won 2 first prizes and 1 second prize in the Blundell's One-Day event. I had pleasure in presenting her with her rosettes in assembly.

Our show jumpers too enjoyed success at Lewiston. Our junior team competed against 13 other teams, Anna Stillwell and Kate Shapland had 2 clear rounds and the team came 4<sup>th</sup> overall, Very well done. Congratulations to Harrison Oakley who represented Queen's in the School's One-Day event at Stonar and won it. I had the pleasure in presenting him with his cup and rosette in assembly.

### **Outdoor pursuits**

Our climbers have enjoyed ??? Cliffs at Portland and the mountain bikers successfully completed a cross country course, ??track and skills area at ?? and our kayakers made good progress in challenging conditions on the River Tone.

### **The Tricky Warren Trek**

Our team from Hutton House won the 4K team event which was held in aid of the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance. Congratulations to Francesca Fender, Karen Chau, Nessie Inniss-Palmer, Catherine Challes and Lilly Tang. Again I had pleasure in presenting them with their cup in assembly.

### **D of E**

The D of E expeditions have largely enjoyed kind weather although this last weekend was very warm. The first Bronze practice expedition took place last weekend and the Silver walkers had a successful trip to Dartmoor. 5 new entrants to Gold D of E and some more experienced students spent a cold night on Dartmoor in bivvi bags. My thanks to Mr Vicary and Mr De Jaeger who also spent the night in bivvi bags. They have not clocked up over 50 years D of E experience between them. I am extremely grateful to them and all the D of E staff who give up their time in the holidays and at weekends to enable our students to benefit from this excellent scheme.

Please find attached the staff email addresses.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

**HEADMASTER**

