

The Chronicle 2023





KING EDWARD VI CAMP HILL SCHOOL FOR BOYS

In pursuit of educational excellence for all

Preface

By the Headmaster



As I write we are at the start of another busy academic year and the September heatwave has all but gone, leaving plenty of rain in its wake. I find myself looking back over the previous year with fondness and with great pride – it has been a spectacular year!

Exam season went very well and although there was the usual jangling of nerves, most students looked excited, relieved, happy even when they came out of each exam. We knew that they had worked hard to prepare properly for their exams so they didn't need any luck, but we wished them the best of luck anyway. When the results day came, there were lots of happy faces and deservedly so, as these students had fought their way through the disruption of pandemics, weather and public transport strikes to achieve some of the best results we have seen, even though the government had

implemented a deliberate programme of grade reduction.

My utmost respect goes to the students, parents and staff who have shown great resilience and optimism throughout these challenges. Yes, it has been frustrating at times, but the effort has been worth it!

This year we opened our first ever Development Office, ably managed by Mrs Beckett. The main objective of the Development Office is to promote and strengthen relationships with our alumni, through a series of events for Old Boys of the school, such as Summer BBQs, sports matches, musical events, reunion meetings and tours of the school. I am hopeful that all of this year's leavers will stay in touch with the school after they have left, and I extend a warm welcome to all former students to engage with all of the events that will be coming soon. Our first event was a Class of 2012 reunion on a cold December morning when we welcomed back both former students and former staff to reminisce whilst enjoying supporting the students' rugby fixtures, and of course enjoying hot soup and warm mince pies.

It's not all joy though, as we said goodbye to four much loved and respected members of the teaching staff: Mrs Bourne, Mrs Jermine, Mr Li and Mr Breakwell. There are full valetes in this edition of the Chronicle to mark our acknowledgement and thanks for their service, but I feel it is right to say here and now that their impact has been deep and wide within our community and we will miss

them. We also welcome our new staff, and as I write this I am optimistic that they will enjoy many happy years working in this wonderful school with our amazing students.

This year we continued to provide a breath-taking array of enrichment and I am proud to say that the extra-curricular provision at the school is on the crest of a wave. We have had academic competitions, House competitions, sports fixtures, large-scale trips, fantastic music & drama and many more lunchtime and after-school Clubs & Societies.

On the academic enrichment front we've had Geography Field Trips, National Chess tournaments, debating competitions, Cadbury World trips, the Junior Maths Challenge, Kangaroo & Olympiad, author visits (Simon Green & Catherine Johnson), the Battlefields Trip, the Junior Schools National Quiz Finals, various science Big Quizzes, Ecton Mines visit, a visit to Brasenose College in Oxford, the Big Bang Exhibition, the IRIS Physics Conference, a series of talks on Mental Health & Wellbeing, the Next Generation Awards, the Summer Adventure trip and lots more Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

Sport continues to flourish in all domains. The matches at Camp Hill Rugby Club, the annual battle against KES, and the Foundation XV against Solihull were spectacles of a highly successful rugby season. We have also enjoyed the Rosslyn Park Sevens tournament and school fixtures across all year groups. The annual swimming gala was a great success too, enjoyed by competitors and spectators alike. Cricket continues to flourish and the season ended with a creditable performance against the MCC and a

triumphant win over the Staff XI.

The highlight of the sporting year has to be the Junior and Senior Rugby & Hockey Tours. The feedback from teachers, parents and the opposition staff was delightful – the boys clearly worked hard and played hard and were outstanding ambassadors for the school.

The House system also goes from strength to strength with a host of House sports and academic competitions and Sports Day! We even hosted our fourth House Festival – an event originally conceived to celebrate 100 years of the House System, which we now run every five years. Congratulations to Seymour House who surged ahead to first place, leaving an extraordinarily close battle for 2nd, 3rd and 4th.

This year's Senior Production of One Man Two Guvnors was a triumph – the audience loved every moment and the cast were clearly relishing the opportunity to entertain. Music too is on a high with multiple concerts alongside the Carol Service and the annual trip to Symphony Hall. Another Camp Hill first was the Cambridge Choir Tour and we look forward to an international choir tour next year.

This was the last year that the Conway Outdoor Activities Trip hosted both Year 8 and Year 10 as we have now caught up with and made reparations for the disruption caused by the Pandemic. It has been a huge operation to host twice as many students as normal, masterminded by Mr Watkins, ably supported by a huge staff team. Next year we revert to Year 8 only and I'm already looking forward to visiting again!

We have also delivered several primary school taster sessions aimed at reaching out to local primaries and supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This important work ensures that our school plays its part in promoting social mobility and is a clear statement that we are open to all able students from all backgrounds.

My thanks to all of the amazing staff who have given huge amounts of time and energy to organise and support these events. Our staff are a wonderful, giving, selfless group of people who go above and beyond to support the students, and it is an honour and privilege to work alongside them.

When the weather did turn for the better we were able to arrange the whole school photo, which, like the Olympics, is an event that happens every four years. The photographers were very complimentary about the conduct and cooperation of the students in what is a huge logistical operation.

The school now benefits from an extensive kitchen refurbishment and we look forward to an even better food service this September as there will be more serving hatches and more tills which should get the queues through quicker. The new equipment will be much more efficient and we look forward to enjoying lower ecological impact and lower energy bills. We also look forward to many more positive developments of the school's facilities including a long awaited all weather pitch.

The Student Council and student Eco Committee ran a very successful Earth Week where they ran a series of events designed to promote awareness of ecological issues whilst raising money for charity. The students chose to support the Birmingham and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Disasters Emergency Committee (continuing our support for Turkey and Syria) and they raised £1586. Events included Camp Hill's Got Talent, Green Day, Eco Dragon's Den and Would I Lie to You.

The Association of Friends of the School (AFS) have run or supported countless events this year. They have been working hard on building community and raising money for the school, generously offering funding for cameras for Photography Club, and financial support for Y13 Prom tickets, Music folders, and a replacement for our tired old cricket score board. I must also mention the

excellent work going on with our Pre-Loved Uniform sales - this important service offers good quality used uniform at affordable prices and supports the recycling of out-grown uniform.

I can't finish this introduction without mentioning the Camp Hill Amateur Operatic Society, or CHAOS as it is very appropriately known. This show was brilliantly written and directed by Messrs Dowling and Caves and, proved to be a spectacle of amusement and delight. There was singing, dancing, and even some acting and all three nights were a sell out! Well done to the plethora of students and staff involved in all of the rehearsals, stage management, music, costumes, props, set design, sound and lighting.

This year also brought us closer to our parents and carers as we returned to a full schedule of parents' evenings. For the first time we held some Parents Focus Group meetings where we focused on topics such as pastoral care, communication, behaviour policy and homework. Parental feedback is helping us to formulate our policy and practices, and it also helps us to strengthen and protect all of the good things we are already doing.

I invite you to read on and to discover the detail of all of the exciting things that the students and staff have been up to this academic year and I look forward to many, more happy years working alongside the wonderful staff, students and parents of Camp Hill Boys.

Warmest wishes,



Mr Bowen
Headmaster
September 2023

Editorial

Welcome dear readers to the world of Camp Hill Boys.

As you explore these pages, I hope you will take the time to appreciate the breath-taking range of activities that are offered to our students while they attend Camp Hill.

From the Battlefields of Belgium, to the Pyrenees, to Welsh Wales and Conway – our students have had the opportunities to travel far and wide.

Our dedicated staff have run a variety of domestic trips too, including the now annual Harry Potter trip, trips to the visit places of worship and the History trip to the Imperial War Museum. And this is only mentioning a few!

Chemistry and Modern Foreign Languages have, as always, ensured that students are entertained with a wide range of opportunities to develop a greater understanding of these subjects.

And our students have, amongst other things, been artists, sportsmen, musicians, quiz masters, volunteers and have managed to return home safely from being abandoned and left to find their own way home, whilst undertaking expeditions for the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

As the editor of The Chronicle, I suspect I probably am the only person who actually does read every single word of this magazine, but even if you only have time to flick through the pages, I hope you can be as proud of this school as I really am.

■ JLP Editor

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Leavers

Christine Butler

Christine started with us in 2019 as a student teacher. She was immediately a perfect fit in the department and an absolute pleasure to work with. She has contributed in many ways. We always expect NQTs to be full of fresh and new ideas and it is fair to say that Christine had them in abundance. What really impressed me though was her commitment to research led teaching and her investigation of pedagogy. I must also stress that such was her commitment, that much of this work actually took place on her two days off!

Her pupils have undoubtedly gained from approachable. Not just the department,

but the entire school is losing a valuable her expertise as a native German speaker and many pupils have benefited from her German club. It is not unusual to see her members rushing towards her room and the buzz created in there was one of genuine enthusiasm and curiosity about German culture and the German language. She also always helped out with other extra-curricular activities, even if this means giving up her own time. It says a lot about Christine that before I ever had the chance to thank her for her help, she thanked me for organising events.

Christine is a passionate teacher and a consummate professional. I know her to be dedicated, resilient and thoughtful. Her students find her kind, caring and asset. She will be much missed, but we wish her all the



very best for the future.

■ EMW

Jo Ormond



Jo Ormond was the PA to the Head teacher and Office Manager at Camp Hill Boys for just short of eight years. Jo came to Camp Hill in November 2014 from the University of Birmingham where she worked as an activities coordinator for the Student Union. Not only did Jo start her new job here that month, but she also got married! Managing several projects at one time is not something Jo is phased by!

As well as working full time at Camp Hill, Jo was also working on her PhD in her own time - Feminist retellings of fairy tales in young

adult literature. And it was Jo's love of spreadsheets that helped her stay organised and on top of her workload – she wasn't known as 'The Spreadsheet Queen' for nothing.

However busy Jo was, she always had time for people. She was an exceptional Office Manager; kind, fair and well-liked by all. On Jo's 40th birthday her popularity was evident as you couldn't move in the front office for gifts, balloons, cards and flowers! She had an excellent sense of humour and always injected fun into school life no matter how hectic the day was.

During her time at Camp Hill, Jo oversaw many changes. When she started here, there was no receptionist so she wore many hats. As the workload in the office increased she led a project to improve the office working environment. She took on a receptionist and orchestrated a huge renovation project, dragging the front office into the 21st century.

During the COVID pandemic, life at the school was very different, but no less busy for the office staff. When the children were in school, Jo and the team had to organise

contact tracing when students tested positive.

In addition, she had the unenviable task of reporting positive cases to the authorities and organising whole school COVID testing prior to the students returning to school. It was a mammoth task, but all ran like clockwork under her efficient management. Most memorably, she was a calm and reassuring presence during an incredibly stressful time.

On leaving Camp Hill Jo accepted a job with 'The Elephant Group' a charity committed to providing fair access to top universities. The Elephant Access programme supports academically able students to gain places to their chosen university whatever their background. This is a cause Jo is passionate about, and she is really enjoying her new role.

Jo, her husband John, Sniff and Snuffkin (her beloved cats) have now moved back to her hometown, Rothwell in Northamptonshire to be nearer to her parents. She is greatly missed, but we wish Jo every happiness in her new life.

■ RJ

Roz Jermine

Roz Jermine joined Camp Hill Boys in 2017, having left Camp Hill Girls as a student a little while before. A longer gap than many returning Old Edwardians, as Roz left at the end of Year 11 to attend Houghall College in the North-East of England and study for her A Levels alongside pursuing rugby. After studying at Loughborough, Roz trained as a teacher of Maths and came to us a few years into her career, already an experienced, outstanding teacher. An absolutely brilliant Maths teacher, professional, and human being in general, she has been an asset to the school and we are very, very sorry to see her leave this year.

Roz joined her sister Sallyann on the staff, and helped to continue to change perceptions amongst students and staff as she became part of the Games Team and the Rugby coaching staff. A former England international player, she never showed off about it. Everybody was impressed anyway! The commitment Roz has showed to the life of school sport has been consistent and considerable, often helping out with after-school training and with Saturday mornings with all different age groups. She will be a



huge loss to the Games department and no doubt students will miss her experience and guidance.

In the Maths department, Roz is described by all her colleagues as the person who always says 'yes' to helping out with a job. She recently stepped up to help run the Department during Janaki's maternity leave, and did an absolutely brilliant job of steering Maths through the first of our School Improvement Partner visits. Roz's calmness and organisation means everyone around her believes wholeheartedly that she has it all under control. No doubt she will one day get

the opportunity to do the job permanently, and she will do so excellently.

Roz's coaching and teaching at Camp Hill Boys have been wonderful, but her talent and time for pastoral care have meant even more to very many of us. As a form tutor, especially in the Sixth Form, Roz has been so present and patient and has made a huge difference to many of her tutees. She is unfailingly kind, and nothing is ever too much to ask. And yet, she knows her boundaries and models to other staff

the importance of perspective and pragmatism.

A truly admirable professional and a wonderful human being, Roz is a huge loss to Camp Hill Boys. She leaves us to work closer to home and to her young family, in Lichfield, where no doubt she will continue to impact students and colleagues with her endless positivity and kindness. We'll miss you Roz, keep in touch!

■ JSF

Thomas Breakwell

Tom Breakwell joined Camp Hill Boys as a Teacher of Religious Studies in September 2020. He came to us from his PGCE at Cambridge University, a true theologian and scholar of the sort we could not pass up!

2020 was a strange time to join the school, as Covid 19 restrictions meant that much of what makes the school special was put on hold for a year. Nevertheless, Tom made a fantastic start and has flourished as a teacher and form tutor from the very beginning. Always willing to put his hand up and take on a job, he has been an immensely valued member of the RS department, as well as staff representative for the AFS and, latterly, Head of Beaufort House.

Tom has contributed to trips in the RS department, running our Year 8 trip to the Central Mosque and St Martins' Church, and joined Year 8 and 10 for the trip to the Conway Centre in North Wales in 2022. At every turn,

Tom has always been keen to be a part of wider school life and to enrich the experience of all his students. He launched the Philosothon for keen philosophers, encouraging a love of his subject in students from Years 7 through to Year 13.

As a subject teacher it is Tom's extraordinary subject knowledge which has always stood out; nobody knows more about the details and arcana of Religious Studies than he does! We have so enjoyed having such a thoughtful and hard-working teacher in the department, and we will be sorry to see him go, even as we wish him all the best.

It is not only Tom's professionalism and high standards that we'll miss. We will also bid adieu to a great actor – one of the most convincing staff to ever play the role of Grimthorpe schoolboy in a CHAOS production. Maybe this has to do with him being mistaken for a Sixth Former when he first arrived?!

Sadly, it was inevitable that Tom would outgrow the department – he is too

good not to be in charge of his own one! He leaves us to take on the role of Head of Religious Studies at Colmers School and Sixth Form College in Longbridge, heading up a large department of specialists who will no doubt flourish under his leadership.

Good luck Tom, you'll be much missed!

■ JSF



Sallyann Bourne



Camp Hill has been a huge part of Sallyann's life for decades. Having attended Camp Hill Girls (along with her four sisters!), she then went off to Manchester University with her Sixth Form sweetheart, one Simon Bourne, and married him a few years later. After spending a few years working in Manchester, they came back to the Midlands and, eventually, Sallyann was back to Camp Hill when a Maths teacher was needed at the boys' school in September 2015.

From the second she arrived here as a teacher, Sallyann demonstrated her commitment and care for the students. As a Sixth Form tutor she quickly showed her brilliance with the senior students, while in Maths she demonstrated the patience which would become such a defining feature of her time, teaching everyone from the smallest to the biggest of students in everybody's favourite subject.

Breaking probably the most important of remaining glass ceilings, she also became a member of Games staff, a rugby

coach and an ever-reliable member of staff for Saturday mornings. That year's Year 7 rugby players spoke fondly of their first memories of Camp Hill Rugby until the day they left.

In the Maths department, Sallyann volunteered for every job going – a trend that would continue for her entire time here! Ever a joiner inner, she also clearly viewed her time at Camp Hill Boys as an opportunity to avoid being in the classroom as much as physically possible. While it would be much more efficient to tell you which trips she *hasn't* been on, I've got characters

to fill, so I'll list the ones she *has*: two Summer adventure trips, numerous Ski Trips, rock-climbing trip to St David's, Conway with Year 8, Senior Rugby Tours, Junior Rugby and Hockey tours, loads of D of E expeditions and probably some others I've forgotten.

At every possible opportunity, all the way up to her penultimate day at work, Sallyann has volunteered to drive a school minibus anywhere and anytime. This is especially commendable given that she managed to fail her minibus theory test not once, but twice. Clearly a hard-earned privilege she was not going to take for granted!

Although Sallyann has been part of the entire fabric of school life, nowhere has her impact been greater than as Head of Sixth Form, a role to which she was appointed during her second year at the school. As Head of Sixth Form, Sallyann's focus was always – first and foremost, above anything else – the wellbeing of the students. She had huge shoes to fill taking over from Graham Hardy, but her

commitment and drive to develop students' understanding of their own and their peers' mental health and wellbeing meant that she made the job entirely her own. From the painstaking care put into arranging form groups so that no student would have to walk to class alone, to long meetings with students, their parents, and outside agencies, to assemblies given from the very heart of what she cares about, Sallyann's work as Head of Sixth Form was genuinely amazing.

There are countless students who have described Sallyann as being the difference in their school experience, and in their lives as a whole, since she joined us. She never said no, never sent them away, never fobbed them off on anyone else. Every student felt valued under Sallyann's care and she knew every single one of them, every single name, apparently every single timetable and UCAS application! It wasn't only the students she cared for, but also her colleagues too. Sallyann has been a friend to so many staff here for so long and we will miss her immensely. There are very few people in the world who are simply good, but Sallyann is one of them. She always assumes the best of human beings, and always offers others the best of herself.

In the last few years we have watched the Busiest Woman in School™ go from being the key point of contact for our 320+ Sixth Formers, to also being the most important woman in the world to two beautiful little people, her daughter Imogen and son Arlo. Now that Sallyann and Simon have grown their family and moved out to the Malvern Hills, she has chosen to relocate closer to home so that she can spend less time in the car and more time with them all. What a shame to be saying goodbye!

■ JSF

Scott Li

Scott Li joined the Mathematics department in September 2021, as an experienced teacher of Mathematics. Scott's passion for the subject and exceptional mathematical ability made him a great fit to the department. After a challenging first term due to issues at home, Scott taught part time and now pursuing a different career path to support his family. Things are now easier and it is great to see how well Asher, his son, is now doing. Scott played an important role with Maths

support for students who were struggling while he was here. As an exceptional Mathematician, he was able to tackle all questions/queries from the students with ease.

In addition, Scott contributed greatly to the students' education and the running of Department. He has supported pupils with the Maths Challenge, and prepared them for team challenges.

It is safe to say I am really going to miss Scott. He is a great loss to the department and the school. We wish him the best of luck with the new chapter in his life.

■ JVG



Obituaries

J D M Wright began his teaching career at Camp Hill in September 1957 although anyone reading that year's edition of *Vivat* (later to be known as *The Chronicle*) would not have been aware of that. Because "the start of the Autumn Term saw the arrival of an unusually large number of new members of Staff", the editor decided they should remain anonymous. So, Des (as he was known to his colleagues although pupils tended to call him Lefty) arrived to a rather muted fanfare, as did his fellow newcomer, Keith Prowse, another man who enjoyed a distinguished career at Camp Hill.

A glimpse at the future Deputy Head's curriculum vitae in 1957 would have invited the conclusion that his appointment was a fortuitous one for the School. Des was well qualified academically (a degree in Zoology from the University of Birmingham and a Diploma in Education from Lincoln College, Oxford) and came with a determination to contribute to the extra-curricular life of the School. He was particularly well equipped to achieve this, given the evidence of a fine school career at Priory School, Shrewsbury where he had been Head Boy, Captain of House, Athletics and Hockey, in addition to gaining his rugby colours. As it turned out, Des was also a very strong swimmer (taking advantage of the School pool at lunchtimes) and colleagues in the Common Room at Camp Hill were astonished at the award of an ASA Gold Medal for the completion of 1 million metres in five years. And, he had another feather in his cap, having, in 1952, been a member of the British Schools Exploring Society when it visited Iceland.

His career, particularly in its early stages before the pressures of senior management monopolised his time, gave lie to the oft-repeated view that, in those days, Staff taught their subjects in the classroom but did little else. Des played a prominent role in the House system, joining Seymour House upon his arrival before replacing Bill Drysdale as Head of House. Keith Prowse, in his valedictory piece on Des in 1992, commented that he "set high standards in House Mastering". Bob Smith (CH 1963/1970) recalls his legendary speeches at the end of House Assemblies in the Lecture Theatre where Des wound up his Seymour lads for the next sporting battle with competing Houses. Des liked to coach rugby to junior sides too and he enjoyed considerable success on the touchline on Saturday mornings. Bob Perrin (CH 1963/1968) recalls Des as "being very supportive and kind but strict. He organised our year's rugby and came to all our games on a Saturday morning...he was certainly one of my favourite teachers.... for his input into our year's rugby".

During afternoon Games lessons, Des did not satisfy himself by remaining on the touchline – he would often don his kit, including a pair of very long shorts, and rampage down the middle of the park, daring youngsters to tackle him. For those who doubt this recollection, I can personally vouch for it, having been on the receiving end.

He also ran the Sixth Form Social Club in the years before the Sixth Form Block was built (1969).

Des took a great interest in genealogical matters and formed the Genealogical Society (which quickly became the Family History Society) in 1974, long before these studies expanded greatly with the development of computer-based companies such as Ancestry. He also mentored the NatWest quiz team over a number of years, recording at least one trophy winning performance and several other appearances in the final.

After four years at Camp Hill, Des moved on to lead the Biology department. He was particularly keen to develop field work as an integral part of his teaching and, prior to his elevation to greater things in 1974, Biologists were taken to various parts of England and Wales to hone their skills. Derbyshire was a favourite venue but Suffolk, North Wales and Shropshire also hosted Camp Hill boys in these years. This focus was evident, too, in his work with the Natural History Society which developed apace under his guidance. Des organised a variety of school-based activities such as quizzes, talks by internal and visiting speakers, visual presentations and laboratory practicals and established a menu of external activities too. These included ecological studies (to Earlswood Lakes for instance) and visits to a variety of places (Wyre Forest, Minworth, Droitwich and Dudley Zoo).

Jon Cole (CH 1963/1970) remembers Des as being "a bit stern but (he) softened and nurtured us as Sixth Formers. He also changed my life. One morning, he called me into the small prep room/office in the Science laboratories and suggested I try for Oxford or Cambridge...He touched my life and must have touched many more". Jon went on to enjoy a distinguished medical career.

In 1974, Des stepped down as Head of Biology, having been promoted to Deputy Headmaster (alongside Harold Greenaway) by Alan Cholmondeley. It must have been rather daunting, replacing the legendary Geoff Sanders (who went off to brother School, KE Five Ways as Headmaster) and stepping up at the tender age of 39 to lead a Staffroom full of formidable characters for whom pastoral care was only the latest educational fad. But Des was no shrinking violet and seemed to settle into the post with relative ease. I would say that there was no pastoral system as such (Keith Prowse in his tribute to Des, written in 1992, committed only part of one paragraph to comment on pastoral care) as everything revolved around Des and his patient work in the Medical Room, as it was at that time. Des oversaw pastoral care for nearly twenty years and it was only after his retirement that Roger Dancey appointed two pastoral Heads of Section (Year 7 and Years 10/11) who were supplemented by two Deputy Heads to oversee the remainder. I wonder what Des made of this – four people to tackle the workload that Des had coped with.

Outside School, Des was very active in the community. A keen knowledgeable ornithologist, he was a member of the West Midlands Bird Club. He obviously enjoyed singing and was a member of the Birmingham Festival Choral Society. As a Rotarian and someone who was active in the life of Kings Heath Church, Des regularly helped old people to go on outings by collecting them from home and taking them to their coach. Keith Prowse noted that Des helped collect census information on one occasion, having a brick thrown through his windscreen as a reward! He also had long experience in marking Biology papers at O level and



J D M Wright

(1934-2023)

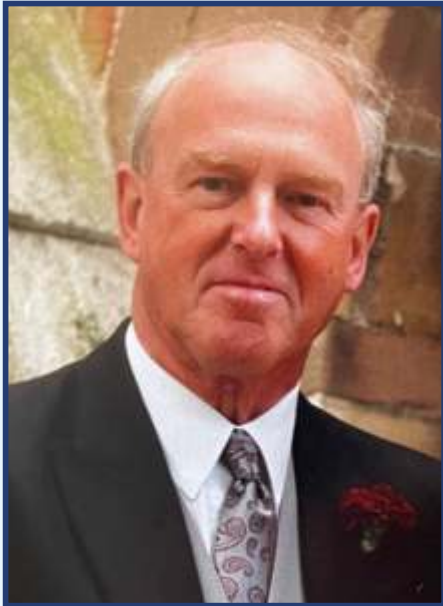
GCSE, eventually being appointed Chief Examiner for the subject by the University of London. And for good measure, Des was Treasurer of the University of Birmingham Biological Society.

After his retirement, Des continued to help out the Biology department for some years. However, he had created the time to enjoy his house in the Lake District and fulfil what I suspect was an ambition of his, to compile a series of books on walking. In the foreword to one such volume, Des declared: "an enduring love of the countryside", which stemmed from his upbringing in south Shropshire. These collections of walks in rural Warwickshire and Worcestershire provide lasting testimony to his lifelong fondness for "one of the most popular participatory sports, if not the most popular one, in Britain". These books were something of a family effort: his wife Pauline tested out many of the walks (as did his daughter Susan, an Old Girl of Camp Hill Girls, and his son in law, Neil) and the carefully drawn maps which accompanied each walk were the painstaking work of his son Chris (an Old Boy of Camp Hill who followed his Dad into the teaching profession).

Des was a consummate professional, a man who committed himself to the teaching of Biology even after his promotion to Deputy Headmaster. He could be relied upon to take on a significant teaching load and would not allow his senior management duties to obstruct his commitments. Des could also look back upon a significant commitment to the extra-curricular life of the School and hundreds of boys would thank him for enriching their lives and for offering pastoral support throughout their School careers.

Anyone who reads past copies of *Vivat* will recognise much of the above. I have relied quite heavily upon a lovely piece on Des written by Keith Prowse in 1992 upon Des's retirement from full time teaching. Keith was present for the entirety of Des's career at Camp Hill and I could scarcely improve upon his excellent valedictory article. I would also encourage readers to access records of *The School Chronicle* to read a tribute to Des from a poet from the Lake District, Glyn Matthews (longtime colleague of Des who shared his love of walking). He called it *A Shropshire Lad* by A E Housemaster.

■ *Alistair Bulloch, former Deputy Head*



John Cleak
1930 - 2023

John Cleak was interviewed and appointed at the original Camp Hill site in July 1956, “to teach English, and to assist with games coaching”. He took up his appointment in September at the new premises in Kings Heath, at the same time as one F G Thain. *The Chronicle*, as so often, briefly and without elaboration announced the arrival of these young men. From such modest beginnings began the careers of two legends of Camp Hill School for Boys.

The Chronicle recorded that the first school concert in the new building took place in December 1957. A young Dai Thomas and JNC appeared on stage and “slipped easily into the role of ne'er-do-wells; the former defiant and business-like, the latter fervent and imbecile.” So, from the beginning, John exhibited that spirit of informality and fun that made him such a vivid presence in the classroom, the common room and on the school stage. This was clearly the same man who, thirty years later, would appear in pupil/staff C.H.A.O.S. productions as the ancient declamatory line-forgetting thespian J Barrymore Cleak, a cameo role that delighted both him and his audiences.

A former pupil, Terry Pearson, started his secondary education at the same time that John joined the staff. He remembers him as a teacher who, to an unusual degree at the time, encouraged extracurricular interests and possessed the seemingly “rare quality of being able to combine the role of schoolmaster with that of a human being”. Terry ultimately became an actor, TV presenter and voice artist with a career whose

origins he firmly ascribes to the interest that JNC fostered. He appeared in three of the drama productions that, from 1958, John put on stage with impressive regularity for more than a decade. Clearly JNC was a new broom and an excitingly fresh presence in school. *The Chronicle* noted that his first production, *Morning Departure* was the first school play for a number of years whose setting was the present century – in fact its stage premiere had been only twelve years earlier. This was contemporary theatre on the Camp Hill stage! In 1963 John's choice of 'Charley's Aunt' apparently resulted in some of the school governors returning their tickets as they didn't think it was 'the sort of thing the school should be doing'. Hopefully governors are less stuffy these days.

In later years, other young teachers wished to put on school plays and John graciously stepped aside, but there were occasional JNC productions, always of a high calibre, throughout his career. In his final year of teaching he performed an ambitious tour de force of directorship, presenting an evening of three one-act plays, David Campton's *Out of the Flying Pan*, Wolf Mankowitz's *The Bespoke Overcoat*, and Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*. He was an accomplished makeup artist and was Mr Makeup for every drama or musical production that was staged at school until his retirement (when, as his former trainee, I took over and he came back as my occasional assistant!).

John had a great love of drama and poetry and brought English studies alive both by his dramatic renditions in class and by his wit and humour. That he was an extraordinary athlete and sportsman must have given him considerable cachet with the pupils. And he was far from averse to bringing literature and sport together in outrageous conjunctions. Terry Pearson remembers him posing the startling question – 'Why would the Ancient Mariner have been a poor cricketer?' The pupils were puzzled. 'Look it's there in the opening lines – 'It was an Ancient Mariner and he stoppeth one of three'! By such eccentric means do good teachers engage the interest of young minds!

I joined the English department staff in 1972, by which time he was in mid-career and Head of Department. In those days, well before the arrival of the National Curriculum, you were expected to develop your own schemes of work, and the classroom was considered a much more 'private' place than it has subsequently become. Nevertheless, John

encouraged and was supportive of innovation. His taste in drama was cutting edge and we took pupils far and wide to productions. He was always central to a lively discussion of the performance on the return journey, often putting both pupils and teachers on the spot concerning a keenly observed detail!

John was very involved in school sport and was, for many years, Head of Howard House. He did much to encourage enthusiasm and rivalry between the Houses and was often to be seen on the boundary or touchline in support of extracurricular games. He was a very clubbable man and did much to promote staff participation in sport – or perhaps “games” rather than “sport”, for he firmly believed that this social extracurricular activity bound people together and ultimately enriched the life of the school and benefited the pupils. He was at the centre of weekly tennis and badminton matches after school, pupil/staff football and cricket matches, and inter-school staff matches.

John was a huge presence in the staff room. As more than one colleague has said, you couldn't ignore the man. He was a source of entertainment, drama, outspoken and even outrageous comment, argument, debate. He was a man who kept the past alive in frequent stories, always told with great relish and dramatic energy, about former colleagues or episodes in the life of the school. I could tell you much about teachers and pupils at Camp Hill who left years before I joined the staff. This was a gift that I always much envied. He was a great wit and raconteur; a master of the Times crossword; a repository of literary and lexical knowledge; and he set the standard for articulacy and coherent argument.

In retirement John pursued his many interests. He took up wood carving, producing some very intricate and accomplished pieces. He was an enthusiastic golfer and he regularly returned twice a week for after-school tennis or badminton, despite an increasingly debilitating arthritic hip. He remained an avid reader and developed a particular interest in Scandi Noir. Film was a passion and he built a massive library of recordings.

And so John passes into legend. Once the pre-eminent teller of tales from the chalk face, he will live for long in our own stories of life at KECHB.

■ John Dinham, former Head of English

House Reports

Beaufort

The prospect of taking over from the role of Head of Beaufort from Mr O'Malley felt akin to Manchester United post Sir Alex – the hope was not to be David Moyes!

This year has been one of huge change and transition for Beaufort with a new Head of House and changes in organisation with 'google classroom' and 'house survey' now popular parlance. I have been really grateful for the patience everyone has shown as I have got the grips with the new role and for all the staff who have helped co-ordinate House assemblies. Particular thanks go to Wisteria Chatterjee (L1) for always helping take down and put up the partition walls before and after assemblies. Also, special thanks goes to Nikil Gilliam (8K), who has been a life saver on the many occasions when I have faced 'technical issues' (technology based incompetence) prior to having to deliver the assembly. Including instances in which 'Sir, you just have to turn the board on'. Thank you for your patience!

As ever, I have been really impressed by the numbers of students who have put themselves forward to represent Beaufort. The following students are notable for having participated in six of more House events, sports day withstanding, this academic year.

- Xai Sandu (7K)
- Zac Johngir (7E)
- Ryaan Vikal (7C)
- Ollie Smoldon (8C)
- Jermaine Tulloch (8C)
- Muhammad Aktar (10C)
- Dawud Irfan (10C)
- Ahmed Shabana (10C)
- Vidyut Tutika (10E)
- Chude Ndozi (L3)

The winter term started with excellent displays in both the House football and rugby. House football was very popular with lots of students signing up to take part, and for those who did not play, the event drew large crowds of passionate spectators. For Beaufort, it was certainly a matter of the younger years showing the older students how to win. In particular, the Year 7 team, captained by



Yunus Ali (7K), 'smoked' the rest of the field as they defeated Tudor in a closely fought contest. The Year 8s, captained by Seb Robotham (8H), also defeated a resurgent Tudor, snatching a late win. Likewise, the imperious Year 9 team, captained by Adam Bashir (9E) successfully stifled the talismanic Tudor attack of Karlo Heydary and Rudy Hudson to bring victory for the 'red army'. Unfortunately, the older year groups were not so successful with both the 10s and seniors sharing joint third with Mr Hill's Howard.

House Rugby was similarly successful with imperious displays across all year groups (we will not mention the senior's last gasp defeat against Howard). Thanks goes to Arjun Malhi (7B), Ollie Smoldon (8C), Kaaraj

Chandock (10H), Sam Ankrah (U5) for captaining their sides and allowing players of a range of experience to take part.

The highlight of the first term was not rugby or football, but the House festival. Although Beaufort finished second behind Mr Dowling's yellow House, it was a lovely occasion. It was amazing to see students charging around, fuelled on fizzy drinks and sweets, participating in all manner of events. All dressed in house colours and costumes!

The spring term was another one for Beaufort. The House events came thick and fast with House chess, quiz, handball, volleyball, hockey, table tennis and Rugby 7s. Special mention goes to Arish Hassan who successfully captained the Beaufort team to



victory in House Volleyball (I won't mention the other results). Also, a special thanks to Dawud Irfan, who has been instrumental in organising both the Hockey and Chess teams. However, a little more shooting practice is needed if we are to dethrone Seymour as reigning intermediate Hockey champions.

The highlight of this term has been the Swimming Gala with our dominance continuing for yet another year. Every race was fiercely competitive and Beaufort certainly did shine, in no small part due to some stand out performances. I am sure that Zac Johngir versus Jacob Hanratty will continue to be an intense sporting rivalry for many years to come. Yusuf Abdullah and Yasin Elashry were a perfect double act securing valuable points for Beaufort. And I have never seen Anthony Botros as miffed as when William Lin narrowly claimed first place in the breast stroke! The seniors must be absolutely sick of my desperate pleas posted to the Beaufort google classroom, and despite my stresses, the seniors put out a swimming team: and what a team! Thank you Ishan Tewari for being both incredibly organised and a plunge expert. My upmost appreciation also goes to Faizan Shah (for being a very dependable reserve), Yousif Elastray, Dylan Datta and Arthur Breakwell for all stepping up last minute. All of your efforts were invaluable!

The Junior quiz did not disappoint. Beaufort were the only house to have three teams plus two German exchange students. Despite capital cities not being any of the teams' forte, Beaufort were crowned winners. Well done!

The summer term was uncharacteristically a struggle. Despite results not going the right way, I have been really pleased that students have used the House system as a means of trying something new and have had an excellent time in the process.

All of these defeats set us up nicely for Sports Day. The narrative was perfect – the comeback was on! It was Istanbul 2005, and we needed our Gerrard moment.

In front of a crowd that was occasionally interested in the sport on display, Beaufort delivered and completely obliterated the competition. Lucas Evans broke the Year 8 Javelin record, Chude Ndozi stormed to victory in both the 100m and 4x100m relay and Seb Robotham continued his dominance of both the 100m and 200m. Adam Bashir dominated the high jump and



Javelin and Muawiyah 'three lung' Abdi left the competition in his wake as he effortlessly won both the 1500m and 800m.

I want to end this report with a number of important thank yous. The first is to the Year 13s who have been wonderful role models for others in the house. Special thanks goes to Sam Ankrah, Milan Ram and Amar Sangha who have led the house with pride. Well done! Congratulations goes to the new, soon to be, Year 13 House Captains: Harley Hau as House Captain and Arthur Breakwell and Eesa Nadeem as vice-captains. I was really impressed by all their applications and commitment to making Beaufort House event better. In particular, I was really pleased with Harley's suggestion of inter-house competition in order to increase participation. Now it is over the Harley to make his vision a reality!

Also, thank you to Mr Burgess, Mr

Norton and Mr Rees for all their work in organising the sheer number of events that are on offer. I know it must take an inordinate amount of time and effort to arrange and re-arrange depending on snow days, strikes and other school commitments.

Finally, it has been a privilege to be Head of Beaufort: the house system is such a fantastic feature of school life and I have greatly enjoyed it. It is amazing how many ex-students remember their time in Beaufort fondly and formed lasting friendships through participating in house events. I know that Miss Marston will be excellent in the new role. She is incredibly organised, passionate about her subject and a fantastic speaker. Knowing Miss Marston, I am certain that House assemblies will not be a geography free zone. Expect plenty of turtle facts and, as ever, go Beaufort!

■ TAB



Howard

It is my pleasure as the newly elected House Captain to give you a report on last year's successes in the House events that took place following the huge success of Howard in the previous iteration of the House Championships.

Starting with football, a usual strong point in our history, it's unfortunate to say that this year hasn't followed the trend even among the seniors. In the Camp Hill Mile we saw another finals ranking following the surprise victory last year with special mention to Year 10's Eddie Kosina who won the intermediate race. Sadly, Basketball was a runaway success for Beaufort, however Howard still gained a promising joint second overall with a shared victory in the seniors and second for the Year 10's. An honourable mention goes to our second place finish in House Festival, which was the culmination of many peoples' hard work put into team organising and their efforts while competing in all the activities.

Come spring term, despite the difficulties assembling squads together and the number of activities taking place, Howard has seen robust performances in a number of different areas. An impressive performance from the senior chess squad for dominating the field and securing us a second overall, following a similar display the year prior. A

second place finish in handball and quiz were a good achievement however we were unlucky in volleyball and hockey not to have had our full complement of our top players. Excellent swimming in both the gala and standards especially among intermediate and seniors was sadly overshadowed by a few disqualifications in the relays which cost us a championship place.

Howard, being the most consistent performer over the past few months, had the summer term to look forward to, with a lot of time given to exams, trips and visits and a limited number of House Assemblies. Still we had the challenge of pushing back the other houses and claiming victory overall. Our musical performers were able to impress with a healthy second place performance and all Howardians showed strong talent in their instrument and ability to perform competitively. A poor start in Cricket with our seniors losing all 3 fixtures meant our inters and juniors had their work cut out for them. However, they all performed amazingly well with the inters winning two of the fixtures and the juniors winning all three bringing us to another second place. In tennis, we were again close to victory however were unable to capitalise on the Year 8 win and the seconds from seniors and year 7, leaving us with yet another second to continue the trend.

Everything came down to the signature event on the House calendar, sports day. Now twice postponed it was a relief having it be on a day when the skies were clear and the sun was out. There was potential this time round given the promising standards results across the age groups, however the gaps in years 9 and 10 made it challenging to put together strong teams on this momentous day. Performances started well and we were able to do well in the throwing events in the morning. As the day went on, a second place finish seemed assured and with special mention to Raees Latif for the winner of the Victor Ludorum for Year 9 and a secured second place finish in sports day.

All in all, despite Howards many second place finishes we were unable to come second in the House Championship, instead placing third, a measly 1 point behind Beaufort's second place. Many thanks go towards Mr Hill for organising all our House activities and giving us empowering House assemblies and although it's been a rough year for Howard with all our second place finishes and all, but perhaps next year will be different and the blue skies will bring a brighter future for us Howardians.

Ethan Tumbos

Seymour

After a miserable third place finish in our last outing, Seymour students were striving for success going into a fresh new academic year. Our campaign kicked off with a dominant start, where the return of the quinquennial House Festival saw the Seymour army, all decked out in yellow and gold, band together across a range of events to secure a massive 40 points towards the championship tally. The collective effort from all the students secured a first place finish in the Camp Hill Mile, meaning we were firmly in first place at the end of the autumn term.

The spring programme brought struggles to pick up points and continue our charge. Wooden spoons in the House quiz, volleyball and swimming headlined the string of poor performances and allowed other

Houses to close the gap, but a strong showing from the seniors and intermediates in hockey kept the other Houses at bay with all to fight for.

Summer began our unstoppable resurgence. Both the Juniors' and Seniors' trumpet tunes earned us top honours, while newly appointed House captain, Amogh Shetty led the senior cricket team to victory earlier on the term. The only other summer competition was House tennis, in which we ended up in third place. Our strong performances tightened our grip on the trophy, and a third place finish on Sports Day, the last event of the year, finally marked the arrival of Seymour's golden summer as we secured the House championship title outright for the first time in ten years.

The result is a testament to the efforts and hard work that all of the year groups have put into organising, participating and competing in all of the House events, where everyone made sure to fight for the points available.

Thanks to Mr Dowling for his rousing motivational assemblies, week in week out and to former house captain Zahid Alidina for leading the House successfully throughout the year. We will look to carry our momentum forward into the new year and retain our title.

Amogh Shetty

Tudor

Tudor House has had a complete rollercoaster of a year, which included many highs and lows throughout.

Despite the final result, it was in many ways very successful! Josh Berrow was excellent as House Captain, organising and taking part in almost every single Senior House Event and acted as a true leader throughout his tenure. The House Festival was a fantastic day where the whole school had so much fun and engaged in healthy competition, the true purpose of the House system. Every House competition was filled with a good team of enthusiastic and talented students, trying to win in the right way, and for all the right reasons.

Certain Tudor individuals were exceptional in House competitions throughout the year, but also beyond this. New to the sixth form, Jack Hogan, quickly established himself as a Rugby



1st XV player alongside other Tudor rugby players (Tommy Fakeye, Tom Dainty, Emile Lone-Ebrahim etc.), and pushed the squad to an extremely strong year. Taijuan Sonko as a new Year 7, took part in a KS3 Basketball tournament with players two years

his senior, and helped Camp Hill to a regional final and won! Sathya Vaidyanathan practically organised the Chess season single-handedly and took us to two National Finals! Along with the help and guidance of Mr. Rees of course.

It may surprise you to know, we won the most House competitions out of all the houses! The only problem for Tudor being that they happen to be the ones that carry the least amount of points! So even though it was a tough result, our performance was strong.

Moving forward, Mr. Rees now has his first full year as Head of Tudor House under his belt and it literally cannot get any worse, so, the only way is up! Prasanna Sivakumar has been elected as the new House Captain and with his two vices, Tommy Fakeye & Harsha Thalava, will take us into new territories and develop the work started by Josh Berrow last year.

Tudor House is coming for the championship and hopefully, it happens this year!

GR



Camp Hill Boys House Festival 2022

Camp Hill's house festival took place on the 11th October and it truly lived up to all expectations.

The day was a huge celebration of colour whereby the whole school dressed up in costumes that were representative of their house. From costumes of the Joker to inflatable Thanos outfits, many of the 6th formers went above and beyond in the making of their choice of clothing.

The House Festival only takes place once every five years and the day always plays a huge part in deciding the House Championship for that year. Students of all year groups participated in events throughout the day ensuring every pupil played a part in achieving points for their house.

Activities such as Where's Wally?, Capture the flag and staff karaoke were all events that will live long in the memory of students as they go on through their education. The staff did a great job at organising events that linked to their subjects in a fun and inclusive way.

The eventual winners were announced in a final whole school assembly where all houses sat in their respective groups. The roar from the Seymour corner was as loud as ever when they were read out

as eventual winners and students were celebrating down the drive as they left school.

All in all, the house festival was a fantastic day for everyone involved in camp hill. Costumes, ridiculous activities and questionable singing performances from teachers means that the House Festival 2022 has a lot to live up to.

■ TMB







Art GCSE and A Level Work

We are pleased to present just a small selection of the beautiful and meaningful work created by our GCSE and A-level students, along with a few showing the A level exhibition, which was set up for A' Level moderation in June. We are truly proud of all of our Art students and all they achieved.

■ GXS



Asghar Hussain



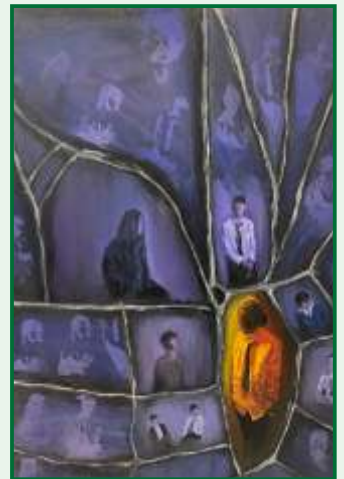
Jujanna Deshpande



Louis Brook



Louis Brook



Louis Brook



Harry McAllister



Hasan Syed



Christy Baiju



Bilal Kamran



George Hill



George Hill

Art A Level



Elliot Robbie



Elliot Robbie



Madyan Khan



Madyan Khan



Madyan Khan



Madyan Khan



Vishal Madhaven



Yashaswin Nukala



Kailash Balamurugan



George Hill



George Hill



Neil Ali



Abdul Samad Adil



Leo Chen



Oscar Collins



Zayne Ahmed



Seth Fisher



Shu'ayb Shah



Elliot Robbie



Elliot Robbie



Louis Brook



Louis Brook

Biology

Biology Big Quiz

What is a Poikilotherm? Well, you probably wouldn't care - not unless you were in the Big Biology quiz this June. Every year, this prestigious, 'non-competitive' and 'fun' event takes place at Birmingham University, where youthful Year 10 students fight a gruelling, strenuous mental battle in order to maintain our predator position on the food chain of honour. It's true! Last year, Camp Hill's team managed to win the competition - and this year, the pressure was on.

The day began in a welcoming atmosphere under the Clock Tower, as one by one, each school passed us and entered the Great Hall. It should be mentioned that we met Mr Syed - a former Biology teacher at Camp Hill and currently teaching at KES Stratford - so of course, we had to show them who was on top... And soon, it had begun.

After exhausting our brain power on a non-competitive word-search, round 1 commenced. But before starting, we were given a special ability. The ability to use a Joker. The power of the Joker is such that it can double the points earned from a singular

round. If you used your Joker and scored 9/10 - no you didn't, you got 18!

Round 1 - Genes and DNA. This round involved simple and hard questions - spanning from GCSE and A-Level Biology facts and knowledge. For the A team, this was a generally more relaxing round, as we had studied the topics to great detail.

Round 2 - Organisms & Adaptations. This round involved questions on different plants and animals, their adaptations and key terms that may be associated with them.

Round 3 - Global Climate and Bioenergetics. This round involved questions about the world around us and reasons for climate change and its effect on plants and biodiversity in general.

Then, there was a small interlude for our lunch, as well as a spot lecture on Microbiology and the focus of bacteria. This started with a brief history on the discovery of microbiology by Leeuwenhoek in 1674 and stemmed to the importance of bacteria to form life and the development of pathogens.

Round 4 - Molecules of Life (Biochemistry).



This round was focused on the molecules that govern life as we know it such as the fundamental elements of Carbon, Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sulphur. Questions also included different important structures of proteins such as the structure of haemoglobin. In general, it could be said that this was one of the most interesting rounds!

Round 5 - The Specialist Round - Biology in the News. Every year, one round is known as the "Specialist Round" in which a specific topic or part of Biology is chosen. This year, it was Biology in the News. Now, I don't know about you, but I know absolutely nothing about this topic. "Where in the World did a rainbow sea slug wash up on the shore?" - Cornwall, of course! Nevertheless, the B team managed to do quite well, scoring above average in this round. (All luck if you ask me...)

Round 6 - Microbiology. It must be said that Alexander Hopkins of team A, made distinct contributions to this round, recognising the structure of Ebola and the infamous Cordyceps fungus.

Overall, the day was brilliant, extremely competitive and opened the world of Biology to us. Our A team drew third place, but did not achieve the podium - as one school team take their position on the podium. Unfortunately, we did not protect our title of winning champions, but our C team achieved second place - a great achievement especially as there were 46 teams!

To those who participate in future years, we advise you to use common sense, and don't overcomplicate things (like the A team did). Ultimately, we would like to say



thanks to the Biology Department for allowing us to intellectually flourish, and especially Mrs Cameron for organising the trip.

■ Alexander Hopkins and Ishan Gautam



Birds of prey visit by The Falconry Centre, Hagley

Owls are one of the most interesting birds of prey in the world, and they occupy all inhabited continents. Only four owls natively occupy the British Isles; the Barn, Tawny, Long Eared, and Short Eared Owl. Year Seven, and some Year Eight students were lucky enough to experience owls up close, thanks to Fiona, an amazing bird handler from The Falconry Centre in Hagley. It is important to note that five birds of prey also visited, not just owls, and all of these will be talked about in greater detail in just a moment.

We were first introduced to Frodo, an amazing African White Faced Owl who brightened everyone's day. Joseph commented "Frodo was my favourite because he was so adorable". His huge

orange eyes and his face feathers (which looked a lot like a moustache) made him the favourite for many people.

Next, we met Oscar, a Barn Owl who really was a striking sight. Adhvaith said "Its feathers were amazing when he was in the air". Oscar's white face and golden plumage made him, in my opinion at least, a close second to Frodo.

The third bird of prey we were visited by was a Common Kestrel. These birds are the only birds of prey that have the ability to hover, thanks to their abnormally large tail. "I wish it hovered, but I was still excited," said Henry.

After that, we met the Harris Hawk. These are not native to Western Europe, and are

instead from the Americas. The Hawk also pooped. Oscar (in my class - not the Barn Owl) stated that "It was great, especially when it pooped on the floor".

Finally, a massive Siberian Eagle Owl visited us. He was far larger than all of the other owls. He also flew around the hall, which was great. Tejasv said "I think it was enjoying flying, and it landed just behind someone!"

Once again, a massive thank you to Fiona from the Falconry Centre, as well as the five birds of prey that visited us. Everyone really enjoyed the morning we spent with the birds.

■ Daniel O'Keeffe

Birds of prey visit by The Falconry Centre, Hagley

The first owl shown to us was an African White Faced Owl named Frodo. He was a Northern species, native to Sub-Saharan Africa. Like many owls, when Frodo is faced with an enemy, he flares his wings to make him appear larger. His cute face made him many people's favourite, including me. He also has a concealing posture, in which he squeezes and thins his body in order to look like a tree branch. In the wild, he eats invertebrates, such as scorpions, insects, and occasionally smaller owls and mammals. They live up to 30 years in captivity.

The second owl shown was a Barn Owl named Oscar. Barn Owls are the most widespread owl species in the world, despite not living in some major countries, such as Russia, China, and most of Canada. Despite appearing quite large, Oscar, like many owls, is mostly just feathers. His bright feathers and circular face, as well as his well-known species, immediately made him a favourite in the crowd. There are an estimated 2200 Barn Owls just like Oscar in Great Britain, with a further 250000 in Europe. They easily catch their prey, which in the wild consists of rats, mice, and voles thanks to their great vision and silent flight. They live around 20 years in captivity, and around 4 years in the wild, although many die young.

The next bird we met was the Common Kestrel. Despite what you might guess from its name, the Common Kestrel is actually a very

interesting and unique bird, as they are the only bird of prey with the ability to hover, thanks to its huge tail. Unfortunately, the Kestrel didn't hover for us, despite how much many of us wanted to see it. They do however use this ability to hunt prey such as voles and shrews. Despite being larger than Frodo, Kestrels, such as the one shown to us, actually weigh less. There are around 31,000 pairs of Kestrels in the UK, despite sadly taking a massive hit in the 1970's due to loss of habitat, dropping to just 4 in the wild in 1974. Kestrels live for around 3-4 years in the Wild, and around 15 years in captivity. The next bird which gave everyone a little shock was a majestic Siberian Owl. This bird was SUPER excited to get out and had an average lifespan of 10-20 years, and an average wingspan of 6ft 2inch! That's taller than former pro basketball player Jerry West! However, the only things these birds dunked on were lemmings which are the key part of their diet.

The Harris Hawk lives for up to 25 years and is found in the Americas. When even just the word 'Hawk' was said I could see everyone just take one step back, but luckily Fiona the amazing helper notified us that there was nothing to worry about.

■ Yunus Ali



Dissection Club

This year saw the resurrection of Dissection Club, as a joiner into the Sixth Form I was genuinely surprised when Camp Hill did not offer a dissection club, so I started one...

Last two terms saw nearly 30 Lower Sixth Formers take part in a four-week dissection course.

In the first week, students had the opportunity to observe the external characteristics of the rat such as their curved incisor teeth and their hairless tails or to locate muscles on the rat similar to our human bodies. We learnt the different anatomical regions of the rat and how the rat's movement relate to human movement.

The second week entailed students learning how to use surgical instruments such as scalpels and forceps to slowly peel the epidermis of the skin and fur away from the muscles. We were able to study the internal anatomy of the rat, labelling the intestines, lungs, heart, liver, stomach and salivary glands. It offered a great comparison to our own organ systems, even if it stunk the entire Biology department out.

The third week, we carefully took out as many organs as possible in order to examine them closer. We enjoyed pulling out the small and large intestines and seeing the tremendous length of the digestive system. (Nearly up to one metre in length!)

In the final week, we learn how to do an instrument tie with the suturing kit in order to enclose the rat layer by layer.

Overall, Dissection Club was a great success and the students got to improve their

manual dexterity and have a fun learning experience.

Special mention to Miss Toogood for helping me set the society up, as well the technicians that set up the equipment for us.

■ Tianjing Cai



Health and Society Conference - Chronicle

On Saturday 20th May, we along with students from across the foundation gathered at KES' Ruddock Hall for a conference on Health and Society.

In the morning, we attended one of a number of breakout sessions on a broad range of topics from the impact of Covid-19 vaccines on global inequality to challenges facing the NHS today.

After a short break we were straight into a talk from Professor Szreter on the history of pandemics and how approaches in the time of King Edward VI can impact our decisions and policymaking today.

Finally, after lunch we learnt about 'Everyday Cyborgs' and the impact of using technology to solve today's medical problems. Overall, the day was an enjoyable experience and



allowed us to connect with other students on an important issue and we would like to thank Mrs Parmar for accompanying us to the Conference on a

Saturday.

■ Joe Sullivan

Next Generation Day – Year 9

In July 2022, I received an email from the Jo Dunlop, from the Birmingham Civic Society. She invited us to take part in the Next Generation Awards Scheme.

This scheme is open to all of Birmingham's Secondary Schools and is already successfully run within many of the schools within the Foundation. It encourages its participants to select a year group and to ask them to develop a range of community minded projects, which they then present to judges from the Civic Society. The best presentation then goes through to the Semi Finals which take place in July of the following year, with the final taking place in the following October. With this in mind, and as I am already Head of Year 9...I decided that this was the best year group to participate in the scheme and I decided that we would take the Year group off timetable on the 25th of January and this would be their opportunity to shine in front of the judges, who would decide which project would then go through to the semi-finals.

From October to January, my diligent form tutors worked hard with their forms to get them to begin to plan a suitable community minded project ready the day. In the meantime, I assembled my team of willing volunteers: Mr Brear, Ms Gore, Ms Cave, Mr Breakwell, Dr Donnelly and Mrs Hundel, who would be there to guide the competitors through the final stages of the competition.

The 25th of January dawned, the competitors were ready to go, but firstly we assembled in the Hall to hear presentations from a range of community groups who had kindly given up their time to talk to Year 9s about the issues that face Kings Heath and its surrounding areas. Thanks to the hard work of Matt Powell, a parent, as well as the Manager of Enjoy Kings Heath, we were joined by Fiona Bilsborough, Headteacher from the National Institute of Conductive Education (NICE), our local Councillor Dave Barker, Matt himself and two PSCOs Paige Stanton and Fareeda Khan for a Question and Answer Session at the beginning of

the day. After this the students went to their designated rooms to finalise their presentations. Each room heard their individual presentations until, after much deliberation, the six finalists were decided.

At the end of the afternoon we were joined by two judges from the Birmingham Civic Society and Mr Bowen and it was their job to decide which presentation would make the final cut.

We heard interesting presentations from a range of students. They had come up with ideas such as hosting archery in school, cleaning buses and trying to help stop knife crime, but the eventual winners were all from 9E with their presentation entitled: Bring Back the Birds. The judges thought that this was a well thought out and sensible project, which could be achieved with the £1500 available to the eventual winners.

In July the group went forward to the Semi-finals and have successfully gained a place in the final, which will take place in October – so the story is not quite ended yet.

■ JLP

Next Generation Report from the Winning Team

Our group, which included us (Hemakesh and Usman), but also Ishaq, Ayaan and Harris began our project on a cold and miserable morning in early January, certainly not expecting to get this far with such a simple plan.

Surprisingly we were all taken off timetable and were given the task to create an idea which would benefit our community and have some sort of lasting and sustainable impact.

Hemakesh and Ayaan began to brainstorm ideas, as the rest of our merry group sat blankly. Unsure of what we possibly could design with a budget of £1500 which might have some sort of use, we came up with blank ideas, with short-term to little benefit. A tight budget really helped us understand how to make the most of what

resources you can work with at a given time.

We then agreed on designing a birdhouse box, credit to Hemakesh, which we realised may be more useful than one would think. Thanks to Ishaq and Usman's research, we discovered it can have quite a large impact on nature, by affecting other cycles and the world around us. For example, who knew an increase in bird population would mean the soil in the ground would be fertilised, or that nasty garden pests could be reduced in number by birds being attracted to a garden?

After looking into the topic and researching it in greater depth, we created a presentation. With the aid of Harris' knowledge of how to interest an audience, we shared with our

year group and several judges, including Mr Bowen and our Head of Year.

Our year group as a whole had some brilliant ideas. We won the first stage of the competition, allowing us to be able to take part in the semi-finals, against a few other schools in Birmingham and we succeeded in being selected to enter the final just a few months ago.

Overall, the project has helped us learn essential teamwork skills, improve our thinking and communication, as well as help us find a new interest towards these unappreciated creatures.

■ Usman Simjee and Hemakesh Muddha

NICE

If you ask me what's the one takeaway from my volunteering placement, it would be this: Savour and appreciate what you have, no matter how ordinary it seems, for the world is unfair and the most unfortunate can happen anytime.

The National Institute of Conductive Education (NICE) is a charity dedicated to providing services for children and adults with movement disorders such as cerebral palsy, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and etc through conductive education (CE). CE is an education system that suggests a person with motor disorder requires special education as well as medical treatments in order to develop ability to conduct activities of daily living.

After helping with the fund-raising After helping with the fund-raising department and observing sessions for very young children, I focused on participating lessons with children aged 5-11. I would assist conductors (teachers) in lessons, as well as helping the children with tasks such as using scissors and writing with a pencil. Most of the children, due to their movement disorders and cerebral palsy, can only perform writing, reading, and other daily living tasks (such as walking) at a limited level compared to children at the same age.

I remember trying to teach the child I was assigned with how to hold the pencil properly and how to write. I watched as she fought with her involuntarily clenched fist, trying to move her curled fingers around the pencil. For the first time ever in my life, I was so grateful for having a pair of hands. A pair of normal, functioning, agile hands that I use every day, every week, every month, doing the most mundane, repetitive, ordinary tasks. I was grateful for having my legs; The same old legs that have carried me through every single day of my life. I was grateful for having my voice, for having the ability to talk to people without the need to worry about how to do that. These are some of the "privileges" that those children dream of, that one day they can move and talk free of the imprisonment of their movement disorders. It occurred to me that the things I take for granted can mean something vastly different to another person. We always say to volunteer is to give, to provide kindness and support, but so often forget how much it helps us to become a better person. It nurtures our personal growth and gives us the sense of purpose, especially amid the most difficult period of time one is going through.

It's not fair that the children at NICE are the ones born with disabilities. I still remember that afternoon when one of the children asked me why is it that she's the one in her family that has disabilities. It burnt a deep hole in my heart. At that age, most of us are active and curious kids with almost infinite amount of energy, running around all day. It's heart-wrenching to see a such bright spirit that is trapped inside a body that stops her from doing so many things while she asks herself why she is so different from her sibling.

"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things." The world is unfair. It's always been like that, and it always will be like that. I'd like to invite everyone to take a moment and appreciate something in life. Maybe it's someone who's been by your side for as long as you can think of. Maybe it's something that reminds you of a good time. Maybe you're just glad that you've been healthy and well.

I'm very grateful for this opportunity arranged by Mrs Parmar and NICE. It was an eye-opening experience and I left being a more compassionate and grateful person (I hope I am...) I would never forget the broad smiles that welcomed me every Wednesday.

With that, I'd like to end with a quote from Sir Winston Churchill: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Ready to embark on a journey of compassion and inspiration?

■ Julian Hau



AFS

The Association of Friends of the school (AFS) has supported many events this year. As always, the AFS volunteers helped to sell refreshments during the Open Evening, Annual AFS Quiz, summer soiree, sports day, CHAOS and the senior production - "One Man, Two Guvnors". All the money raised from these events were used to provide support for students and the school. One of the highlights this year was the launch of 'pre-loved school uniform' initiative. Through this, the AFS could promote the ecological benefits of recycling by saving unwanted uniform from landfill and offering it a new lease of life with a new owner.

In addition, the AFS purchased a new cricket board for the PE department which was installed in time for last summer's cricket season and also donated HM's book tokens and cameras for the Art department. All of this was possible because of the generous donations from parents, carers and well-wishers of the school. It's a privilege that the AFS has been able to fund 'The Chronicle' magazine you are now reading since 2009 and the launch of AFS merchandise – mugs and water bottles – has also been a huge success.

Apart from fundraising, the AFS has supported many social events by providing samosas during the new Y7 parents evening and Saturday sports fixtures.

■ Nithya Menon



Chemistry

Chemistry Olympiad

RSC Chemistry Olympiad 2023

January saw 87 students sit the Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad paper. This year's paper had questions ranging from amino acid complexes and vaping through to cheese, and proved very challenging nationally with 28% of the 11838 students scoring less than 12/86. It was pleasing therefore to see that 76 of our entry received a medal, with 40 bronzes, 25 silvers and 11 golds. Special mention must go to Ben Scott whose score placed him in the top 50 students in the country, and to Louis Bailey who gained a gold medal in Year 12. The future of Camp Hill Chemistry looks bright with two Year 11 students being awarded silver medals.

Cambridge Chemistry Challenge 2023

This year's C3L6 paper explored the idea of formal charge and the crazy Chemistry of bismuth. Congratulations go to all the 49 students who entered and their hard work throughout the year. The students achieved 10 copper awards, 19 silver awards and 13 gold awards.

This year's Roentgenium award was

reserved for the top 0.6% of the pupils who entered nationally. This was achieved by Louis Bailey who has been invited to a Chemistry residential summer camp at St Catharine's College, Cambridge.



C3L6 Residential

After collecting our keys from the porter's lodge, we made our way to our rooms, and dropped off our bags, changing into our formal clothes for dinner later. Gathering in the courtyard, we met the Professor running the camp, Dr. Peter Wothers, as well as the undergraduate helpers, before making our way to the bar to do our own introductions, including our courses and our favourite elements.

We then had a formal dinner, and had an opportunity to discuss studying at Cambridge with the helpers, as they rotated around each table. After the dinner we were shown an exhibition in the college on atomic orbitals, with over one hundred laser-etched glass cubes displaying the shapes of the orbitals for each period within each block, as well as an exhibition on Volta.

On Saturday morning after breakfast, we walked to the Yusuf Hamied Department of

Chemistry, where we had a lecture on functional group levels and organic chemistry, followed by a practical which was part of the International Chemistry Olympiad when it was held in Cambridge. We had to work out the empirical formula of a copper complex by performing two titrations, one determining the percentage by mass of copper, and the other chlorine. After which we spent the evening listening to a talk on the history of the periodic table, seeing some of the first, and most inventive, forms of the periodic table including a 3D spiral version, as well as many antique books and an antique chemistry set mostly full of poisons.

The second full day was similar to the first, with a lecture on atomic orbitals taking us up to lunch, followed by another visit to the labs. This practical was an investigation about the critical micelle concentration of a surfactant, and we had to devise our own method, as there were no

instructions provided. The method that most settled on was titrating set volumes of distilled water into our surfactant solution to decrease the concentration whilst measuring its conductivity, the graph of which would give us our value. That evening, we settled into a hall at the college for a lecture on the Schrödinger equation and the particle in a box, followed by the film Contact.

Our final day in Cambridge began with a final lecture from one of the undergraduates on thermodynamics and Gibbs free energy, followed by a chance for all the students to attempt to lift a tungsten bar one-handed from a table, which proved impossible due to it having a similar density to gold. Overall, the talks were fascinating, and it was a great opportunity to visit Cambridge and get a taste of what studying there would be like.

■ Louis Bailey

Chemistry: IRIS Ionic Liquids project and research conference

The Institute of Research in Schools (IRIS) is an organisation that focuses on providing the opportunity to do extracurricular STEM research in schools. During the school year, seven Year 12 students (including ourselves) took up the opportunity to synthesise ionic liquids and research their antimicrobial properties, as well as testing if additional iron compounds would bring any magnetic properties to the liquid and produced posters based on this.

With our posters printed by IRIS, we set off to the University College London on 27th June early morning. Albeit the delay of our train, as per usual, we arrived just in time at UCL as the introduction of the conference began.

The conference was kick-started by a series of short presentations given by multiple research groups, with topics ranging from *proving the existence of Higgs boson*, *investigating the viscosity and conductivity of Ionic Liquids*, to *investigating the factors of sizes of tree crowns*! It was an eye opening experience to see how different research groups worked as a team and their unique approaches to difficulties and problems they encountered during their research. Teachers and students were encouraged to unload their queries onto the team in the Q&A session after each presentation, which greatly boosted participation by drawing the audience in. The only problem was that you never know if they picked you or the person behind you for the question!

Next, we were given time to present our posters or go around and speak with other research groups about their projects. It was an exciting experience to see what ideas different groups proposed and to share our results as fellow researchers. From *investigating Covid big data*, *Cosmic Mining (collection and analysis of stellar informations)*, to showing off an AI tennis ball retrieval robot, it never ceases to amaze us how much we can do as young researchers when given the chance and support. It also reminds us that success is never easy to outshine others means to outwork others, but hard work and a little bit of luck would eventually pay off.

Not only did we learn a lot more about a range of topics, the conference was a fabulous opportunity for us to hone our presentation and communication skills. By speaking to a wide range of people, from other student researchers to

professors from universities, it was a great chance for us to build up confidence and learn how to accurately and concisely deliver a presentation on a research project. There are not many times when you can introduce your research to a professor from the University of Oxford!

The event ended with a talk on the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN and his own scientific journey delivered by Professor Alan Barr from the University of Oxford. It was a particularly engaging lecture as he dissects the structure of LHC and explains to us how everything works on relatively simple terms. As a professor of particle physics, professor Barr's love and enthusiasm for particles and the universe was demonstrated throughout his lecture. Science and research are never about finishing a task or a job it is about answering questions that spring from our minds and following our passion, our interest, our love on things that inspire and amaze us the most. It is an exciting journey that ends with another beginning, a door that opens up to endless questions for you to find out. Science and research are about your enthusiasm to find out the truth.

As the conference closed with a big round of applause, we departed London by train, which was surprisingly on time! It had been a fun day out and a rewarding experience which pushed

us further into other realms of chemistry, widening our chemical knowledge base and providing precious opportunities for practical skills (such as learning how to hold a round-bottom flask so you would not drop it!) Research is more failure than success, and there always will be things standing in your way: impurities, tiny mistakes, unexpected or miscalculated steps, (not enough funding for the department...) But as the great super heavy element chemist Yuri Oganessian has said: "We could weep. We could shed tears. We could find excuses for our own inactivity. Instead, we are going to seek a way out of this difficult situation...and new ways of solving arising problems." This is the mind set of being a scientist.

We want to thank Mr O'Malley for organising the project, providing support, and the constant help and guidance on the project (and reminding us for the deadline of the posters), without whom our achievements would not have been possible. Special thanks to Dr Taylor for letting us use his laboratory and many apologies for making chemicals that smell quite unpleasant. We also want to thank the school for funding our train tickets to London and finally shout-out to Mr Redshaw from the Physics department for organising the trip.

■ Omer Al-Zubair and Julian Hau



Royal Society's Young People's Book Prize

Yet again, we were lucky to participate as one of the judging panels in 2022/2023 for the Royal Society Book Prize. This year we read six young children's books and were asked to help to judge what we thought of them. The variety was immense, starting with a statistics book, through to a book that looked at current affairs in the world, through to a book that focused on how we can save our environment by telling us to reach our dreams. It was a brilliant selection to choose from.

Our team consisted of nine people: Zakaria Bora, Joud Boujamaa, Esa Butt, Nikhil Gilliam, Amoghavarsha Prasad, Xu Wang, Samuel Wiseman, Yuehao Zhang and Tony Zhou. We had to decide a winner between "Microbe Wars", "How was that built", "Beetles for Breakfast: Weird and

Wonderful Ways to Save the Planet", "Fourteen Wolves", "If the world was 100 people" and "Fantastically Great Women Scientists and their stories". We recommend reading them as they are very thought provoking.

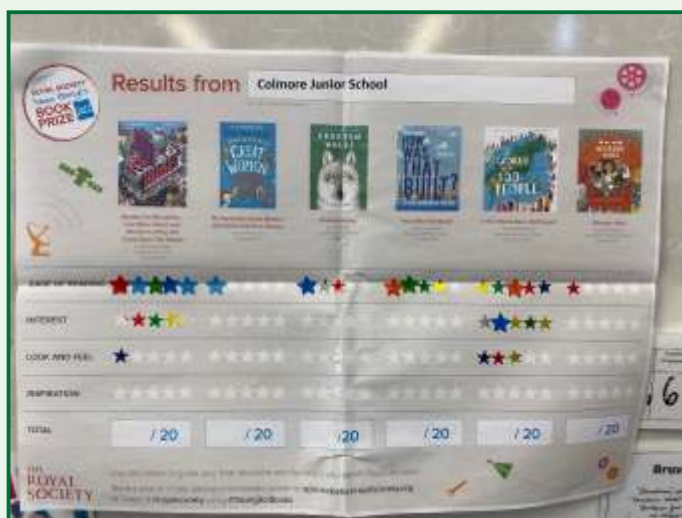
We eagerly dived into these books and learnt something new after reading each and every one. Some of the books were aimed at a younger age group, so this year we went on a brief trip to Colmore Junior School to show them the books and get their opinions. This included taking part in lots of fun activities which they all contributed to. It was amazing and at the end we asked them all to vote on which book was their favourite. Ultimately, they chose "If the world was 100 people". We even brought along some flavoured crickets, which

surprisingly many of the students thought were very tasty. It was a highly successful trip that helped us gain more insight into how others felt about the books.

It was a tough decision and the majority of books got four or five stars from our team. It was especially close between Colmore's favourite "If The World Was 100 People" and "Beetles for Breakfast." Overall our favourite was "Beetle's for breakfast" with "If the world was 100 people coming in a very close second. We very much enjoyed all of the books.

Overall, it was a privilege to do this, and it was so much fun!

■ Tony Zhou



West Midlands Chemistry Quiz

After a two-year hiatus, the West Midlands Chemistry Quiz was back. Two Year 10 and Year 11 pupils travelled to the University of Birmingham in March, for an evening of Chemistry questions. Questions ranged from the radioactive element present in smoke alarms to detecting iodine in seaweed.

Camp Hill went into the half way point with a slim two-point lead, having overhauled the initial advantage seized by their closest competition, KES. This was a lead that wouldn't be relinquished, as the

four held off a late charge to extend an unbroken streak in the WMCTC Quiz that stretches back nearly a decade.

Congratulations go to Arnav Aphale, Sampanna Raut, Taheen Islam and Shubham Kumar for their achievement. This is especially the case given the short notice they had that the quiz was going ahead, and the limited preparation time this gave them to become familiar with the types of questions they would be facing. Well done!

■ RAR



Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition

The Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme is a programme the school offers students from year 9 and upwards. The programme involves completing three sections - Skills, Physical and Volunteering. And finally, after all the sections have been completed, the students will take part in an expedition for two days and a night. The DoE scheme aims to improve the students' skillset to help give them a competitive edge over their peers, providing them with vital experiences that could

prove critical later on in their school and professional careers.

For the Bronze award, we were required to complete a minimum of six months on one of the sections and three months on the remaining sections. All of the members had - supposedly - completed an hour of activity every week (not my words). So over the course of the Bronze award, we spent a total of forty-eight hours each refining our chosen skills. Many of us were already doing these



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After a few games sessions spent planning out route cards, meal plans and first aid kits instead of lifting weights in a room filled with sweaty boys, most were finally prepared for the expedition. Equipped with my freeze-dried curry and gourmet Tesco crêpes I was finally ready!

After a short drive to Swanshurst park, it was us against the great outdoors. We stuck to our planned route and navigated our way around the vast nature trails and canal system of Birmingham and then, after a gruelling walk up the hill on Cartland road, we finally arrived at school.

We had to work fast to put the tents up before the darkness crept in. Before long, it turned

pitch black and we were trusted to make dinner without burning ourselves, which MOST of us managed. After a quick dinner, we went to sleep, ready for the day ahead.

On the final day, we got up at 7 am and drove to the Lickey Hills. After getting lost a couple of times and asking locals for directions, we managed to get to the first checkpoint. In the distance, we could see the massive hills, which were on our planned route. After losing our way a couple more times we finally arrived at the foot of the hills. This proved to be the biggest challenge of the entire expedition but after eating a few energy bars, we slowly made our way up the hills and after reaching the summit, made our way down to the minivan that was conveniently located at our destination.

I would like to thank all the teachers that had given up their weekends to help us with the expedition. And Mr Brear for organising the expedition, and making sure we were all ready for it. All in all, I think that the DofE programme is a wonderful opportunity to get out of your comfort zone and do something you would not normally do.

■ Yashaswin Nukala



Drama

One Man and Two Guvnors

Dazzling costumes. Exquisite set design. Side-splitting humour. And...Matthew Holland waving a kitchen knife around? Who have we just chosen as Head Prefect? The curtain lifted on another of Mr. Dowling's highly anticipated school productions on 23 March for a two-night run of Richard Bean's hilarious comedy "One Man, Two Guvnors". Featuring astounding talent from both sides of the canteen, plus a couple of fresh faces on the Camp Hill Stage, with half the rugby team thrown in, this was a show not to be missed.

The ever-hungry Francis Henshall is employed by the gangster Roscoe Crabbe as a bit of extra muscle. But he doesn't get paid 'till the end of the week, and he can't stop thinking about CHIPS! Taking on a second job for posh twit Stanley Stubbers will earn him half a crown and a meal, but what happens when Stanley and Roscoe turn up at the same pub for the night and both want their post delivered? Francis tries to work out how to juggle two jobs and mostly fails, much to the delight of the audience. Meanwhile, the aspiring actor Alan Dangle's life has fallen apart when Roscoe forces him out of his engagement to the pretty but arguably dim Pauline, daughter of Roscoe's ex-partner in crime. But, wait! Roscoe's supposed to be dead! Then who's this pretending to be him? Roscoe's identical twin sister Rachel?! Oh yeah, Stanley and Rachel are engaged as well. I know, we didn't really understand the plot either. And I'm also pretty sure Mr. Dowling didn't. :)



Toma Hoffman didn't disappoint. His comedic timing and interpretation of the character of Francis was side-splitting, and his improvisation during the matinee performance was show-stopping - quite literally. Not to be outdone, the single, working, driving, bookkeeping woman he fancies, Dolly, was played to stylish 60's perfection by Holly Mia Garside of Camp Hill Girls, who particularly enjoyed doing the boys' makeup on show nights. Matthew Holland was formidable as the "dangerous actor" Alan, and was a force to be reckoned with when buried deep in one of his soliloquies, which made use of some...interesting metaphors. Hasan Syed delighted the audience as the 87-year old waiter Alfie with his slapstick prowess, although the subtleties of Bean's script suffered under the comedic weight of Syed's profane declarations. Zosia Webster's confident portrayal of Rachel Crabbe, as well as her dizygotic (just trust me) twin Roscoe, provided a narrative anchor in the midst of all the confusion and her theatrical dexterity was clearly displayed in both sensitive and comedic moments. Tears were shared with the soppy soul of Pauline Clench, played to perfection by Amulya Maganty, who found humour in the character's fluctuating moods and explosive naivety. Caleb Wilton's wonderfully comedic execution of Stanley Stubbers provided a constant source of laughter, enhanced by his elaborate and effortless ad libs about pubsigns and his ability to exploit the

audience's reactions to maximise the impact of his punchlines.

Jibraan Rashid delivered an extremely assured portrayal of Charlie Clench, the East End hard man with a sensitive soul - the subtlety of his characterisation demonstrated a maturity rarely seen in student performances. Tommy Fakeye brought Lloyd Boateng to life with an energetic and highly entertaining performance that paved the way for bigger and better things later in the school year as part of the CHAOS summer show - a rags to riches story for the erstwhile king of the tech box. There are rumours that he plans to return to his buddies back in the tech team this year, but there will always be a place for Tommy on the Camp Hill stage.

Tom Collieran formed an amusing double act with Hasan Syed as Gareth the chef. Ivan Brosnan, who played the pompous lawyer, Harry Dangle, brought a touch of class to proceedings, with a fastidious demeanour that channelled Suchet's Poirot. Tom Pitfield opened the show with aplomb, performing Little Richard's 'Rip it Up', and continued to delight and amuse in supporting roles throughout the performance, whilst Sam Ankras gave a confident turn as Brighton's sole police officer, who struggled to bring order to the chaos that surrounded him. Eva Turner offered philosophical insights as the thoughtful cabby whose knowledge of Greek mythology matched her skill behind the wheel.

The directorial team of Mr Dowling, Miss Toogood, Mr Caves and Mr Rudd each played their part: Miss Toogood lost the plot attempting to map out the plot, Mr Rudd always turned up to apologise for not turning up, Mr Dowling worked to a timetable ten minutes behind everyone else and Mr Caves ensured that we were never without a man in a suit eating chocolate concrete and custard.

The set and costumes were organised to a near professional standard by the meticulous research and work of Ms Freeman, whose eye for detecting and acquiring contemporary clothes and accoutrements helped to paint a vivid portrait of 1960s Brighton. That picture was supported by an exceptional backdrop, provided by Mrs Smith and Hodges of the art department.

Credit must also be given to the tech team and back stage crew who, under the watchful and experienced eyes of Ms Garvey and Mrs Mitchell, worked tirelessly to ensure that the stage was perfectly set and transitions seamless. The live band, ably led by Wolfie Spyrou-Kirby, with Harvey Collett on guitar and Bohan Qui on bass drummed up a roaring atmosphere and even managed to remember most of their cues.

A real triumph, the show was a testament to the dedication and enthusiasm of all involved!

■ Caleb Wilton and Matt Holland





CHAOS

A phrase that has worked its way into my vernacular is, "that's so Camp Hill". It has come to represent the sorts of things that seem to exemplify the spirit and the ethos of the school – particularly the quirky or the unusual. So a musical play put on jointly between staff and students, with a home-grown script and songs would seem to fit the bill for being described in such a way. Add into the mix a host of silly accents, morris dancing, audience participation and a headmaster dressed as Elvis, and we can be certain that this was "so Camp Hill".

But what was it? Well, it was the latest instalment of CHAOS (Camp Hill

Amateur Operatic Society) and their performance of Grimthorpe Abandoned, wherein we saw the pupils and teachers of Fortuna Boys' Grammar School embarking on a trip from t'North to Moseley Bog to take part in a Duke of Edinburgh expedition. The staff of Fortuna Boys' are led (rather ineptly) by Headmaster, Spike Mouseworth – named in honour of Mike Southworth who created the first CHAOS productions in the late 1960s. Mouseworth's Deputy, Heath PIPPS, is named after Keith Phipps who starred in numerous CHAOS productions.

Unfortunately, but predictably, for Mouseworth and PIPPS, the whole enterprise



is a shambles and they end up having to stage one of Heath Pipp's musicals. This time it was a tribute to The Lord of the Rings where we saw Fomo Bagpipes having to destroy his uncle's ring at the insistence of Grandad the Wizard in order to ensure that it did not fall into the hands of the Princess of Darkness, Sarowoman.

And, by the way, this whole enterprise – writing the script, composing the music, writing lyrics, auditioning, asking people if they want to be in it, casting, rehearsing, producing, directing, costuming, setting – was all achieved in less than three weeks. That's also "so Camp Hill". They said we couldn't do it... They didn't really. They don't exist. But I imagine it's what rational thinking, sane and sensible pragmatists would've said

had they chosen to comment three weeks ago. But we would have proved them wrong because the show was a great success.

Cast and crew enjoyed three evening performances and we think that the audience had a nice time too. Some of the audience even contributed, with former colleague Chris Jones, former Headmaster Mike Roden, and two current governors Asif Afridi and Martin Crutchley taking to the stage to show us their dance moves. Perhaps the highlight in terms of audience participation was seeing Mr Rossiter's dad improvise an amorous gruffalo – don't ask, you had to be there.

There are too many people to thank individually here – they are mostly all thanked in the programme anyway – but I would like to

reaffirm my thanks to Tom Dowling for his exceptional writing and musical talents (and his performance of Gollum) and to Emma Lamb who came back from CHG to help with production and direction and was indispensable in actually making the show happen. She can sing a bit too!

I am also delighted that we managed to combine old staff and new and introduce CHAOS to another generation of Camp Hill. We even managed to persuade Nathan Hill out of acting retirement for a demonstration of theatrical prowess and dramatic intensity that was only surpassed by the trolley; arguably the real star of the show. We look forward to 2025 and doing it all again.

■ AJC



The Big Bang Competition

The dawn of 2023 saw the start of a small group of budding engineers meeting every Thursday lunchtime in the Food Tech room to form the Engineering Society. After a rocky few weeks, the society soon found its niche as competitors in the Big Bang Competition. The competition, which had already been running for four months prior to this and is aimed at young people in secondary schools across the country and encourages them to explore STEM by either conducting a scientific investigation of their choosing or by concocting their own innovative invention. Given the nature of the society we decided to execute the latter option and after a few days of brainstorming came up with the idea of creating an eco-friendly delivery drone.

The next few weeks of implementing this idea consisted of the sacrifice of countless free periods and sleepless nights as we attempted to carry out nine months of work in half the time. Our tasks included, but weren't limited to, a frenzied development of ideas, CAD modelling and finally, suffering through a level of hardware failure that convinced us that our drone had become a sentient sadistic beast that was hell bent on ensuring that we

exclusively spent our time solving its many hardware/software problems.

Nevertheless, we endured and produced a self-stabilising drone that we managed to submit to the competition on time. After a few agonising weeks of waiting we received the news that we had become finalists in the competition and we were invited to the fair to present our project. So, following a secondary interview, on the 22nd of June, a team consisting of Sasan Hapuarachchi, Jas Dziedziak, William Shi, XazQ Sandhu, Pruthvi Shrikaanth, Ethan Tumbos, Shubham Kumar and Dawud Irfan went to the fair and did exactly that (Although he chose not to go to the fair himself, Nathan Campbell did help considerably in the development of the drone).

The fair itself was interesting with a wide range of exciting booths for us to explore ranging from the RAF to Rolls Royce, each with their own interesting story about their engineering experience in industry. In

addition to learning about what other companies were working on, we were able to present our own ideas and concepts to any visitors at the fair who wandered over to our booth allowing us to network with people such as RAF representatives, pilots and the sponsor of the Big Bang Fair himself!

Although in the end we did not win, it was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and we look towards participating in it again next year and perhaps trying our hand in a few other competitions that may attract our attention in the future...

■ *Sasan Senmuthu Hapuarachchi*



Senior Debating

Another year of debating has come and gone, from regular Thursday lunchtime meetings of keen debaters and those who are just starting out, to participation in the ESU Extended Mace competition, all of which I am sure the regular debaters deeply enjoyed.

In the first round of the ESU Mace competition, a team consisting of M. Sikandar, R. Wasfe and T. Colleran did extremely well in winning their debate against King Edward VI High School for Girls where they successfully opposed the motion 'This house would ban the sale and consumption of meat'.

This won us a place in the second round

of the competition where a team composed of J. Sullivan, S. Raut and S. Shyam. We were opposing the motion of 'This house would use proportional representation in U.K. national elections' against a particularly fierce proposition from King Edward's School. Unfortunately, we narrowly missed out on progression in the competition but as always, the Camp Hill Boys team was very strong, and we look forward to the potential of participating in future interschool competitions.

We look onwards and upwards to the future and hope face to face debating becomes a regular feature of the debaters' lives. I'm sure you will realise that debating over Zoom is a new

experience for many and something that is particularly unnerving.

Overall, senior debating has been a hugely valuable and fulfilling experience this year and I am sure all of the boys involved will agree.

This leaves me no more to say than to thank Mr Wilkins for the time he has put into supporting us throughout debating this year and the numerous lunchtimes he devoted to do as much as possible to support the Camp Hill teams in discovering their flair for success.

■ Joe Sullivan

Geography

Cadbury's World

The 28th of April was truly a fine day. The sun was shining, the birds were singing and 150 sweaty Year 9s were waiting to board the coach to visit one of the ancient seven wonders of the world. They were going to visit one of the most iconic landmarks that any Birmingham has to offer... Cadbury World.

It is a state of the art establishment conceived in the early 90s that sent shockwaves throughout the land, making the industrial process of making the world's chocolate a joyous family trip to go on, whilst meticulously detailing every little aspect of this glorious modus operandi. Now, this place isn't to be taken lightly. Cadbury World houses a plethora of intel on the backstory behind the man, the myth, the legend John Cadbury.

We began our pilgrimage, entering the first exhibit and receiving several complementary chocolate bars that turned out to be my only food for the rest of the day, as I had left my lunch at home. Worth it, though.

In this exhibit, we learned about the ancient origins of this mystical product, and how it was first sourced and used by the Mayans in Mesoamerica as a medicine and concocted into a ritual drink sent down from Quetzalcoatl. We then ventured forwards in time, seeing how chocolate made its way to Britain and eventually to John Cadbury's corner shop in the heart of Birmingham. Then, the Year 9s were enlightened upon the secrets of the chocolate process, and how chocolate is turned from bean pods plucked off Ghanaian trees to become the smooth silky delicacies that cream in our mouths. This takes place in an exciting presentation with shaking seats and we had steam pouring on us, causing the less ergonomically stable of us to descend to the floor.

We then got some hands-on experience in the factory department, as we wrote our names and made drawings in gooey melted chocolate. We then got given some more chocolate, this time a cup of flavours of our own choosing. Me personally, I chose a cup full of dark chocolate, caramel, and Oreos. We then watched as a man demonstrated how chocolate enters the moulds and takes its shapes. It was incredibly enticing; all the students stationed there were in a chokehold at this display of choco-wizardry. Some even tried to get greedy and snatch the chocolate.

After this was a terrifying horror experience that very few will forget - the car ride around "Cadbury Village". It is a slow, but

traumatising experience with heavy psychedelic elements where we were driven around a track that showed us the horrors of an Orwellian society where even the living beings are made of chocolate. There were these small cannibalistic Chocolate Beans residing in a chocolate world with chocolate families and chocolate-based landscapes. All in all, it was a very strange experience.

Just before lunch, we went shopping in the ultra-budget Cadbury World shop, where everything from foot-long chocolate bars to tiny little packets of buttons was being sold at remarkable prices - I remember seeing my peers walk out of the shop with boxes and crates bought for less than a tenner. Some did it for the chocolate, others did it for the hustle. At lunch, we all collected together and recounted our experiences throughout the day and what wonders we saw. I sat on a bench beside my friends, eating those half melted chocolate bars I had stored in my backpack. Whilst I would've preferred to eat an actual lunch, it was better than eating some random Tesco sandwich for 4 pounds, and it filled me up well.

After lunch, we entered the other strange experience of the tour - the 4D cinema. Lining up in our 3D glasses, we didn't know what we were to find, but the designs on the wall told us the horror beans from earlier were back. As we got into our seats, we watched as some 2001 animation produced in Windows PowerPoint was played in front of us, depicting the beans from earlier as they went on a series of roller coasters and rides, as we felt the vibrations and movement of the chairs.

We concluded our tour with an educational talk on trans-national corporations and the rise of globalisation, finishing off the Globalisation topic we studied in Geography this year. It was interesting to learn about the different flavours of Cadbury chocolate across the world designed for markets with different palates, and seeing the effects of the Mondelez acquisition first-hand was fascinating. It was a focused way for it all to conclude, restoring us to the reasons why we came here in the first place.

Overall, the trip was fun, albeit we sincerely hope that the recent acquisition by Merlin Entertainments will improve some of the displays by the time the current Year 8s get there - some of them are very old and traumatising!

A huge thank you to the Geography Department and all members of staff who organised and assisted the trip.

■ Ihsan Mohit and Afnan Muhammad



Y10 Geography Field trip – Carding Mill Valley, Shropshire

On the 4th of May, a group of Year 10 geographers, including myself, embarked upon a highly enjoyable and enriching field trip to the stunning Carding Mill valley in Shropshire. Needless to say, everyone had a wonderful time observing the majestic upper course of the mighty River Severn, the longest river the UK has to offer, and the beautiful landscapes which accompanied it.

The exciting day began with a morning bus ride first to the Atcham bridge in Shropshire before stopping at Carding Mill valley to truly experience river geology in its rawest form. Despite the ride being around two hours long, we were all filled with burning anticipation for the magnificent scenery awaiting us, on which we would be making insightful observations on the characteristics of rivers in their upper course and the resulting surrounding geology.

Before long, we had made it to our first stop, the Atcham Bridge, overlooking the elegant meanders of the middle course of the River Severn. The weather was brilliant for some quick observations from atop the bridge. I amongst my other peers rapidly noted the presence of point bars on the inside of the river meanders, blanketed in minuscule pebbles and sediment called alluvium, which are crucial supplies of minerals and nutrients to the surrounding farmland. We also noted the steep river cliffs on the outside of the river meander, carved out by the erosive fast moving current of the river. Geography is much better when you can physically observe it rather than just on a classroom PowerPoint! Mr. Butcher showed us a photo of the extent of the 2007 River Severn floods on the particular area surrounding Atcham bridge, and the water level was almost submerging the bridge!

Following our short taster session of river features observation on the Atcham bridge, we finally arrived at the beautiful Carding Mill valley. We disembarked from the bus and donned our wellies in preparation for some exciting field work in the relentless currents of the River Severn itself!

After a refreshing lunch on the lush green river bank we set off on an intrepid trek up the winding interlocking spurs carved out by the river, speckled with grazing sheep, to site one, perched relatively high between two hills. Here, we began collecting data including the width, current velocity, gradient, smoothness of bed load and river depth of the River Severn in its upper course to test if our lessons were really true to real life! We found the river to be shallowest, narrowest and the current to be slowest at site one, due to this being nearest towards the river source thus having less energy to sustain a faster current to erode a deeper bed and wider banks.

The width, depth and current velocity generally increased, as we moved further downstream from site one to site five, our final data collection site was on the upper course of the River Severn. The bed load also became smoother as we moved from site one to site five as a result of increased abrasive erosion due to the river current increasing velocity the further you went downstream. The walk down between sites was often accompanied by a precarious slalom of painstaking navigation between jagged rocks and narrow ridges, on which I traversed especially clumsily! Luckily I was compensated with a refreshing ice lolly at the shop on my way down as a well-deserved reward for the unforgiving terrain I had braved!

All in all, the Carding Mill Valley trip was a wonderfully entertaining experience where I got to experience the lessons I had been taught in their truest form, while spending a smashing time with my friends, as well as being amidst some of the most beautiful scenery I have ever seen on a school trip! In spite of this, all of the excitement and activities understandably exhausted me, and I had a much needed nap on the bus for the journey back to school!

■ *Mohamed Eltair*



Water Aid



On 25th April, Year 9 welcomed Glynn Trow, a volunteer speaker from Water Aid. This was as part of their geographical studies into global poverty and development. We started the talk with some startling facts, for example did you know that 771 million people don't have access to clean water close to home? Mr Trow explained how this can lead

to 800 child deaths a day.

We considered the serious impacts of lack of clean water and sanitation on millions of people around the world, as well as the inextricable link to climate change pressures. This was naturally a time to develop empathy and consideration for those less fortunate than ourselves. However, it was also a time to pause and think about the word "empower". Water Aid's focus is on empowering those in developing and emerging economies, particularly women and children, to develop sustainable water conservation and provision initiatives.

This poem helps to summarise the talk:

Hope Spring Eternal

*In the past when the rains stopped
The world put its hand to its mouth in shock.
Young and old sought new homes
New pastures told of new seeds sown.
And built upon and tilled the land*

*And willed life from skilled hands
Roots search deep, crops grow high
Shoots dare greet the bittersweet sky.
The changing climate pressures earth
With scant regard for human worth
Once more the long walk and bodies immerse
In unclean water unfit for thirst.
Let us rise to the challenge, let us stand tall
If a future is for one, it must be for all
Let the aged flourish and water nourish birth
And hope spring eternal and sing from the earth.*

Lemn Sissay

We would like to thank both Mr Trow and Water Aid for their hard work and as a Camp Hill community, we will continue to support them in their campaigns for water equity and futurity.

■ DGM

Year 12 Geography Field Trip

Following a 4-hour drive filled with questionable music choices on two cramped minibuses, we arrived in Criccieth, where we were entertained with sea walls and groynes. After measuring beach gradients and pebble roundness, we got back onto our minibuses for further driving. Eventually we got to the Conway centre, where we were met with a not-so well received dinner.

On the second day of fieldwork, we visited Llandudno, a beautiful town on the North of Wales, in order to complete some human geography. In our groups, we interviewed the general public on their takeaway habits, including frequency and what kind of takeaways they preferred to order. Some of us were met with enthusiasm from the majority elderly population, whilst others faced rejection after rejection. We then had some free time to enjoy what the town had to offer, such as the breath-taking pier or the Welsh KFC. Many opted for a local fish and chips before subsequently being followed and attacked by hungry seagulls, leaving certain geographers traumatised.

After completing fieldwork and exploring what Llandudno had to offer, we turned our attention to the Great Orme, which is the exclamation point on the headland that the town sits on, offering fantastic views of Anglesey and beyond into the Irish Sea. It also offers dramatic views scaling these cliffs up to the peak in itself was memorable, involving breath-taking scenery, wrong turns, hairpin bends and (if you were in Mr Butcher's van) stalling.

If admiring the views wasn't enough, another attraction on the Great Orme is the open mines. Here you could find many loose cliffs, primarily made of limestone, that were formed around 330 million years ago. By smashing and bashing them open we were able to spot many amazing features hidden within them, from shells to fossils to other interesting formations, where joints between different rock types were impressively



out at masses of greenery swaying hypnotically in the breeze, or to venture as far as possible into the marsh, or to try your hand at identifying the different species of plants that were growing.

Next were the sand dunes of Aberffraw, where we used a transect and intervals of 200 metres to observe several different conditions that we expected to change as we trekked further from the sea. Using quadrats, we calculated the vegetation cover, whilst sand cores were also used to extract a sample of the soil covering a depth of up to a metre deep, from which we could later analyse variables such as colour, moisture content and pH. We also drew field sketches at each interval, which together with photos, would help our analysis to understand the landscape. Furthermore, plant diversity was another consideration of what we expected to change, in which we used a combination of plant ID sheets and apps to identify different species, which could go towards analysis of where pioneer species were in correlation to where the sea was, among other things. Of course, fieldwork wasn't the only focus, as the wild nature of the dunes and the movement of sand by the

enduring wind made for a beautiful landscape, and a great way to end a great trip.

'The other bus...'

The minibus ride with Mr Brear was certainly entertaining. With the spontaneous conversations about crypto and stocks between Mr Brear and Hayder and the amalgamation of different music genres locked in stalemate coming from Hamish's speaker and the main minibus speaker. It is not so often you hear country and house played at the same time.

At our first stop at the service station in Shrewsbury we were met with an old fashioned American style diner, which of course is an example of Americanisation. This did get a few of us excited so we went off to explore this rare sight. As we got there we noticed a menu on the window and were taken aback by the extortionist prices, or maybe the price of UK Fried Chicken has clouded our perspectives.

The trip to this American diner unfortunately triggered Matthew's 'I must tell a story related to this situation' response and we had to listen to him tell us about the time his mum went



to America and ordered a salad.

We then regrouped with the others by the minibuses where we played some one bounce where immense skill was displayed. It was almost as if we were on the beaches of Rio de Janeiro. After

this we got back on the buses to resume our journey to Crickieth.

■ Julius Cakaj, Suleman Abdulgader & Chude NDozi

Maths

For a variety of reasons, the majority of our usual team challenges were still unable to take place this year. There was, however, the full range of individual challenges available for our students to puzzle over.

Late Results

When writing about the Maths Challenges in last year's Chronicle, we were still waiting for the results of the some of the Olympiad rounds. In the Hamilton Olympiad (aimed at Year 10 students), Kenny Lau achieved a Certificate of Merit. In the Cayley Olympiad (for Year 9), Pramath Murthy gained a Certificate of Merit, whilst Shubham Kumar and Taheen Islam truly excelled themselves, earning Certificates of Distinction. Of the eight boys who qualified for the Junior Olympiad, Ashaz Jameel and Anson Tang (Year 8) and Amogh Prasad (Year 7) all achieved a Certificate of Merit. Affan Aamir, Lemuel Adjei, Rudy Hudson and Kabir Singh (Year 8) and Lucas Evans (Year 7) received a Certificate of Qualification. Congratulations all round!

The Senior Maths Challenge

The autumn term saw the Senior Mathematical Challenge, which took place in early October and involved all mathematicians in Year 12, further mathematicians in Year 13 and the top set in Year 11. This year the boys achieved a total of 64 Bronze, 61 Silver and 37 Gold Certificates from our 184 entries. The top result this year was achieved by Farhan Awais of Year 13, who qualified for the follow-up British Mathematical Olympiad Round 1. A further 36 boys qualified for the (slightly easier) Senior Kangaroo. In the Kangaroo, Khalif Khan, Suleiman Mahmood and Hassan Malik (Year 13), Louis Bailey, Ishaan Dubey, Yuvan Marimuthu, Chude Ndozi, Samuel Nouhov and Amogh Shetty (Year 12), Adam Bora, Karan Kukreja, Kenny Lau, Raphael Mahgerefteh, Malachi Powell and Joel Skaria (Year 11) all did very well to achieve Certificates of Merit. In the Olympiad, Farhan achieved full marks on the all three of the questions he attempted (out of six); this is a highly commendable result, and earned him a Certificate of Distinction. Special mention should also be given to Simon Liu (Year 12) who was given a discretionary

entry for the Olympiad, and scored highly enough to achieve a Certificate of Merit.

The Intermediate Maths Challenge

The spring term brought with it the Intermediate Challenge. This is also the largest, with over 350 entries, meaning a great deal of planning and preparation is necessary for the day to run smoothly. When the results arrived, the students had achieved 74 Bronze Certificates, 106 Silvers and 78 Golds. Three students did extremely well, qualifying for one of three follow-up Intermediate Mathematical Olympiads; in addition, an impressive 62 students qualified for one of two colours of Kangaroo, 18 of whom got Merits. In the Grey Kangaroo aimed at Year 9, Sean Li and Anson Tang were especially successful, while on the Pink Kangaroo aimed at the older years, Adam Bora, Raphael Mahgerefteh, Karan Kukreja, Sampanna Raut, Ayan Butt, Joel Skaria, Yousif Elashry, Kenny Lau, Harvey Murray and Aditya Prasad did particularly well. In the Maclaurin Olympiad (for Year 11), Shrikannan Selvaganapathy performed



strongly enough to gain a Certificate of Merit. In the Hamilton Olympiad (aimed at Year 10), Pramath Murthy scored highly enough to achieve a Certificate of Merit. Shubham Kumar went one better, achieving a Certificate of Distinction. Well done to all!

Year 10 Maths Feast – Taheen Islam

Eight of our students participated in something called the Year 10 Maths Feast, described below by Taheen Islam.

Held in the Spring Term, eight students were called upon to participate with other schools in the annual *non-competitive* Maths Feast. We were separated into two teams (NOT split by ability), with team A as Ishan Gautam, Shubham Kumar, Alexander Hopkins and Vrishank Battu, and team B as Amen Tomas, Taheen Islam, Adwaya Gupta and Pramath Murthy. Upon arrival, we were met with the obligatory maths word search starter, which posed no hassle to either team, and so the challenge was underway.

The Maths Feast consisted of four rounds, each designed to challenge, stretch and extend the participants' mathematical knowledge. The first round involved ordering a set of numbers, but with a twist. These numbers were all in different forms, which could include fractions, surds and mathematical expressions, designed to make comparing the numbers much more difficult, and of course, calculators were not permitted. We were also given an upper and lower bound for the set, meaning that not all numbers would be included in the final ordering, with points being awarded for correctly identifying the anomalous numbers. Both teams seemed to fare quite well with this as it was the first round, but it was clear the pressure was on.

The second round was a race against the clock to answer a set of true/false questions, testing the teams' organisation to split up the questions effectively to each member's strengths. The style of the questions meant the correct approach wasn't always obvious from the outset, meaning the students had to engage their problem solving and logic skills in order to tackle these together. As with any team challenge, this inevitably led to lots of discussion argument within the teams, while our

sixth form helpers knowingly watched us dispute amongst ourselves but were unable to say anything. Both teams had quite some trouble agreeing on their answers, which of course lost us marks in the end, but a really good effort was given for the most part.

The third round took some time to explain, giving us ten minutes to read and understand the geometrical algorithm presented to us which was to be used to estimate a value of π . This involved splitting a circle into progressively smaller sections and using Pythagoras and trigonometry to create an iterative formula for the true value of π . Marks were awarded for each value as well as the intermediary working out values. This was a relatively straightforward round; in essence, it simply involved following the instructions step-by-step, but the steps were lengthy which did still leave room to slip up.

The final round was the infamous relay round, a true test of teamwork and strategy, splitting each team into pairs who must work in isolation from the other pair. Information in the following questions was dependent on previous answers from the other pair, which created a hectic environment where some pairs were left sitting doing nothing waiting for other pairs frantically working on a problem they couldn't begin to make headway on. Because of these bottlenecks this was the most time-pressured round for the teams, and while neither team quite managed to finish every question, we pulled through and completed the Maths Feast, eagerly awaiting the results.

To our disappointment, final rankings were not disclosed, as the Maths Feast was *non-competitive*, instead leaving us to be content with



certificates of participation and our complimentary snacks and drinks. The day off-timetable was greatly appreciated however, so a big thanks go to all the students who took part, Victoria Ark Academy for hosting the event, and of course Mr Dowling for making this all possible for us.

The Junior Maths Challenge

The Junior Maths Challenge was the challenge of the summer term, and once again, we were very pleased with the results. The boys amassed a total of 58 Bronze Certificates, 85 Silvers, and 62 Golds. Of these, three students qualified for the Junior Olympiad, and a further 41 boys qualified for the Junior Kangaroo. The Kangaroo (being multiple-choice) is relatively quick and easy to mark. Eleven of our students achieved Merits: Yasin Elashry, Esa Butt, Tony Zhou, Miqdad Atta-Ur-Rasul, Lucas Evans, Xander Davis, Luka Segas-Afridi and Jermaine Tulloch (Year 8), Karim Berair, Henry Bloomer and Ben Wrangles (Year 7). The Olympiad took slightly longer to mark: Aswin Cheeroth (Year 8) managed to achieve a Certificate of Merit; Daniel Adeyemi and Amogh Prasad (both Year 8) scored close to full marks on four out of the six questions which required full solutions, earning themselves Certificates of Distinction in the process.

South Area Network Maths Challenge – Anson Tang

We also entered the South Area Network Team Maths Challenge, which is described below by Anson Tang.

During the Summer term, I and five other students from Year 9 attended a maths challenge competition at Camp Hill Girls. We spent two weeks practicing for this challenge every lunchtime with the help of Mr Li and Ms Gore, refining our maths skills with challenges from previous years and in the end, we were all quite confident that we could do very well in the competition.

On the day of the challenge, we left school after break and headed to the Girl's school to compete with several other schools from the Birmingham area. The challenge consisted of four rounds, testing our group of six in different areas of maths such as problem solving, speed and cryptography.

We were quite confident in most areas, and were able to complete them well before the time limit, however the cryptography task was really challenging for us as it was not something that we had practiced before. By persevering, we did eventually work out how to decode the message, but we unfortunately ran out of time to complete it.

Although we unfortunately came second to Camp Hill Girls, barely losing due to our lack of knowledge in cryptography, overall it was still a real learning experience for everyone and we all had lots of fun. I am very proud of us and what we achieved, and personally I learnt a lot about cryptography and teamwork that day, and I think it will serve as an important memory for everyone who participated the event. We are all looking forward to more events in the future!

Well done to *all* of our entrants across all of the different challenges this year!

■ DJT



A Letter to Camp Hill from a German Perspective

Dear all,

We are Mara-Hélène Müller and Lena Pasemann. We are two German guest teachers currently working on our undergraduate degrees. Mara studies English and History with teacher training at the University of Koblenz, while Lena studies German and Economics with teacher training at the University of Magdeburg.

Partnered with the University of Birmingham and the IGES (Institute for German and European Studies), we visited Camp Hill as part of the project *Teaching German in a Transcultural World*. Within this project, a few German university students, who are currently undertaking teacher training, were given the opportunity for a four-week School Placement in the West Midlands. Thus, we were assigned Camp Hill School for Boys.

Our tasks at Camp Hill included not only the observation of lessons but also German pronunciation practice with Year 7-12 students, as well as assisting teachers. The pronunciation practice was especially beneficial for the students,

teachers and us alike. To us it was particularly valuable because we are both aspiring language teachers and here, we get to experience what it is like to teach pupils a foreign language, namely German.

We are very impressed, however, with the fluency and accuracy we encountered with most students. Most of the time, the errors we had to correct were minor.

The most striking differences that we noticed about the school systems in the UK and Germany were first and foremost the school uniforms, obviously. To add to that, students at Camp Hill can choose between a much wider range of courses than we are used to. Also, at this school a much more advanced level of proficiency is expected from both the teachers and the students. Furthermore, students at Camp Hill are very respectful and disciplined. However, we also noticed that the English school system can be quite expensive, whereas education is freely accessible in Germany. It is very nice to see though that Camp Hill

students get to be part of this school due to their intelligence rather than their financial stability.

We particularly enjoyed the conversation with the Camp Hill boys, the opportunity to talk about Germany and the differences between England and Germany, especially in regard to the different school systems. The warm-hearted welcome from the staff surprised us and we will forever remember this team as a competent, caring, and professional one.

We are glad and grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of something this big and influential. It is with great humility that we hope to have made an impact on the students in the same way they have on us. After this school placement, particularly in our future careers as teachers in Germany, we will look back fondly on the memories we have shared not only with the staff but also with the students at Camp Hill School. Thank you for having us, it was an honour.

■ Mara-Hélène Müller and Lena Pasemann.

The Business Language Champions' Event

On Monday 30th of January, we (Sreevidya Somayajula, Ismail Rahman and Lily Gambin) travelled to St. Paul's School for Girls to take part in the Business Language Champions' (BLC) Big International Issue event, along with several other schools from around the UK. As A-Level German students we were keen to test and develop our skills, so much so that we arrived first - an hour earlier before the event started. Some call it poor planning, we call it zealous determination.

To start, all the students were divided into country-themed groups: four French and five Spanish. We were split amongst two German-speaking countries - Germany and Austria - alongside participants from other schools. The overall task for the day was to come up with a hypothetical initiative to be presented to a model UN of sorts in the team's chosen language, with two members of each team acting as interpreters into

English. This was done with some help from the language teachers who accompanied the students, alongside the BLC staff present.

The first half of the day was spent coming up with the initiative, creating an action plan and writing a draft resolution for the model UN, alongside workshops presented by BLC staff and a keynote talk from Belén Bueso Ríos, head of the Language Resource Centre at Amnesty International.

After a break for lunch, the French and German teams presented their initiatives to one another, whilst the Spanish teams did the same amongst themselves. After this first round, each team cast a vote for who they would most like to see participate in a final round, leading to the German and Argentine teams advancing to a head-to-head, wherein they each presented their initiative to the whole group of around eighty people. Sadly,

Argentina won the popular vote, but Germany still triumphed on the staff vote for the best group throughout the day, with both Ismail and Lily taking home a certificate and a book - although Sree did get chocolates, so we know who the real winner was. Both the Austrian and German teams received glowing feedback from the organisers after the event.

Overall, not only did we learn a lot about how languages can be used in real life, but also made new friends with people all over the UK. Special thanks to Mrs Wells for organising such a valuable event, and the nice St Paul's student who was our tour guide for the entire experience.

■ Lily Gambin, Ismail Rehman and Sreevidya Somayajula

Year 9 Business Languages Day

Year 9 Business Language Day was a spectacular and enjoyable day for all of the year group due to the great presentations and talks.

At the start of the day, we had extremely funny talks from older students talking about the languages in school and how learning languages can be a special and essential skill needed for university applications and going abroad. Afterwards we had talks from the language assistants, who talked about where languages took them and how languages can help you in different countries. Also, they mentioned how essential it is to understand languages, as Google Translate is severely unreliable!

Next, we went to the rooms of our selected language's teacher and discussed our project to launch a new, healthy cereal bar on to the French market. As a group we had to make an advertisement, a poster, a rap and a logo. We also wrote a script for the presentation. We had lots of help from Mrs Balkham and Justine, the French FLA,

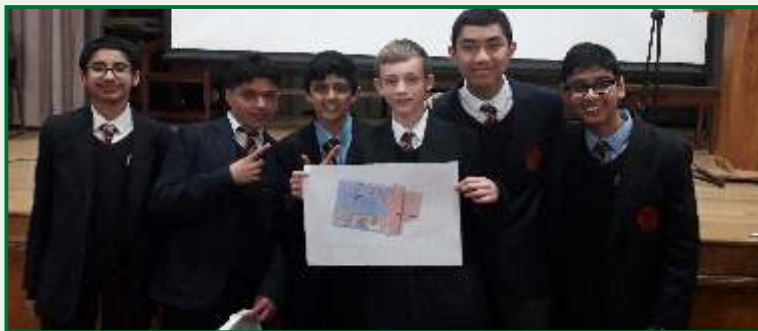
in terms of the French.

In the afternoon, it was time to show our product to Mrs Balkham and the class and we proceeded to the next round in the hall due to a solid performance from all of our team. We had extremely tough competition but there could only be one winner. Coco Crunch!

As a whole, Business Language Day was

a very enjoyable day for all with very good activities. This day was not only fantastic, but full of learning and advice. To conclude, I would like to thank all the MFL teachers for organising this event and making it so enjoyable and memorable.

■ Saif Babar



GCHQ Challenge

Early in August 2022, the GCHQ launched a new competition for Year 9 students across the UK - a new initiative, 'The National Language Challenge'. During late October, notices were posted on Google Classroom about this competition which convinced us to take on this challenge as a team. All four of us took up the hardship of attending daily calls, burning the midnight oil racking our brains out to try and win the chance to visit the GCHQ headquarters.

Our team consisted of four intrepid linguists - Affan Aamir, Adnan Lohawala, Levi Dandy and Sathya Vaidyanathan. Before the event officially started, on a late Sunday evening, the team pondered over a zoom call trying to decipher the format of the event and decided we were ready to give this challenge our best effort.

At 8am on Monday the 7th of November, the competition officially opened. We knew the week ahead was going to be strenuous: managing routine school work during the day, then homework and extracurricular activities in the evening, along with working on solving the puzzles in the competition. However, we were quite excited and enthusiastic about taking part in this challenge.

There were 64 challenges and 8435 points in total up for grabs. All the challenges were of varying levels of difficulty- 23 easy, 17 medium, 15 hard and 9 extreme. The competition was aimed to introduce us to different languages and to improve our skills in logical thinking. The aim was to capture a 'Flag' - a coded message in a different

language, which then needed to be translated for full credit.

A variety of different languages were incorporated - some of these were languages that are commonly taught in schools - French, German, Spanish and Mandarin, as well as very obscure ones - Amharic (Ethiopian), Malay and French slang! To make it even more challenging, there was Binary, Morse Code, Braille and several made up languages such as stone tablet drawings and number systems in base 5. There was even lip reading to decipher!

By the end of the first day, we had solved about 40% of the challenges, and had amassed 2500 points. We knew that the harder ones were coming, but did not let that deter us. Our brains were already fried by the second day and we only managed to solve four challenges, however, we had some breakthroughs on solving a few others and decided to go back at it with a fresh mind the next day.

Wednesday and Thursday were by far our most productive days. We were steadily climbing up the leader board which was a boost to our morale, but unfortunately, or possibly for the better, the competition organisers decided to disable the access to the leader board for students and the teachers as well, so teams could pull out all the stops to win. We knew that we had to up our game at this point. Concerts and after school activities had interfered with our progress up until Wednesday, and we had got up to 64% completion of challenges, as well as 4500 points. On Thursday,

we had gathered another 2600 points, bringing us up to 7100 points.

By Thursday night, we had completed 58/64 challenges and only had Friday remaining to get the rest done. We got one challenge done in the morning and another at lunchtime, leaving us with four remaining to do in the one hour before the competition closed at 5pm. Tensions were high as we were racing against time fervently trying every possible combination for solving the problems - abandoning and going back to them constantly. We had almost solved two others, making use of the hints - and just as we were about to hit submit on a final answer for a question, the time ran out, stripping us of 80 points.

At the end of the competition, we had successfully solved 60/64 challenges and had raked in an amazing 7435 points, ranking 33rd in the country out of 2000 entrants - considering that other schools gave their students time off from lessons the entire week to take part in this competition, we felt we had done pretty well and this was a great score.

The competition was a thrilling experience and other teams in our form enjoyed taking part in it too. Lots of new skills were learnt along the way. It was a great week, and regardless of the result, we had had loads of fun.

■ Sathya Vaidyanathan, Affan Aamir, Levi Dandy, Adnan Lohawala

Year 8's German Exchange

Wednesday 22nd to Tuesday 28th of March saw Year 8's German Exchange take place. During school times, the exchange students went on trips in and around Birmingham, and spent the rest of the day and weekends with their host families. Their day trips were to Warwick Castle, Coventry Cathedral, Cadbury World and a walking tour of Birmingham. They also had the chance to visit the shops and buy some souvenirs.

Also, on Thursday the 23rd, we (Nikhil and Yusuf) brought along our German exchange partners to Junior House Quiz, and we (Beaufort team 2) won! A student, Rehan, thought it very exciting as he had never done a House event in school; they don't have them at his school.

Some activities we did at home included

playing card games, watching a Benedict Cumberbatch film, going to a restaurant, playing video games, and going to a football game.

On the train to the game, my dad recounted the time he went to watch England beat Germany 5 - 1 in Munich... and lost his voice from singing so much!

They thoroughly enjoyed the experience of learning about the culture and customs of living in Birmingham. They loved having an insight into what we like to do.

The exchange students, from the *Schule am Ried* in Frankfurt were very happy with the trip and the Year 8s taking part look forward to visiting Frankfurt next October.

■ Yusuf Sultan-Qurayshi and Nikhil Gilliam



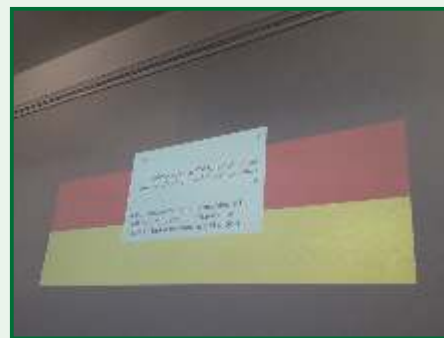
Kuchen



On Thursday 8 December, Year 7 Germanists enjoyed an afternoon of traditional cake and biscuits, served by a team of efficient

helpers from Year 10.

Cake and coffee are a big tradition in Germany, known as *Kaffee und Kuchen*, where



friends and family meet up to enjoy sweet treats. Students were given both *Stollen* and *Lebkuchen*. *Stollen* had a sweet fruit taste, quite like cake, even though it is actually a kind of bread. Some *heisse Schokolade* (hot chocolate) and *Orangensaft* (orange juice) in very fancy glasses sweetened the deal. Our favourite part of the whole thing was probably trying the *Stollen*, as it was a whole new taste. The experience really opened our eyes to different foods in German culture.

But the cakes were just the tip of the iceberg. After we had eaten, two A'Level students studying German came to explain why languages are so important. As we were all munching on a gingery *Lebkuchen* and sipping at our orange juice, they made us laugh by showing some examples of something we're all guilty of – bad translations using Google. The complex words they used had us all reaching for our *Vokabelhefte* (vocabulary books).

We would like to thank everybody who helped organise the afternoon and we hope everyone had as much fun as we did. *Auf Wiedersehen!*

■ Abbas Rizvi and Xai Sandhu

UK Trips

A Trip to Warwick University

Back in April 2023, we were lucky enough to get a visit from Helmut Schmitz, Professor of German at the University of Warwick's School of Modern Languages and Cultures. Seeing as he published a monograph on Representations of National Socialism in post-1990 German fiction, there aren't many people available with a more expert knowledge on the historical and social context of the book we are studying for A-level German. We knew that he would be able to tell us virtually anything we wanted to know as well as things we did not even know that we didn't know. During our lesson, he gave us an in-depth talk regarding all the ways in which 'Der Vorleser' could be connected to post-war German society, and its place in historical German literature.

There were three key aspects that Mr Schmitz explored through his presentation: German literature through the 70s and 80s; historical backdrop at the time the novel took place, and Hanna & Michael's (who are the main characters) relationship. 1970s Germany- both East and West- was a time of great reflection and thought. This was

due to the gradual decline of the parent generation- the ones who were alive and made decisions during the time of the Nazi regime. Autobiographies were published by the children of these people in order to process and work through identity issues: what am I when my parents were Nazis? These are called "Vaterromane" and represent the unspoken words that were not said between parent and child.

The second topic was contemporary issues, particularly the student movements and power at the time. After the Second World War, the gap between generations grew more and more stark and divisive. The students were antiauthoritarian, actively politically-left aligned, and were keen to dispel the older generation who were in positions of power, some of whom were Nazi sympathisers. They were called the Ghosts of the Third Reich. This led to the demonisation of the youth in the media, which further inflamed the generation divide. This culminated in protests with slogans such as "Unter den Talaren. Muff von Tausend Jahren", or "Under the gowns. Muff of a thousand years." The flashpoint was on 2nd June

1967 where clashes between students and police led to the fatal shooting of Benno Ohnesorg.

The final topic that was explored was the complex relationship between Hanna and Michael, if one can even call it a relationship. It is structured more as a power play rather than a fulfilling relationship. However, what was particularly interesting were the comparisons between the relationship with Hanna and Michael, and Hitler and the public. Both Hitler and Hanna are portrayed as people with absolute power while Michael and the public are victims of the authority figure. This interpretation naturally has a lot of ethical and moral issues to consider.

At the end, there was an opportunity for us to ask questions or comment on the content of the lecture. At first, we all stared at each other in awkward silence as no one was willing to be the first one to raise their hand. However, Lily was the brave soul who broke the ice with her first question, and from there, we transitioned into an intriguing discussion and debate about the various themes in "Der Vorleser".

Some of the themes we discussed included abuse, trauma, and the 'Second Guilt'. There was also an interesting point raised about how problematic and controversial it is that Schlink's book could be interpreted as trying to equate the trauma of the 'Second Generation' Germans as 'victims' to the very real and tangible victims of the Holocaust: the Jewish people; the Sinti, Roma, and other ethnic minorities; handicapped people, and the LGBTQ+ community.

We concluded that there are many loose threads in 'Der Vorleser' that are never tied up neatly, and Bernhard Schlink attempts to cover too many themes for which there are no short and easy explanations. This is known as overdetermination, where there is excessive ambiguity.

To conclude, we had a very educational visit, with some people writing up to five sides of A4 worth of notes, as well as getting a plethora of external reading we could do. We broached some

very thought-provoking and interesting topics, and are now all much more confident with our understanding of 'Der Vorleser' as an integral part of German literary history, and as a method of understanding the past, as opposed to just as a simple novel. We'd like to give a big thank you to Professor Schmitz, and to Frau Wells for organising it!

■ *Ismail Rahman, Sree Somayajula, Lily Gamblin*

Year 8 and Year 10 residential trip to North Wales

In June 2023, after coming back from an enjoyable half term and with exams behind us, Year 8 and Year 10 took a spectacular trip to the Conway Centre in Anglesey, North Wales. There was a lot of anticipation leading up to the trip as we all knew that it would be a week with no phones or online games, but it would be fair to say that we all ended up being pleasantly surprised.

We started off with a tedious three-hour coach ride to Cwm Idwal where we got our first breath of fresh air in Wales. It was here that we ate our lunch and learned a little bit about how valleys were formed. Once we were done with our food, we continued by travelling on to the Conway centre.

Upon arrival, we were taken aback by the building for it appeared to be formidable and intimidating, but we could not be more wrong. This really goes to show that you do not judge a book by its cover as the interior of the building was surprisingly welcoming.

We were told, almost at once, that we needed to dress our beds. This appeared to be a challenge for certain members of the year group as they ended up taking ages to complete this seemingly easy task. This was followed by a tour of the centre and then dinner. Many were dreading the moment they would have to sit down and eat their food as they were unsure about the type of foods that would be served to them, but the initial meal of fish and chips raised few objections.

After finishing our meal, we had the opportunity to partake in one of the centre's many enjoyable activities. There were many different staff who ensured that we had a fun time doing whatever it was we were to do whether it was mountain biking, raft building, high ropes and so much more. The activities that evening were very enjoyable and we were lucky to have the Conway staff there to help.

Next came the time for us to head to bed. It was not in any of our interests to go to sleep anytime soon but we were sent to bed all the same and with frequent checks from the teachers, we had little choice but to settle down and go to sleep.

We were given a sudden awakening at around 7:50 by Dr Page and his bagpipes and at around 8:30 we headed to the main hall for breakfast where everyone was thrilled with the variety of food to start the day off. Within our groups, we spent the morning kayaking, stand up paddle boarding,

testing ourselves on the Via Ferrata course and much more. After a few hours of activities, it was time for lunch, much to the excitement of our hungry stomachs.

In the afternoon, half of the groups took the trek up to Aber Falls, approximately a four km walk where we enjoyed taking in our surroundings and the cattle around us. Once we actually got to the waterfall, we set up on some rocks and eagerly watched Mr Dowling scale down the slight cliff into the pool of water at the bottom. The waterfall itself was vast to say the least, splashing us as it struck the rocks below. The other half of the groups enjoyed an afternoon of playing sport and board games with the teachers where we saw Mr Watkin's and Mr Rudd's competitive sides flourish in a 'teachers versus students' football match.

After an afternoon in the sun, we arrived back at the Conway centre's main hall for dinner, which to our delight was chicken burger and chips. Once we had eaten, we were allowed to go to the tuck shop on site where a queue of around thirty boys waited patiently. After a night of football, rugby, cricket and even frisbee we settled down for the night in our dorms ready for the next day.

As this was our last full day at the Conway centre we were raring to go. We had three activities per group lined up for the day with the standout being around half of us in the Menai Strait for the night session after dinner. We enjoyed various water activities like canoeing and kayaking whilst being surrounded by lion's mane and compass and barrel jellyfishes. After another exhilarating day, the previous night's antics weren't replicated as everyone was exhausted, meaning we got a good rest and were energised, ready for the three-hour journey back to Camp Hill.

A big thank you to all the staff that made this trip happen. We thoroughly enjoyed the trip to the Conway Centre, and made memories that will stay with us forever.

■ *Seb Robotham and Barachel Ankrah*



Ecton Mine

On a wet Tuesday morning in June, two minibuses full of Year 12s set off for a day trip to the historic Ecton Copper Mine in the Peak District National Park. Once at the mine, we took a walk up the hills near the area thus seeing some of the important features of the mining landscape in the area, such as old shafts and the orchids on Ecton Hill, some of which are particularly rare. We then continued to look at the building that once housed one of Matthew Boulton's steam engines, while trying to navigate around the cowpats (which some of us did slightly more successfully than others!)

After a well-deserved break for lunch the groups took it in turns at three activities including a tour of the mine, some chemical analysis of ores and, in many ways more excitingly, making our own black powder. The tour of the mine

provided a great insight into what life was like for those who worked extracting the ores in the area and we discovered what true darkness was really like – despite banging my head a few times (they clearly didn't think about people of my height) this was a great part of the day.

Luckily, by the afternoon the rain had subsided allowing us all to visit the outdoor classroom to see our black powder detonated, which was rather enjoyable.

In conclusion, the trip provided an amazing introduction to transition metals and thanks must go to the staff involved in the trip and the volunteers at the mine for the time they gave to make the day possible.

■ Joe Sullivan



Visit to Imperial War Museum on 12 January 2023

On a dark morning in January, 60 Year 9 students embarked on an eagerly anticipated visit to the Imperial War Museum. The main focus of the visit was to learn more about the Holocaust from the recently reopened exhibition which the Imperial War Museum has had for the last couple of decades.

The exhibit has taken advantage of recent scholarly research and reflections in the wider field of Holocaust studies to provide a more inclusive and reflective exhibition, looking at the experiences of individuals caught up in the horrors of the early 20th Century, in which the focus on the steps towards the 'Final Solution' are made more

pertinent. Using iPads as guides, out students were able to find out about this topic extensively in order to support their later learning in class.

Beyond this central focus for the visit, groups also had the chance to explore the galleries looking at the First and Second World Wars which also provide a focus for much of the work done in Year 9 and into GCSE studies. The focus on global conflict has been a recent focus in the improvement of these exhibits and the artefacts, interactions and stories really bring to life the scale of these events and the impact they had across all parts of the World. We were also able to visit the Ashcroft Gallery of Victoria Cross heroes, those who served

(and often died) for valour in the British and Empire forces from the mid-19th Century to the modern day. The sheer range of backgrounds and experiences of the service personnel commemorated was intriguing.

Arduous journeys to and from London could have taken their toll on the morale of the students, but all managed the long day successfully and were able to return to Birmingham very much more enlightened and informed.

■ GNH



Year 12 History trip to Durham

The penultimate week of summer term saw an intrepid host of Year 12 historians accompanied by Mr Bruten, Ms Freeman, and Dr Page boarding a minibus for the sunlit uplands of County Durham.

A busy two-day trip began with visits to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Durham Castle and Cathedral, where we received a guided tour by Professor Len Scales, a leading authority on medieval Europe and Head of the Department of History. Having spent a superb hour in the cathedral tracing the footsteps of St Cuthbert and Harry Potter, we were treated to a bespoke visit to the Norman chapel deep within Durham Castle. Not typically open to the public, the chapel is the oldest standing religious building in Durham and features superb, yet cryptic eleventh-century carvings of snakes, cats, and mermaids, giving students unique insights into the worldview of medieval artists. Day

1 concluded with a second bespoke tour of the city and university conducted by Durham alumna Ms Freeman, whose enthusiasm for brutalist architecture won over even the most ardent sceptics.

Energised by a substantial breakfast served up in Hatfield College, the morning of Day 2 saw students gathering in the hallowed corridors of Palace Green Library Special Collections Department. Under the careful watch of expert codicologists, students were able to pore over a series of original medieval books, including volumes owned by Bishop Hugh de Puiset, a central figure in their study of Angevin England, and to learn about techniques of book and document production in the twelfth century. A final treat awaited at Durham's Oriental Museum, a storehouse of fabulous treasures (some even voluntarily donated!) from across north Africa and Asia.



Following a quick, scandal-free trip to Gilesgate Sainsbury's to stock up on provisions, the group made a sharp line for the A1 slip road, revelling in camaraderie and enriched by new insights into the Angevin era. Huge thanks to Mr Bruten for driving!

■ JSP

Year 8 Trip to Birmingham Central Mosque and St Martin's Church



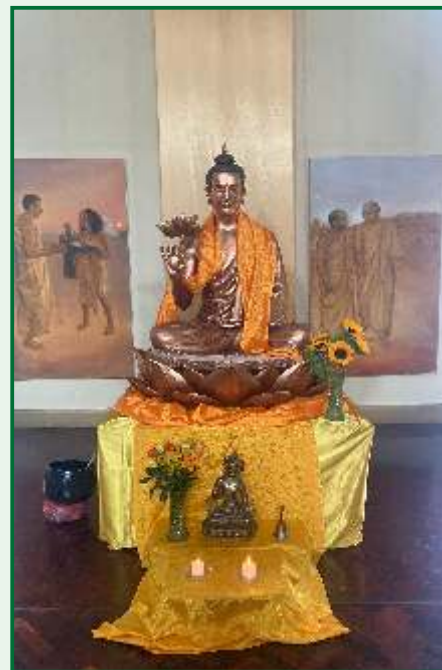
During the spring term, all of Year 8 went on a RS trip to Birmingham Central Mosque and St Martin's Church to support their learning about Islam and Christianity during RS lessons. We were given comprehensive tours and fascinating insights into how these places of worship are used. Additionally, we had the chance to see very old artefacts, with lots of details included in each talk.

At Birmingham Central Mosque, we had a tour of the whole mosque, although major renovations are taking place. After looking at models of other major mosques around the world, we learnt about the donations that allowed the Muslim community to construct the largest mosque in Birmingham and the history of the mosque with changes that were made over the years. In addition to learning about how the mosque serves the Muslim community in Birmingham, such as the minarets projecting the call to prayer and the prayer rooms themselves, we were kindly served biscuits and juice before being shown an informative overview of Islam and its teachings. This deepened our understanding of Islamic principles and provided insights into the everyday lives of Muslims in Birmingham.

St Martin's Church, also in Central Birmingham, dates back to the Victorian era, although a church has existed on the site since 1290. This meant we saw a range of artefacts stretching throughout the history of Birmingham, such as statues of the people in the family who owned the markets during the Middle Ages. In fact, a meeting here over four hundred years ago led to the founding of the King Edward VI Foundation and eventually our very own school! Afterwards, we were shown around the windows of the church, some of which were rebuilt following destruction in World War 2, showcasing various Christian narratives. The decorative images and the details were impressive - the church was much larger than I anticipated!

Lastly, I would like to say that we had a great time exploring Islam and Christianity in such depths through their respective places of worship, looking at core key beliefs and daily religious practices. Thank you to Mr Breakwell and all the other members of staff who organised the trip; it was truly enlightening!

■ Mahdi Hussein



Schools Climate Assembly Trip - October 20th 2022

After an early wake-up, a 7:15 meet and a three-hour journey, we eventually pulled up to the destination, a magnificent building in the outskirts of Sheffield. T

The day started as all British events do, with thunderstorm warnings. However, after a quick talk from the founder of the assembly and the Headmistress of the host-school, there was an expertly-selected panel, hosted by wildlife TV presenter, Megan McCubbin. The panel included Miriam Turner, Executive director of Friends of the Earth, Maxwell Ayamba, a self-proclaimed climate academic, Mikaela Loach, podcaster and writer based in Surrey and last but not least Scarlett Westbrook, the youngest policy writer in Parliamentary History.

After that incredible panel, we headed to a group activity, which focused on how to make our school more climate-friendly and, following some brilliant ideas, it was time for lunch!

After lunch, the group conversed for an hour whilst watching a documentary, as the crowd built, all waiting for one man. Chris Packham. Before he spoke, however, we got to hear from Sile Sibanda, host on BBC Radio Sheffield.

The proceedings were interrupted with the news that Liz Truss had been outlasted by a lettuce, causing thousands of young adults to erupt

into cheering. Following that it was time for the main man. And he did not disappoint. Somehow, he kept the crowd engaged and entertained whilst making sure we were all informed about some incredibly important issues that aren't often spoken of in the news, like the imports of fur and foie gras, a trade that was supposed to be banned, however reversed by Liz Truss's Government.

When that speech came to its end, we left for another smaller group activity with Scarlett Westbrook, about the importance of teaching

students and even teachers about climate change. As that concluded, so did our day in Sheffield.

Another eventful bus journey ensued and as the evening fell, we said our goodbyes and an incredibly informative day for all of us ended. Many thanks to Mr Brear, for walking half an hour in the rain to get the minibus, driving us there and organising it all!

■ Muhammad Sikandar



A Trip to Westminster

On 27 September this year, the Year 13 Politics group, alongside Camp Hill Girls' students, embarked on the long journey to visit Parliament, Whitehall and the Supreme Court.

It was a remarkable start to the day as our train left on time and we were able to arrive in Parliament Square in good time prior to our visits to the Supreme Court and the Palace of Westminster. This meant that we had the opportunity to travel up Whitehall and catch a glimpse of Downing Street though unable to see either Larry the Cat or the other incumbent of Number 10 that week (Liz Truss in the days following the politically catastrophic 'mini-budget').

Wandering to Trafalgar Square and onto The Mall where the flags were being taken down following the State Funeral, we hoped to catch a glimpse out of HM Treasury entrance of Kwazi Kwarteng, but to no avail....

Our first visit was to the Supreme Court, the seat of Highest Justice in the UK and for some overseas jurisdictions, we could look around the chambers where decisions are made on matters of Brexit legality, Proroguing Parliament and (more recently) the rights of Scotland to hold a new referendum on independence.

From there it was a short trip over Parliament Square to the Palace of Westminster, here neither the House of Commons or the House of Lords were in session – it being conference season – so we almost had the run of the place to ourselves.

We visited the Royal Chambers before proceeding to the House of Lords in its finest Burgundy and on to the Commons swathed in green and students were given the opportunity to stand at

the despatch box (for almost as long as Liz Truss) and have a Prime Ministerial moment.

The final part of the visit was to Westminster Hall, William Rufus' greatest legacy with its magnificent hammer-beam roof and saw where Queen Elizabeth II lay in state and where Charles I was sentenced to death for treason.

We then followed this with a workshop on protest and reform in Parliament before heading back to Euston Station via 55 Tufton Street, Pret a Manger and Buckingham Palace.

Catching the tube to Euston we had enough time to visit the British Library, catching sight of Magna Carta and other iconic documents before looking forward to the train back to Birmingham, only to discover that our booked train no longer existed, thank you to Avanti West Coast for bumping us onto the next train and meaning we were only an hour late getting back.

■ GNH



Year 7 Chemistry Club Big Bang Fair Trip 2023

Thursday 22nd June 2023 was an exciting day for Year 7 Chemistry Club, as it was the day of their school trip to the Big Bang Fair at the NEC. I was on the trip, and for any future year 7s reading this, trust me, you would love it too.

The first stand that me and my group visited was the EPCC where we played a fun game of sorting different coloured balls! First one person, then three people, then our entire group had a go at the same time. When our entire group did it, we noticed that we kept colliding with each other trying to sort them. This represented how more people in a team get the job done quicker, as we sorted a lot more balls compared to before, however then it does get trickier to communicate, which is why we kept colliding.

After that, my favourite part, we went to the National/Network Rail stand. You had to collect three stamps on your train ticket to win goodies including some seeds, a badge and some sweets. I, however, managed to collect a second goodie bag because I am a train nerd. I named all eleven London Underground lines and received a goodie bag just

for that.

Then we got ice-cream :)))

We then proceeded to go to, wait a minute, Camp Hill's stand?! Yes, some of our very talented Year 10s along with Mr Redshaw and Mr Cattermole had their own stand showcasing a drone our year 10s had built. Well done year 10s!

After that it was to the BBC stand. Me and my friend Lucas got to be reporters for a day with proper specialist BBC camera equipment and we even learned some Javascript after we did that! Well done BBC!

Finally, the BOSCH's stand, I got to try and race an RC toy car around a cute race track, however the remote control was very unresponsive so I only barely made it to the finish line.

It was time to go back! After a quick group photo, we made our way back onto the minibuses back to Camp Hill to be greeted with flooding in the Goldfish bowl. Thanks for reading :))

■ Omer Arshad



Annual Art Trip to The Warner Brothers Studio Tour

We were delighted this year to be able to take our Year 8 students to the magical world of Harry Potter at the studio tour in Leavesdon to share the wonderful and creative world of film and the variety of creative careers that are needed to make it happen. The students were wowed by life like models (such as the Ukrainian Ironbelly Dragon), special effects, wand duels and of course, their favourite part; Butter Beer and the giant shop at the end of the tour!

We were privileged to go behind the scenes where we had a lesson delivered specially by the Warner Brothers learning team during which they had the opportunity to see actual props used in the films up close and personal! Students were used to show how large Hagrid's trousers are, as well as seeing white card models of Hagrids' hut that were meticulously designed and planned by architects before being made into actual sets for the films. The students were incredible in getting involved in designing and making their own miniature model of their own house design, having to consider the characters and atmosphere that they want to create in their set.

After flying on broomsticks and catching the golden snitch, we wandered through the Forbidden forest where there were plenty of surprises and special effects. Hogwarts Express is always impressive with the opportunity to walk through the train and see the carriages in their different set ups. After a quick pit stop for lunch

there was time to explore the 'back lot'. This was where the students could see the Night Bus, walk across Hogwarts Bridge or even ride on Hagrid's motorbike! A new attraction for this year was Professor Sprouts Greenhouse, where shrill cries from Mandrakes could be heard.

The final part of the tour was an incredible chance to see the animatronics, the making of the creatures, prosthetics for the goblins and an incredible scene in Gringotts bank which I will leave for Zak Bora from 9C to tell you about shortly. We saw the concept art, which was truly inspiring for all of our students who are fascinated by digital art and our young aspiring architects enjoyed seeing the white card models and meticulous plans that showed every measurement and diagram for each building needed for the films.

Overall the students had a brilliant day, as did the staff and as always we were impressed with our students and their curiosity in how the films were made. We hope it may have inspired a few of them to continue the amazing film industry that we have here in the UK, whether it is as an artistic director, an architect or even a graphic designer there will always be the need for creative individuals to continue to make the magic we watch on our screens.

■ GS

The Warner Brothers Studio Tour was truly breath-taking throughout, with full scale models of places like diagonal alley and even Gringotts! They even have some of the actual props from the movies like Dobby's costume and Griphook's mask. I thought that the whole, entire tour was phenomenal and I'm super grateful to everyone who made it happen.

When I first heard about the trip, I assumed it would be a small little exhibition of clips from the movies, and not much else, but from as soon as I looked at the entrance, there were full model replicas of the giant chess pieces, HUGE wand displays, and I knew right from then that it would be an amazing time, and it definitely fulfilled that.

If I had to pick my favourite bit, it would have to be when they used a mixture of electronic and real props to make the dragon that broke out of Gringotts in the Deathly Hallows and he spits out and sprays fire all over you. Personally the level of detail required to make something like that is absolutely fantastic.

Overall, I'd say that the Warner Brothers Studio Tour was a super creative and innovative way to bring out the full 'Potterhead' in us, but also for us to see how much detail goes into making things like the sets, props, costumes, and the sheer amount of creative careers shows how fantastic the team worked behind the scenes to put it all together into some of the best movies of all time.

■ Zak Bora



Lord Mayor's Sixth Form Mega Quiz

In November we were able to enjoy the delights of Senior House Quiz, the event took place in the triple classroom after school with two teams representing each House. The occasion was completed in high spirits, with positive engagement from all competing houses.

With rounds including food and drink, TV and cinema and World Cup mascots, the

competition was able to go right to the wire with Beaufort winning overall closely followed by Howard.

Later in the month, two teams made their way over to the Great Hall at the University of Birmingham to participate in the Lord Mayor's Sixth Form Mega Quiz, a scene of past heroics. Our teams of Camp Hill Lambda (Year 13) and Camp Hill Mu

(Year 12) were both competitive and able to succeed in finishing third and fourth in a competition comprising over 30 teams.

Well done to the teams from KES and Bishop Vesey who finished in the top two places.

■ GNH



Schools Challenge

With a new online knockout format, it was a real pleasure to return to competing in the Schools Challenge this year. With both entrants in the Senior and Junior branches of the competition we had high hopes of progress through the competition.

The competition is similar to University Challenge (where you may have spotted CHB alumnus Michael Fleetwood Walker leading the way for UCL) with starters and bonuses allowing teams to accrue points.

Our senior squad of Jobe Simpson, Caleb Wilton, Ayaan Tahir and Sathya Vaidyanathan were

able to make pleasing progress in defeating Bede's School in Sussex followed by a resolute victory over local rivals Shrewsbury. Our comeuppance came in the following round where our squad were narrowly defeated by Hampton School in West London rueing the missed chances to get on the buzzer first.

The juniors were able to go even further with their ventures and, having defeated Oxford High School in their first round, it then took many weeks and two aborted fixtures before we narrowly defeated Hilden Grange School in Tonbridge, Kent to proceed.

This quiz format was reliant on both teams hearing the questions at the same time and this was made difficult by the various firewalls and bandwidth issues of the varied schools involved, as a result a hybrid format was employed where teams would take it in turns to answer starter questions. This then resulted in our junior squad of Esa Butt,

Nikhil Gilliam, Kezi Kalette, Umar Qureshi, Ahnaf Rahman and Yusuf Sultan-Qurayshi being invited to the national finals.

We travelled down to London on 19 June by train and made the walk from Euston Station through Regents Park to Primrose Hill where we could admire our venue among the £25 million townhouses and villas (a one-bedroom flat would set you back over £600,000 in these locales).

The Hall School was the location for the event and we were drawn against City of London School's B team (Daniel Radcliffe/Harry Potter was an old student).

In our quarter final we played exceptionally well - in a tiny room which could hardly fit in our reserves and assembled parents and teachers, I guess class sizes were a bit smaller in this sort of establishment - with five minutes to go, we had edged into the lead however, City of London cast their magic, got a few lucky breaks with the bonus questions and we were left to regret the missed opportunities. We then had to dust ourselves off, take a deep breath and enter the 'Plate competition' for the runners up in the quarters, only to come up against City of London A team.... Now this team were not only *head and shoulders* above us in the fixture but they were also sprinkled with celebrity parenting which I cannot *strictly* divulge. So two fixtures and two defeats but a wonderful experience for the students involved and a day where they did themselves and CHB credit.

Well done to the Perse School in Cambridge who emerged as the winners on the day. Many thanks to Ms Mackenzie for accompanying us with the trip and to all involved in making this adventure happen.

■ GNH



2023 Philosothon

If you were given a gold ring that would turn you invisible, what would you do first? Plato, a Greek Philosopher, asks whether any person would have such an iron nature as to never use the ring unjustly? Would they kill, steal... or do good? Plato proposes this thought experiment to question the essence of human nature - are humans naturally just, or unjust?

You may have never been blessed with the fulfilling experience of sitting down, and just pondering about whether nature belongs to anyone, or, if any knowledge is truly innate - unless you were part of the PhilosOthon at KES this February. Sitting round a circle with students from

many other schools, these were the types of philosophical questions that we had to discuss.

Although it may have been stressful at times, this event was an amazing experience. Each round was filled with brilliant ideas, people building off each other, thinking deeply about controversial topics, and then sharing their thoughts. It was a brilliant way of sharpening our communication and social skills - we were also judged on how well we could help others contribute, and how well we could steer the discussion towards progress in an idea.

Our team had students from Years 8 to 13, and from my perspective, I found that we did

really well. Now although KES won their own competition (to the amazement of their own team), I'm two-hundred percent certain that we would've been runners up.

On a serious note, top work from everyone in the team. We'd like to thank all the teachers who made this day so intellectually stimulating - and especially to Mr Breakwell, for building up our philosophical passion. We will emerge victorious next year!

■ Ishan Gautam

Library

Library Chronicle report

Starting the year with a bang, the House Festival offered a wonderful opportunity to host a workshop for students of all ages. The illustrator Chie Kutsuwada delivered a fascinating manga drawing session that delved into the historical influences on manga and its evolution. Have a read of Ben Morrison's article for more information.

In December, students from all the library book clubs took part in the inaugural Two Cities Book Award, organized by King Edwards School and Wolverhampton Grammar School. The shortlisted books covered a range of genres and were enjoyed across the board. We attended the award ceremony and were treated to live and virtually live talks given by the nominated authors. It was an amazing opportunity for our students to meet students from other participating schools and pose questions to the authors. We look forward to taking part again next year.

In March we celebrated World Book Day with a week of quizzes, and author visits. The illustrator and author Laura Howell led a cartoon drawing workshop for a selection of our own enthusiastic cartoonists. Students from a range of years took part and thoroughly enjoyed Laura's informative technique tips and hilarious creativity cues. Chris Bradford also joined us later in the week to talk about his Young Samurai series of books and get students involved in his hair raising ninja game (aka Squid Game!). The lengths students will go to in order to win a free book never ceases to amaze me!



Simon James Green delighted us in May with his wonderful new book, *Finn Jones was here*. Prior to the event, many of us were unfamiliar with Simon's work, but he managed to win us all over with hilarious stories from his childhood and describing his writing process. I am grateful to our local bookshop, How Brave is the Wren, for facilitating this wonderful event and we have big plans to work together again in 2023/24.

As part of our Year 7 wider reading programme, our students read and thoroughly enjoyed *Sawbones* by Catherine Johnson. It's a thrilling story set in the gruesome world of early surgery in 18th Century London. We invited Catherine in to discuss her wonderful historical fiction and run a writing workshop. Her fascinating career and research methods left us all with a list of historical sites to visit as soon as possible! You can read more about Catherine's visit in Omer Arshad's article.

Finally, to round out a great year of books club meetings, we went to the Odeon cinema to see *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* and on to Waterstones afterwards for a library stock pick. No better way to end the year!

■ A. G.



House Festival manga workshop with Chie Kutsuwada.

The House Festival Manga workshop, held in October 2022, was an entertaining and informative experience.

CHB was thrilled to welcome Chie Kutsuwada, illustrator of various mangas including *Tsunami Girl*, *The Book of Five Rings* and *Warrior Kids*.

During the workshop, we were taught how to effectively and efficiently draw manga characters and elements of the manga face.

Our last activity was piecing together what we had learned and practised to construct a

manga face— see picture below.

Since the workshop, I have been a manga convert, or so I'm told, and now will enjoy reading manga, when before I wouldn't have considered it. This workshop changed my opinion.

This workshop was an intellectual experience and was great fun to partake in.

■ Ben Morrison

8E



Catherine Johnson Creative Writing Workshop & author visit 2023

July 11th 2023 was a wonderful day for all students of Year 7 and Year 8 as Catherine Johnson - author of famous books such as *Sawbones* and the sequel, *Blade and Bone* - came to Camp Hill for an author visit and also gave a special creative workshop for some hand-picked Year 7 students.

During the workshop, she talked about some really useful and interesting techniques for writing, which could really help down the line. She

even brought some objects that we wrote a creative description about. We had little five minute intervals where we would just WRITE non-stop and we would discuss our ideas. Catherine's main message was that we all had excellent ideas. I found it really inspirational and an experience I will never forget.

After the workshop, all of Year 7 and Year 8 went down to the hall to attend the main author

visit. She talked about her book, *Sawbones* and the sequel, *Blade and Bone*. Afterwards, the people who ordered any of the books could collect them. And then it was lunchtime and everyone went out onto the fields happy, knowing they had just had a lovely experience.

■ Omer Arshad

Trips Abroad

Battelfields Trip 2023

Despatches from the Western Front Day 1

It takes a braver man to cross the Channel these days. With the fear of Bank Holiday hold-ups and interminable queues, our departure just after midnight allowed us to be one step ahead of the misery as we ventured to reach Dover by daybreak to catch the early ferry, where, among the football tours, stood our shining examples of youth on a quest to understand parts of a foreign field that would be forever England.

Our first visit was to Brandhoek on the Ypres Salient in Flanders, Belgium to gain an understanding of the siting, the arrangement and the ornamentation of First World War Cemeteries; illustrated by the story of Noel Chavasse, the only soldier to have been awarded the Victoria Cross twice during the conflict. His story of bravery in tending to the maimed and wounded and making the ultimate sacrifice along with his batman Rudd, is one of the highest heroism from a larger than life ex-Olympian. Speaking of ex-Demigods, Mr Bulloch (formerly of Camp Hill) brought the stories to life and teased out reflection and conversation among the students.

The second visit to the much larger cemetery of Lijssenthoek, which had the group split in two to experience the impact of medical change brought about by the urgency of the growing

casualty lists alongside the varied tales of those who are interred next to this former military hospital. From blood transfusions to x-rays to plastic surgery to the treatment of psychological distress, the medical practitioners were among the great heroes of medicine and the Remy Siding Casualty Clearing Station was where much of this innovation was able to take place and be refined for the future benefit of all mankind.

A welcome return to the Hooze Crater museum and cemetery meant moving from the relative calm of the western side of Ypres where the wounded could be treated to the eastern side where the close fighting between German and British units was at its fiercest, the marked difference of a cemetery half-full of unknown soldiers consolidated from all over the salient. The museum benefitted from a new mezzanine floor which commanded a fascinating view over the cemetery and it fascinated the students with its range of weapons, dioramas and contemporary first world war souvenirs (from cigarette lighters fashioned from bullets to statues of the Virgin Mary ensconced in a shell casing). The replica trenches gave an insight into the constricted nature of soldierly life under constant danger of shells, gas and raiding parties. We were also grateful to have a rest and lunch in the glorious Flemish sunshine.

Our final visit on Flanders Fields was to Essex Farm, another cemetery which was linked to medical treatment, this time an advanced dressing station. It was where John McCrae wrote his famous poem in May 1915 which popularised the poppy as a symbol of remembrance, we also paid tribute to Valentine Strudwick, a 15-year old volunteer who died in 1916 and is the youngest recorded British casualty on the western front.

Finally, beleaguered legs asked for the respite of the hotel, some hearty hot food and the chance to have a rest, a game of spirited football. A fulsome day, an unforgettable experience and readiness for rising at first light to visit the battlefield of the Somme.

Despatches from the Western Front Day 2

Christopher Clark's magisterial account of the origins of the First World War, *Sleepwalkers*, described how the statesmen of Europe blundered and miscalculated their way in turning a dispute in the Balkans into a general war. Today took us from the somnambulists to the Somme, where one of the principal architects of descent into war, saw all of his worst fears realised. In the rolling hills of Picardy, Raymond Asquith, eldest son of the British Prime Minister of the day, Herbert Asquith lies buried. In



the beautiful surroundings of Guillemont Road Cemetery, graced by birdsong, we started our second day. For Asquith Senior, he was out of office, a broken man within months of the tragedy. Status in society was no insulation to suffering and loss. For Raymond, his inscription reads: Small time, but in that small most greatly lived this star of England (Henry V).

A short journey then led us to the southern point of British involvement on the Somme at Montauban. Here a marked success led to the detachment of Liverpool and Manchester Pals advancing on the village and achieving their first day objectives. We ventured into the village to see how the landscape opened out into a horseshoe of woods which would lead to a futile effort over the coming months to drive home the advantage. This may have countered the general trend, the rest of the day reinforced the stereotype of futility and loss.

Dr Page rendered a moving account of the Devonshires, their regiment decimated on the first day of the Somme at Mansell Copse. Their trench became their final resting place. From there to Lochnagar Crater, an impressive example of the power of mines, twenty tonnes of Ammonal which created the largest crater on the Somme. Following a trip to Super-U to pick up provisions for the visit to the north of the Albert-Bapaume Road, we went to the small hamlet of Beaumont Hamel, on the face of it an easier task than Montauban to claim on July 1. Following months of bitter fighting, it was final taken in November at the end of the Somme campaign. We visited the sunken road and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders monument where we set up the trestles for a picnic, while the students also visited the recently restored Hawthorne Ridge Crater, the site of another mine made famous by the filming of the Battle of the Somme. Onwards then to Newfoundland Park, a Canadian monument to the people and communities of Britain's smallest dominion, more than any other it suffered loss as a result of actions taken on 1st July 1916, the Caribou monument has over 800 names of Newfoundlanders dead with no known grave. Not that Mr Hill was able to notice this as he was able to befriend a beautiful black Labrador whose owners were not able to take "Presley" into the sacred ground. In the spirit of sacrifice, Mr Hill embarked on a little less conversation and a little more (dog-sitting) action while its owners were able to visit. More like Newfoundland Park...

Our final visit was to Ulster Tower on the Thiepval Ridge, the best ice-cream and coffee rest stop on the Somme, a site of monumental significance for the Royal Irish Regiment, located next to the Schwaben Redoubt and the fortified village of Thiepval, where initial Irish successes were thwarted by the failure to make progress on the flanks and bring reinforcements. From a distance, we admired the Thiepval Memorial with over 70,000 names of the missing, yet another solemn reminder of the scale of sacrifice which was made in the futile pursuit of making the breakthrough.

An eventful evening of food, football and good company has rounded off a busy day. And so to bed...

Dispatches from the Western Front Day 3

Back to Wipers, as the British Expeditionary Force named the town of Ieper/Ypres in the small corner

of Belgium which remained in Allied hands. After another highly satisfying breakfast (one which opened up many questions like "why are the French so keen to have chocolate in museli" to "...is it appropriate to have a doughnut before 10.00am?") we hit the A1 North and crossed into Belgium and onto the Messines Ridge to follow in the footsteps of a certain Adolf Hitler. He had signed up to fight for the Bavarian Volunteers who were stationed in Bayernwald where we were able to visit a reconstructed trench network, concrete dugouts and mineshafts which were distinctly dank.

From the woods to the site of one of the most destructive mine explosions on the Western Front, in what is now the Pool of Peace at Spanbroekmolen (roughly translated as Tight Breeches Windmill). In an effort to make a breakthrough in 1917, the British sought to shore up the southern flank of the Ypres Salient on the Messines Ridge, a battle excellently retold by Mr Bulloch, prior to making the 'big push' further north. Part of the operation was carried out by sappers who set up mines with thousands of pounds of high explosives, most (repeat most) of which went off. This site of reflection also provided us with the opportunity to park up the bus, get the trestle table out and enjoy our picnic lunch (in spite of some interesting conversation with the local famer).

Post-prandial perambulations took us into the heart of Ypres where our students were able to do some souvenir shopping around the old heart of the city in the shadow of the historic Cloth Hall. We were most impressed as all came back on time from their wander and lots had bags with Belgian chocolates in them – maybe some of it may manage to reach home! We walked back to collect the coach outside the Menin Gate – a reflection to the fallen currently under restoration – where Dr Page was able to provide moving renditions of his laments on the bagpipes.

Onwards to the northern sector and the Battle of Passchendaele, the stereotype of mud, blood and toil. Firstly to Langemark German Cemetery, another place with associations to Hitler, who, as well as serving in the sector in 1914, visited the site on his triumphal tour to Paris in 1940. A small cemetery under the cover of the mythically significant oak trees, it casts a different aura to the other sites visited, over 10,000 buried in multiple graves and a further 40,000 in the Kameraden Grab (the Comrades Grave) where thousands taken from other cemeteries were buried in a mass grave no larger than a tennis court. The sculpture of four soldiers looking over the mass grave adds to the sombre mood.

At Vancouver Corner, a Canadian memorial, which stands tall among the flatlands of Flanders, Mr Bulloch postulated on the use of chemical warfare and how it developed from 1915 onwards, and then onto the final culmination of the

futility of war. Tyne Cot Cemetery is the largest of all the Commonwealth War Graves across the world, twelve thousand graves, nine thousand of them unidentified. In the beautiful sunshine, the white Portland stone looked stunning on the wall of the fallen without a known grave, 30,000 to add to the 50,000 plus on the Menin Gate, just from this small sector of the Western Front.

After capturing the commanding view from the raised plinth on which the sword of sacrifice stood, it was time to head back, though not before helping one of our pupils to find the inscription for their great grandfather. With a prompt return to the hotel and dinner, during which the sword of Damocles which had been hanging over Mr Rudd was lifted by virtue of Everton's victory which kept them in the Premier League, we could enjoy the evening sun and have a competitive game of football, which should hopefully make all sleep soundly prior to departure tomorrow and our long journey back to Birmingham.

Dispatches from the Western Front Day 4

Bank holidays in France are always something of a mystery, like back home, Whitsun is a national holiday, the one when it is said the Parisians rush to the Channel resorts if there is even the hint of sun. The French, it seems, are also keen to experience 'le patrimoine' where they hit the cultural and historic highlights of their region. It also seems to be when shops are randomly shut or decide that opening times are for the faint hearted. In spite of my failure to either get the pizzas I suggested from the boulangerie or the picnic top-ups from Intermarché at the time it was meant to open, we were not too



troubled in beating the rush to the Battlefields hotspots of Day 4.

A race to Arras between Mr Crutchley's car and an 18-tonne luxury coach (with added USB ports) was unsurprisingly won by the coach. Here we visited the deeply impressive Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery and Memorial to the missing; beautiful architecture and the atmosphere of an English Garden, Mr Hill led the talk on the Battle of Arras in 1917 which included some of the most significant strategic advances of the war on the Western Front, though at great cost. The memorial to the missing added another 30,000 names to those we paid our respects to on the Somme and the Ypres Salient, Mr Rudd talked about Walter Tull, professional footballer and first black officer of a regular British army company, his war record and its near extinguishment from the historical records by a conservative establishment, Mr Bulloch talked of three Camp Hill ex-students buried here and a Camp Hill airman whose name appears on the memorial to the flying aces of the war from the RFC, RNAS and RAF. The cemetery throws up lots of surprises, an unidentified Russian, Indian soldiers and a USAF airman killed in the Second World War. To add to the wonder there were two other visitors in the time we were there, an infinite improvement on previous visits, it must be the Bank Holiday vibe. Trust me, this place is an undiscovered gem.

From Arras we moved north to visit the high ground which was so vital for dominating the surrounding landscape. First to Notre-Dame de Lorette, the largest French military cemetery in World, over 40,000 are buried here, some 10,000 in individual graves and many of the unknown in seven ossuaries, one beneath a lantern which shines as a beacon across the local region of Artois. Of note was the section for Islamic soldiers of the French imperial armies, all buried together in the same section and in rows enabling the headstones to face Mecca. On the high ground alongside the cemetery is the recent memorial of the Anneau or Ring upon which the names of all soldiers, regardless of country and rank, are named in alphabetical order on panels making up the circle, just shy of 300,000 of them. As it was bank holiday the locals were out in numbers... on a parkrun.

The next great ridge of high ground was the famous Vimy Ridge, held by the Germans and commanding a view of the occupied Douai Basin, one of the most industrialised regions in France, the coal mines leaving huge spoil heaps that make the landscape seem dotted with volcanoes. Here we picnicked in full Bank Holiday fashion, setting an example to the locals of how to make the most of the weather, before heading to the Canadian monument which dominates the landscape in its blinding white stone under azure skies and upon a verdant sward. Back to the Visitor Centre, placed further back to where the 1917 front lines were, here a Canadian guide showed us the tunnels and trenches which enabled four Canadian divisions to achieve outstanding success in pushing the Germans off the ridge.

Our penultimate stop took us to Le Trou, a most beautiful, and deserted, moated cemetery outside Fromelles where we learnt about the failed Australian campaign here of July 1916. Enough time for biscuits, water top-up and an air on the bagpipes from Dr Page. Then to Neuve Chapelle, the Portuguese Cemetery where all of the 2,000 nationals who fought on the western front are buried, it was here we came across a most

spectacular thing, some locals who were visiting the great history on their doorstep on a bank holiday, we engaged in pleasant conversation and I was humbled to hear from one of them that I speak French "comme une vache espagnole" – like a Spanish cow – which I am sure is the highest accolade. Onward to the Indian Memorial next door, built in Mughal style, yet still evoking the sense of calm of British and Imperial War Cemeteries and Monuments with its bright white stone and manicured lawns and flowerbeds. It was students turn to impress with their understanding of the Indian army, the religious inscriptions and imagery representing those who fought and died from Sikh, Hindu and Muslim heritage.

We then bade farewell to Mr Bulloch and Mr and Mrs Crutchley and wish to thank them for their support and help in making this trip special, and to offer our gratitude to Alistair Bulloch in particular for the knowledge and wisdom, acquired over the decades, about the sites we have visited and their pertinence to Camp Hill as a community; a labour of love, but one from which we have all benefited, as so many have over the previous years.

France has something of a reputation for fine dining, however, the fullest place we visited all day was McDonald's in Bethune, must be a Bank Holiday treat or something...

Signing off we wish to thank the students for making this an enjoyable, eventful and educational experience. Carry your learning with you and be proud to display it.

■ The Battlefields Team



Berlin Trip

On March 30th - at 4:15am - the coach arrived in the boys' playground, marking the start of our ten-hour journey to Berlin. Tensions were already high, not only because of our shared tiredness, but also Ben Hone's failed promise to bake croissants for everyone to enjoy on the coach ride to Heathrow. Overcoming the urge to lock him in the baggage compartment because of this, we set off to the airport. You would have expected this journey to have been silent. But the constant, excited chatter of people (namely me) ensured the vibe of the coach stayed high, and, unintentionally, that nobody could sleep.

Upon arrival at the airport, we exited the coach, collected our baggage and mentally prepared for security. Which was shockingly swift, despite a few searches and pat-downs. Following breakfast, yoga with Ms Freeman and a few card games, we were on the plane to our new home for the next five days.

It was evident who was afraid of flying, when he hit some turbulence toward the end of our flight. With Ms Freeman clenching the armrest of my chair, we landed in Berlin Brandenburg airport. Here, we were provided with our first taste of Germany's fit-for-purpose architecture. The building creates a feeling of weightlessness, with its glass facade that separates the roof and the passenger handling zone. As such, creating a visual link between the landside and airside whilst also being wholly functional: providing natural light and opening up the space. Architecture aside, we made our way through the airport to the carpark, where our transit to the hostel waited.

The history of Berlin is vast and can be experienced in many ways throughout the city, but it was the cityscape that I and a lot of other people (mostly the art students) found most captivating. On the coach to the hostel, we passed through a particularly brutalist section of Berlin. The brutalist movement is hallmarked by block-like forms and

raw concrete construction, often criticised for its ugliness. But, it serves as an important reminder of the effects the Cold War had upon Berlin - with architects subliminally designing fortress-esque buildings to elicit a feeling of safety.

Once we arrived at the hostel, we were given our key cards to our rooms and given time to unpack. After returning to the lobby, we were taken on a guided tour of Berlin provided by Ms Freeman who clearly shared a historical interest in the city. The city was beautiful at night, and felt much safer than the streets of Birmingham. Ms took us to multiple memorials and explained their significance, whilst also giving us time to take photos, ask questions and appreciate the magnitude of the statuary works. In my opinion, the multidisciplinary nature of this trip is what made it most enjoyable: with the History Department's keen knowledge on the historical context of the work and the Art Department's assertions on the techniques the work uses and how these relate to the context in which they were made.

Once leaving the park we were provided with some free time to explore the city and get something to eat. Of course, my group of friends headed straight to the nearest kebab house to sample the world famous German Doner. Demolishing our kebab, we headed back to the hostel for some well-deserved rest after a long day.

The next morning, we had breakfast - which consisted of meats, fruits and lots of bread - and left for the Stasi Prison. This was a rather solemn tour, but extremely enlightening to the atrocities that took place. As we walked from cell to cell, we were taught about the different methods of torture the Stasi used to obtain information and/or confessions from its prisoners. The unsettling tone of the tour was amplified by the revelation that some of the prisoners are now workers at the memorial, highlighting how recent these events happened. As much as people would like to forget the awful things that happened in the prison, it is incredibly important that this part of history is told and I am thankful that we were able to go.

After this, we were taken to the Jewish museum where we were guided around 'Paris Magnetique', an art exhibit showcasing work from Jewish artists of the School of Paris. The exhibition charted how migrant, often marginalised perspectives from the Parisian avant-garde have influenced today's understanding of Western modernist art. On show were works by famous and less-well-known artists, including Marc Chagall, Amedeo Modigliani, Chana Orloff, Sonia Delaunay and Jacques Lipchitz. School of Paris, which was begun in 1925 by the journalist and art critic André Warnod, refers to a cosmopolitan art scene that stood up to nationalist and xenophobic voices. Its



members came to Paris from the former Russian Empire, that is, from Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus, as well as from Germany and Italy, to find a new, free environment for their work. Some of them shared ideals, but above all they wanted to escape the poor living conditions in their countries of origin, where they had faced marginalisation and discrimination.

Then we were allowed to explore the permanent exhibition of the museum, 'Between the lines' which spanned an entire building. The building zigzags with its titanium-zinc façade and features underground axes, angled walls, and bare concrete 'voids'. It allows for many interpretations. For some people it brings to mind a broken Star of David; for others it is a bolt of lightning. What is shared between all is the feeling of insecurity or disorientation that you are left with upon leaving.

One of the five voids contains the 'Shalekhet' (Fallen Leaves) installation by Israeli artist Menashe Kadishman. Here, More than 10,000 faces with open mouths, cut from heavy round iron plates, cover the ground floor forcing viewers to walk across them. This places the viewer into the role of oppressor and amplifies the atmosphere of pain and loss the void exemplifies. Ultimately, this museum highlighted the harrowing events that took place during Nazi occupation of Germany. As well as the importance of art in presenting history in a way that words cannot. After an earnest day, my

group visited a nearby frozen yoghurt shop for a well-deserved treat and we headed back to the Hostel.

On our third day in Germany, it was time to visit some art galleries. First we visited the Hamburger Bahnhof, one of the world's largest and most significant collections of contemporary art. The most striking work had to be Sandra Mujinga's 'I Build My Skin with Rocks'. This piece consisted of a large black box upon which was a video screen. Mujinga looks to evolutionary adaptations of animals and specifically to the thick hide of elephants. With the piece, she examines what it means to have a skin so tough it allows one to move through the world in more affirmative ways. The combination of psychedelic visuals and haunting soundscapes both captivated and disgusted me.

The Alte Nationalgalerie felt more familiar, containing exhibits from Ancient Egypt to Classical Rome. This provided ample still life drawing opportunities for the art students and of course catered to the history students. The 'Colossal statue of Helios' was my personal favourite, exemplifying the ancient Greek ideal of male physique.

On our final day, we visited the East Side gallery. This is one of the largest open air exhibits in the world and contains some very famous artworks such as the 'Sozialistischer Bruderkuß'. After lots of photos and a wander around the nearby shopping centre, we headed to the airport. After making sure I had bought as many sweets as I could, we boarded the

plane. And, after a smoother return flight, and a coach journey of idle chatter and snoring, we made it back to school.

Overall, the Berlin trip really aided in my studies of art, but also my understanding of the important history of the city and Germany in general. Whilst it was appropriately solemn at times, I can speak on behalf of all of us when I say it was great fun. Thank you so much to Ms Smith and Ms Hodges from the Art Department and Ms Freeman and Mr Rudd from the History department for making this trip possible and providing their expert knowledge. And, another extra special thank you to Ms Smith who organised the entire trip.

■ Kien Astley



The Summer 2023 Spain trip - The Pyrenees

This year's summer trip to Spain was an absolute blast. It feels like yesterday that forty Year 10 boys perched on the grass outside the school office, waiting to board the coach. How oblivious we were of the adventure that was yet to come...

The long anticipated 24-hour coach ride began. Roads grew from familiar to foreign, the view repulsive to radiant, and our moods from sunny to snoozy. Dover's white cliffs gleamed at us, and as the ferry set sail, so did our late night antics. Encountering amiable German students, the ferry's roof became our dance floor as the competition and a dark night engulfed us. Rising to the responsibility, Vinay Bora stunned the crowd with his smooth, sturdy skills - only to be ruthlessly humbled by a formidable German opponent. The brilliance of those moments seemed to light up the night.

After a clear sail and an entertaining journey, many awoke from their slumber to a new world - the pinnacle of what we had seen so far, the Pyrenees mountain range.

Beaming, we put a tiny impression on the giant surroundings with our astonishingly small footprints. We gazed in awe at the skyline that deems us so small; great, rocky declarations of the earth's powerful gaze back, while the mountains stood sentry to the most tranquil of ink blue lakes at their feet. We were enchanted by the slopes of the mountain, a giant's slide that gives home to so much life - suddenly, we saw that each sage green bush among them is in fact a tree, and were stunned. Beneath, the vastness of the valley seized us, leaving us with a sense of feeling bigger, because we knew how small we are. Yeah, that's a taste of what it was like.

After settling in and spending the first night, it was time for our first activity - White water rafting! Paddling our way through a concoction of river rapids (with names like 'the washing machine') was an amazing experience, elevated by our breath taking surroundings. Momentarily, it felt as if no other activity would be better. Evening came, and we found out that Kayaking was. There, adrift on one of those serene lakes amongst towering slopes, made us feel free within the valley. Twenty minutes of this freedom passed before it became a necessity to capsize every kayak in sight. Desperately, the

teachers tried to control the chaos, and it was to some avail, so well done to them. But it must be said that whatever 'game' we played afterwards, (fruit salad??) was to none. Nevertheless, chaos in moderation *can* be a good thing - and so it was wonderful.

Angrily, the sun rose the following day, turning the heat up. Soon, we were canyoning - traversing the slippery rocks and plunging drops down a canyon stream. Stand up Paddle Boarding topped the afternoon. One 10-man board (with a few guys on top) lost to the power of the current and went almost beyond reach - if it wasn't for an annoyed instructor that saved lazy CHB students from their impending doom.

The late evenings in Spain were great. From quizzes, to stargazing, we tried to find every way to bend the rules and push 'bedtime'. Stars, one by one appearing in the sky, signalled the era of CHB nightlife - the disco. We were all of one mind; tribally chanting, we formed a ring where you were pushed to show off a couple moves, while the teachers idly sat in the background and supervised - a truly electric atmosphere.

Our final day of activities started off at an Adventure park, the weather as benevolent as always. After traversing a tricky (for some) high ropes course, a great, inflatable bouncy castle of joy awaited us. Frantically we bounced around like overgrown toddlers without a care in the world - racing each other on the race course, or trying to stay on your feet on that 'spinning log knockout machine thingy'.

Afternoon arrived, we visited a local village with some very steep roads. Well, forty boys raiding the supplies of the whole town - what a splendid time to be a shopkeeper. Interacting with the people in these towns was really nice - because the people were really nice! We even took pictures with a restaurant owner who served us brilliant food. As an orange effulgence began to creep over the horizon, we appreciated the peace of the evening before heading back to the hotel.

Alas, such fleeting moments eventually came to an end, and we said goodbye: to the vast landscapes, the dorms, the hotel food, the local villages (and the ice cream) and the people there

who made our trip so great. Speaking of such people, it must be said that all forty of us who tagged along are incredibly thankful to the hard work of all the staff involved on this trip. Especially to Mr Burgess, Ms Freeman, Mr Rudd and Mr Morris who not only tolerated our presence, but gave us an awesome six days. So, thank you!

■ Ishan Gautam



Ski trip 2023

This February, forty boys from Year 9 to Year 12 took a greatly anticipated seven-day trip to the esteemed ski resort of St Anton am Arlberg, in the Tyrol region of Austria. It was an exhilarating experience, giving everyone a chance to discover, or improve, their skiing prowess.

We stayed in a fantastic, family-run hotel that provided comfortable dormitories (more so for the Year 12s!), a game room (which was well-used throughout the week), and our dinner for most of the nights.

The skiing itself was an adventure for all of us. There were slopes for skiers of all abilities, and even a 'Funslope' (I believe that this is a misnomer, as I did not have 'fun' falling over multiple times on

the ski jumps – the others, however, enjoyed it considerably).

While there, we explored the full breadth of the massive resort, skiing for dozens of kilometres per day, and even went on an exciting 'ski safari' on one of our sessions. As the trip went on, everybody's skiing skills dramatically improved, thanks to our wonderful instructors. The fun went by almost without incident, as only a handful of people (myself included) got lost.

Every evening, we enjoyed activities such as quizzes (where we witnessed rampant cheating by the teachers), swimming and bowling (with a side of bouldering). We even had a pizza night at a local restaurant – and although most

people would agree that the hotel food was... very edible, we were all very grateful.

Finally, I am obliged to give a mention to the trip anthem 'Always look on the bright side of life', which accompanied every one of our coach journeys, bringing a smile to our faces every time.

A huge thank you to all of the teachers who accompanied us on the trip – Mr Bruton, Dr Lavery, Mrs Mitchell, Dr Page and Mr Brear, for helping to make this experience as enjoyable as possible.

■ *Arnav Aphale*



Chamber Concert

The first big joint concert of the year is always the Chamber Concert, which features our junior ensembles and a range of smaller groups and solos. This took place on Tuesday 8 November.

The concert featured performances by the String Orchestra, Senior Lower String Ensemble, Senior Guitar Ensemble, Saxophone Ensemble, Flute Quartet, Oboe Ensemble, Electric Guitar

Ensemble, String Quartet, Jazz Ensemble and Training Wind Band. Particular congratulations to Babar Zaffar and Ryan Vafaei, who both gave highly sensitive and moving piano solos.

In addition, there were some notable performances including *Mr Blue Sky* by the String Orchestra, *Waltzing Matilda* by the String Quartet, *Puente Nuevo* by the Senior Guitar Ensemble and *El*

Gatto Gordo by the Jazz Ensemble. The concert was just over an hour long and ended with a spirited version of *Tequila* by the Training Wind Band!

I am very grateful to all involved including our team of Visiting Music Teachers and their work preparing pupils for the evening. Congratulations to all who performed! ■ JTW

Prize Giving

Prize Giving continues to be an event when we can showcase the highest standards of musicianship among the school's solo players and chamber groups.

This year we continued in the tradition of having two musical interludes throughout the

evening. The first was our excellent CHB String Quartet (Joel Skaria – violin, Harley Hau – violin, Thomas Pitfield – viola, Rhys Jamieson – cello) who played an arrangement of *Waltzing Matilda* (arranged by Nicolas Buc) with admirable musicianship. The second interlude was provided

by Year 13 A Level student Alex Hand who played Gershwin's *The Man I Love* with impressive technical control and style. ■ JTW

Carols at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital

On Tuesday 5 December, the choir travelled to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to sing carols for the patients and visitors in the large main entrance hall.

It was a wonderful start to the festive

season and gave them the opportunity to sing some of the most well-known carols ahead of the Carol Service.

It is pleasing to note that a healthy number of students attend and they drew a large

crowd from across the hospital because of the gutsy singing!

We look forward to retaining our relationship with the hospital next year.

■ JTW

Christmas Concert

In December we held our Christmas Concert – this was the second joint event of the year with Camp Hill Girls' school.

The concert started with the Intermediate Orchestra playing Cole Porter Classics (arranged by Wagner).

In addition, the famous *Carol of the Bells* by Leontovych featured in a number of guises throughout the evening, being played by the Intermediate Orchestra and sung by CHB Choir.

The Concert Orchestra played some tricky repertoire, which included a selection of music from Christmas films and a medley on Christmas carols. Their concert also featured performances by the Wind Band, Clarinet Ensemble, Concert Band, Lower String Ensemble, Flute Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble.

The evening closed, as is traditional, with Concert Orchestra playing 'Sleigh Ride' by Leroy Anderson, and a visit from Santa!

■ JTW



Year 7 Visit to Symphony Hall



We are so fortunate to live in a city which has such a rich cultural heritage. And it is notable that the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Hall are two institutions in the city which are pillars of excellence in the music of the Western classical tradition.

We took a trip with Year 7 to Symphony Hall, where students from across the city were privileged to be able to listen to a bespoke

programme put together specifically for pupils in Key Stage 3 and played by some of the best musicians in the country.

The programme was very diverse, featuring music as disparate as the score to *Avengers: Endgame* and Brahms' Symphony No. 1. The whole of Year 7 attended – I hope that, for all, they left having been changed by a wonderful musical experience; for others, I hope that the

concert may have lit a spark within them which can be nurtured into a bright musical future.

■ JTW

Teatime Concert

The Teatime Concert is our third joint event with the Camp Hill Girls. The concert starts earlier than the other events in the year and pupils have tea beforehand.

The concert featured some of the department's larger ensembles: beginning with the Training Wind Band and ending with the String Orchestra. The Jazz Ensemble also made an

appearance, performing Herbie Hancock's *Chameleon*.

Furthermore, we were treated to a range of chamber performances including CHB String Quartet, the Senior Guitar Ensemble and the Electric Guitar Ensemble and there were also commendable solos from Clement Franklin (trumpet) and Aditya Krishna (electric guitar).

Although all performances were accomplished, I would be remiss if I did not mention an outstanding performance by the Tabla Ensemble who performed with virtuosity, expression and an excellent sense of ensemble.

■ JTW

House Music 2023

On Tuesday 25 April we held the annual House Music Competition. This is an opportunity for some of our most able musicians in each house to get together and organise a programme of music while gaining credit for their house. It was adjudicated by Mr Simon Palmer (former Head of Music) who instituted the competition!

Praise must go to all pupils who performed. There were some very impressive performances - particularly from those performing in the Senior Solo category: George Hill (piano), Sushant Shyam (piano), Caleb Wilton (piano) and Rundong Yu (violin).

The scoring was very close. In fourth place was Beaufort; Tudor and Howard shared joint second place; but Seymour emerged victorious!

■ JTW



Early in the Summer Term, we held the Senior Concert. This is a special event, as it is the last school concert for our talented Year 13 pupils. This was also our penultimate joint event with the girls' school this year.

The concert featured performances by CHB Choir, Concert Band, Concert Orchestra, Flute Ensemble, Jazz Band and the Lower String Ensemble. A particular highlight was the pupil-

directed ensembles: the Swing Band did a wonderful job of *Tank!* and another group performed Elton John's *Yellow Brick Road*. It would not be a Senior Concert without an item from the Year 13 leavers, who, for this year, entertained us with a kazoo chorus!

Though a sad event in many ways, there was undoubtedly an atmosphere of celebration as we marked so many years of happy music-making in

the school. As we lose familiar faces at events such as these, we simultaneously welcome the new generation of musicians to take the reins in leading music in the school. To those leaving us, we hope that music continues to bring them moments of joy throughout their lives and they develop a deep appreciation of the fulfilment it can bring to us all.

■ JTW

Summer Soiree

Our final joint concert with Camp Hill Girls' school, the Summer Soiree, took place on Tuesday 13 June. We were grateful for CHG agreeing to host it, as our own hall was being used for examinations.

There were some fantastic performances from some of the school's larger ensembles including *Contraption* by the Intermediate Orchestra and *September* by the Wind Band. There were also

performances from some of the school's chamber ensembles including the Electric Guitar Ensemble, Oboe Ensemble and Tabla Ensemble. A particular 'well done' must go to Xu Wang (piano) who performed Peixun's *Thunder in the Drought Season* with an outstanding level of virtuosity and musicality.

The timing of the concert posed difficulties as some pupils were involved in public

examinations. However, what really made the concert outstanding was the initiative and musicianship of some of the younger musicians who were so keen to step into major roles where older pupils could not attend. They not only carried the concert, but proved that they will be invaluable to the Music Department's ensembles in the years to come.

■ JTW

Evensong at Christ's College, Cambridge

Camp Hill Boys' Choir was fortunate enough to be able to sing evensong in Christ's College, Cambridge on Wednesday 5 July. The service included Tallis' *If Ye Love Me*, Weelkes' *Short Service*, Smith's responses and Psalm 23 by Davies. We were ably accompanied by Mr. Palmer on the organ. As the service took place towards the end of the examination season rehearsals were difficult, but the choir rose to the challenge admirably, consuming a significant amount of repertoire in a short period of time.

In addition to singing evensong, the choir was given talks by both the chaplain and the Admissions Tutor at Christ's, who talked through choral scholarships alongside standard admission to the college (and university more generally). Pupils stayed in Cambridge overnight, had a pizza dinner in the city and had the opportunity to look round Cambridge colleges the following day.

Achieving the choir tie for attending the trip was a driving force for many. In addition, we were extremely grateful for the donation of some very professional choir folders from an exceptionally kind member of AFS.

■ JTW



Pupil Successes

In addition to successes in pupil performances in all the concerts mentioned, we have had a large number of exceptional performances throughout the year in assemblies.

We started our annual calendar of performances earlier than expected this year due to the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II. I was impressed by the speed at which a string group was able to put together the National Anthem and 'Nimrod' from Elgar's *Enigma Variations* in preparation for an event marking the late queen's passing. Dr Page also gave a moving performance of *Flowers of the Forest* on the bagpipes for the event.

In addition, we have had some outstanding assembly performances throughout the year from: Caleb Wilton (piano), Joel Skaria (violin) and Hun Kang (piano), Vansh Praden (flute), Kevin Cao (piano), Kumayl Vanat (voice), Garjun Ho

(piano), Babar Zaffar (piano), Terrence Sutton (piano), Alex Hand (piano), Yuehao Zhang (piano), George Hill (piano), Josh King (piano) and Xu Wang (piano). Ibrahim Miah and Shaun Chacko also performed their own composition for guitar duet.

A special thank you must also go to Clement Franklin (trumpet) and Ben Scott (French horn) for their playing of the Last Post in our Remembrance Assembly.

Congratulations to the following pupils who successfully attained the following graded music examinations this year:

Congratulations also to pupils who have entered and passed music examinations outside of school throughout the year: **Rahul Chauhan** (Grade 6 piano), **Rishi Chauhan** (Grade 6 piano - merit), **Nicolas Hotzel Escardo** (Grade 4 piano - merit),

Vivek Gohel (Grade 5 Dhol - merit), **Kenny Lau** (Grade 6 piano - distinction), **Sampanna Raut** (Grade 8 piano - distinction), **Macca Ros-Nalugon** (Grade 6 violin - merit), **Sushant Shyam** (Grade 8 piano - merit) and **Joel Skaria** (Grade 8 piano - distinction). Particular congratulations must go to **Alex Hand** who achieved his ABRSM diploma in piano.

Finally, a particular 'well done' must go to **Caleb Wilton** and **Sampanna Raut** both of whom were accepted as Apprentices on the ORA Singers Young Composers Programme. This is a rare opportunity for which they had to fight off tough competition.

■ JTW



Benjamin Atkin	7B	ABRSM	Violin	Grade 3	
Mateusz Grzesik	7C	ABRSM	Singing	Grade 3	Merit
Shawn Sen	7H	ABRSM	Singing	Grade 3	
Isaac Williams	7K	ABRSM	Cornet	Grade 2	Merit
Zubair Ahmed	8E	TCL	Guitar	Grade 1	Merit
Lucas Evans	8E	TCL	Guitar	Grade 1	Distinction
Arish Hassan	8H	ABRSM	Flute	Grade 3	
Christopher Moore	8H	ABRSM	Clarinet	Grade 4	Merit
Basheir Said	8H	TCL	Trumpet	Grade 1	Merit
Mithun Kesavan	8K	TCL	Guitar	Grade 1	Merit
Yusuf Sultan-Qurayshi	8K	ABRSM	Violin	Grade 5	
Lemuel Adjei	9B	TCL	Trumpet	Grade 3	Merit
Musthafa Ahmed	9C	Rock School	Bass Guitar	Grade 5	Merit
Levi Dandy	9C	TCL	Classical guitar	Grade 3	Merit
Benjamin Law	9C	TCL	Trumpet	Grade 6	
Adnan Lohawala	9C	ABRSM	Singing	Grade 4	Merit
Sathya Vaidyanathan	9C	ABRSM	Flute	Grade 4	
Ryheem Miah	9E	TCL	Saxophone	Grade 1	Distinction
Hemakesh Muddha	9E	ABRSM	Flute	Grade 5	
Zane Shah	9H	TCL	Guitar	Grade 4	
Aakshat Kumar	10C	TCL	Guitar	Grade 3	Distinction
Aiden Arul	10E	ABRSM	Singing	Grade 5	
Aman Koiri	10E	TCL	Clarinet	Grade 5	
Jingxi Bai	10H	ABRSM	Violin	Grade 5	
Pramath Murthy	10H	ABRSM	Flute	ABRSM	Merit
William Lin	10M	TCL	Violin	Grade 5	Merit
Arnav Aphale	11J	ABRSM	Violin	Grade 4	
Edward Cheung	11M	TCL	French horn	Grade 2	
Zayan Khan	11M	TCL	Singing	Grade 6	
Sampanna Raut	11M	ABRSM	Singing	Grade 7	Merit
Kumayl Vanat	11S	TCL	Singing	Grade 6	
Wisteria Chatterjee	L1	TCL	Violin	Grade 6	Distinction
Sam Nouhov	L2	TCL	Jazz saxophone	Grade 6	Distinction

Senior Basketball

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Off the back of an impressive prior season with the last year 13's, the U18 basketball team was ready to take on the challenge of a new season. A veteran player, Sam Morris was able to coach us throughout our journey in taking on the matches teaching us the game and especially team play, passing the ball around, perfecting pick and rolls, drawing fouls and much more.

So, about the season, this year basketball has been somewhat successful, it has however been very enjoyable. We beat Aston convincingly in a strong all round team performance. Brian's shooting paired with Arnav's paint work was too much for Aston to handle. As a team we were coordinated and

although Aston almost made a comeback half way through the game, their attack was quickly diminished by a 3 pointer made by Simon. Kahin also played decently, shooting 1/12.

However, it is fair to say that in our first two games we were inexperienced at running the team, which is why we didn't win them. Basketball this year has been good and the weekly sessions on Thursdays have made sure we have got better and we turned around a poor start to the year.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Burgess for setting up the games we had this season and thank Sam Morris for taking it upon himself to coach us throughout the year.

■ Josh Berrow



U15 Basketball:

The Basketball season started with a match against St Georges, where unfortunately some important absences (Vidyut Tutika) required a few Year 11s, as well as many random people, to help the Y9/10 team to victory. Despite the opposition having a slightly more athletic team, we managed to pull ahead securing the comfortable 22-12 win.

The second match of the season was arguably the best and most intense match this season and was against Bishop Challoner. Filled with aggression and fiercely competitive, both teams went back and forth for a full forty minutes. However, Mr Rees' great coaching and encouragement allowed us to stay energised until the end. In the first and second quarters, Camphill - despite it being a close half - came out on top, which proved to be extremely annoying to our opposition. After the incredible pressure put up on our

defensive end from the entire team, Bishop Challenor seemed extremely frustrated. Ali Berair's contribution was noticeable and really annoyed the opposing players. After a referee's time out and some motivating words from Mr Rees, we decided to pressure the team even more. At the end of the third quarter, the scores were neck and neck, but our team was tired out. Due to our exhaustion, Bishop Challenor unfortunately pulled ahead and came out on top. We look forward to playing them again next year and hopefully with some work, Camphill will win.

The third and final match of the season was a repeat against St George where two teams A and B were selected to play against the opposition. This time, we had no important absences as the Captain (Vidyut Tutika) had returned. On the St George's team however, there were a few changes in terms of players. It seemed as if that they may

have also recruited some Y11s (who looked like grown men) to play in this match - however they all claimed to be in Y9/10.

The tip-off resulted in a St George possession, but a steal from Jesse Okunbor resulted in an early assist to Vidyut Tutika. This momentum carried through the whole game and eventually resulted in a Camphill win for the A team. The B team on the other hand was less successful and lost. This match needed a special mention for Barachel Ankrah, who ran Point Guard for the latter half of the game despite being in Y8.

Overall the basketball season ended positively with lots of passion and determination in store for next season. Basketball Colours were awarded to the Captain (Vidyut Tutika), and everyone else who wasn't in Y10: Gabriel Kalejaiye, Muawiyah Abdi, Barachel Ankrah, Bashier Said and Taijuan Sonko.

■ Vidyut Tutika.



Chess:

Chess at Camp Hill this year has been very successful. We reached all three National Finals - Team Challenge, Puzzle Problem Solving and the main Standard Play National Championships. Birmingham.

In addition, District Chess League events (BDCL) had also resumed for schools - where we came second overall, out of four events that were played, one of which was held at Camp Hill itself. Many new players played their first competitive school matches and we fielded the first proper U13 team in competitions.

The first event of the year opened with a Jamboree tournament held at Queen Mary's. After three rounds, Camp Hill A finished second, 1.5 points behind KES. And the B team came fourth, only a few points behind Aston. This would be the first of many tournaments, where we were always a few points behind KES....

The second would be the qualifier for the regional stage of the National Finals, the A team had gained automatic qualification, due to having a high combined rating, so only the B team were sent to play. They came third, achieving qualification to the regional stage - where we were the only school to have two teams in the Regional West Midlands stage.

The third Birmingham Schools League event was held at KES - in the highly popular and exciting 3+2 Blitz format. Six rounds were contested, and the A team scored five wins out of six, losing only to KES, who got six out of six. The B team were narrowly pushed out of the medals, by Warwick A+B, who scraped easy pairings after defaulting the first round, and the B team were paired against the A team in their final match.

The National Schools Regional stages were the next main parts of the calendar. The B team were paired against Solihull, and the A team against Warwick. The unique part of the National Schools is that it is run over six boards, rather than four in the regular Birmingham League events, also these are usually played in Standard Play time control, (long games) compared to short (rapid) games in other events.

The A team annihilated Warwick 5.5-0.5, and in the second round, did the same to Aston 6-0. Unfortunately, the B team's run was cut short due to a tough pairing against Solihull which went in their favour closely.

The Regional Final was held against KES - the winner would get a place at the National Finals - on a snowy Wednesday, luckily before conditions were so bad, schools were shut. After losing last year, 3.5-2.5, the stakes were high, and the energy to win was more than ever. However, history would

repeat itself. Weird openings, time trouble with the clock, and pressure to win contributed to this match, and from leading 2-0, this quickly became 3-2 to KES, and due to clever counter-play from KES, their Board 1 managed to draw their game, to repeat the scoreline from last year. Not all hope was over though, as the Repechage event was still to be played...

Camp Hill hosted the final Birmingham District Schools event the following week, where the top two teams would qualify for the 'Team Chess Challenge National Final' - in the rapid play format for four player teams. This event brought a whole load of surprises. In the end, the B team finished on top of the A team! They had two draws, with KES (who had a weakened team), and Solihull, who somehow, the A team lost to. Most importantly, we had a team in the top two, which gave us a qualification spot to the National Finals. The U13 Team also played this event this year - and came seventh out of eighteen in the U13 section.

The National finals for this were held at Imperial College London, as well as the Puzzles Finals - which we had also qualified for from online rounds. Eight of us went, and played and solved valiantly, without our full strength teams due to GCSE Speaking Exams. The 'Chess Playing Team' came eleventh of sixteen, and the puzzles fifth out of sixth. It was a tough result, but being our first time ever in these competitions, we knew we could improve for next year. An Old Boy of the School - David Yarwood, also came to watch us play

For teams who lost in the Regional Stages of the National Finals - 'Repechage' tournaments are organised across the country. Fortunately for us, Solihull was hosting one, so we entered and got ready. Even better for us, we were top seeds, ahead of Hereford Cathedral, Aston and Solihull themselves - and got stonking victories, of 5-1, 5.5-0.5 and 5-1 respectively. This gave us an easy spot to the National Finals at the end of June - the highlight of the English School Chess Calendar.

On the morning of the 29th of June, six intrepid players arrived at the Sports Hall car park, carrying their luggage, ready for what we had been preparing for the whole year. Seeded nineteenth out of twenty-six teams, it was the National Schools Finals. This year, it was to be held at Nottingham University. This well welcomed event, over two days, in the 50+10 Standard Play time control, was highly anticipated and was the main highlight everyone had been waiting for.

We left early, at around 9:40 am, and arrived at the 'Kings Meadow Campus' at around 11 am, two hours before the start of Round one. After heading to Aldi to eat lunch and grab some food, we

were back ready to play our first game. Seedings were tough in this event - we were paired against the sixth highest ranked team - Magdalen College School Oxford, a prestigious independent school in the centre of the city. We were (unfortunately, but predictably) annihilated 5.5-0.5, with one draw from Sathya, and five losses.

The second round was easier on us, where we played Altrincham Grammar for Boys, the bottom seeded team, and we calmly won 5-0.5, with 5 wins and a draw for us. Our evening third round game was heavily delayed due to technical issues in the previous rounds, and we were paired against Exeter Maths College - a 6th Form specialising in - you guessed it - Maths. We were lower seeded but knew we could put up a good fight. Taha and Kanav both gained significant advantages, and took the full point home - Taha especially after being lost in the openings. Karan got a nice draw. The score became 2.5-2.5 after all of us had finished apart from Daniel, who was on the worse side at the start. However, his opponent slipped and he took the reins, due to time issues on the clock, we couldn't convert this, and we lost 3.5-2.5.

We headed to Pizza Hut to eat dinner, and then to the accommodation at the main campus, to rest and get ready for the next day.

In the morning, we were on a wild goose chase to find breakfast, but did after a teacher from Haberdashers Aske's helped us - we were the first school there, but the last school to arrive at the venue of the chess tournament. To our surprise, we were playing KES, who with a weakened team, knew we could take the win - which we did - 5-1 to us, with two draws, and four wins - and Aditya got his first win for the team in the event.

The last round out of the five, we had two wins out of four, hoping to get three, our target. There were two schools who we thought we could play - Brighton College and Eton College, the latter which was our preference as we knew we were better. But as fate would have it, we were paired against Brighton College - much higher seeded, and better than us. All hope was not lost, but we knew it would be much harder. With their experienced players - the results quickly fell down - and it was 2-0 quickly, then Kanav got a beautiful win back, with a sacrifice which his opponent failed to defend, but then two more of us fell, and another due to time and touch move errors. So the final scoreline ended at 5-1 to them.

All players fought valiantly, and tried their best. Kanav was the man of the event for us, with four out of five points, and two amazing piece sacrifices. Karan and Daniel fought valiantly at the top, against other schools' more experienced players. Taha and Aditya in their first OTB Standard Play event scored 2.5 and 1.5 respectively, trying hard in their first time of this format.

Chess this year has been very eventful, and with a long summer ahead of us to improve and rejuvenate, we can be sure of better results in the tournaments to come.

Thank for to Mr. Rees who has made all of this possible, taking us to London, Nottingham and various other fixtures on Friday evenings.

■ Sathya Vaidyanathan.



Senior Cricket 2023

A stop start season is a fair summary of the 1st XI cricket session. Fixtures kicked off in early May only then to be hit by the examination season, which puts an ever increasing amount of pressure on the sport of cricket for our young adults. However, I'm extremely proud of the 1st XI team this Year.

The season kicked off with a comprehensive victory over Old Swinford Hospital. Camp Hill restricted OSH to 84 all out on a tricky wicket. Amogh Shetty was the stand out bowler recording figures of 4-9. In reply Camp Hill made hard work of chasing down the total. Youngsters Haaziq Wani and Hasson Soonsara stood tall to stabilise the innings. Soonsara made a valuable 22 runs, partnered by Wani would finished on 29* at the end. Camp Hill eventually winning by 4 wickets. Next up saw the 1st XI suffer a disappointing 2 wicket loss to KE Five Ways. Batting first, Camp Hill could

only muster 63 all out on a damp wicket. Captain Yuvanash Nirantharakumar stood tall with an important 23 runs. In reply Rayaana was fast and hostile taking 5-7 off his four overs to give Camp Hill a chance of victory. However, KE Five Ways held their nerve scoring the winning runs in the 17th over. The weather then played havoc with the fixture card, no less than five matches succumbed to heavy rain fall. The 1st XI did get back out on the field against a strong MCC side at the picturesque Harborne Cricket Club. Camp Hill bowled well and restricted the MCC to 235-8 declared. Old boy Owais Akram was the stand out bowler, recording figures of 15-2-73-5. A superb display of seam bowling. In reply, another old boy stood out, Abhinash Nirantharakumar batted beautifully before holding out for 67. Camp Hill gave the target a go for the most part but as the score became out of reach the middle/ lower order batted very

sensibly to settle for a draw. Camp Hill finishing on 171-8.

The final fixture of the Year was the much anticipated staff vs students' declaration game. The students batted first and were bowled out for 199 inside 23 overs. Rayaana Khan played beautifully to anchor the innings with 56. Arreb Tayyab came in at number 10 and smashed to ball to all parts for a quick fire 40. The pick of the staff bowlers were Mr Butcher and Mr Rees who both took 3 wickets off their allotted overs. In reply the staff stayed around for a bit but ultimately lost heavily. Mr Azam top scored with 70 and Mr Burgess batted resolutely with 15 to help make the score card more respectable. Congratulations to the students who were as ever a credit to the school, winning with grace and captained exceptionally well by Eesa Nadeem.

■ TJB

U15 Cricket:

After a long wait due to two cancelled matches, the U15 cricket team finally started the season, coming up against Yardley school.

Having lost the toss, Camp Hill bowled first and ran through the visitors batting line up, getting them all out for 39. This was then easily chased down by Camp Hill, with the top scorer of our batting side being Ben Hodgetts scoring 16.

The highlight of the game was an outstanding bowling performance by Nisith Fernandez, who had figures of 6-12, including a hat trick. This was backed up by some excellent bowling from Harshith Salanke, who took two wickets for just seven runs.

Our next match was at home against Five Ways. Camp Hill won the toss and elected to bat on what looked like a good batting surface. A strong start meant that we got 123 on the board in our 20 overs.

In this innings, openers Aakshat Kumar and Ishan Gautam both batted superbly to give us a good base, with Aakshat scoring an aggressive 38 which was backed up by Ishan's 19. and this good start was further reinforced by a strong performance by Vivek Gohel who got a quick 17. Towards the end of the innings, a few quick boundaries by Jai Thakur and Rithvik Bodapati helped us get to our score of 123.

In response to this, Five Ways had a very strong start, with their opener dismantling our bowling attack and taking the first two overs for 15 and 20. They continued this onslaught of

boundaries until they chased down the target with only the loss of wicket. It was a promising batting innings by Camp Hill, but the brilliance of Five Ways' batting line-up meant that we couldn't capitalise on our good start.

In our next match we came up against University of Birmingham school at home. Losing the toss in this shortened 16 over game, we got sent out to bat first. Losing our first wicket in only the second over, Camp Hill were off to a bad start. After this Vivek Gohel and Aakshat Kumar started to put their foot down. Both these batsmen scored quickly and got 30 and 20 respectively. Towards the end of the innings, a quick array of boundaries by Shubham Kumar who scored 17 helped us to get to a total of 122 runs.

UOB school had a slow start, losing steady wickets at the start of the innings. Things were looking good for Camp Hill, but then UOB school started scoring some quick runs in the middle overs, leaving them needing fourteen runs off the last over to win. But Camp Hill held their nerve and secured a close win by seven runs. Shout-outs to Aakshat Kumar and Harshith Salanke, who both bowled well to have figures of 1-19 and 1-32 in 4 overs respectively.

Our next game was against KES Stratford again at home. Having lost the toss and bowling first, we got off to a good start with Aakshat Kumar opening the bowling and removing the two opening batsmen and the Number 4 batsman in the first few overs to end up with excellent figures of 3-23. The

other end was kept well tied up by Abdul-Rahman who bowled four excellent overs giving away only nine runs. Stratford then fought back, scoring runs at a quick pace to get to a total of 140 in their 20 overs. Despite a slow start by Camp Hill, we started inching closer to the target as Aakshat Kumar and Vivek Gohel tried to quicken the pace in the middle overs, with Aakshat scoring at a quick pace with his 29 off 20 balls, helped by Vivek who got 11. After that thing started to fall apart for Camp Hill, with a few mix ups which led to unnecessary run outs. Even with the efforts of Harshith Salanke and Etik Gadiya scoring with some quick boundaries in the tail, we fell short of the target by 35 runs, only managing to post 116 before we got bowled out.

In our final league game of the season, we came up against Arden. Bowling first in this 15 over game, we had some quick breakthroughs at the start of the innings, with Ishan Gautam and Saad Ali getting some quick wickets. Camp Hill did not let Arden get away throughout the innings, taking periodic wickets, leaving them only able to score 83



runs in their 15 overs. There were some excellent bowling performances from Ishan Gautam and Vivek Gohel, who had figures of 2-3 and 2-9 respectively. Aakshat Kumar also contributed with three good catches and one wicket. Camp Hill started their innings positively, with Ishan scoring at a high pace to get 23 before getting bowled. This high tempo was maintained by Vivek, who scored 15.

It looked like it was about to get tight at the end, but Sushruth Thaminemi and Rithvik Bodapati managed to hold their nerve and guide Camp Hill to a win by 7 wickets.

Overall it was a great season by the U15s, we showed great improvement in our skills and game awareness from last year, which showed in our results. Hopefully we continue this and come back even stronger next year.

■ Aakshat Kumar



Senior Football:

This year promised to be an adventure to say the very least. With Camp Hill's very own reincarnation of Jose Mourinho in Mr Hill at the helm, and a Ron Weasley look alike as his left-hand man (Mr Maxwell), hopes were high going into the season. Fuelled with hunger and anticipation from the players, minus Hamish McGhee's seemingly constant voice of criticism, Captain Wolfgang Spyrou-Kirby, Vice Will Mackie, and self-proclaimed 'People's Captain' Jack Herbert strived to lead the team to result after result.

The season started off with a game against Handsworth, and the game started brightly for Camp Hill, with Kira Shalagin scoring an early opener before Hamish scored a great free kick to add a second before half-time. Unfortunately, the team couldn't hold onto the lead after the break, and Handsworth came back strongly to overturn the Camp Hill lead and win the game. Lapses in communication between Will Mackie and his foot meant he managed to score an own goal past Sachin Sandhu in the Camp Hill net. However, there were some encouraging signs from the performance to take into the rest of the season.

The second game of the season, against Bablake and King Henrys, would bring the team the first result of the season, coming back from 2-0 down to draw the game 2-2, with Hamish McGhee getting the first and Ali Jawad Ibrahim putting away a great finish off of his shin to get a second goal to

bring the game level.

The next few games didn't bring any positive results for Camp Hill, although drawing the second half against King's Worcester after an inspired tactical change (putting centre back Eesa Nadeem in goal) from Mr Hill is worthy of noting. But each game was competitively fought and the amount of own goals being scored was reduced, giving the team confidence that they would get the elusive win that the hard work in matches and training deserved.

After multiple games being cancelled due to strikes and poor weather, the team faced KES in the final game of the season, in what was named the 'Haseeb Derby' within the squad, in which fittingly Haseeb assured the team on the way to the fixture that Camp Hill would emerge victorious in ridiculous fashion.



The game started positively for Camp Hill with players like Jack Herbert and Wolfgang Spyrou-Kirby helping to make sure Camp Hill had control of the game and could dictate the tempo in Mr Hill's classic yet easy on the eye 4-4-2 formation. However, against the run of play, KES scored from their first attack of the game, scoring the rebound after goalkeeper Raj Gahir made a good save, putting Camp Hill 1-0 down. This didn't dent the team's spirits and some quick feet from Hamish McGhee earned a penalty, which he put away to bring the game back to 1-1 before half time.

The team was confident going into the second half and fairly soon into the half, Ali Jawad Ibrahim scored Camp Hill's second. Milan Dawson then lobbed the opposing keeper from range, proving that he was in fact **not** washed, and putting the swagger back in his step, something Year 13s had grown accustomed to over the years. Hamish McGhee got his second and Camp Hill's fourth to put the game to bed, as well as performing some dives that Bruno Fernandes would be proud of, ensuring the team's first, and a thoroughly deserved, win.

Honourable mentions throughout the season include; Sachin Sandhu snapping Jack Herbert's leg in training in an off the ball incident the day before a match, Ali Jawad Ibrahim's composed finishing all season long, Arthur Breakwell and his



willingness to get stuck in during matches, Will Mackie's masterclass versus Five Ways, and Charlie Hill's constant Man of the Match nominations from Mr Speake.

On a more serious note, the season has been an enjoyable one, despite the mixed results, and all the players put in 100% effort to work

towards the deserved win in the last game of the season. A big thank you to all members of staff involved for sticking with the team, despite the questionable defending on show, and helping provide training sessions and drills that helped us work towards the win against KES, a fine way to end the season. We all hope that Mr Hill will only grow in terms of development of his coaching career, and,

who knows, Natedog may play players in their preferred positions in the future - only time will tell.

■ *The PE Department*

U12 Football:

The squad was split into two teams, with both teams performing amazingly well, but ultimately the Wheelers Lane team finished on top.

The first two games our Camphill team played ended in a 0-0 draw, and a 3-1 thrashing from Wheelers, Huzaifa Kaleem scoring our only goal, which was scored directly from a corner.

The next two games were slightly more interesting with one team's game ending in a 0-0 draw and with Yusuf Ali narrowly missing the goal and hitting the crossbar, but be assured there were goals in the other game. After Yusuf Ali scored at close range, Benjamin Tobulevicius, who was in goal admitted to the ball crossing the line, after Zain Steers cleared it out, truly a courageous act

Returning back to Wheelers after a horrible defeat, fresh and pumped up for the second leg, our team, consisting of some new key players, was a force to be reckoned with and the team showed that right from the start. Camp Hill lost the kick-off, but all was not lost.

Seconds in, Yusuf Ali pounced onto the ball and hit a long-range rocket into the top corner. He then went on to score two more in that game to claim his hat-trick. Fadi Bouhouia and Yunis Ali also managed to score one goal each in that 5-0 game.

In the second game, however, Wheelers were a much trickier team to play against. But we fought hard and we held on to a draw until it came to penalties. Fadi, Yunus, and Yusuf stepped up to shoot-out. The same goal-scoring trio as in the previous game, both Yusuf and Fadi converted theirs into the bottom left leaving the keeper stuck to his spot. Wheelers went on to miss their second pen, and all Yunus Ali had to do was strike it home. The pressure was unreal. but as soon as he hit the ball, we knew we were victorious. Camp Hill Boys were the winners and had redeemed themselves

due to a truly fantastic penalty.

Thank you to Mr Maxwell and Mr Speake for organising these events. We had a great time and really enjoyed our time.

■ *Yusuf Ali 7K*



U15 Football 2023

After a 3-0 defeat including two own goals against Five Ways last year, the only way was up for the Y10 football team and we came into this season with a point to prove.

What a difference a year makes! We proceeded to beat Five Ways 3-0. After starting well, Reuben Howard won a penalty within the first five minutes, which Jesse Okunbor proceeded to calmly convert. The Camp Hill dominance continued throughout the first half with Reuben Howard

finishing a sublime cross from Alhasssan Al-Hashimi.

Late in the first half and early in the second half, Five Ways threatened to score, but an amazing double save from Kaaraj Chandock and a courageous defensive effort prevented the hosts from making a comeback. Victory was sealed when Zahi Ihsan tapped in a defence splitting through ball from Kailasanathan Bicrant. Vinay Bora was named man of the match for his creativity in midfield, but

Kaaraj Chandock, Kailasanathan Bicrant, Jesse Okunbor and Reuben Howard all deserve a mention for their stand out performances.

Thanks to Mr Rees and Mr Maxwell for organising this fixture. We look forward to representing Camp Hill next season as senior footballers.

■ *Ben Hodgetts*

U14 Football:

On a usual sunny Monday afternoon in Birmingham, the highly anticipated football match between Camp Hill and Five Ways kicked off at 2 pm. The excitement was palpable as the two teams took to the pitch, ready to battle it out for victory.

Five ways started the game on the front foot, immediately applying pressure on the Camp Hill defence. The early pressure paid off as the Five Ways striker found the back of the net in the tenth minute with a simple finish.

Camp Hill tried to respond quickly, and boy they couldn't have responded quick enough. Karlo Heydary picked the ball up on the edge of the box and hit a powerful strike outside the box into the top left corner. And then Camp Hill started to gain their pace as that first goal was key to the players' motivation and continued to dominate possession, until the Five Ways striker found himself open again and scored a beautiful scorpion kick from out of nowhere.

Five Ways continued to pile the pressure

on the Camp Hill defence, however with their attackers failing to convert a number of chances Camp Hill couldn't wait for that half time whistle to blow soon enough. The half time whistle blew and our players needed that manager talk the most, and boy did he do so, Mr Maxwell made a speech that was so good you would have thought Pep Guardiola was managing the Year 9 football team.

Finally the second half came and we were ready for the challenge. In no time at all Karlo picked up the ball and played a beautiful trivela pass to Adam Bashir, Adam controlled that ball and he showed his excellence with a composed finish in the bottom left corner

Now the Armanah boys started to step up their game as Adam Maflahi played a beautiful ball over the top to the wing. Next, Rudy saw his chance and burst down that wing like a young Gareth Bale and blasted the ball into the top right corner, there couldn't have been more of a deserved goal in that game.

Lemuel Adjei showed his excellent physique by not letting the Five Way's room striker to breathe, he bodied him so hard that the striker had to evacuate the field with embarrassment. This led to many more goals from the Camp Hill players allowing Reece Latif and Ben Law to get a goal and allowing Karlo Heydary and Adam Bashir to get their second of the evening.

The Camp hill players held on to their lead with all their might and finally the final whistle blew and the Camp Hill players couldn't have been more delighted.

The Camp Hill players and fans were understandably delighted with the result, while Five Ways were left to rue missed opportunities and defensive errors. It was a memorable game for Camp Hill, who will be hoping to get another game to show the quality that these students had to bring

■ *Karlo Heydary*

Handball:

The Year 8's began our handball journey at Walsall Academy, where we came away victorious and are now onto the next round where, if we won we would be going to the National Handball tournament in London!

In our first game, we came up against a very well drilled side from Walsall Academy, but the lads performed exceptionally well and we won 10-3 with top scorer Mushaf Mir, Basheir Said and Seb Robotham providing most of our goals. In addition, we were excellent defensively with the likes of Alex

Innocenti, Jiale Chen, Yehia Hamed and Barachel Ankrah establishing an integral defence, also helped by the goal-keeping of Yaseen Sahib.

In our second game, we played another strong side and powered through with a dominant 8-4 victory. Ahmed Mahfoudhi showed his attacking prowess, as well as performing brilliantly in goal, although it should be mentioned that Daniel Lo made save after save before the switch. Jason Llewellyn (the only Year 7 on the team) performed phenomenally down the wing, creating and scoring

chance after chance.

Our final game saw us come short in a very close 9-7 loss, but what we took away from that game has prepared us for the challenges that are ahead.

Overall, the team played outstandingly well, whilst showing great sportsmanship along the way and now we look forward to the next round.

The PE Department

Senior Team Hockey from a Student's Perspective

The 2022/23 Hockey season for the boys at Camp Hill was short and sweet. Most of the team from last year had left, so we were scrambling to rebuild before our first match. Furthermore, there were no Year 13s playing for us, so we had to work hard and play as a team.

Despite these factors, our first fixture was smooth sailing, seeing a decisive 4 - 0 victory over Old Swinford Hospital. A few weeks later, we performed well again, winning 5 - 0 against KE Stratford.

However, Queen Mary's had a much stronger side, and after a well fought battle the boys pulled through to come out on top - scoring a goal late into the second half. This let us close out our last game 1 - 0, resulting in a flawless season.

Notable mentions go to the year 10s Ishan Gautaum and Daniel Kippax for playing above their age group to help out; and to Vineet Rao and Amogh Shetty for holding the team together through some tougher moments.

Final thanks go to Mr Norton and Mr Watkins for organising fixtures and running training.

■ *Jonah Kippax*



U15 Hockey:

It must be said that this year, the level of hockey demonstrated by our U15 team was unforeseen. Why? From minute one of match one, I realised - this was a different team from last year. A team that had experienced hardship, failure, a team that was driven to perform better this year. The uplifting atmosphere that welcomed us upon arriving at the turf, for the first time in months, filled us with a sense of purpose - because this time, we wouldn't be shoved aside by our opponents: KES Stratford - we would provide a challenge. (last year, they beat us 6-0...)

And...Stratford were left in shock, as our passionate team quickly found our way around their players. One by one, we weaved the ball through the midfield, and by some alien force, it ended up in the handy hands of Haaziq Wani, who, for the umpteenth time, managed to fall over while in the process of scoring. Haaziq, you seriously need to learn how to hit the brakes... nevertheless, our top goal scorer this year disappointed no one (except for the opposition, of course). Enraged, Stratford suddenly bit back on the counterattack - but did NOT get past our defence. Making his debut, a special mention must be made to Enobong Nkantah, who seemed to appear out of nowhere, multiple times, to tackle Stratford's best player. That match, although we fought hard, we ended up losing 4-6. But that match was different - because we knew we were a far better side than last year.

The matches that followed were amazing. Four weeks after our narrow loss to Stratford, an incredible opportunity presented itself - Hockey Tour, 2023. After a long journey through the beautiful country landscapes, we arrived at Cockermouth school. From experience, we knew that if there was one match on tour that we had even a chance at winning, it was this one. And indeed, I instilled this sense of optimism in our players during our team talk. Within the first five minutes we passed almost professionally around to the width of the pitch where our two wingers send the ball into the D, to be heaved into the back of Cockermouth's goal by our strikers. We were one up, but they suddenly equalised. Both sides had equal counterattacks, and we frequently found ourselves running back and forth on the pitch to defend our goal. Here, our two wingers Zahi Ihsan and Dawud Irfan performed exceptionally well on the attack - leading to our second goal, a powerful flick by Aryan Kadhane. The feeling was electric. There were two minutes to go, and we had done it. We'd reversed the score from last year - this time, it was 2-1 to us. A special mention must go to Dawud - Cockermouth recognised his contribution by awarding him Man of the Match, and a very cool tie. This was the best I had ever seen our team play.

Our final match was our most gruelling yet. The first half looked promising. In fact, Mr Norton expected us to easily beat these guys. But no. Wigton hockey club managed to come back from being 2-0 down, and not only equalised, but took us off guard as they slipped through our defence, scoring another goal. The rest of the match was a fight to equalise. It was 2-3, with only twenty minutes to go and our defence and midfield fought hard to stop any more goals - with valiant efforts by

Ahmed Shabhana and Ishan Gautam to send the ball in the other direction. But sadly, the score just didn't feel like changing. I say we ended up jinxed by Mr Norton... Nevertheless, we worked as a team to create many opportunities. Even if we didn't execute them, we still performed. Those two matches were amazing, filled with great moments for all of us.

In a Nutshell, Hockey was a bright aspect of our school lives this year as it really picked up. It was hard to choose a team of 14 players from a list of 22! We performed better than last year, and learnt to work as a team. What's more, with the addition of the new Astro turf next year, our hockey skills will skyrocket. Next season is looking incredible, and as a team we're grateful to all the staff who are bringing the turf in, and to all the teachers who've made this season possible.

■ Ishan Gautam



Junior Racket Sports:

Table tennis is a sport that has grown significantly in recent years – here at Camp Hill and on the international stage. I can very much remember when Table Tennis first arose in school a few years ago and it was quite different to now.

This year's season began with enthusiasm, with many of us enhancing our skills on the tables outside. With clear potential, a few of us were drafted to play in a match in November, arranged by Mr Norton with St George's School Edgbaston. In this, we were extremely successful, scoring few to no losses. On the 29th of November, we versed SGSE again, and this time, they had proved a tougher fight, but we were still successful,

only losing a few games at the lower seeds.

Overall, these matches proved that Camp Hill could do well in table tennis – many of us had worked incredibly hard to improve our gameplay and technique and this was evident.

During the early months of 2023, there was unfortunately intermittent unfavourable weather conditions, rendering gameplay outdoors rather difficult. Nevertheless, it was still clear to see a major improvement in our play.

Around January or February, some of us were also suddenly asked to play a match against KE Aston. Unfortunately, we hadn't prepared and did not bring our bats. We did lose against

Aston, but it indicated that we needed to be ready on most days. In the future, I think we will do extremely well against them.

The last event of the Table Tennis season was House Table Tennis. There were many strong players in all houses across all years, and Howard came on top overall.

That concludes the events of the successful table tennis season so far, so for now, continue improving, be confident and enjoy the sport.

■ Alex Hopkins

Senior Racket Sports:

This badminton season has been a great learning experience for all the players, as they came back with a mix of wins and losses against other schools. The most memorable games were friendly matches against KES and Rugby, where a series of singles and doubles matches were played.

Pranoy Nishanth, Ankur Ramesha, Jingxi

Bai, Ethan Tumbos, Tom Colleran, Tristram Tse, Hassan Soonsara, Shourya Agarwal and many more, persistently battled Rugby and KES players to end both fixtures with a pretty positive finish and even more delectable match teas.

The opponents from most of the schools we've played have been very experienced and some

of the players have been very skilful and have played to a very high level. Regardless of our wins and losses, it's safe to say that our players are definitely improving and growing as a team, preparing us for the next time we play these schools and come back with even more victories!

■ The PE Team

Senior Rugby 1st XV:

The 2022/2023 rugby season started with quite possibly the biggest squad the school has seen in years and got to an excellent start with the stunning victory over KE Aston with 55 points, largely at the hands of the prolific try scorer Sam Ankrah. This was a large inspiration for the creation of the KECHB Sports Clips Tik Tok, thanks to Matt.

There are many words I could use to describe Matt's 1st team performances, unfortunately, none of them describe his ability on the field, but nevertheless, Matt you've been a true journeyman and cameraman for us and everyone is grateful for your contributions.

After the win against Aston, KES came with the first real challenge to the infamous Camp Hill blocker pattern and 1-3-3-1, with a poor first half performance from Camp Hill, Mr Burgess stormed onto the pitch to rally the troops. He started his speech as all great coaches do: "Everyone shut up and stop shouting at each other for making mistakes" followed immediately by shouting at Paul: "What the hell are you doing in those rucks?" Fearing for the repercussions of making another mistake we went on and came back with passion. And in the dying moments of the game, working it up the pitch phase by phase from our try line, we went on to complete the comeback of the season, with the side lines erupting when Somto dived over to win us the game. After this resounding victory, we went on to narrowly defeat Princethorpe although I wasn't there to bear witness, I was told it was potentially one of the most heroic defensive performances Camp Hill has ever seen.

However, the undefeated season was not to be as we suffered a tight defeat to Hereford Cathedral. Following this was a beautifully executed performance against Camp Hill RFC. Fortunately,



Burgess managed to keep his head throughout the game!

It was plain sailing after the club v school match with three successive wins over Queen Mary's, Shrewsbury and completing the double on Aston (putting a combined 108 points on them within two games).

One of the most notable performances from this string of victories was put up against Queen Mary's with Henry Feeny's return to the Firsts and his rapidly following immediate departure following a devastating RKO that would've made John Cena proud. Henry has only had a few appearances for the firsts, but I don't think it can be argued that any other player has put in a bigger hit than the one Hennes delivered.

The following four games of the season weren't the

best, however my faith that "if they'd have come to ours we would've had them" never faltered, and as Mr Burgess put it time and time again: "the scoreline didn't reflect the efforts of the boys". Despite the slight dip in results towards the end of the season battling through injury and exams, we managed to finish the season in style against Queen Mary's securing our first clean sheet with 41 points.

I want to thank you lads, this season has been unreal and I will remember captaining this squad for the rest of my life. I couldn't have asked for a better bunch of lads to play with for the last seven years and I'm going to miss this squad when it's all over. Thank you guys. Thank you also to all the senior rugby coaches for all your hard work over the season.

■ Toby Taylor



Senior Rugby Tour- Barcelona



Senior Rugby 2nd XV:

The 2021-22 2nd XV season was not kind to our scorelines. With only one win on the books, we came into this season in typical Camp Hill fashion; let's play some good games of Rugby, hope that the weather stays nice and the score lines finally reflect our efforts. Thankfully, I'm happy to report here that all those hopes have finally come to fruition.

A renewed sense of determination from fresh faces joining from both outside of and within school boosted our confidence, and allowed us to thrive as a team. The strong characters of Henry Feeney and Jack Hogan, the latter of which went on to prove his worth in the 1st XV after only one match, quickly adjusted to our squad and served as pillars of strength in the forwards. Furthermore, Christy Baiju, Gian Khara, Matthew Ransbotyn and Malachi Powell all stepped up and demonstrated their willingness to put in the work rate for a spot on such a strong team, even at the expense of some older boys.

All of this would be disregarding the bulk

of our players, Year 12. I've played with these boys long enough to know all of their strengths and weaknesses. Ask Hamish McGhee to convert a try from the edge of the pitch, and there's a reasonable chance of it going through.

As with all things however, we all had some areas for improvement. From a lack of commitment to training sessions, or tardiness before an away match, I was expecting to have to chase a number of people up this year. I was pleasantly surprised to find that everyone respected the role they had to play in our squad. Call it growing up, taking responsibility, or even just the pressure that younger years would take their position, I couldn't say, but it meant that I never had to talk to anyone about anything like that.

Playing instead to their strengths I've been delighted with the progress of many, with the likes of Prasanna Sivakumar, Arthur Breakwell, Emile Lone-Ebrahim, Chude Ndozi, and Thomas Isaac being just a few who stood out this year, though I think I'd run out of space if I were allowed

to name everyone.

We faced some tough opponents early on, with our draw at Princethorpe and loss at Alcester being a somewhat slippery start to the season, but we gained traction and continued to push on, with fixtures against Haberdashers' Abraham Darby and KES being particular highlights for myself. Not to mention the Rugby Tour to Barcelona, a great end to our season where we celebrated a win that culminated all of our hard work as a squad this year.

I am proud to say that this has been a successful and memorable year for us, both on and off the pitch. I've said it before and I'll say it again, it's been an honour to work with this squad, and I'm looking forward to next year because if we play like that again, I have no doubts that it'll be another successful year for us.

■ Matthew Holland

U12 Rugby:

I would like to start off by congratulating all the people that play for any of the Year 7 Rugby teams, you are all the future of Camp Hill rugby.

Our first taste of rugby (for most of) however got off to a rough start. With the first Saturday game ending in a complete decimation. Princethorpe walked away with a thrashing under their belt, and us feeling a little disheartened. Nevertheless, we pushed on and, in our next game, we got our first two tries thanks to our captain Kingsley Moss and Rahul Sinha against Camp Hill Rugby Club.

Now that our A team had played a few games we were getting the gist of things and in the lead up to our first tournament were desperate to play. But unfortunately due to traditional English weather the game was cancelled.

Despite this we were back in action two weeks later with a tournament at KES. We sadly came out of this with no silverware to show for our efforts, but we did get our first win of the season against KE Aston which was celebrated wildly. The next game we trekked and played for over four

hours. Despite this we got our first true win of the season thrashing Newcastle Under-Lyme with tries from Dexter Guest, myself, Rahul and Taijuan Sonko.

The next Friday we were fired up for the game against Queen Mary's Grammar School. But we may have got cocky and the fixture ended in defeat for all A, B, C and D teams with the closest to a win being a 5-10 defeat. After this performance we were beginning to think that we would never win on a Friday!

Next we were once again back in action against Haberdashers' Abraham Darby, where our streak on Saturdays carried on 35-15 with tries from myself, Omar Slatter and you guessed it, Rahul. Then the next Saturday we had a low scoring 10-10 draw against King Edward VI Five Ways School. Our next few games were cancelled or losses and we now entered our last few games.

Our first was a clash of the titans with us facing KES. Unfortunately, after taking the lead on a few occasions we lost by a try (our B team got a famous victory). Against KES the A team defence had a great game with tough tackling from Preston

Umanah and Karim Berair and some great tries from Muhammad Alderwish.

In the penultimate fixture we faced Aston again, but it was the same story as the other Fridays, a defeat. The A and D team lost but the B and C teams came out on top.

In our final game of Year 7 Rugby Union we faced Camp Hill Rugby Club. This would be a difficult task beating them. But we cruised to victory and never faltered. Our efforts showed in the scoreline as we won by three tries with Jason Llewellyn, Kingsley, Me and once again Rahul all scoring tries. This was the perfect end to a great season.

We started with nothing, but a group of boys where only one or two had played rugby beforehand, but after a rough start we kept improving and ended with a bang and I'm so glad that I could be a part of it.

Many thanks to Mr Rees, Mr Burgess, Mr Norton and Mr Morris for making it all happen.

■ *Oliver Hancock*

U14 Rugby:

To say this year's U14's rugby season was a disappointment would be... about right. The season gave us a bitter second taste of 15s rugby, with just two wins from seventeen games, ending the season with an astounding 12%-win rate, a 3% decrease from last season. With low training session turnout and four matches where we didn't even have fifteen players, you start to believe maybe there was another reason for the almost single-digit percentage win rate than simply COVID's effect in Year 7.

Negatives aside, the season started with five consecutive losses before we played Newcastle-under-Lyme School. By halftime, two tries each from Raees Latif and Lemuel Adjei, brought the score to 29-5. Continuing the momentum from the first half, great defence from forwards Dawud Husayn, and Ashton Okello, prevented us from breaking under the pressure from Newcastle, bringing Camp Hill comfortably to the season's first success, with a final score of 39-5.

Three thrashings later, we earned our second win in a closely fought tie with Prince Henry's High School. Whilst it wasn't our most amazing performance, the valiant effort from the squad was enough to bring us over the line and win 22-17.

It's such a shame that this was the last time we felt this amazing winning feeling in the season.

Three more losses followed before another heartfelt game was played out by Camp Hill. Bablake and King Henry VIII school was an

interestingly close affair, ending 25-17 to the Coventry team. Irrespective of the score line, it was quite an ugly game, with a great deal of arguments and mild conflict between the teams - and the pain of losing to our newly-found rivals was simply too hard to take.

Still, we managed to push through until tour and whilst the results over the three days were not the greatest, the experience certainly was. From watching Mr Burgess' superb drop goal at the Carlisle match to getting shouted at by the Crown and Mitre's angriest residents, the rugby tour was definitely a memorable time.

Continuing the positive tone, we moved over to Rugby Sevens, an area in which we have had past success in with a 50% win rate at U13s to boast about. However, this season brought tougher opponents in preparation for the Rosslyn Park 7s tournament at the end of March.

Overflowing with excitement, our first tournament at King's Worcester proved our immense talent, losing our first game by a single try against KES. Scoring first and only losing by five was a great improvement from the 15s result of 41-0.

The highlight of the day was the next game against Welsh side Llandovery College. After going down 12-21 in the first half, we brought ourselves back into the game with a try from Raees, seemingly too late. But, against all odds, a restart from which captain Lemuel caught himself, paired with brilliant evasive running around the Welsh side saw Camp Hill win the game 26-21 on the last play. We finished the day with three losses and one win,

losing in the Shield semi-final.

Our next tournament was the Shakespeare 7s Series at Stratford RFC. We started well with a comfortable win against KE Shakespeare School, before consequently losing 26-5 to Queen Mary's. However, we followed up this loss with an utter thrashing of our bitter rivals Bablake and King Henry VIII School, with whom we shared some "kind" words with afterwards in the changing rooms. We then received a thrashing of our own against Princethorpe College, but all in all a successful event.

And then we reached the top of the food chain. The Rosslyn Park 7s tournament, where over 1000 teams from over 300 schools all over the world face off. Our group was quite the challenge, drawing Harrow School, Collegiate, and Emmanuel School.

After a loss to Harrow to open the event, paired with terrible weather conditions, we were itching to get going in our second game against Emanuel School. After drawing first blood by a quick Lemuel try and a second blinding run from Raees, the first half ended 12-0. However, we returned to our bottling days of old in the second half conceding three tries in three minutes, losing the game 15-12. We finished bottom of our group.

A pretty unsuccessful second season of rugby for the U14s, with great potential shown and we are all looking forward to Year 10. Once again, many thanks to Mr Norton and all the coaches for the training and support throughout the season.

■ *The PE Team*

The Swimathon

In June, students from across the school came together during the day for a swimathon, raising money for NICE, the centre for movement disorders. This is a local charity doing really important work in the field of conductive education for people with neurological movement disorders.

Over the course of a cardio-heavy day, students swam a total of 4,335 lengths of the school pool, racking up a hugely impressive distance of over 108km. To put that number into context, it's about the distance from Birmingham to Nantwich, or from Camp Hill Boys to King's Heath high street and back, 50 times! The event raised £400 for NICE, and we are very grateful to everyone who donated.

Everyone that took part deserves a big round of applause, but special mention has to go to Sam Nouhov in L2, who covered 320 lengths, accounting for 8km of the grand total. I was also hugely impressed by Aadil Kipasi in 9C, who seemed to be channelling Dory from Finding Nemo in his determination to 'just keep swimming'!

Well done everyone. Same time next year!

■ DJW

SAFETY NOTICE

There must be at least 2 responsible persons present at all times when the pool is in use.

CHB SWIMATHON 2023

Year 7	YA 80	OS 66	FB 80
	SB 80	BA 46	
	ZJ 150	VN 130	TD 64
	JH 110	AA 42	WZ 72
			SO 64

Year 8	TA 150
	EM 64
	WF 72
	LR 122
	TE 182

Year 9	NS 128
	RS 110
	AB 110
	TS 101
	AR 100
	AL 50

Year 10	EG 110
	HA 160
	DB 128

TIME (SECS)	TOTAL DISTANCE (M)	AVERAGE DISTANCE (M)
Y7 1024	25,600	
Y8 938	23,450	2431.25
Y9 682	17,050	
Y10 328	9,950	
Y12 1293	32,325	

Sunk Room

Isobel 200

Sam 320

Prithvi 64

Oliver 100

Joseph 51

Ben 142

Archie 50

Ran 50

Joe 100

Ethan 50

Julian 40

ALL 4335 108,375

GRAND TOTAL

School swimming: Year 7 participation in Official Swimathon

In addition to the hugely successful school charity swimming event, four of our Year 7 students took part in the official Swimathon challenge, a national event which brings people together for the love of swimming and to raise money for several high profile charities.

Isa, Tejasv, Zac and Vedaant teamed together to complete a team 5km challenge at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. On the same weekend, Mr O'Malley was also swimming an individual 5km challenge at his local leisure centre!

We hope that in the 2023-24 academic

year, even more staff and students will be able to take part in the Camp Hill Swimathon event, in addition to the official Swimathon 2024 event.

■ SOM
Attached image: Year 7s Isa, Tejasv, Zac and Vedaant



House Championship 2022-2023

ACTIVITY	Beaufort	Howard	Seymour	Tudor	
Football	8	4	6	12	30
Festival	20	30	40	10	100
Camp Hill Mile	14	6	20	10	50
Badminton	6	8	2	4	20
Basketball	12	7	4	7	30
House Points	6	4	8	2	20
Chess	4	8	6	12	30
Handball	2	5	5	8	20
Volleyball	6	4	2	8	20
Hockey	6	4	12	8	30
Swimming	20	10	6	14	50
Quiz	12	8	4	6	30
Table Tennis	4	12	6	8	30
Rugby	20	14	10	6	50
House Points	2	6	8	4	20
Music	4	7	12	7	30
Cricket	6	14	20	10	50
Tennis	2	6	4	8	20
House Points	6	8	4	2	20
Athletics	20	14	10	6	50
OVERALL TOTAL	180	179	189	152	700

HOUSE CHAMPIONS Seymour

Sports Day











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