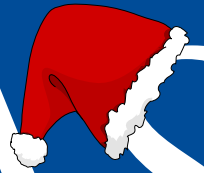
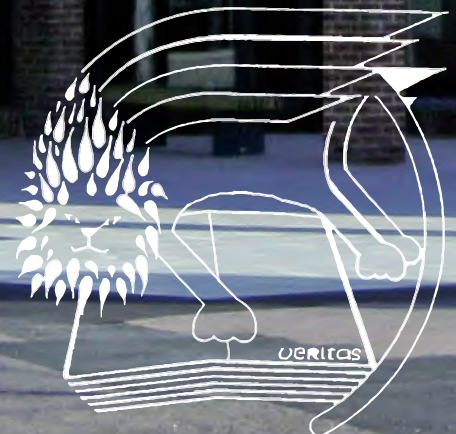


# VERITAS



St Mark's Catholic School

No. 7 - AUTUMN 2014





# The David Sheath Sports Hall Officially Opens

*We are very lucky at St Mark's to now have our brand new state of the art Sports Hall which has been in use since the start of the school year.*

The Sports Hall was officially opened on the 10th December at 9:30am. The school was fortunate to welcome back former Headteacher David Sheath as guest of honour. Mr Sheath was Head of the school from 1986-2001, and in recognition of the great contribution he made to the school the new Sports Hall was named after him.

The David Sheath Sports Hall was also blessed on the morning by Father Derek McGuire – Parish Priest at SS. Michael and Martin, a fitting moment on this grand occasion for our Catholic school. Also present was former deputy headteacher Mike Meredith, as well as former PE teacher Maria McLoughlin. This made the occasion even more special as it brought together both the history of St Marks with the present, paving the way for the foundations of a new future within our school community.

The leaders of the school were also present. The event saw governors, senior staff and PE students come together in unity to bring a real sense of occasion to the event.

The opening ceremony began with the unveiling of a special plaque followed by a tour of the complex. The guests were able to view various sporting activities such as basketball, netball and rowing training which was linked to the interactive smart board in the Activities Studio.

The guests were shown around the whole of the sporting complex. The facilities include a four badminton court sized hall, both male and female changing rooms featuring showers, a new P.E office and an Activities Studio.

There are numerous individuals who contributed greatly to the building of The David Sheath Sports Hall, including former student Ed McCann's Company – 'Useful Simple', architect Catherine Ramsden and project Manager Victoria Martin. Construction work was undertaken by 'Quinn'.

Mr Enright would like to thank everyone who contributed and extends special thanks to all of those parents who have shown their generosity by donating to the school over the years, which has greatly contributed to the funding. The David Sheath Sports Hall cost £2million, £1.25million of which was thanks to a successful EFA bid.

The school now provides superb sporting opportuni-



ties and intends to build upon the impressive sporting success in competitions throughout the years. I was fortunate to be part of a successful Football Team at St Mark's which won the Football Borough Cup each year without fail, the County Cup with the final played at Brentford FC, Griffin Park, reached the quarter finals of the English Schools Tournament and completed a football tour of Valencia in Spain! The David Sheath Sports Hall will without doubt provide even greater sporting opportunities for the students in school.



Year 9 student Ciara Egan has utilised the Activities Studio very effectively. She has been able to use the dance hall under teacher supervision from 3:05-4:30 every Tuesday and Thursday after school to improve her Irish Dancing. She expresses her gratitude, saying, "The use of the new Sports Hall has really benefitted me in my dance, it has allowed me to excel in competition outside of school."

We are all very happy with the completed Sports Hall after so much effort, money and time was put into the project. We look forward to the forthcoming sporting opportunities and success that the David Sheath Sports Hall will bring.

*Tony Egan Year 13*

## HeadLine



Welcome to our first edition of Veritas for the 2014-15 academic year. The Sunday Times recently ranked St Mark's Catholic School as the 15th best comprehensive school in the country, and Ofsted's Raiseonline identified the School as being in the top 4% of schools nationally for adding value at GCSE. We were delighted with these accolades which reflect outstanding examination results in the Summer. Our GCSE results (86% A\*-C including English and Maths) and 'A' Level results (93% A\*-C grades) were the best in Hounslow Local Authority. "Value Added" at GCSE (1,017) and 'A' Level (Alps "Excellent") were also very pleasing.

However, being an outstanding school is about much more than examination results. First and foremost we are a Catholic School, driven by gospel values and with a strong focus on prayer, Christian community and support for those in need. Fulfilling God given potential includes spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects as well as academic performance. It is about the whole person. It is about preparation for a successful and positive life as an adult.

As always these Veritas pages sum up the wider life of the School much more effectively than any list of events can. Many of the articles are written by the students themselves. The students at St Mark's are proud of their School. They are the primary reason for the success of the School. These pages demonstrate their commitment and their positive contributions. I am also very grateful to the staff who give up so much of their time to organise and run these activities and to Ms Cramer and Mr Cox for putting this School Magazine together.

**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:

Abinav Bhattachan, Samantha Bowman, Jason Burksfield, Yzabelle Celosa, Sophie Dawson, Elona Doci, Ania Egan, Tony Egan, Louise Fontava, Phillip Garcia, Liam Gavin, Michael Harvey, Genice – Marie John-Lewis, Siobhán Kelly, Jack McLean, Christopher Marques, Olivia Matoke, Ciaran Nolan, Aine Sümer O'Flynn, Katie O'Leary, Aaron Reardon, Sam Robinson, Tom Stinson, Joe Tiangson, Patson Travers, Seth Tunwa, Geneva Virasami, Louise Wiener and Klaudia Zaporowska.



*Photograph and front cover by Mr Guegan*



# The Bookshelf

## Hounslow Speed Read

A team of Year 8 readers took part in this annual event which takes place at the Paul Robeson Theatre. The students gave presentations of their own favourite books to each other, and then voted for their favourite book.

The winning titles this year were:

Dave Cousins *Fifteen Days without a Head*

Ali Smith *Frozen in Time*

Paul Stewart *Barnaby Grimes*

Congratulations to our team for their own great choices and presentations. Our team members were Marcel Krzyzanowski, Ellen Smith, Oliwia Zakrocka Dos Santos and Rahul Edapully

Warren Estrochio and Karina Ursua Year 8



## Book Buzz

All Year 7 students have chosen their free book from the Bookbuzz scheme. Bookbuzz is an initiative to promote reading for pleasure, giving everyone their own choice of title. This year's books are a great mix of genres, varying in length and offering poetry as well as non-fiction too. Everyone has the opportunity to swap their books when they have finished reading them if they wish, then they can read all of the titles!



## Black History Month

Valerie Bloom gave a reading at the Paul Robeson Theatre as part of Hounslow's Black History Month Celebrations. Our students thoroughly enjoyed the talk, and asked lots of thoughtful questions.



## Darren Shan

The famous author of horror and fantasy books, Darren Shan, paid a visit to The Rose Theatre, in Kingston and we went along to hear him speak about his writing. He read excerpts from some of his books, and managed to make us jump out of our seats at least once!

He has written many books, all popular with us at St Mark's, including the Zom-B series.



# The Choir

The School Choir has had a busy start to the year and it seems that this may be our busiest year yet. Our biggest event so far has been the Deanery Mass, hosted by St Mark's. Our choir of eighty students from Year 7 to Year 11 celebrated Mass with local primary and secondary Catholic schools in the area. The School Hall was filled with melodies and harmonies from students whose musical ability ranged from those who had never sung before to students who are accomplished singers and musicians. That is the joy of Choir - anyone and everyone is welcome!

This event was closely followed by the Year 7 Mass held to welcome the newest members of our school community. Year 7 students have made an incredible impact on

the choir; more than 50 of them have joined and breathed new life into the already thriving Choir. Year 7 student Francesca Medri says, "I come to choir because it's fun and we get to learn new songs every week!" Isabel Sanchez agrees, "I come to choir because I love singing and we get to perform all the time." The Year 7 choir members have sung in assembly, demonstrating their great talent and impressing everybody watching.

December has offered parents and the wider school community the opportunity to listen to the Choir perform. The Carol Service provided a celebration of festive songs and Christmas carols enjoyed by all, and the Choir also performed at Prize Giving – a fitting end to a busy term.



## Prize Giving

We look forward to ending this busy Autumn Term with our Prize Giving Evening, which is always a special occasion in the school calendar.

Students from all Year groups will be awarded prizes, awards and certificates in celebration of their achievements in the last academic year. Snovia Fernandes, who is to be awarded the Mary Anderson Cup for Outstanding Year 7 Student, exclaims, "I am delighted! I was quite shocked when I found out!" The recipient of the Philip Lawrence Memorial Cup, awarded for Academic Achievement at GCSE, is Vonn Abebe, who modestly offers, 'Credit to all my teachers.' Joe

Jackson (who will receive the Faith in Action Rebecca Richards Award) reflects the emphasis placed by St Mark's on contributing to charity; "I am proud to be a part of the wonderful work the school does in relation to charity". Rebecca Owen is, "Very happy to be awarded the Austin Cup for Choir", while Prize winner Tyler Daniel summarises his achievement with the very fitting observation, "Hard work pays off".

This year's Guests of Honour will include two former St Mark's students, Tara Sheehan and David Ricketts. Tara, a medical graduate, is in her final year of a three-year GP training scheme. David, an English and American Studies graduate, is now Associate Editor of a section of the Financial Times. Other guests will include former St Mark's Headteacher David Sheath, and Chair of Governors Dr K. Sullivan.

In his address to parents and students Mr Enright will be highlighting the school's excellent Diocesan inspection and the completion of the newly opened David Sheath Sports Hall.

The celebratory awarding of prizes will be enhanced with performances by our Orchestra and Choir who have been busily rehearsing for the evening ahead. We hope that it will be a truly wonderful evening.

Phillip Garcia Year 12





# Faith In Action

## Oaklands Party

On Wednesday 10th December, Year 12 Faith in Action students provided the annual Christmas Party for Oaklands, a Special School in Hounslow.

The students at Oaklands School have a range of different disabilities. In one Faith in Action lesson the Headteacher of Oaklands came in to talk to the Sixth Form about her school, and how much this Christmas party means to them. 12THL also visited Oaklands school to see what daily school life was like for these children. They saw the challenges the children faced on a daily basis and how life is different for those living with disabilities. Those two factors put everything into perspective, and made the Form want to make this party as good as possible.

Over the last two months they have worked hard in their Faith in Action lessons to organise the party, plan the way

that they were going to fundraise for it, and make sure they had everything they needed to make the party a success.

On the day itself there was lots of music - all chosen by the students of Oaklands, and also lots of games that they could play, such as pass the parcel, and karaoke! The Headteacher told us that this party is the highlight of the year for the children, and they always look forward to it. Dylan, of 12THL said that it was hard work, but it was worth it when you saw the smiles on their faces.

The party was a great success and everyone -both from Oaklands and St Mark's - had a great day. Everyone enjoyed themselves, and 12THL can be proud that their hard work made a massive difference to the students of Oaklands School and put a Christmas smile on their faces.

*Jason Burksfield Year 12*

## Secret Santa

## Mary's Meals

Our Year 12 Faith in Action groups were involved in 'Operation Secret Santa' this term. We had a visit from a representative from the Children's Services in the London Borough of Hounslow, who explained to us our challenge - to help provide Christmas presents for children and young people in care this Christmas.



We organised fundraising events including Beat the Goalie (Michael Blake was a great goalie – thankfully for those who took part not quite invincible!), a cake sale and a basketball game between students and teachers. The students and staff of St Mark's rallied to our cause and contributed with generosity, and we have been able to put together a wonderful pile of presents for girls and boys from 0-18 years.

We have been deeply impressed with the generous nature of our school community. We thank all of those who have contributed. We hope the gifts we have been able to buy will provide the children and young people who are receiving them to have some extra happiness this Christmas.

*Clara Nolan and Ania Egan Year 12*

This Christmas the Sixth Form FIA group decided to support the charity organisation Mary's Meals. Mary's Meals is a global movement that sets up school feeding projects in some of the world's poorest communities, where hunger and poverty prevent children from gaining an education.

The premise is simple, Mary's Meals provides one meal in a place of learning to attract chronically poor children into the classroom where they receive an education that can help them lift themselves out of poverty.

Mary's Meals now feeds almost one million children every day. The Sixth Form FIA have decided to assist in Mary's Meals second endeavour- the backpack project! The organisation additionally now seeks to provide each child with a backpack equipped with the essential equipment necessary for school.

The Sixth Form FIA group did an assembly to explain what we required St Mark's students to do, to bring in a good, practical, useable backpack that would be equipped by the Sixth Formers using the proceeds from the fundraising Year 7 Fancy Dress Party.

Additionally, the Sixth Formers also challenged each Form in the school to retain one backpack and to fully equip the backpack with essentials such as pencil case, rulers, eraser, crayons, exercise book, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap.

Hugh Laurie, a representative from Mary's Meals came into school to collect the backpacks on December 12th. The project has been a huge success and we would like to thank the St Mark's students for their contribution.



# Year 7 Fancy Dress



A flurry of ghoulish faces materialised in the hall in late October for the Fancy Dress party put together by the Year 12 Faith in Action group for Year Seven students in order to raise money for the Senior Citizens' party which was held in December. Students and teachers alike came together for an evening of spooky activities and plenty of food

The evening promised to be one full of scary costumes and even scarier dance moves! Sixth Form students were on the lookout for who could be crowned the best dancers and the best dressed. Our Best Dressed winners of the night were: Rudy D'Souza, Rudolph Blankson, Jade Denis and Eiana Cutamura. Best dancers were Max Bilin and Mary Soriano.

We would like to thank all the Year 7 students who came to the event and donated money, raising £90!

*Elona Doci Year 12*

## Senior Citizens' Party

On 10th of December, Year 12 forms 12DBR along with 12SHO organised the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party. Many fundraising events took place to help us raise money including a Krispy Kreme doughnut sale, Krazy Karaoke night, Hot Chocolate morning, the Year 7 Fancy Dress Party and Mystery Movie Night. After making a large sum of money we began preparations for the party and bought Christmas decorations for the Main Hall along with food.

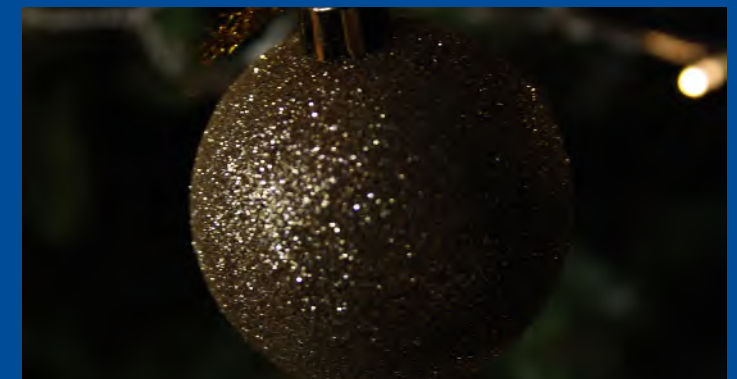
We invited 70 senior citizens from six nursing homes to attend and join us in celebration. They were warmly greeted by members of the Sixth Form outside the school and enjoyed a welcoming cuppa in the LRC. Shortly afterwards, we made our way to the main hall where we were in awe of the transformation that the Hall had undertaken for the festive season.

Christmas music played throughout the afternoon. The faces of the Senior Citizens lit up in the dazzle of the festive lights, and the sound of the Choir's angelic voices echoed throughout the school. The guests were served a wide variety of seasonal foods and the Hall was filled with a Christmas atmosphere and the joy and laughter from both senior citizens and students. Conversations between the elderly and the students filled the

Hall - their stories of the past were intriguing; listening to them and discovering new things was the real treat for us. We really felt like we had had made their day, and they had made ours.

Before the event ended we played an intense game of bingo and afterwards escorted them out with smiles on their faces. We all truly had a great time.

*Joe Tiangson Year 12*



## Krazy Karaoke

On the evening of Wednesday the 12th of October, the prestigious Krazy Karaoke returned to St Mark's. The highly anticipated event attracted a crowd of over 300 students and an array of teachers who piled into the Main Hall for an unforgettable occasion.

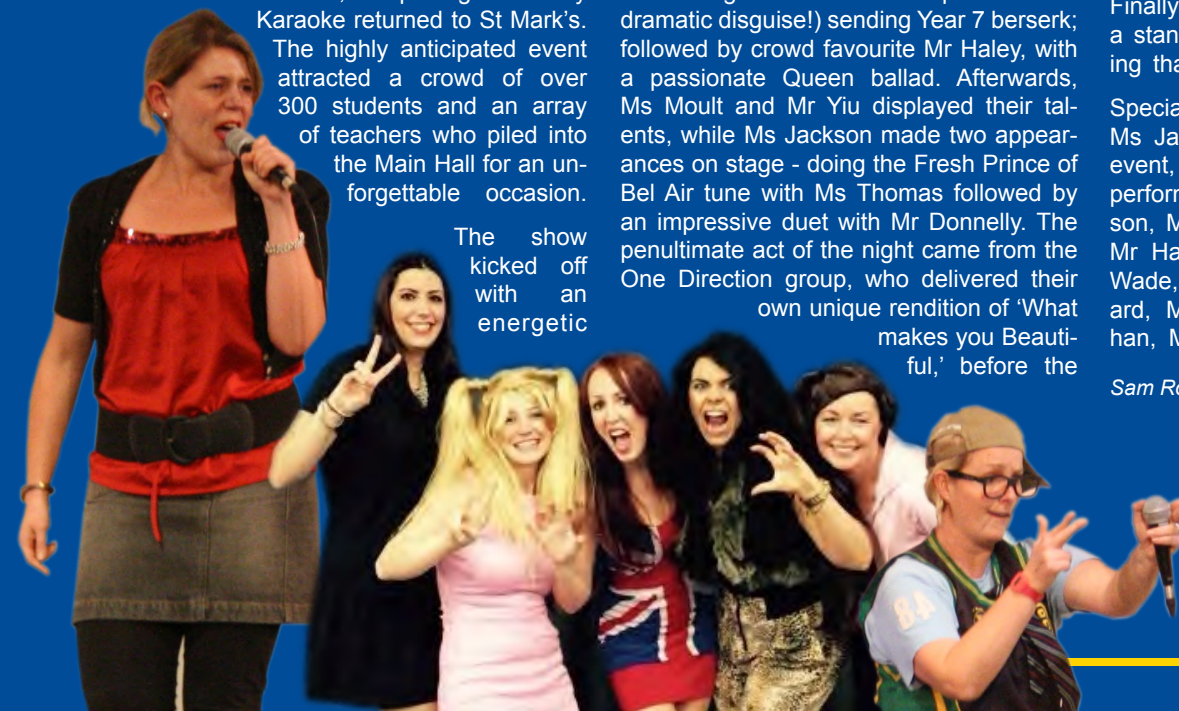
The show kicked off with an energetic performance from the Spice Girls (members of the English and Drama departments in dramatic disguise!) sending Year 7 berserk; followed by crowd favourite Mr Haley, with a passionate Queen ballad. Afterwards, Ms Moul and Mr Yiu displayed their talents, while Ms Jackson made two appearances on stage - doing the Fresh Prince of Bel Air tune with Ms Thomas followed by an impressive duet with Mr Donnelly. The penultimate act of the night came from the One Direction group, who delivered their own unique rendition of 'What makes you Beautiful,' before the

Little Mix lot brought the night to a close.

Finally, all the acts returned to the stage for a standing ovation on a successful evening that raised just over £400 for charity.

Special thanks goes to Form 12SHO and Ms Jackson who helped to organise the event, and also to all the teachers who performed : Ms O'Connell, Ms Hutchinson, Ms Hanrahan, Ms Smith, Ms Joyce, Mr Haley, Ms Thomas, Ms Morillon, Ms Wade, Ms Reid, Mr Fanning, Mr Leonard, Mr Brennan, Mr Harvey, Mr Sheehan, Mr Yiu, Ms Moul and Mr Donnelly.

*Sam Robinson Year 12*





# House

# Competitions

## Music

This year's House Music Competition was quite a blast, to say the least! Excitement was tangible in the air, as were the anticipation and eagerness of the audience and the acts. The competition gladly welcomed a variety of performances, from pianists and guitarists to bands and vocal groups, all of which were unquestionably spectacular and triggered more than a few standing ovations from the roaring crowd.



Clitherow managed to sing their way up to the top of both the lower and upper school competitions this year. For Key Stage Three, it was Conor Guerin who charmed the audience with his astounding version of Beyonce's Listen, coupled with some sassy dance moves that made the audience go wild. Key Stage Four's performer wasn't any less impressive; Kieran Collingwood's performance of Crazy was simply flawless, as was his guitar technique!



"The standard was so high this year, it was difficult to choose an overall winner. There was so much talent," declared Ms Jackson, one of the judges. "It was wonderful to see so many people getting involved".



The overall results were at Key Stage Three: Clitherow, with More coming second, and Pole and Campion joint third. For Key Stage Four Clitherow was again victorious, with Fisher in second place and Becket in third.

*Klaudia Zaporowska Year 10*

## Drama

The end of November saw the annual House Drama Competition take place after school. This year's theme was 'Wacky Inventions' and wacky it was with ideas springing from cheese inventions to actual dancing shoes to a build-a-friend workshop.



"Key Stage Three", according to Ms Hutchison, Head of Drama, "showed massive potential. We can't wait to see them back on the stage in other group events". In first place came Campion with a hilarious take on the mishaps that could come with building a time-machine, it became apparent that they think humanity will evolve in intellect in the near future. Pole took second place with an outstandingly thoughtful piece – quite possibly with the longest script of the night – and in third came More with a not so wacky but deeply relevant take on a world war code cracking machine called Colossus.

Key Stage Four demonstrated outstanding talent. Becket came first with their whimsical idea for a see-through toaster. It was filled with laughs, mad German scientists, a deep love-triangle and probably the House Drama Competition's best ever plot-twist ending, all in under ten minutes! Second place was claimed by Campion with their idea for (much like build-a-bear) build-a-friend. This great performance piece was a roller coaster with loops of happiness and pitch-black darkness with no in-between! In third came Clitherow with an extremely funny sketch based on Dragon's Den.



"I'm so proud of the talent that oozes out of students at St Mark's," concluded Ms Hutchison.

*Liam Gavin Year 10*

## Cake Decorating

*Clitherow House Captain Jack McLean (Year 13) describes the preparation behind this most festive of House Competitions.*

As we get closer and closer towards the Christmas holidays it is plain to see the students of St Mark's getting into the Christmassy mood, and what better way to get into the Christmas spirit than with a friendly Christmas Cake Decorating House competition!

I myself am the House Captain of Clitherow, and I couldn't wait to start rounding up a team able to put the other Houses to shame! As with all House competitions, it was open to everyone. I was fascinated to find out what reasons participants have to get involved. In my team alone there were a variety of

motives, ranging from, "Simply just to enjoy myself", to "Finding out if I am any good at it or not," to my very favourite "To make sure Clitherow win!"



In this competition each House will be given a plain iced cake as their 'blank canvas.' The teams compete to see which can be the most creative, decorating a cake so that it not only looks beautiful, not only looks festive... but also looks delicious! The teams will compete in groups of eight and must convey in their work an element of the Christian faith... so there can't just be a scene full of snowmen and Santa Clauses guys!

In my team I've had the honour to witness the enthusiasm, creativity and passion from all members involved. The positive energy and communication from the students has really allowed all the wonderful ideas to become a reality. So, on Competition Day, all you other Houses had better watch out! I would wish my House the very best of luck... however it's the other Houses which will need it the most! Go, Go, Clitherow!

*Photography by Christopher Marques Year 13*





## MFL Oxford Visit To Brasenose College

Year 11 and 12 students studying French had the opportunity to visit Brasenose College, at Oxford University this November, enjoying a tour, a tutorial session and a lunch provided by the University during the course of the drizzly Tuesday afternoon.

I was fortunate enough to attend the trip and tour the grounds of the University, as well as taking part in a mock tutorial session with one of the French tutors who had given us the poem "L'Invitation au Voyage" by Charles Baudelaire. We analysed the poem as a group with her guidance and questioning. She explained at the end of the session that what we had experienced was typical of a modern language tutorial at the university. I found that studying the poem in such depth was both a challenging but rewarding new experience.

After the tutorial session we enjoyed a hearty lunch in the company of three second-year students who shared their experiences of university, the "medieval kitchen" room abuzz with various anecdotes and questions.

A more in-depth tour of the College followed, with the students showing us the Junior Common Room, Gertie's Brasenose Bar, the library, the dining hall, as well as an unplanned look at a student's dorm room who was gracious enough to show us around.

The day ended after the tour of another college, Hertford, which has the popular tourist attraction the 'Bridge of Sighs', more formally known as Hertford Bridge, joining the two sections of the college.

We had an excellent experience of the university and are very happy to have been able to meet with and talk to various members of the Oxford University community. Ewan Holland in Year 11 said, "It was an engaging and interesting insight into university life."

*Geneva Virasami Year 12*

## Year 12 Biology Field Trip

As excited young biologists boarded the three coaches, the time to experience rural life in the country was nearing. It was a sunny Wednesday morning; as the flares of light seeped through the coach curtains, us nocturnal youths were resting, preparing and gaining energy for our Juniper Hall trip.

When we arrived, the cityscape that we were familiar with had been transformed into another world as we stood in front of a grass carpeted landscape. A few murmurs about the inability to access three bars of internet did arise, but soon dissipated as we were introduced to the small campus by some instructors. We would be sleeping in accommodation in the main building. After we skimmed up the stairs, we were welcomed to our new

bedroom for the night – mine consisting of three bunk beds, a sink and a window.

After this, we had some classroom time, and were introduced to the basis of ecology, soon followed by our first practical!

We were all buzzing. Rulers, clipboards and wellies at the ready, we trudged up the mud-stricken hills to our destination. First we carried out a 'practice practical' in small groups, measuring the distribution of different organisms in five randomly placed quadrats. With the aid of transects, we were able to note down the coordinates of each quadrat.

One thing that I remember was the freshness of the air that swept through my lungs with every breath I had taken. It was rejuvenating.

Later on, we each carried out our individual real Biology controlled assessments, ate chilli con carne, and went to sleep.

On the last day we had to carry out the second, slightly more difficult exam paper which required us to use a biological key to identify unspecified plant species (on Juniper Hall grounds). Admittedly, I spent about two hours trying to get my results... it was difficult!

On the coach home, we were all tired, but after witnessing life in the beautiful countryside we knew it was a trip that wouldn't be forgotten.

*Aine Sümer O'Flynn Year 12*

## Year 13 French Work Experience in Normandy

With Normandy being the place of the D-Day landings and the foundations of the Norman conquests, the A2 French students knew that the region would have an abundance of history vital for understanding the differences between French and British culture. More importantly, it was going to provide an opportunity to practise the French language in France!



We stayed at a quaint cottage in the small village of Commes which hosted the Centre of Learning French in France. Normandy, known as the 'Norman Switzerland' with green pastures and small hills, did not disappoint with the picturesque views.

The main objective of the trip was to immerse us into the language through work placements. We had a variety of work placements to choose from, including working at the famous Bayeux Tapestry, the Bayeux Tourist Office, a department store and a secondary school where I was placed with another student.

The school was located in the commune of Maltot, located near the university city of Caen. The school focused on Agricultural, Business, Nursing, Law and the teaching of English. At first the sheer size of the school was daunting, as well as the thought of speaking French for the whole day. However, after the first lesson I felt relieved and ready to speak French at every opportunity. The students and staff were welcoming and keen to speak to an English person. I enjoyed conversing with teenagers our own age and taking part in real lessons. Whilst Michael enjoyed the Accounting and Logistics lesson, I was most enthralled with the French Law lesson.

As well as the work experience, we were able to have leisure time too. We visited famous towns like Caen, Bayeux, Honfleur and Port de Bessin, and also visited the historic World War II sites of Arromanches, Omaha Beach, the Fallen Heroes' Cemeteries and the German Bunkers.

Overall, we were able to practise our spoken French extensively which allowed us to improve our pronunciation and to aide our fluency. We also became more attentive in understanding and comprehending French spoken by native speakers. All agreed the trip was a great success. *Aaron Reardon Year 13*

# Shakespeare

## Richard III

Weeks of hard rehearsal finally paid off when 26 students from Years 8 to 10 performed *Richard III* at the Watermans Arts Centre Theatre in Brentford. The event was part of the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival and two other schools accompanied us on the night with colourful performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Julius Caesar*. Of course, they saved the best 'till last and our creative performance of *Richard III* wrapped up the evening in style.

The play tells the story of Richard who is determined to reach the throne, whatever it takes, even if means murdering several people along the way! However, on the eve of his battle against the Earl of Richmond, the ghost of Richard's many victims forecast his demise, leaving him emerging into battle with a guilty conscience... followed by disastrous results.

To make our performance even more memorable, we decided to set it in the modern day as business workers on the trade room floor, which turned out to be a great move.

For many of the cast this was our first opportunity to per-

form on a professional stage, and it gave us all a treasured experience never to forget. It also taught us that Shakespeare is not scary, but rather an amazing piece of art. However, the greatest lesson for me was to be found from the man himself, 'Be not afraid of greatness!'

A huge well done to all of the cast, the directors and everyone else who was involved on the night.

*Samantha Bowman Year 10*



## A Midsummer Night's Dream

In early November the students of St Mark's were witness to a truly spectacular performance. Love, illusion and mischief entwined together in the most magical of Shakespeare's plays, presented by the all-male professional Propeller Theatre Company.

Based around the events of one night in one magical wood outside Athens, two pairs of lovers - Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius and Helena - become entangled in fairy mischief on the eve of the Royal Wedding of Theseus and his wife-to-be, Hippolyta. Dreams and reality become interchangeable within the romantic chaos that ensues, and misplaced passions are ignited as appearances become ever more deceptive.

I started off feeling a little sceptical of what we would be watching that morning in the Hall as what we saw before us was six men in white tights and leotards. Being your typical teenage crowd we assumed the worst, but I must assure you that our doubts were completely unfounded! I was blown away by the skill with which

the actors captured the entire audience's imagination, making the words of a distant period come alive.

One of the best scenes was when the four confused Athenian lovers gathered, at which point Lysander and Demetrius have both proclaimed their love for Helena due to the mistake of Puck placing the juice of the magical flower into the eyes of the wrong lover, leaving Hermia completely spurned. A hurling of insults takes place between an outraged Hermia and a bewildered Helena, amidst which the words "canker-blossom" are thrown Helena's way.

The original and humorous way approach to the play meant that the audience felt comfortable in digesting something usually quite challenging for anyone of this day and age.

*Sophie Dawson Year 10*





# Remembrance Day

## War Graves

In September two Year 13 History students were fortunate enough to be able to represent the school on the Department for Education's First World War Centenary Battlefield Tour. They share their reflections:

What struck me most about the whole trip was the visit to the German Military Cemetery in the town of Langemark, located in the Flanders region of Belgium, a few miles north east of Ypres. The cemetery is strikingly different to the bright and open Commonwealth war graves that many of us are familiar with, and this is mainly due to the way the Germans honour their fallen soldiers. The German cemetery is in a secluded, dark wood, shaded from the sun by German planted oak trees. On entering the cemetery, you first walk through a corridor within a small building with chambers on either side, displaying various memorials and lists of the deceased carved onto stone panels on the walls. The shadow created by the canopy of trees as well as the dark colour of the graves is sombre and uninviting, however I found that there was somewhat a strange bleak beauty about the place.

Unlike the Commonwealth graves, there are no raised headstones at Langemark; instead the grave markers consist of flat stone plaques embedded into the ground. Typically, these have the names of around four or five German soldiers inscribed into each plaque. Sadly, however, it is not uncommon to see a large number of "unbekannte Deutsche Soldaten" – "unknown German soldiers" labeled on the grave-stones. What shocked me most about the visit was a mass grave for the remains of 24,000 German soldiers, buried in a space not much bigger than a back garden. Our tour guide informed us that as a defeated nation in economic ruins and the Treaty of Versailles articles on cemeteries enforced, the Germans did not have the means to bury their dead in the same way the Allies did. The sombre, darker feel of the cemetery reflects the German view, and this is through the use of the branches and foliage from the German Oak, which dominates the cemetery, ensuring it is always in the shade.

At the Western boundary of the cemetery lies a bronze sculpture of four men which immediately catches the eye of the visitors entering the graves. The sculpture depicts a photograph taken in 1918 of four soldiers from the Reserve-Infantry-Regiment 238, who were mourning at the grave of a fellow comrade. It almost feels as if the solemnly standing figures were watching over the thousands of German casualties of war. At the end of the day, the German soldiers were people too, who had their own families and their own lives, which many of them were not able to go back to after the war.

The whole trip was a humbling and moving experience, especially the visit to the Langemark German cemetery which will stay with me forever.

James Ferguson Year 13

As soon as we arrived in Calais we headed directly for Tyne Cot Cemetery. This was an important war grave to those Commonwealth soldiers who fell at Passchendaele. It is also the largest British and Commonwealth war grave in the world, as 11,956 soldiers are buried there. It was a beautiful cemetery, dominated by the German pill boxes which mark out the German frontline in 1917.

What made the visit to the cemeteries even more rewarding was being accompanied by an ex-soldier and four current serving soldiers. They were all chatty and willing to add their own experiences to what we were being told about soldiers serving during the First World War. We rounded off our first day with a trip to see the very moving Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. The ceremony is performed every night in Ypres. There was a huge turnout from the town of Ypres, as well as visitors from all over the world. Seeing Ypres at night was amazing as well, especially when we considered that during the First World War the city was completely flattened, then rebuilt with original plans to every detail when the war was over.

It was an amazing experience which we will never forget.

Conor Bateman Year 13

## War Poetry Competition

To commemorate the lives of those who have died in the Great War and all wars since, students in Year 9 had the opportunity to write a poem about war and enter it into our annual War Poetry Competition. Congratulations to this year's winner, Jennifer Onuchukwu, for her haunting poem 'War: A Guilty Conscience'.

Also, well done to our runner-ups, Ciara O'Flynn and Alexander O'Shea for their excellent contributions.

### War's Guilty Conscience

I thirst for the call to war  
Dead bodies covering the fields.  
The poppies spill from under soldiers bodies,  
Blood flowing from open wounds.

Soldiers await my presence.  
I am always near;  
Just lingering  
Over the aftermath of an explosion,  
Fields now ruptured veins.

I thirst for the call to war  
So I can snatch the bodies for my own  
I see the souls,  
Longing for me to relieve them of their pain,  
Their misery,  
Fighting in a war,  
Only to have their lives stolen.  
Another body drops to the floor  
Lifeless.  
Cold.  
Dead.

His eyes were cold and brown  
Like coffee stains  
From a once warm mug, awaiting his return  
I shudder, feeling a cold breeze drift through me  
I feel his pain  
But I also feel his happiness.  
As his misery is over  
Relief.  
Comfort.  
Peace.  
Is all he feels as his story  
Of tragedy and destruction,  
Finally comes to an end.



THEIR NAME LIVETH  
FOR EVERMORE





Ms Joyce's Year 9 English Group

## Year 7 Retreats Year 7 Bowling & Charity Week

After arriving from lots of different Primary schools it can be daunting for the new Year 7 students to get used to life at St Marks. One of the best ways for them to make friends and get to know each other is on the Retreat days, which each Form does in the first couple of months at school. This year, the day was based around a discussion of how every student is created in the image of God. Each form went to Botwell House in Hayes with the Chaplain, an RE teacher and their Form Tutor. They took part in a range of spiritual activities and games which were designed to reflect on their faith and also encourage them to bond with each other.

"We were the first group to go," said Rudy D'Souza of 7 Beckett. "The games we played were really great. The day helped me socialise a lot and meet new friends. I liked it when we wrote the letter to ourselves in Sixth Form because it was really cool."

Matthew Macleod Year 10

### 7 Pole describe their Retreat:

The trip was a great opportunity for 7 Pole to talk to each other and interact with each other. It was a fun and educational experience.

First we sat on chairs and we were instructed to play two games. After that they showed us a drama play. We then prayed and reflected for a little while, while relaxing. The class then got a sheet of paper and we were asked to write a letter to ourselves in May 2019."

It was a great day, just look at our quotes:

"We all played really well together and got on great." (Georgia)

"I liked the games we played." (Nikola)

"There were good activities." (Jamie)

"It was really good fun and I loved that we did drama and games." (Gabrielle)

Year 7 have made an excellent start to their life at St Mark's. They had to hit the ground running as charities week was thrust upon them in the first half term, and they certainly rose to the challenge.

As a reward for working so hard in the first half term, each Form has had the opportunity to go bowling. This also helped them to get to know each other. This has been a lovely experience for the Tutors and myself.

I have every confidence that Year 7 will continue to impress; they are already showing themselves to have the makings of an excellent Year group!

Ms Thomas (PPL Year 7)

On the week of 6th October Year 7 continued the long established tradition of trying to raise money for our chosen charities.

Throughout the week a series of events took place in order to raise money. These consisted of racing car games, cake sales, doughnuts; Beat the Goalie, hot chocolate and some Forms sold toys.

Many congratulations to 7 Fisher who managed to raise the most money. They organised a racing track game in the Music Block and also sold cakes. Overall Year 7 raised over £500 to donate to their charities.

With so much variety, everyone could get involved, even the teachers! The week was an outstanding success. It allowed the whole of Year 7 to get involved and also to have fun.

Tom Stitson Year 10

## Starting the Year with a Bang!

In early November Year 9 students were lucky enough to be invited to the 'Fireworks- Real Science or Just Bangs?' talk presented by Matthew Tosh, where they learnt about the different chemicals and practical uses of combustion processes involved in the production of fireworks. The enthusiasm emanating from the year group was wildly evident through the interaction and response to the demonstrations of various flares and explosions.

Matthew Tosh introduced the different ways in which science can be applied to the real world and how much we rely on science to be consistent. In this case, Tosh brought to light the importance of precision within his profession, as he reminded us that "a firework can only be used once!" Therefore he can never practise what he is about to present.

The students gained not only greater understanding of how fireworks are created, but also knowledge on the safety implications of setting up and setting alight a firework. The event was a great success and was described as being "a memorable experience" by one Year 9 student.

Olivia Matoke Year 12



## 'The Art of Science'

As soon as we entered St Michael's Hall, we saw some amazing science and art equipment. On every table there was something fascinating. We could not wait to begin all of the exciting experiments that were awaiting us. First, we were shown what everything did and how it worked. After that, we got into groups of five and were put on one of the bases.

The first base we did was all about using 3D glasses and clear plastic sheets to see different colours when you looked through them. We had to put on a pair of 3D glasses and put a plastic sheet on a light projector. When we looked through the 3D glasses the plastic had changed colour! Also, when we tilted our head, the plastic sheet changed colour again. It was really cool!



The next base was called Spin Painting. We had to put a large circle-shaped piece of paper on top of a large wooden wheel. Then we put the wooden wheel on an A3 piece of paper. We put different colours of paint on the circular sheet of paper and spun the wheel around. It used force to push the paint on the wheel, off onto the A3 sheet of paper. This left us with a beautiful pattern on the sheet of paper and we were all amazed!

Another base was about Bubbles. Everyone in each group made a tetrahedron out of small pipe cleaners and straws. Then, we dipped the tetrahedron into some soapy water. When we

pulled it out of the soapy water there was a small bubble tetrahedron inside of the shape we had made. On the outside of the small bubble tetrahedron was a wall of bubble mixture holding the bubble in place. It looked incredible and out of this world!

The fourth base was about using inks that would not mix to make colourful designs on sheets of paper. We had a plastic box filled with water and we poured some different colours of ink into the water. Then we placed a blank piece of paper into the water and when we took it out it had the ink on it in lots of different patterns.

Finally, the last base was about a shape called the Mobius Circle. The Mobius is a circle with a twist. If we were to draw a line on the inside of the Mobius, the line would end up going onto the outside as well. We also learnt that if we cut on one side of the Mobius it becomes one normal circle connected to a smaller Mobius! It was mind-blowing! Also on the same base we learnt that if you connect two Mobius strips together and cut down the middle the shape will turn into something like a pair of handcuffs. Then if you cut down the centre again, the shape will turn into a perfect square! We couldn't believe it.



Overall, we had a fantastic time at the Art of Science workshop. It may have been one of the best mornings so far at St Marks for us. We hope that we can do something like that again and learn even more about the art of science!

Ellen O'Neill and Cameron Fox Year 7



# My trip to St Mary's University...

My trip to St. Mary's was eventful. When we first arrived we were taken on a tour of the University which helped me gain a better understanding of how a University campus is set out. After that my knowledge about the university was tested and shortly after I was informed of how much money it costs to attend university yearly. Some current students studying a drama course volunteered to lead some activities, to give me a better understanding of what lessons are like. The trip also showed me how University lectures work; it gave me an idea of what university would be like if I decide to attend a university in the future. Overall this experience really helped me think about my future and enhanced my knowledge about university in general.

Aiko Monteiro Santos Year 10



## Oxford Visit



On the 17th of October a group of Year 10 and 11's went on a trip to Somerville College (Oxford University), which is famous for having the first female Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

er study there. Although it was originally an all women college, men are now also accepted. We attended a talk in the morning with Professor Dr Timothy Walker who taught university level biology. He explained to us how the natural world around us is changing because of the changes we have made in life style – for example, the increased burning of fossil fuels.

After lunch our tour guide gave us an introduction into university life, highlighting the amount of determination and effort needed to go to university and study there successfully. This was followed by an interesting talk on studying classics and history at university. Overall the whole day gave us a detailed insight into university life and the variety of subjects available to study.

Zakarius Franek Year 11

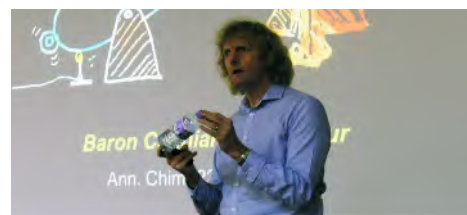


## Life After St Mark's

Over the course of the Autumn Term Sixth Form students enjoyed a series of inspirational Chemistry lectures showcasing the best of what Chemistry has to offer. The engaging and instructive talks were delivered by top ranking Professors coming from the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham respectively, and were intended to give Year 12 and 13 students an insight into how Chemistry can be used far beyond A-level. They also presented an insight into the fascinating life of a university student, opening minds to the limitless possibilities of science and life beyond St Marks.

Michael Harvey Year 12

We were delighted to welcome four past pupils who came back to share their experiences of university life. Former Head Boy Jamie Windmill spoke about his time at St Catherine's College, Oxford, telling us about the themed parties at the Student Union and also the Chemistry!



Professor Steve Howdle

Chemical Engineering student Carlos Mascarenhas reminisced on his school days at St Mark's, how he left all his work until the last minute and went to the High Street during his study periods, however he advised us to make things easier on ourselves and not to approach Sixth Form in the 'Carlos way'. Volunteering for St John's Ambulance and the Tanzania trip were amongst the many extra-curricular activities medical student Mazin Eragat had under his belt when he applied to Hull-York Medical School. Not only did he speak about the difficulties in studying Medicine but also the rewards it can bring. Carla Brackstone focused on her dream job of working as a researcher at a major charity after studying Medicinal Chemistry at Warwick University. These talks really gave us an insight into what 'Life after St Mark's' is really about.

Katie O'Leary Year 12



Ex-students: Mazin Eragat, Carla Brackstone, Jamie Windmill and Carlos Mascarenhas

# Sky Careers Lab

As part of the 'Life After St Mark's' programme, Year 13 media students participated in a Sky Careers Lab day. Sky, the biggest broadcaster in Europe with over 20 million subscribers, invited the young television enthusiasts to their headquarters in Osterley, West London where we were provided with some valuable career and employment skills.



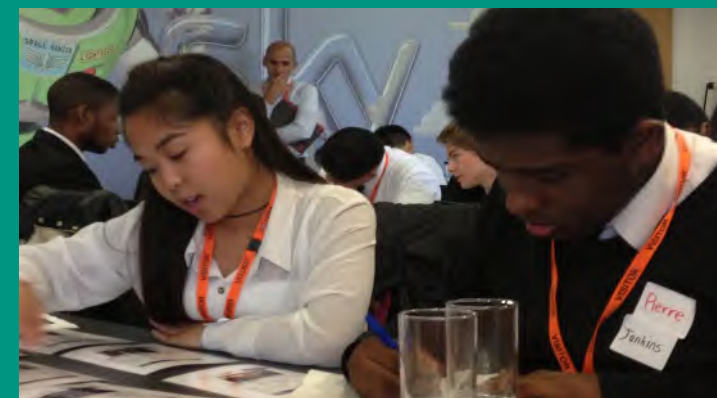
The day began with a tour of their studios – the same studios where they film Sky News and edit promos for Modern Family. In addition to gaining access to their multimillion pound sets, we were star-struck by the presence of some TV celebrities including sports presenter David Jones and anchor woman Kate Abdo.

The tour and a brief history on the company were followed by a skill building activity. We were given three real life scenarios in the area of Sports, News and Entertainment that Sky employees have to face on a daily basis. In groups we had to approach these situations and handle them according to the set time and

budget. The Sports teams constructed a Sports show aimed at children, while the News teams organised a TV crew and location to broadcast a live event. As for Entertainment, teams planned an evening TV schedule for Sky 1 that would run along a Bank Holiday weekend. Each scenario was unique and had its own set of criteria – and curve ball thrown in – which we had to adhere to, covering audience, conventions and funding. Finally, we presented these plans to senior members of Sky who assessed them and gave us feedback on how well we had handled the situations. They were also able to share us their own personal experiences in working with the company and how they had got there.

The day proved to be a great success as Robyn Bowden claimed, "It was really insightful and inspired me to pursue a career in the media industry."

Abinav Bhattachan Year 13



## Media Production Skills Day

In September video journalist Alex Fraser came into school to give the Year 12 media students an insight into the technical world of digital media. He was great – his warm smile and friendly manner helped to demystify the terms and techniques he introduced us to. At this time we had only been in Year 12 for a matter of weeks, so his expertise and knowledge was incredibly interesting.

We started off exploring how film and TV directors use camera angles, distances

and framing to explain certain things words cannot. We were all fascinated. Personally, I thought that the director just filmed, and that it was the acting that made it a masterpiece, but how wrong I was! There is so much to learn about how to use the DSLR camera effectively, things like the Rule of Thirds, White Balance, and Exposure, and this media day perfectly introduced this new world to us.

After learning how best to use the Canon

cameras, off we went to test them out and film a one minute clip. The next stage was learning how to edit on the iMacs using Final CutPro, which for me was the most enjoyable process. Editing really puts us in a position of a creator, where we can change every little detail about the footage.

All in all, the media day was a great success. As a class we now cannot wait to put these skills into practice in our Year 12 coursework.

Patson Travers Year 12

## Budget Britney

A weary schoolgirl stares at the clock on her classroom wall, impatiently tapping her pen. The clock finally strikes three, and out she runs with her fellow students, breaking into a dramatic dance number in the middle of the school corridor as dramatic opening notes to a song reverberate throughout the building... 'CUT!'

This was no ordinary day at St Mark's. The Year 13 media students were practising their music video production skills for their A2 coursework by recreating Britney Spears' "...Baby One More Time". The Britney for our rendition was consortium student Daniel dressed in a blonde wig and a tied up shirt.

Alex, a video journalist for The Guardian and Reuters, began our training day by teaching us the rules of cinematography, followed by tricks and tips on making the best use of our Canon DSLR cameras. After that, we began planning our music video, making decisions ranging from the clothing and props to the camera shots and angles we were going to use.

When we reached our filming location in the Sixth Form block, Alex, who also directed the shoot, demonstrated the structure of a working film set before casting students in roles of camera op-



eratives, music technicians, choreographer, and backup dancers.

The final process of filmmaking – post-production – took place back in our media classroom where we were taught how to edit together layers of raw footage in sync with the music track. Final versions were screened to the class, which provided as much entertainment as the actual filming!

The final videos can be watched on the A2 media blogs at [www.stmarksmedia.blogspot.com](http://www.stmarksmedia.blogspot.com)

Abinav Bhattachan Year 13

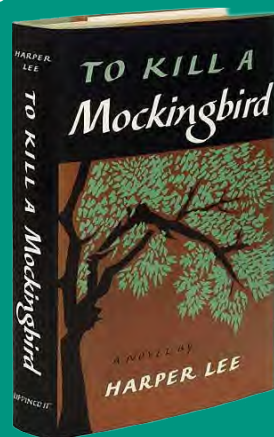


# Year 9 Summer Challenges

While summer is a time to sit back, relax and meet our friends, a six week break from school can also provide a fantastic opportunity to try some new activities we've never done before. Things like trying a new sport, a new food, reading a book or just saying something nice to someone are everyday things we take for granted. But these simple ventures can enrich and develop our lives.

To help us realise this and to make the most of our holiday our Head of Year set a series of challenging tasks and activities for us to complete over the break. These included creating a piece of art, learning a famous poem, cooking a family meal or simply telling someone about something you are passionate about.

Surprisingly, none of the tasks were boring or difficult; in fact they were easy and great fun! Some people were encouraged to get active by trying out some new sports such as bungee jumping, cliff diving and river rafting, while others got creative and designed some amazing pieces of art and food for their family.



Doing something nice for someone or visiting a relative helped us realise how one nice sentence can make someone's day.

The challenges also prompted us to keep the upcoming academic year in mind. Reading an interesting book or visiting a museum helped us gain as much knowledge as possible from our break.

Whether it was visiting the World War One Museum in Ypres, wild river rafting or reading 'To Kill a Mockingbird', the challenges I completed made my holiday much more interesting and exciting and also had a big impact on my life.

Sports I had never done before such as parkour, scuba diving and zip lining kept me fit and active. The new foods that I tried such as paella and mussels, gave me an interesting taste of foreign culture. These are important life experiences I would never have enjoyed if I hadn't been adventurous and given things a go.

Callum De Greef and Gabriel Robinson Year 9

## Basketball: Sixth Form vs Teachers

27th of November marked what was to be a monumental event in the school year when the finest talent in the Sixth Form competed against the teachers. If you didn't get yourself a ticket, then you sorely missed out!

Historically, the teachers remain undefeated, and sadly this year showed no change. There was a terrific effort from the Sixth Form students, who managed to sink in a considerable amount of points. However, the success of the teachers was greatly helped by the addition of their Year 10 star player, Tristan, who charged through the Sixth Form team, securing a win for the teachers.

All in all, it was a good game with a considerable display of effort, skill and teamwork - but let's not forget the terrible calls from the referee...

Seth 'I'm not bitter' Tumwa Year 12



## Safe Drive Stay Alive

On the 17th October, Year 12 students from St Mark's, Gumley House and The Green School were given a loud awakening to the dangers of reckless driving and a deeply personal insight into its consequences. Rather than bombarding us with statistics about motor accidents, we were given very personal accounts of quite horrifying accidents from a fireman, a policeman and even a survivor.

No one was prepared for the shocks that ensued; the whole event (which was held at Questors Theatre in Ealing) was perfectly designed: not so scary that students would flinch away at the sound of jangling car keys, but not so



casual that by the following morning the day is forgotten.

The host was adamant in telling students not to fear driving itself, but the act of driving dangerously. Even the most carefree teenager was brought to tears by the survivor's account.

The day itself most definitely made a deep impression on everybody watching. The very thought provoking, emotional afternoon made for a very quiet coach journey back to school.

Michael Harvey Year 12

# Global Entrepreneurship Week

In November, Global Entrepreneurship Week inspired people to soak up advice and inspiration and consider launching their own ventures, and this includes some of our very own students.

Throughout the week Year 7 students designed Christmas cards to be sold around the school, whilst Year 10's had the opportunity to visit British Airways.

Student Eleni Yiasouma describes her BA experience: "The Year 10 Business Studies trip to British Airways was great. We learnt about the different roles of the employees and how they look after the customers to provide a high quality service. We had a tour of the headquarters and saw the CEO's office; we also had a tour of the museum where we learnt about the developments of the aircrafts over the last century. It was really fun to see the model first class and business class aeroplane seat. Later on we took part in a Dragon's Den style competition and applied some of our knowledge to the task. The trip has inspired a growing interest in working for British Airways in the future!"

Year 10 students also took part in a Coca Cola Challenge which gave them a legitimate excuse to indulge in fizzy drinks! The Year 13 students had the pleasure of visiting Fujitsu. These activities, from large-scale competitions and events to intimate networking gatherings is what inspires our young entrepreneurs to follow their dreams.

Entrepreneurship Week was designed to help young people explore their potential as self-starters and innovators. So be on the look out for those who took part, as they could be on 'The Apprentice' sometime in the future!

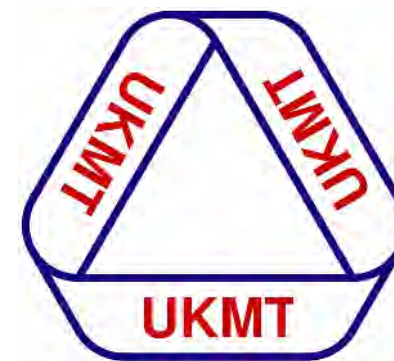
Genice - Marie John-Lewis Year 13

## UK Senior Maths Challenge 2014

Congratulations to the Year 12 and 13 young mathematicians who put their academic reputations on the line, once again, in tackling this most gruelling of national academic challenges.

Our 2014 cohort garnered 2 Gold, 7 Silver and 13 Bronze awards (with our top 2 Silvers only 1 mark out of 125 off a Gold award and our top 3 Bronzes only 1 mark off a Silver!)

Special mention goes to Michael Harvey who now has a full set of Gold awards at Junior, Intermediate and Senior levels and whose Gold score was high enough to qualify him for this year's follow-on round, the Senior Kangaroo.



The A Level Film Studies students were actively involved in Into Film 2014, the educational wing of the London Film Festival. The Year 13 Group attended a screening in Islington of *Belle*, an inspiring film with themes of slavery, racism and class at the heart of the narrative.

The Year 12 Film group attended a screening in Staines of the award winning film, Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave*. Student Karen Bolding felt, "The film was as powerful as cinema can get, unflinching, gripping, heart-breaking".



# Jack Petchey “Speak Out” Challenge

*On Tuesday November 18th two groups of audacious Year 10 students were set the Jack Petchey Speak Out challenge.*

The day consisted of an enjoyable interactive workshop in which we all learnt how to think quickly, communicate easily, and speak confidently. Throughout the day we practised the skills we were constantly learning and put them into everyday use. Nerves were eliminated and we all soon came into our comfort zones. At the end of the day we delivered our “Speak Out” speeches which we had prepared during the day.

Our “Speak Out” speeches were assessed, and in total five students were chosen to go forward and “Speak Out” in assembly. In addition the winner will progress into the next round; the Regional Final, in front of the Mayor, and politicians. From there 15 speakers will then go forward to the Gala Grand Final; here there will be iPods, and money achievable!

Overall the Jack Petchey Speak Out challenge was a fantastic opportunity for us all to develop invaluable communication and presenting skills that will benefit us for the rest of our lives. I strongly recommend this scheme to anyone; whether you are an apprehensive individual or an aspiring public speaker, you won't stop talking after the “Speak Out” challenge!

*Michaela Mannion Year 10*

# Words Matter

Debating and Public Speaking continues to thrive at St Mark's and the season has got off to a winning start with Jessica Ulisse and Ciaran Donnelly achieving first place in the newly formed West London Debating League held at Greenford High School in October. We entered two teams of 2 in this British Parliamentary style competition, with Ifunanya Odunukwe and Alex Moreland also performing creditably. These four Year 11 students were central to our unprecedented success last year and truly are skilled orators.

Debate Mate Club recommenced and it is great to see an influx of enthusiastic Year 7's in attendance. We attended the Debate Mate launch in central London and the aforementioned new intake held an impromptu debate on the tube on the way home!

We hosted the 2014 Rotary Club Public Speaking Competition on the 19th November and we were represented by six teams from across the year groups, waxing lyrical on subjects as wide ranging as “Procrastination”, “We want it all” and “Edward Snowden – a 21st Century Hero”. After a titanic struggle the event came down to two schools, at both the intermediate and senior level, St Mark's versus Gunnersbury. At the senior level St Mark's narrowly lost the overall competition to one of the Gunnersbury teams. However, from our teams were the awards for the Best Chair - Aine Sumer O'Flynn, the Best Main Speaker - Philip Garcia, and the Best Vote of Thanks - Rhea Lopes.

The good news is that the future for public speaking looks bright as the Year 8 team won the intermediate event with Naana Ohene as Chair, Tom Moreland as the main speaker and Britan Niklehaj as the vote of thanks. Tom says, “We all had a lot of fun and tried to do our best. In the end, this paid off and we won. We are very glad to have been involved and are honoured to have won.” Naana also won Best Chair. All the pupils from all six teams represented the school fantastically and we look forward to the next event.

We have entered the prestigious English Speaking Union Schools Mace Debating competition where we have drawn Hampton School in Round One and we have 2 teams in the ESU Public Speaking competition. A busy end of term in prospect for all!

# Lourdes 2014

During the summer, a group of Sixth Form students travelled by plane to France and had the opportunity to spend six days in Lourdes to volunteer as ‘Red Cap’ helpers on the Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage. We were able to work with people of different ages and cultures from all around the world. It was our job to care for the sick and elderly who were in need of physical or emotional support.

We were a team of students from three schools; St Mark's, Gumley House and Nicholas Breakspear. There were some unknown faces at first but through the course of the week we got to know every single person including our team leaders. When tending to our malades we would always be partnered with a new group member and a new malade every day; meeting new people made our time even more enjoyable.



Our role as Red Cap helpers was to provide the malades with a fun spiritual experience. We were given a schedule of events and processions and it was our responsibility to make sure that our malades would get to the services they wanted to go to. Although each day was very busy and had a heavy schedule, it was memorable to see the true positive impact a young person can give.

Lourdes is a wonderful holy place and it was fantastic to see its effect on the malades. Going to Lourdes meant so much to them and so we understood why so many go on the pilgrimage every year. Our time in Lourdes was such a great experience and as a group of 45, the spiritual ambiance brought us all closer together as a community. We are all very grateful for the fun and rewarding experience we had in Lourdes and a lot of us wish to come back next year.

*Yzabelle Celosa Year 13*



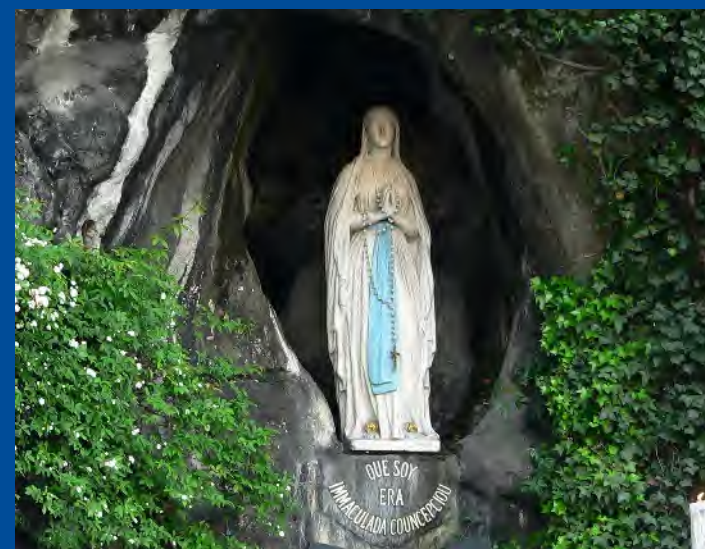
*“It was a spiritual, exhilarating and peaceful journey.” – Judith*

*“Lourdes was an amazing experience, we made so many good friendships.” – Emilia and Megan*

*“Unforgettable experience, I thoroughly enjoyed it and would love to do it again.” – Michael*

*“It was hard work but it was definitely worth it.” – Lian*

*“I found it very successful and enlightening.” – Joe*



# Cafod Soup Lunch

Each Autumn Term the Sixth Form students prepare themselves with aprons and a recipe in order to make soup for students and staff. The aim of the CAFOD Soup Lunch is to raise money for charitable causes. As the bell rang for lunch at 12:40, the wait was over! Queues of pupils from all Year groups and staff filled the food technology rooms with both enthusiasm and charitable intent.

*“I think it's good that we're raising money for them. They're less fortunate than us - we have a roof over our heads and they don't.”*  
*“It tastes really good!”*

*“It's been an emotional roller coaster but we finally made it.”*

*Joe Theobald, senior prefect (one of the cooks)*

Ultimately the generosity of students within the school helped to raise over £300 for CAFOD.

*Olivia Matoke Year 12*



# Ten Ten Theatre

In early October the award-winning theatre company ‘Ten Ten’ came in to perform their two-hour Enrichment session to students in the Sixth Form. It is not every day that we get to go to the theatre and for this performance we did not even need to leave the school!

The session, entitled “Bruised, Hurting and Dirty”, involved a striking one-woman play and told the powerful story of an Eastern European woman who was lied to by someone she trusted, and then ended up being trafficked in the UK. The session helped us understand the problem of trafficking and the impact that it can have on the victim, both physically and mentally. It also educated us about what happens when a trafficking victim is found, as the whole play was set in a safe house for women where they are able to stay for a month or so while they get themselves together and find a better place to stay or perhaps even go home.

At the end of the session, there was a time for a reflection

on the performance that we had just seen, involving questions for us to reflect on and debate. Some of the answers given were very forcefully argued and it was clear that many students felt passionately about what they had just seen.

All in all, it was an excellent performance about a very thought-provoking issue and one that I am sure all members of the Sixth Form will never forget!

*Siobhán Kelly Year 12*

**tenten**  
**theatre**



# Football

It has been a busy start to the year for the Year 7 and Year 8 Football Teams. Training has been well attended and the attitude of all the students has been fantastic.

The Year 7 Team has played two fixtures so far this year. Despite a battling display in the Middlesex Cup, they were unlucky to lose to a strong Queen's Parkside 4-2, with Warren Reader impressing up front.

The other fixture featured both A and B teams against Lampton in the Borough League; the A team won 3-2 and the B team drew 1-1. Joslin Goleku and Alfie Buckmaster both impressed for the



A team but it was goalkeeper Joe Benson who was man of the match with some crucial saves. The B team star was captain Nahom Abebe.

The Year 8 team had a tough bap-

# Boys' Sports

tism in the National Cup losing to St. Aloysius from Islington, but they have made an excellent start in the defence of their Middlesex Cup.

So far they have beaten Preston Manor and Featherstone Schools comfortably and now finally have a tough home game versus Highgate Wood in the quarter finals. Whilst the attacking flair of the team is clear to see, it has been particularly pleasing to see that the side has kept two clean sheets. Noteworthy performances have so far come from Felipe Oggioni, Jonathan Bartholomew and Ben Englefield.



# Rowing

Students continue to benefit from our link with London Youth Rowing which has enabled the school to have use of five indoor rowing machines and free water-based coaching sessions in Chiswick. Some of our older students attended a combined Rowing and Careers Day at the University of East London, which was of great interest to our students.

# Rugby

Rugby continues to develop at St Mark's with particularly impressive commitment from Year 7 and Year 8. Training numbers have been good on Mondays; any more students that are interested are invited to attend.

Year 7 have played two fixtures so far, winning one against Cranford and losing one against Heathland. It is a real pleasure to see the boys putting into practice what they have learnt at training and they are improving with every training and match they play.

Particularly impressive so far have been Josh Dwyer and Cormac Diver, with Liam McNulty and Patrick Gunayaka chipping in with some crucial tries.

The Year 8 side have also impressed in fixtures against Cranford and Heathland, but have been unfortunate with the weather impacting on a tournament they are scheduled to participate in. The Year

8 side also faced a competitive Gunnersbury side in October with a number of the Year 7 squad providing support. Some excellent tries were scored in an excellent game of rugby. Well done to all involved.



# Girls' Sports

## Netball Rally

### Year 9

On Wednesday 12th November, the annual Year 9 Borough Netball tournament took place at Heathlands School. 12 teams from schools across the Borough took part in the competition. St Mark's started the competition against their old rivals Chiswick School and suffered a loss, 3-0. The team were disappointed with this start and knew that they could play much better.

From there on in, the team certainly did play much better, winning all of their remaining league games by five or six goals. The team progressed to the semi-final where they faced Gumley School. The team knew this was going to be a tough game, but the team continued with their winning streak and won 3-1. This meant a place in the final, where yet again they were to play their rivals Chiswick, who they had lost to on the first game of the afternoon. The girls really wanted to make amends and felt confident they could reverse the score and win this re-match in the final.

The game was fast and furious as the ball travelled from end to end. At full time the score was 2-2, so extra time began... came to an end with the score still level at 2-2... so extra, extra time started. A late shot just before the final whistle blew at the end of this period of time, by Bronwyn Polley, crowned the Year 9 Netball Team Borough Champions!! Congratulations to the whole team!

Team: Bronwyn Polley, Eve Considine, Rachel Gorton, Ciara John, Megan Da Cruz, Milly Brand, Ona Okechi -Nworjhi, Jessica John Louise Wiener Year 10



### Year 10

On 6th November, the Year 10 Netball Team took part in the annual Borough Tournament. In the previous two years, the team had made the semi-finals but narrowly missed out on a place in the Final.

The standard of competition at this age group is always very high and the two teams from St Mark's equipped themselves incredibly well. The A team had some closely fought games, drawing two, losing one and winning four. Sadly, this was not enough to take them to the semi-final stage for the third year running.

Both teams should be very proud of the netball they played and their fantastic team spirit!

Well done!



# Senior Girls' Football Rally

Tuesday 18th of November was a day of mixed feelings for the Senior Girls' Football Team. On the plus side, the rally wasn't cancelled, unlike in previous years. And although the sun did not really show up, thankfully nor did any rain. Ten girls from Year 10 through to Year 13 took part in the event, and, despite our lack of practice together, there was a real team spirit.

On the downside, team spirit alone wasn't quite enough to win matches. There is no nice way of saying this; we did not win a

match! We came close on most occasions, but ended the day with five losses and two draws - although we were unlucky not to win our final match, having a brilliant would-be-goal disallowed. However, the score lines did not reflect the way we played; we tackled bravely, never shied away from a shot at goal and our enthusiasm never waned. We all really enjoyed it!

Louise Wiener Year 10

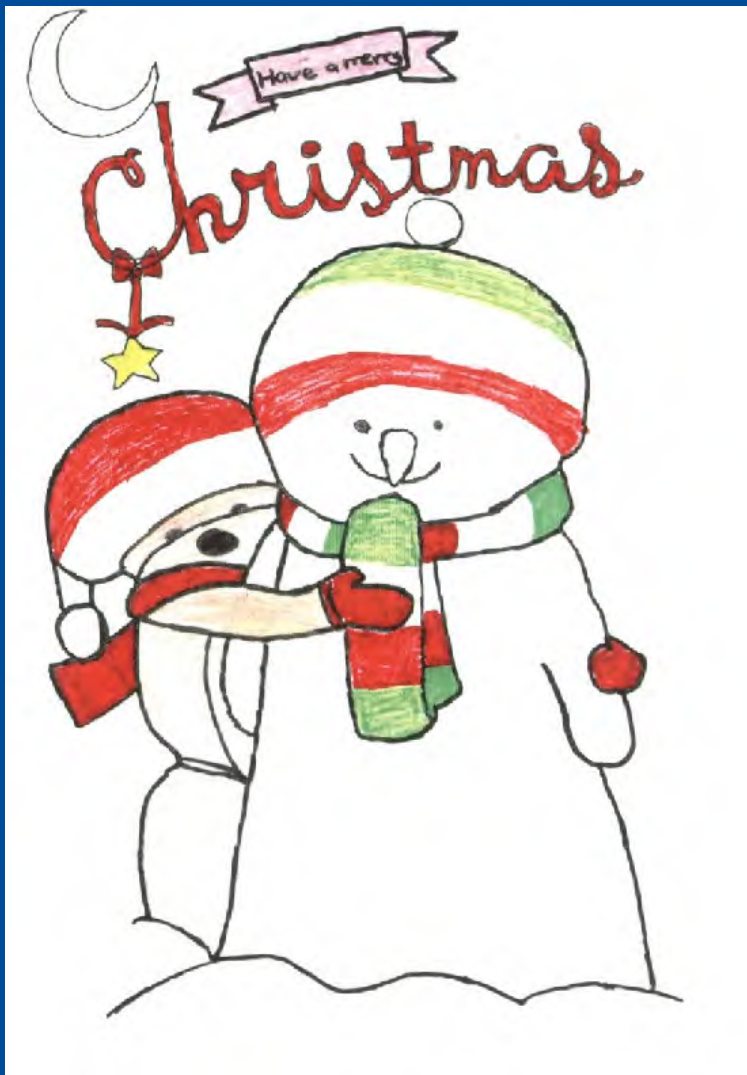




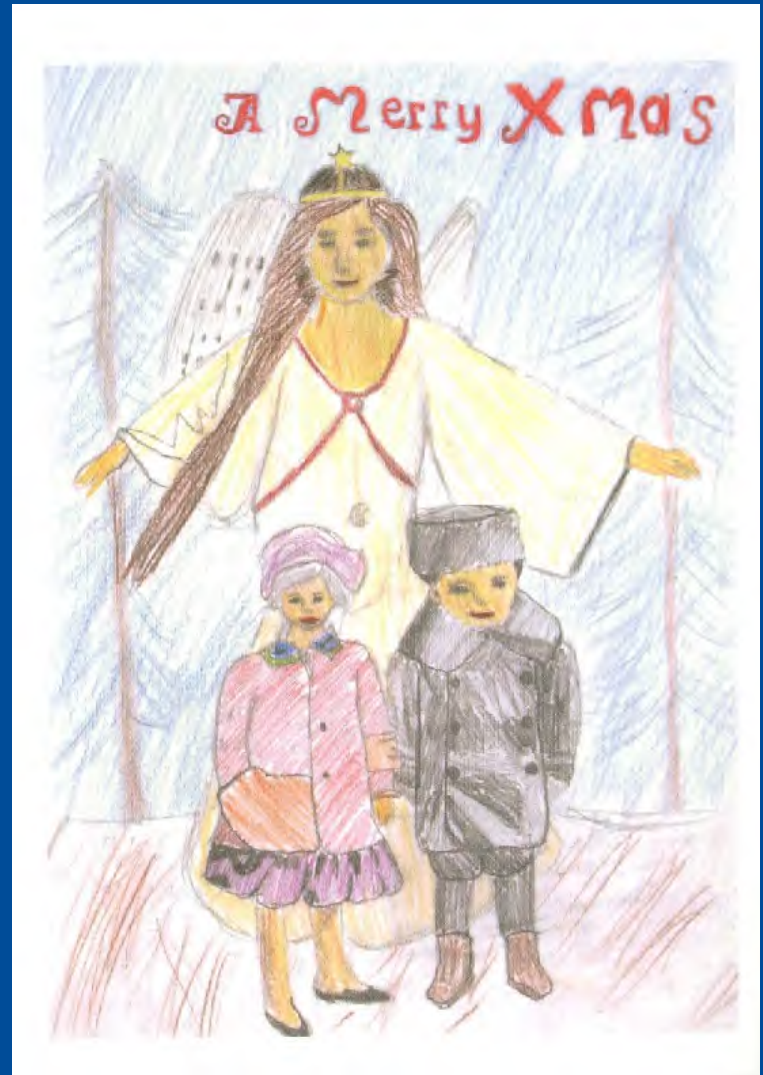


Designed by Joe Benson

# Year 7 Enterprise Christmas Cards



Designed by Dylan Cardoso



Designed by Ciaran Collins