

VERITAS

St Mark's Catholic School

No. 8 - SPRING 2015



Coca Cola Real Business Challenge Winners!

Tuesday 29th January saw eight eager Business Studies students from Year 10 represent the School at the Coca-Cola Enterprises: Real Business Challenge.

The event took place at the Kia Oval Cricket Ground, London, where the team were given the task of presenting an idea to raise money for the Special Olympics. The team's concept was called '#saysomethingspecial', where one person posts a picture of a friend - or anyone for that matter - on a social media platform and captions it with something they like about them with the hashtag: #saysomethingspecial, and then donates £1 to the Special Olympics. This idea was inspired by the recent hugely successful Ice Bucket Challenge which raised money for ALSA. However, the team felt an added benefit of their concept is that it would combat the social dilemma of negative self-image, simply with words, whilst also raising money for a noble cause as well.



To present this idea, the group got to work with an app team to create their own app. The concept with the app



was then pitched to a panel of five judges. The judges were very impressed; their feedback praised the originality of the idea, the opportunity for fun and personal involvement it offered, and its use of popular social networking sites. The students won overall in each category and were declared the winners – a fantastic achievement!

Their poster design will be displayed on bus shelters around Hounslow in the Summer months.

So what happens next for the winning team? The team of 8 will be competing in the National Final in March, where they will stay a night in central London to prepare.

Ms Wade commented, "I was very proud of our students, they worked tirelessly on the brief they were given, they used outstanding teamwork skills when coming up with ideas and supported one another. Their creativity was supported by their enthusiasm and determination to produce a marketing campaign of a very high standard which was commended by members of the Special Olympic Council. The value of this event will stay with these students for many years to come. Bring on the National Final!"

Liam Gavin, Year 10

The team left to right: Tomas Wojtan, Nicole Zahra, Eleni Yiasouma, Sebastin Bastek, Darren Snarski, Anna Gajda, Nathalia Cantor Herrera and Thomas Sloan.



Participant Nicole Zahra describes the day...

I remember that on the 29th January most of us were quite excited but slightly nervous about participating in the Regional Finals of the Coca Cola Business Challenge. When we arrived we were shown to a table in a large conference room. We were given a folder with our task; it was to design a campaign for a well-known charity called the Special Olympics.



Our group immediately started brainstorming ideas. After a few minutes of discussing it was decided that the major part of the campaign was to take place on social media. The idea was that a person would take a photo of their friend, with their consent, and say something good about them. The photo would then be posted on social media under the hash tag 'Say Something Special,' linking it with the 'Special Olympics,' therefore raising awareness about the charity. Our campaign also had to include posters, apps and an event, so we all got to work as we only had a little over five hours to finish the task. Darren and Tom went off to the App Workshop to create an app for our campaign, Anna and Eleni worked on the events, Tomasz handled the financial aspects of the campaign, whilst Sebastian, Nathalia and I worked on the advertising and the powerpoint we had to pitch.



The entire session was filled with an atmosphere of competitiveness, excitement, some tension and unprecedented bursts of laughter from Tom! When it was time to pitch our campaign we felt slightly anxious, however the pitch went smoothly. What seemed like decades passed until it was finally time to announce the winners. The runner-ups were given their prizes, and then a Managing Director from Coca Cola announced the winners of the regional final; us! At first we couldn't believe it and we just sat there half-dazed. Then it finally registered and we got out of our seats exclaiming and talking excitedly. Now we're off to the National Finals, hopefully to reap victory once again.

Nicole Zahra, Year 10

HeadLine



I am delighted to introduce another edition of our School Magazine Veritas. It is always great to start with positive news about the School. I sent home to parents a copy of Minister of State, David Laws' Letter of congratulations in February. He highlighted the School's outstanding support for disadvantaged pupils and

indicated that St Mark's was also one of the top 100 state schools for 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths, for showing sustained improvement at GCSE and for value added performance. We also received a letter from Alps (A Level Performance Systems) identifying St Mark's as within the top 2% of schools in the country (1,164) for adding value. Performance Tables have been published by the Department for Education and you can view the details on St Mark's at www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance.

It was lovely to celebrate the success of students at Celebration of Achievement assemblies this term. It is important we recognise that the vast majority of students at St Mark's are well behaved, hard working and keen to do well and fulfil their God given potential. This year there were 878 applications for the 186 places available at St Mark's in Year 7. We are sorry to disappoint many families whose first preference is a place at St Mark's but this oversubscription demonstrates the reputation that the School has in the West London area.

We are strongly committed towards continuing development and improvement at the School. The project to turn the old Gymnasium into a modern Theatre is now underway. We are also securing a long term lease on the playing fields at Sutton Lane.

This term we held a Mass for Magda Szablinska on the anniversary of her death, 21st January. Fr Derek also blessed a special stained glass window installed as a memorial in the Sixth Form Common Room. Please keep Magda's family in your prayers.

Finally, Marion Kelly, our School "Matron", retired in February and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for 26 years' service at St Mark's School.

Paul Enright, Headteacher

The Veritas Team

We thank our students in Year 10 and the Sixth Form for their time, determination and commitment in attending Veritas meetings and contributing articles and photographs. The Veritas team members for this edition are:

Jason Burksfield, Elona Doci, Stacio Fernandes, Louise Fontava, Liam Gavin, Christopher Marques, Olivia Matoke, Ciaran Nolan, Aine Sumner O'Flynn, Sam Robinson, Tom Stitson, Geneva Virasami, Louise Wiener and Klaudia Zaporowska.

Front and back cover photographs taken by Mr Guegan

Spring Concert

On Thursday 12th March, our annual Spring Concert put a spring in the step as an audience of over 200 enjoyed a night of musical entertainment courtesy of students from Years 7 to 11.

This year the focus was on classic and legendary songs. Performances included Ciaran Donnelly in Year 11 playing Frank Sinatra's *Fly Me to the Moon* on the piano, Sophie Dawson in Year 10 with a vocal performance of John Lennon's *Real Love* and Gabrielle Estorninho-Bouree in Year 7 sharing a beautiful performance of Bach on the cello.

After listening to some timeless pieces, the audience was fast-forwarded to the modern day by the ensemble performances, including a guitar



ensemble of George Ezra's *Budapest* and Rock School with *Thinking Out Loud* by Ed Sheeran.



The evening concluded with the Music Awards 2015 given to students for outstanding musical achievement.

Mr Martin said, 'It was another successful year for the annual Spring Concert which provides a great platform for students to showcase their musical talents and ability in front of an audience. It also develops valuable life-skills such as team-work, organisation and time-management. I am very proud of all the students who participated. Well done to them all!'

Huge congratulations to those students and all of the other award winners and performers for a fantastic night.

Music Awards 2015

Award for Vocal Excellence
Elrad Stoiber

Upper School Vocalist
Catherine Nkwo

Lower School Vocalist
Ona Okechi-Nworjhi

Upper School Instrumentalist
Freda D'Souza

Lower School Instrumentalist
Vernon Fernandes

Choir Award for Commitment
Snovia Fernandes

Instrumental Award for Commitment
Hayden Fernandes

Ukulele Orchestra Award
Angelica Aleksandar

Denys Baptiste Award for Musical Excellence 2015
Joshua Ferguson

St Mark's Governing Body



I have been asked recently what role the Governing Body undertakes within the St Mark's community and so in this issue of Veritas we thought it would be useful to explain the work of the Governors and their function.

The Governors are a group of volunteers who represent those stakeholders with an interest in the School and draws upon parents, the Church and a cross-section of the local community. Primarily the role of the Governing Body is a strategic one; its key function is to be a source of challenge and support to the Head Teacher and Senior Team and, in the parlance of the education world, work as a "critical friend". In practice this means the Governing Body helps set the aims and objectives of the School, oversees the strategy for achieving those aims and objectives and monitors and evaluates the progress the School is making. We are also part of a wider group, the Diocesan Multi Academy, which encompasses a mix of comprehensive and primary schools across the Westminster Diocese. This body exercises a light regulatory touch to ensure consistency of approach in Catholic education and I represent St Mark's interest on their board.

Needless to say the Governing Body's work has been made very straight forward during the past decade or more at St Mark's. The Senior Management Team, the staff and parents have ensured that the School has consistently improved and we can rightly be proud of a school that is now recognised not only as a leading comprehensive locally but also nationally. We recognise that this has been through the efforts of the whole school community and the leadership of the Senior Team. It gives us great pleasure not only to celebrate the achievement of those students who perform at the highest academic level and gain places at our top universities, but to see almost all the students maximise their individual potential not only in examinations but in all aspects of their school experience. The School deserves its outstanding ranking.

However, we will continue to pursue incremental improvement in both academic performance and extra-curricular opportunities. We have maximised our financial resources to develop the new Sports Hall and soon we will see the completion of a new Theatre. We will continue to ensure the physical environment is maintained at a high level. Balancing the resources available is a difficult job and we thank all those parents who contribute financially to the School.

The Governing Body may not be a highly visible element of day to day life for the students and parents, but be assured we are working to ensure that the experience the pupils enjoy here at St Mark's is the very best, as demonstrated by the achievements and activities published in this magazine.

Dr Kerry Sullivan, Chair of Governors

10th Annual Choir Festival

Primary school students from SS Michael and Martin's, Mount Carmel, St Edmund's and St James' Catholic Primary School joined us on the 4th February to perform two solo pieces and *Mamma Mia!* in the 10th annual Choir Festival.

Once again it was an unforgettable evening. With the collective voices of over 300 students singing the ever popular songs from *Mamma Mia!* accompanied by a live band of 20 the evening was very special. The audience of around 400 really enjoyed the show.

St Mark's Choir and Orchestra performed *The Lord is my Shepherd* and a fabulous version of *Beautiful*.

The Choir Festival is a firm favourite at St Mark's, and it never fails to impress. The event really showcases the fantastic musical talent that we have in our schools and it relies upon the dedication, commitment and talent of the students.

So thank you to everyone involved!



ten ten theatre

Ten Ten Theatre is an award-winning theatre company that works with schools around the UK touching on many youth issues such as relationships between family and friends, communication and morals. It has an underlying Christian ethos rooted in the Catholic tradition.

Year 8 watched a performance called 'Girl Next Door' which is a story about two young neighbours

who each have their own issues and ambitions. The Year 9 students were treated to a performance called 'Chased' which is relationship based. The play explored the issues of peer pressure, relationships, the impact of the media and the influence of alcohol. Year 10 watched 'Babies', a performance which covered a wide range of themes dealing with teenage pregnancy, abortion, parenthood, relationships, marriage, family life, love and responsibility.

At the end of each play there was an opportunity for students to contribute to an open debate in which they were encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts and opinions on the performance.

Flame 2

In early March three St Mark's students went with the Chaplain to Wembley Arena to witness and experience the community of young Christians at 'Flame 2'. It was an inspirational and spiritual day which will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

Matt Redman, winner of two Grammy awards and a full-time worship leader since the age of 20, was well able to lead the magnificent music for this special 'Youth Day Celebration'. He sang many songs which got the 8,000 young people present cheering, clapping and jumping to the music. We all felt we were taking part in something very special.

The day started off with a surprise, we got a 'selfie' with Cardinal Vincent Nichols - we felt very privileged to meet him. Another most wonderful thing

that stood out for me was listening to Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle who came all the way from the Philippines; he was truly inspirational and very funny. He told some great stories and he brought wisdom and joy to 'Flame 2'. Without him it would not have been so special.

Not only did we hear fascinating people talk all day, we also got to sing and to meet new people with the same faith. It was truly an energetic and excellent day.

Luigi Medri, Year 10



We Day UK

On Thursday 5th of March, 11 determined year 8 students travelled to Wembley Arena seeking a chance to help people in need and make the world a better place by changing the way we think from 'I' to 'We'.

Many encouraging and inspirational people were there to tell us their stories and describe their struggle and efforts to make the world a better place. There were different bands and singers who performed. Among them were Shawn Mendes, Bars and Melody Years and Years, Mr Probz, and Connor Mayard.

Our experience has taught us a lot. We watched short clips on how we can help the less fortunate. For example, for £30 we can buy a goat to give to people in other countries so that they can get fresh, healthy milk and start a business. Also the women can sell bead-

ed bracelets to earn more money for their families.

This event has shown us how we can help in our local communities and therefore the world!

Gloria Zolnierczyk Year 8



Faith In Action

This has been another action packed term for the FIA Team. The entire Year 12 cohort had two inspirational speakers from CAFOD. This became the launch pad to start the term and our latest project, helping to raise money to buy Emergency Aid kits to allow villages in developing countries plan and practise procedures for natural disasters and the immediate 24 hours after. This is linked to CAFOD Global campaign for climate change and the Year 12 pupils all pledged to make one change in their lives to combat climate change.



Elsewhere, other Year 12 students have begun organising and fundraising for explosive summer events which include a Special Needs Sports Day, and Talent Show. A selected group had the opportunity to pitch their idea of organising a St Mark's Celebration Day to Mr Enright in a Dragons' Den style scenario. They said he was a very nice Dragon and had the same attention to detail as Deborah Meadon!

The Year 7

Lots of hard work and preparation will hopefully pay off for members of the Sixth Form who have organised an exciting Easter party for Year 7.

The party, which will take place in the Main Hall, will feature both a karaoke competition and a dance off. There is a lot up for grabs as there are prizes available for the Best Singer and the Best Dancer!

Besides giving the younger students a

Fairtrade Fortnight



CHOOSE PRODUCTS THAT CHANGE LIVES - THE POWER IS IN YOUR HANDS

This has been the slogan of Fairtrade Fortnight 2015. At St Mark's, Year 12 Faith in Action students have been promoting Fairtrade through the sale of Fairtrade chocolate. Buying Fairtrade chocolate makes a huge difference to the lives of cocoa farmers and their families around the world. Fairtrade helps to make cocoa farming in places like Ivory Coast and Ghana more sustainable by guaranteeing minimum prices and providing a premium to invest in local communities, so farmers can provide a better future for themselves and their families. Chocolate is only one example - there are now over 4,500 products from coffee, to flowers to gold that are Fairtrade certified.

Any profits made on the sale of the chocolate are being used to support the students who are taking part in the pilgrimage to Lourdes in the summer.



Easter Party

fun ending to the term, the event is planned to raise funds which will go towards purchasing Easter gifts for senior citizens. Money will be raised through ticket sales as well as a Tuck Shop. The event looks to be a real success with many tickets sold to the excited Year 7 students.



Ski Trip

On Friday 13th February, the start of half term, 40 students and four members of staff headed to the ski resort of Zillertal Austria. For many apprehensive students this was their first skiing trip; others were hoping to improve their techniques from previous years.

After a long and tiring 21 hour journey due to Austrian traffic, the ski party arrived at Hotel Cafe Zillertal, our home for the week ahead. Ski hire was sorted, rooms allocated, and luggage unpacked.

Sunday morning arrived and after an early wakeup call from Ms Thomas and Ms Davies we set off to the beautiful Ziller Valley. Pupils were grouped and off we went! The slopes were



glistening and the sun was shining, perfect skiing conditions. A successful first day was followed by five more days of skiing full of snow ploughing, parallel turns, ski lift dramas and spectacular falls!

Evening activities included the usual ice skating, nine pin bowling, quiz and games night, Tyrollean evening and the last night disco, all of which were great fun.

The trip was a great success, with no injuries and perfect weather. Thanks to all the fantastic Ski Astons instructors and the entire PE department especially Mr Greensmith for organising the trip.

Roll on next February when it will all happen again!

Tom Stitson Year 10

Geography Trip

On 30th January the Year 12 Geography students went to Slapton Ley, in Devon. This was to allow us to do fieldwork for Unit two of our AS course. We did three different topics within the three days we were there; Rural Rebranding, Urban Rebranding, and Crowded Coasts.



On Friday we met at school and set off in the minibus. It was a long journey but we got there in the end. We spent the rest of the day getting shown around Slapton Ley Field Studies Centre, where we would be staying. We also met our instructor for the trip, Jon. Jon gave us a lesson later that evening about the history of Slapton, and outlined what we would be doing on the trip.

On Saturday we spent the day looking at Rural Rebranding. We visited three areas. The first was Stokeley Farm Shop. This used to be just a working farm, but now they have a shop where they sell their pro-

duce, along with branded goods to meet the needs of their customers. The second site was Totnes which is a small town in Devon which had introduced its own currency which locals could buy. They hoped this would encourage people to buy from independent businesses, rather than shop at chain stores. Finally we visited the shops at Dartington, once a cider press but due to declining demand turned into lots of shops with all profits going back into helping the local community.

On Day Two we looked at Urban Rebranding. We went to Plymouth, once one of the most deprived areas in Europe after demand for the ship building industry there plummeted. Its Retail district has been rebranded, and we looked at how certain areas have been more rebranded than others, whilst some could still do with more. These areas were Frankfort Gate, Royal William Yard, the Barbican, and Drake's Circus, which is a new shopping centre built in the centre of Plymouth.

On the final day, we studied Crowded Coasts, and looked at the different areas of the coast along Start Bay. We walked down from Start Point, through places such as Hallsands, which is full of history, Torcross, Beesands, Slapton Sands, and back to Slapton Ley. We got to see how this coastline has changed throughout history, and what schemes and defences are being put in place to avoid flooding and erosion in the near future.

Overall, not only was the trip interesting and useful for Unit 2 of our AS course, but we all had some good fun too.

Jason Burksfield and Sam Robinson, Year 12

Belgium Trip to Ypres and Passchendaele

On 6th of February, students from Year 9 embarked on a trip to Belgium. The aim for the day was to visit the key memorial sites and pay respects to those who died on both sides of the fighting.

Two students describe their experience:

When in Belgium we first arrived at Essex Farm Cemetery and were able to see Victoria Cross holders and where the doctors operated during the harsh trench warfare. Then we moved on to the Passchendaele Museum where the groups observed different machinery and weapons. We also saw examples of Dug-Outs and the resting areas of some of the better constructed trenches. After this, we visited Tyne-Cot Cemetery. We were amazed by the outstanding colours and architecture representing valour in the war. The crisp cold weather brought out the features of the white tombstones.



In contrast to that, we visited the German Cemetery at Langemark. It was clear that the German people wanted to remember their dead; however they knew war is wrong and wanted to remember that as well. This aspect was shown in the dimmed tombstones and the overlapping trees creating a very sombre mood.



We learned things about both sides of the war and how the glorious dead were remembered and respected. We also enjoyed a fun time trudging through mud filled trenches, laughing our wellingtons off!

Alex O'Shea, Year 9

Once we arrived, we headed to Ypres and did some sight-seeing. Our guide pointed out various graveyards and told us interesting facts, like how many people were buried at a specific graveyard and which buildings had survived the atrocities of WW1. Then we got to Essex Farm Graveyard. We were able to see the mass graveyard through our windows while our guide read us 'In Flanders Field'. We had a moment of silence to commemorate all of the soldiers who had passed away in the war.

Our coach then rumbled on to the World War One Museum. It was full of fascinating artefacts preserved from the war. We smelled the different gases (not the toxic ones!), compared ourselves in size to a bomb shell, and dressed in uniform.

We then set off to the trenches. Whilst the trenches were not real but recreated, it felt as if we were actually there. We went through pitch-black tunnels and waded through water. In the end, everyone got a little muddy; it was really fun!

We then went to see two more graveyards. The first one was the Commonwealth Graveyard, where we said a prayer and looked around. The gravestones were made of a beautiful marble and were set out in rows, as if they were soldiers in a line. The other graveyard was a German one, where it was dark and had trees everywhere. They had a mass grave with 25,000 soldiers from the German ranks buried, and individual ones, dark grey square stones in the ground. It was so crowded that each little grave had six people buried in it.



After we had seen all the sights we went to Ypres town. It was very pretty, and it was all old, the road was still the same cobblestones as before. Sadly, we did not have any time to get Belgian chocolate!

Ciarra Ebru O'Flynn, Year 9

Shakespeare's Globe

As part of our unit of work on Shakespeare, Year 7 researched the Globe Theatre. Some students made their own models of the Globe Theatre. We learnt many interesting facts about Shakespeare's Globe, for example did you know that:

About 21,000 Londoners visited the theatre in one week in 1592. Men had to play all the parts in the play, as women were not allowed to (it was considered shameless and un-lady-like),

Stars, the Sun and the Moon were painted on the roof of the stage because it was named 'The Heavens'

If the audience were not enjoying the performance, they would throw rotten food!

We enjoyed learning about Shakespeare, and discovered that the following well-known phrases come from his plays: 'Fair Play' *The Tempest*, 'All that glitters is not gold' *The Merchant of Venice*, 'Break the ice' *The Taming of the Shrew* and 'A laughing stock' *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.



Grace Collingwood and Josh Ward Year 7

Magic, Madness and Murder.

On Monday 23rd March, a Year 9 class are due to attend a production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond.

Prior to their visit, the class has been studying Shakespeare's greatest tragedy. They are full of anticipation and hope that the performance will live up to its reputation as one of Shakespeare's darkest and most powerful works in which ambition and devilry collide as Macbeth aims to succeed the great King Duncan's throne.

The Orange Tree Theatre is set in the round, which emulates the home of all Shakespeare's plays, The Globe. This should provide a deeper insight into the disturbed minds of Macbeth and his wife, and offer a welcome alternative to Ms Joyce's portrayal of Lady Macbeth in class!

It promises to be a mystical experience to be enjoyed by the Year 9 students.

Gabriel Robinson and Eoin Hanlon Year 9t

Propeller Theatre *The Comedy of Errors*

Humorous, exciting and educational! *The Comedy of Errors* is one of Shakespeare's shortest plays, first performed on 28th December 1594. Similar to the play *The Tempest*, *The Comedy of Errors* encompasses shipwrecks, love, grief and family reunions.

It tells a funny story of two sets of identical twins separated at birth during a shipwreck. Each brother grows up with a twin from the other family. The two sets of identical twins cause chaos and confusion in Ephesus. Later the two sets of twins reunite and a series of unpredictable events occur. Their mistaken identities lead to confusion, adventure and lots of humorous twists. At the end, the broken family is reunited.

I did enjoy this performance from the theatre company

'Propeller', they made it funny and stunning. There are not many improvements to suggest in my opinion. But, I would like the beginning to be much clearer and slower and there to be a smoke machine when the doctor comes in to make it more wizard like. Everything else was great and should be showed in all schools across the country.

I would recommend this play to anyone who likes a laugh and enjoys Shakespeare. It was very educational. I think that this is Shakespeare's best play for children from seven to fifteen. If I were to rate this play in stars from one to five, I would give this a five star rating as it is the best play I have seen in my life so far.

Ciaran Collins Year 7

Cupid's Day

The long anticipated day had finally arrived. Orders were in, presents were at the ready and yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was Friday 13th February - Cupid's Day at St Mark's!

This year, a number of Year 12 students volunteered to spread some Valentine's Day cheer around the school by delivering poems, balloons, chocolates and roses to some lucky students. It was delightful to see the faces of the recipients light up when their names were called out. Some student responses include, 'I didn't even expect to get anything,' and 'I really liked how the poem was read out to me, it was funny'.



Alongside the smiles raised in our School, the Sixth Form students were also hoping to raise money to help those less fortunate, and decided to support the charity Smile Train. They raised a total of £163.30, which will pay for one operation to rectify a cleft palate and give a person the ability to smile again.

Year 12 made an excellent effort in gathering the orders and delivering all of the gifts on time. Special thanks to Mr Jivan for helping us to organise the event.

Áine Súmer O'Flynn, Year 12



Dragon's Den Challenge

On 20th January, a group of St Mark's students took part in the Youth Travel Ambassadors' Dragon's Den Challenge. They successfully presented their ideas for a campaign for the improvement of bus safety to a panel of judges, who decided to fund the project.

Participant Uche Okolo from Year 10 says, "The day was great fun. The whole group spoke amazingly well and I really enjoyed the experience."

The group is now working hard on their campaign, and will report back at the scheme's summer roundup in July. We wish them luck.



Spanish Play

Our Year 9 and 10 students have now had the opportunity to see up to three foreign language plays by the On-atti Theatre Company. The French play had a story of mistaken identity and the Spanish play was welcomed here in February when the story was based around a teenage girl getting ready for a first date but plagued by an annoying younger brother. Some students took part in the action, really putting their language to the test, and enjoyed a moment in the spotlight!

Students are quite often pleasantly surprised by their level of understanding, several confirming, 'I understood more than I thought I would'!



German Play

On Thursday 5th March the drama company On-atti came to St Mark's and performed a German play "Meine neue Schwester" (My new sister) to Year 9 and 10 German students. The play was very interesting especially since the actors made it so easy to understand by using hand gestures and actions to emphasise the words they were saying. Both actors interacted with the audience extremely well and this helped the audience to stay engaged and recognise what was happening in each part of the play. It could have been very easy to lose the audience by performing a play that was not in English but a combination of an interesting storyline and witty humour that children of our age can relate to made it a great performance.

Niall O'Grady



Murder Mystery Evening

Who Killed the Ship's Captain?

The idea of taking on the project to organise and direct this year's Murder Mystery production was one I thought I'd regret, mainly due to the workload. However, there were many aspects of the project that made it very much worth it.

First of all, my ardent cast of friends who, in spite of giving up all of their free periods and suffering my directorial nagging and some tediously terrible rehearsals, remained devoted and slipped straight into their roles whenever I needed them (with a little help from some Friday morning pastries and Wednesday afternoon pizza deliveries). Even though some of them had never been on a stage before, they all made the show hilarious, with some page-turning pauses and involvement of the audience.

Secondly, the Tanzania crew who turned up on the night and rushed around finding bins and lights and adhering to my very precise demands re: table decorations! Especially Evan De Roeper, Robert Owen and Sam Robinson who manned the cameras and the sound – Robert concentrated so much whilst filming, he fell off of his chair and almost broke his knee. Many thanks also to Mr Alexander for tidying up my loose ends and putting the cast through their final paces.

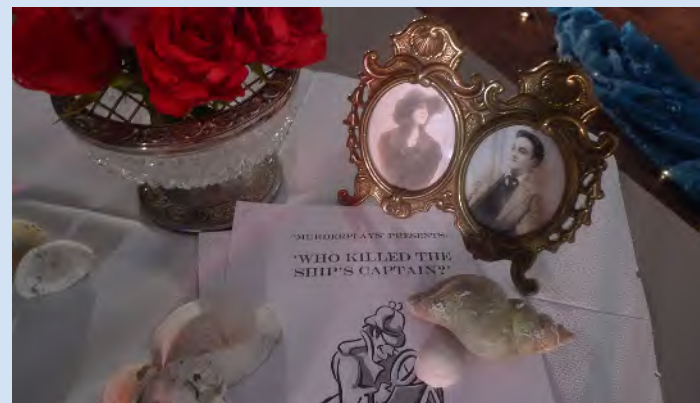


Finally, the audience. Everybody who came along to the evening brought the spirit and laughter to make it a success – especially you Ms Bandarian, who could not help but intervene!

In short, this project was very much worth it and I hope that everybody involved has enjoyed it just as much as I have.

Ellie Haines Year 13 (Producer, Director)

Darkness settled in St Michael's Hall as family, teachers and friends of all ages gathered in quiet anticipation of this main event, The Murder Mystery Evening, which was produced and directed by Year 13 student Ellie Haines. This event was held to raise funds for the Tanzania trip taking place later this year.



I had the dubious pleasure of filming the performance, quietly crawling along the floor trying to capture the best angle possible...safe to say my trousers were ruined the following morning. Crewing alongside me were the people who are going to Tanzania; they were easily identifiable in their bright green T-shirts.

The audience fell silent as the beaming white light illuminated the Narrator as he set the scene and uttered witty jokes to which the audience responded positively. As I crawled below the stage from one end to the other, a myriad of colourfully costumed characters appeared in great numbers through the stage door. They each explained who they were and what they did on the ship. The Narrator then walked slowly out onto the audience, weaving between the multiple tables and explaining that one character was the killer and the other his or her accomplice.

As the night progressed the plot unravelled further. There were some interesting plot twists throughout the performance. Detective Ellie entered the stage, using her skills of deduction clearly learnt from Holmes himself to interrogate the characters. The fourth wall was bro-

ken multiple times especially when a phone went off in the audience allowing our esteemed Detective to dance! As the performance was coming to a close, the audience was asked to guess who the culprits were by writing their thoughts down on a piece of paper. The Tanzania Crew gathered the answers.

The night ended with the culprit and accomplice being caught out by our canny Detective. Bailey the Cabin Boy turned out to be the murderer, with Catherine Earnshaw his accomplice. Just like last year, Ms Bandarian won again! How did she know? And is she in the right profession?

I speak for the entire audience when I say that the evening was every enjoyable and amusing. Thank you Ellie for directing a fantastic performance!

Evan de Roeper Year 12



PICTURE OF CAST: Left to right. James Ferguson - Chief Officer William Earnshaw. Pierre Houston - Dr Ian Jackson. Jack McLean - Bailey the Cabin Boy. Emily Drulovic - Pamela Davies the Captain's personal secretary. Robyn Bowden - Catherine Earnshaw. Hannah McGee - Elizabeth Pearson the Captain's wife. Centre: Esteban Alvarez - the Ship's dead Captain).



Anime Club

Over the last two terms St Mark's has been running an Anime club which has the aim of exploring Japanese culture, fashions and food while appreciating the artistic styles of Anime films and drawings. This unique club has truly inspired students of all ages at the school, resulting in a dedicated and enthusiastic following. With future plans that include sushi making, T-Shirt designing and opportunities to actually learn Japanese, this club knows no limits!

Due to the success of the Anime club, students involved were offered the opportunity to venture out to Cineworld Feltham to watch an exclusive viewing of the Studio Ghibli Anime classic *Spirited Away*, and to participate in an in-depth Q&A session with key guest speakers from within the Anime film industry. The film is being shown as part of a new and innovative cinematic project called CINEMANIA. The aim of the project is to encourage young people to engage with a variety of films, develop their critical skills and cinematic tastes and hopefully enable them to get a greater insight into the film industry through the programme notes, discussions and guest speakers.

Year 9 student Charlotte Earley says, "Anime Club is great! It allows us to learn about a different culture and language and have fun watching a variety of different anime films. It is so nice to get involved in something so unique and exclusive. There is nothing out there like this!"

《OSCAR® WINNER 2003 BEST ANIMATED FEATURE》



World Book Day

To celebrate World Book Day on Thursday 5th March we were asked by our English teacher, Ms Joyce, to bring in a costume. Thursday came in the blink of an eye, and we all brought in costumes so that we could dress up as our favourite book character.

Some people dressed up as Katniss Everdeen, the Twits, Cruella de Vil and even The Mad Hatter! We were all taken down to the LRC where we joined Mr Sheehan's class – they were dressed up as well!

Mr Sheehan dressed up as Edward from the *Twilight* series. We took loads of pictures and had a brilliant time talking about our characters and our books. Mr Sheehan led a quiz on books. These were *Harry Potter*, the *Twilight* series and *The Hunger Games*.

At the end, we introduced ourselves as our characters; we had to stay in role the whole time. Overall it was a great World Book Day.

Diana Fernandes and Gabrielle Estorninho Year 7



Science Week

Science week 2015 at St Mark's kicked off with an inter school competition at West Thames College. This was followed by a highly successful two days of tropical forest which created a great deal of excitement and awareness of different exotic animal and their habitats and the dangers of losing certain species.



Pigs' trotter dissection was another big success with Ms

Kingsland and Mr Shore allowing the students to test their skills with the scalpel.

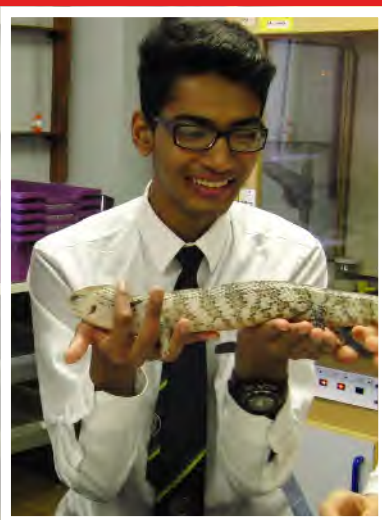
On Wednesday the School Hall was closed to accommodate an 8m dome, which generated a



great deal of interest, especially with the partial solar eclipse in the news recently. Straight after this Dr Simon Foster from Imperial College had Year 8 students making gunpowder in order to find the winning combination of chemicals for rocket launch.



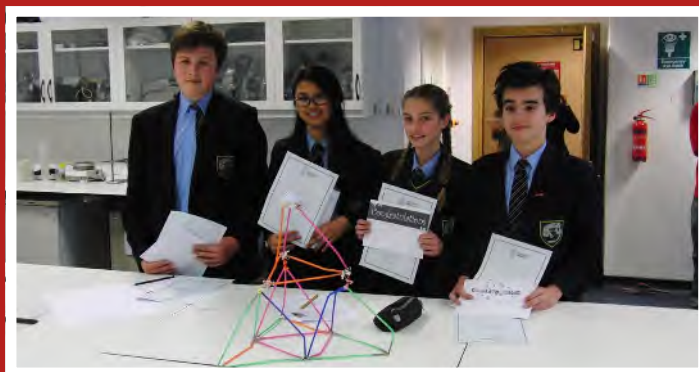
The final day of activities included the Biology Museum with Mr Shore displaying a range of specimens to capture the imagination of the young biologists. The ultimate event involved teachers carrying out experiments which generated some bangs and explosions, including launching some rockets in the lower school playground. The audience were also treated to the uses of liquid nitrogen including the making and tasting of ice cream!



West Thames College Science Competition

Four pupils from KS3, Macey Rajkovu, Eliza Padama, Thomas Ferreira and Piotr Gnap were selected to represent St Mark's in the West Thames College Science competition. Six other teams from the Borough were represented at the event and were given the task of building a tall tower that could hold golf balls for two minutes using 50 straws and various other small items.

The KS3 team excelled in the competition and came first ahead of five other schools to claim some amazon vouchers and a goodie bag. Well done to them and all the other participants who took part in this Science Week event!



Participant describes the experience. **Katie O'Leary Year 12, KS4/5**

Thomas and I made up the St Mark's KS4/5 team. Having only recently learnt what an iodine clock is we stepped foot into the lab with a little bit of apprehension. I won't give you the full blown methodology of the experiment, but in a nutshell we had to add solution B to solution A in order for the reaction to take place, changing the volumes of the substances in solution A to allow a colour change to occur in exactly 25 seconds. This is called the iodine clock experiment.

We had a few practices and managed to get it right when the judges were watching us. However sadly the best team didn't win; the hosts took home the trophy (and the amazon voucher!) by just two points. We came in second place ahead of four other teams from the Borough.

Life After St Mark's

Sarah-Louise Fernandez (Oxford, trainee lawyer)

Joanna (Asia) Szypula (Psychology student, University College)

On the 24th of February two ex-St Mark's students returned to deliver a 'Life after St Mark's' talk. Sarah-Louise Fernandez spoke of her path to being a trainee lawyer at a distinguished law firm in London, after impressively graduating from Oxford University. Joanna (Asia) Szypula, a student at the Univer-

sity College of London studying Psychology, spoke of her steps taken to reach her preferred field of study.

Both of them were extremely informative, outlining both actions required to take them toward their chosen career paths and also what they entail. What they both emphasised the most was that hard work and dedication is a must, but above all else what we choose to study is something we must not simply try our best to excel at but be something we feel passionately about and would enjoy doing.

Overall, the evening was quite enjoyable in addition to being informative, and I personally have taken away a lot from it that will most certainly be very useful to me.

Once again, St Marks would like to thank Sarah-Louise Fernandez and Joanna Szypula for giving up their time to speak to us.

Daniel Fernandes Year, 12



Dr John Ashley (F1 Aerodynamicist)

It was very exciting to see Dr Ashley back at St Mark's. It was really interesting to hear about his role as a Senior Aerodynamicist at Mercedes AMG Petronas F1. It was amazing to see all the medals he had won for Lewis Hamilton's and Nico Rosberg's Formula 1 cars. Dr Ashley's speech was extremely inspiring and has motivated me to follow a similar path. I will always remember him for being so friendly and staying back to answer extra questions. It's really impressive that he was a former student at St Mark's!

Anoshan Antony Year 13



Dr Elena Wilson (Consultant Oncologist)

Consultant oncologist at UCH, Eleanor Wilson, took time out of her busy schedule to come in and talk to prospective medical students back in January. As an academic tutor at UCL, she revealed that she wouldn't change her job even if she had her time again, saying that medical school was one of the best experiences of her life!

Katie O'Leary Year 12



House Competitions

House Debate

The Annual House Balloon Debate ignited lively conversation even before it started with the famous names chosen by competing teams such as Winston Churchill, Bobby Moore, Alexander Bell, Florence Nightingale and Edward Jenner.



The competition was split into five intense rounds. The opening round required teams to state the main reasons for keeping their chosen character safe in just 15 seconds. Then teams had to attack another team, arguing reasons why their famous figureheads should be dropped from the balloon. Bobby Moore came under relentless fire but managed to survive to the next round!

The third round was to come up with a short tag-line that outlined your team's characteristics in one short, punchy sentence. Some dodged the wrath of Mr Hanlon to make it to the next round – many did not. The penultimate round was to say what your character would be if they were a culinary dish. There were some creative ideas here as teams compared their idols to patriotic dishes such as fish and chips!

With six teams left, the final began. This was a quick-fire round where stalling or repeating yourself would leave you up the creek without a paddle. Edward Jenner battled it out to the final, but was eventually out done by veteran Year 11 debater Jessica Ulisse who battled and triumphed for Alexander Graham Bell.

All in all, it was a great competition, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

Joshua Moran Year 9

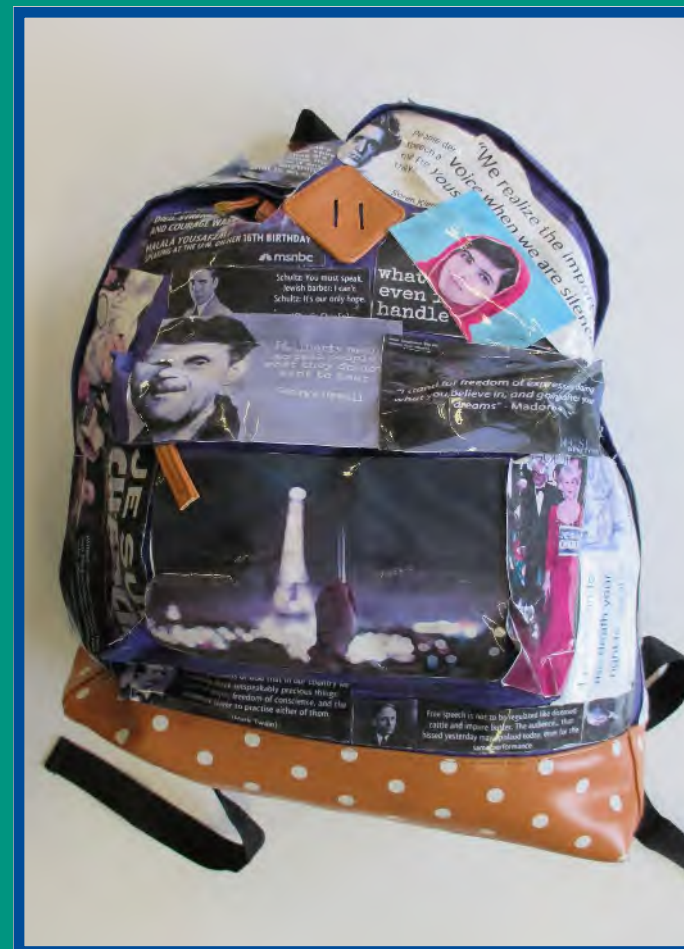


House Art



Freda D'Souza, Year 10

Freedom of Speech



Nia Enokkaran, Year 8



Lian DaCosta, Year 7



House Quiz

On 18th March, all six Houses got together in the Main Hall to test out their general knowledge. There was a strong sense of competition in the air. Our knowledge was tested on a range of categories such as fashion, music, film, sports and even face recognition!

Throughout the whole quiz, there was a real team spirit which made the event even more exciting. Students from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 proved that even the silliest things are worth knowing.

In the end, the winners from KS3 were More, with Pole and Becket following closely behind. In KS4, Pole ended up being the 'quiz-masters' with Campion and Clitherow coming in at 2nd and 3rd.

Overall, it was a memorable experience which everyone involved immensely enjoyed. It was a great end to the day. We can't wait until next year!

Nicole Ahlawat and Charlotte Earley Year 9

ESU - Churchill Public Speaking Competition

In January, two groups of talented public speakers from Year 10 took part in the ESU Churchill National Public Speaking Competition for Schools. In addition to St Mark's, Greenford High School and NHEHS also participated, each with two teams.

Each team was made up of three people. Firstly, the role of the Chairman is to keep everything moving smoothly and to support the members of their team. Then the Speaker gives a five-minute presentation on a pre-prepared topic. Finally, the Questioner probes the Speaker's knowledge and ability to respond spontaneously by asking questions.

The competition is made more difficult as the participants in each team are split; the Speaker is divided from the Chairperson and Questioner (who remain together), and partnered up with a Chairperson and Questioner from a different school and given only thirty minutes to prepare. Although the Speaker's performance contributes to their original team's final score, the new team is required to demonstrate effective teamwork.

Our first team consisted of Jerry McMichael, Anna McConnell, and Sophie Dawson, who tackled the truthfulness of the statement "Sports that mistreat animals are a barbaric anachronism". The second team included Liam Gavin, Klaudia Zaporowska, and Kasie Brookfield, who discussed the topic "All morality is relative".

The end to the evening was fantastic. The first team for St Mark's won the competition, while the Speaker for the second team, Kasie Brookfield, won the award for 'Best Speaker'. "It was a very good experience as we all learnt a lot," Kasie said. "Public speaking is a valuable skill to have so we were all pleased to be involved."

Klaudia Zaporowska, Year 10



UK Intermediate Maths Challenge

Congratulations to the pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 who participated in the UK Intermediate Maths Challenge on 5th February 2015.

An impressive 163 pupils took part, collecting a total award haul of 34 Bronzes, 23 Silvers and 2 Golds. A further 31 students were within one correct answer of a bronze certificate. Special congratulations go to Luigi Medri (Year 10) and Pieter Gnapp (Year 9), who both qualified for the follow-on round. Thank you to all the teachers who gave up their lesson time in order for this to have been possible.

Louise Wiener Year 10



Year 9 Charity Week

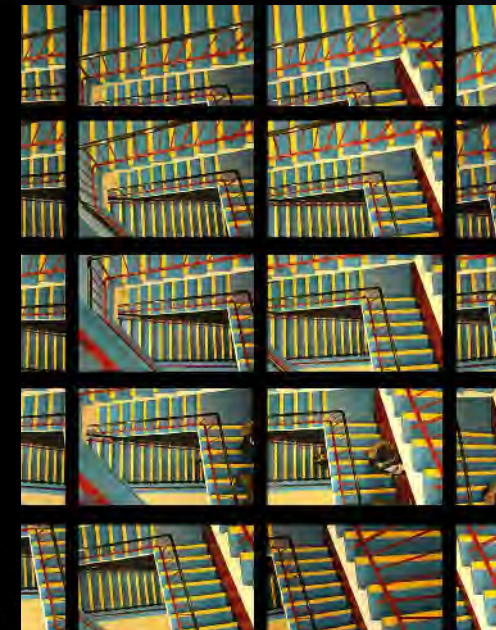
The Year 9 Charity Week featured many successful endeavours. 9 Becket sold fruit kebabs, 9 Clitherow organised a sale of various home baked delicacies such as cupcakes, 9 Campion and 9 More organised Cinema Nights, and 9 Fisher organised a very successful Breakfast Bar and Hot Chocolate Morning selling treats such as Delina Melaku's home-baked almond cake and raising £70. Holly Logue in 9 Fisher said, "We enjoyed raising money for charities in a social way." Rachel Harvey added, "We enjoy helping others in need and following God's message of 'Love one another as I have loved you.'"

However, it was 9 Pole who raised the largest sum

of money earning a grand total of £196 for charities such as the Zambia City of Hope and the Lourdes trip. Several members of the form were eager to express their pride in participating in Charity Week. "It was great fun engaging with my fellow peers, knowing that we were helping the Zambian charity," said Aidan Anthony, Shauna Kelly and Jessica John. To raise the impressive total, 9 Pole sold a variety of treats, including the ever-popular Krispy Kreme doughnuts. Edward Hawkes felt that "it was great knowing that we were helping the less fortunate", a sentiment which is undoubtedly shared by the whole Year Group.

Geneva Virasami, Year 12

AS & A2 Photography



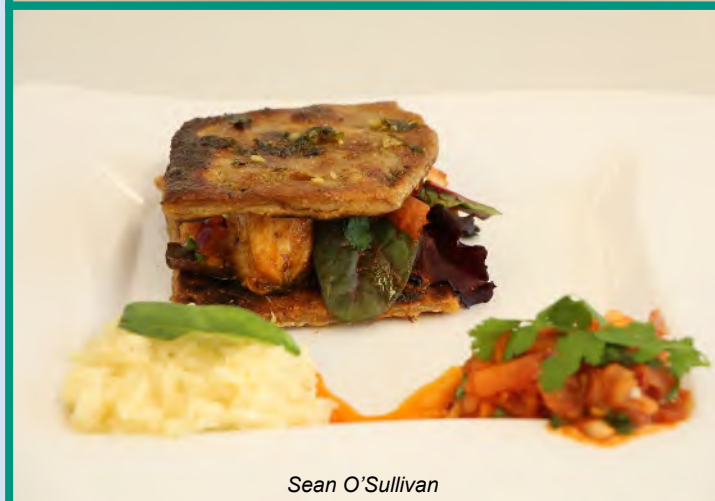
GCSE Food Technology



Peter Thomas



Alexander St. John



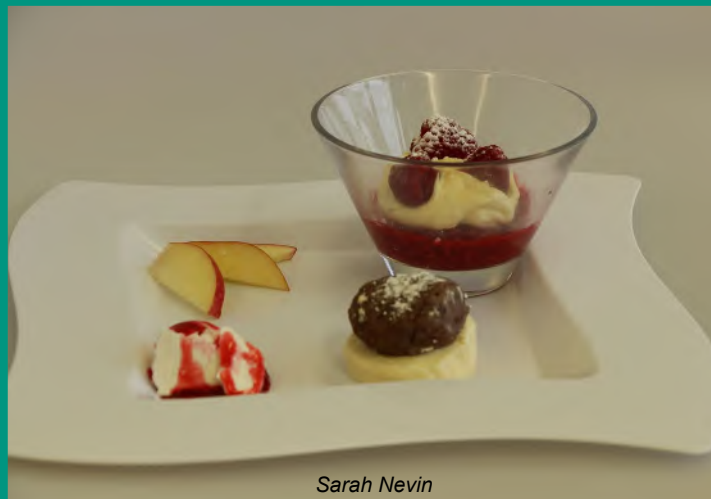
Sean O'Sullivan



Melissa Preston



Wiktor Hareza



Sarah Nevin



Edward Clack

Girls' Sports

Athletics

On Thursday 5th February girls from Year 7 and Year 8 travelled to an indoor athletics centre to compete with other students from local schools. Upon arrival, we were welcomed and had a brief introduction from the hosts of the competition Gumley House about the different events we would attempt. We participated in several track and field events such as triple jump, shot-put and sprints. Overall we all had a fantastic experience; many of us were representing St Mark's for athletics for the very first time. Both the Year 7 and Year 8 Girls' Teams were runners up and finished 2nd place with a silver medal. We were delighted and proud to receive our medal and congratulations in Year 7 Assembly.

Francesca Williams and Francesca Gilham

Netball

On Wednesday 4th March, a team of Year 7 girls travelled to Heathlands School to partake in a Netball Rally. Despite the bitterly cold weather and the many other schools that participated, the team's training paid off and they did incredibly well beating team after team on the way to the final where unfortunately they lost out to Gumley in a hard fought contest.



The Year 7 Girls' Netball Team have put in so much hard work; I think we can expect great battles in the future between St Mark's and Gumley!

Sarah Pereira



Boys' Sports

Basketball

The new Sports Hall has become a basketball fortress of success this term as both the Year 9 and the Year 10 Boys' Teams won their Borough Basketball Leagues. The Year 9's won both their games in the new Sports Hall by beating the opposition by an excess of 30 points on both occasions. This means promotion to the A League next year. For the Year 10's all three games were again played in the Sports Hall and all were won. The first game against Feltham was a tight affair with 6 points being the winning margin. The new two games were more comfortable with the whole squad being able to gain good game time. As a result, the Year 10 boys retained their League A title. Well done to both teams on a great season!

London Scottish Rugby Trip

On the 16th January the Key Stage 3 Rugby players attended the London Scottish versus Cornish Pirates Championship Rugby Match. As our community partners, London Scottish have been fantastic in helping to coach our boys this year. They were then invited to form a Guard of Honour for the players at the start of the game and to meet the players after the match. London Scottish ended up winning and fun was had by all who attended the match.



Football Success

Congratulations to the Year 11 Football Team who have reached the final of the Middlesex Cup with a 4-0 win over Drayton Manor in the semi-final. All members of the team played to an extremely high standard; special congratulations go to Taylor Elliott for his hat trick and to Mark Jadunath for scoring the other goal and for winning two penalties. Hopefully, we will have some good news from the final to report in the next issue of Veritas. Commiserations to the Year 8 Football Team who could not match last year's win in the Middlesex Cup, losing 5-1 to Greenford in the semi-final.

Cross Country

Well done to Alfie Buckmaster (Year 7) who won the Hounslow Cross Country Championships and to Jonathan Bartholomew (Year 8) and Oscar Crowe (Year 10) who claimed 2nd places. Notable performances also came from Tia Flanagan (Year 7) and Browyn Polley (Year 9). These students also represented the School at the Middlesex Championships. Well done to all those that took part.



Memorial Window
for
Magdalena Szablinska
1997 - 2014