

Cheltenham College News

Volume 13, Number 2. Spring Term 2011

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developments

Once in a
lifetime choral
opportunity

A
co-educational
world

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extravaganza

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more inside...

Cheltenham's first ever QI club

Wouldn't it be great to be able to learn for the pleasure of learning and not for just for an exam? Well, this is exactly what the QI club is all about. A concept introduced by a Lower Sixth girl who was inspired by several academic-themed clubs, the QI club is now a Monday Activity for Lower College students looking to develop their general knowledge.

“The music, quotes, and flags of the world quizzes have really added to my general knowledge. I initially had no idea about some of them but I have learnt a huge amount – and enjoyed it!”

Wanting to create a closely bonded group, we started by playing some clever board games such as Trivial Pursuit and Articulate and soon moved onto studying newspapers and current affairs. We now run weekly news quizzes to test our understanding of what happens in the world.

“I love the current events discussions we have every week because they are much more interactive than just reading newspapers.”

Eager to learn from each other and about different cultures, each member of the club has also presented a foreign country that he or she has a link with, discussing identity, food, political regime and traditions. More recently, the pupils have been practising for 'Just a Minute' and 'Countdown' as they will be leading a House competition around these games next term.

“It doesn't matter what you know or what you don't know because by the end of each activity, we've all learnt something in a really relaxed atmosphere.”

All in all, the QI club is a successful and exciting challenge where students are not shy to be bright!

“I have loved the presentations on the different countries; it is so interesting to learn about new cultures.”

“I have learned so much about current events and other cultures, things that without being part of the club, I wouldn't get to know about.”

*Mme Wandrille Bates
Modern Languages and QI Club leader*



Spring Term Dates

Start of Term:

20.00 Sunday 9 January

Half Term:

11.30 Friday 11 February –
21.00 Sunday 20 February

End of Term:

11.30 Friday 25 March

Introduction



It's great to see so much original content in this edition of College News. We have thought hard about how to convey the careful thinking behind the renewal of our academic direction and our efforts to bring the very latest educational philosophies to the classroom.

Bringing in new ideas from other top schools is always a real fillip, particularly for a school going through such an exciting period of growth and renewal as College. Duncan Byrne, our new Deputy Head (Academic) brings fantastic experience from two top London schools and his vision and clarity are evident in his article setting out our future academic development. Note too our focus on independent learning, stretching and challenging pupils beyond the curriculum and making links across the subjects to enrich the learning experience.

I choose the word 'learning' very specifically and our appointment of Dr Mary Plint from The Cheltenham Ladies' College this term is a very calculated statement. Too often, schools focus only on teaching and don't think enough from the pupil's - the learner's - perspective. Dr Plint's role at College is innovative and, we believe, will contribute significantly to our existing academic strengths.

As ever of course, this edition also features so much of what we do so well outside the classroom as well as within it. I hope you enjoy the diversity and excitement of College captured in these pages.

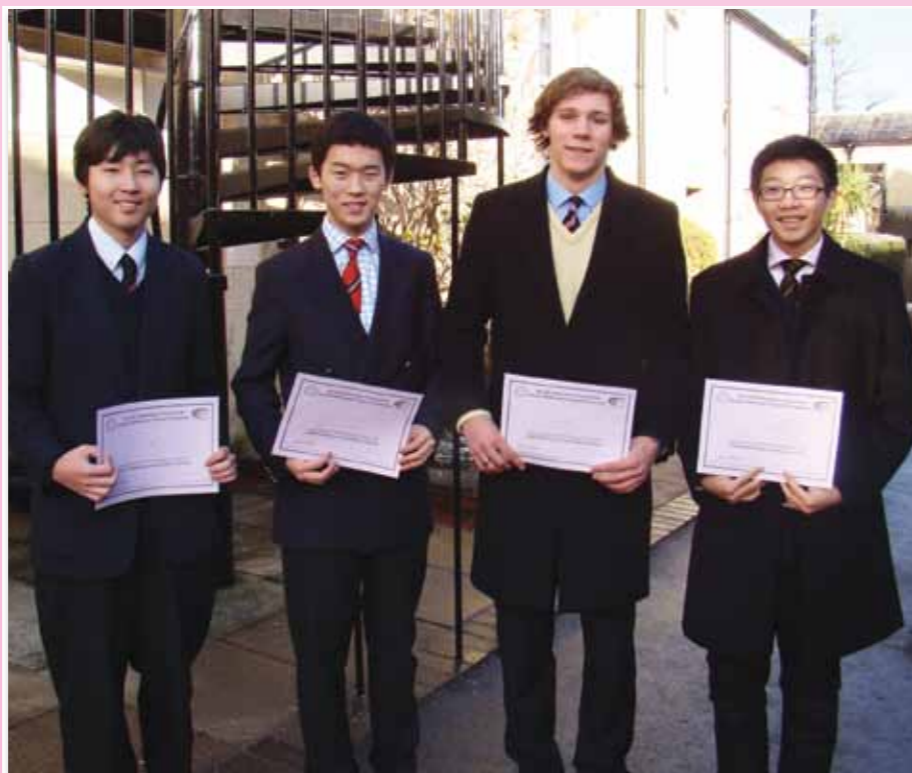
*Dr Alex Peterken
Headmaster*

Rising to the Maths Challenge

Congratulations to 60 pupils from Upper College who took part in the UKMT Senior Maths Challenge, a national competition run by Leeds University which tests both mathematical knowledge and ingenuity. Nearly half of the pupils received certificates for their efforts, with seven pupils gaining silver certificates and 4 gaining gold. In first place was Jun Ho Ku (U6, Xt), who scored an impressive 89% and who has been invited to take part in the British Maths Olympiad.

Congratulations also to the team of Peter Wild, Jun Ho Ku, Paul Yoon and Kango Lee who represented College in the regional finals of the UKMT Senior Team Maths challenge competition at Wycliffe College. Over 20 teams from around Gloucestershire took part, including The Cheltenham Ladies' College. Our College team did extremely well, finishing the night in second place, just one point off the winning team from Rendcomb College.

Well done all!



Academic Colours

Congratulations to: Alex Austin (U6, A), Jonathan Harrap (U6, H), Beth Jones (L6, W), Cressida Pidgeon (U6, Q) and Gus Slator (U6, Xt), all of whom have been awarded full academic colours this term and who now have the privilege of wearing the pink tie with black stripes. Congratulations also to a further 23 pupils who have been awarded half colours; the black tie with pink stripes.



Academic developments

Dr Peterken has made no secret of his desire to re-focus College's attention on academic achievement. Although College has long been, and will continue to be, an all-round school where success on the sports field and fulfillment in extra-curricular activities complement what goes on in the classroom, exam results matter hugely, especially in a marketplace which is becoming ever more competitive despite increases in university tuition fees.

Firstly, we are now giving Cheltonians the opportunity to sit their A Level exams on more than one occasion. Students across the country are benefitting from re-sits and now our Upper Sixth pupils will be sitting a number of modular exams in January to assist them in obtaining the scores needed for them to meet their university place offers. We are also improving the support that Sixth Formers will receive during their A Level studies. Mr Jonathan Pepperman, Head of History and Politics, has been recently appointed to the position of Head of Upper College and one of his roles will be to ensure that individual pupils who are performing beneath their potential are monitored and given strategies to improve.

In order to put greater focus on academic achievement, the number of weekly lessons will be increased significantly from September 2011, benefitting all pupils. This will not, however, be to the detriment of the College's unparalleled Activities programme because we remain determined to concentrate on the whole pupil. We

have also identified the need to establish a better independent work ethos. All Third Formers will now undertake the Headmaster's Project, requiring them to work both collaboratively in groups and individually as they become accustomed to the different way of working in the Senior School. Similarly, there will be a compulsory individual project for Lower Sixth Formers. Reports from universities indicate how much value they place on evidence of students' capacity for independent study, and College is developing a whole menu of projects, including the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification), from which pupils will be able to select. They will all therefore embark on their UCAS applications with a significant piece of independent study upon which to draw.

“Exam results matter hugely, especially in a marketplace which is becoming ever more competitive”

Such initiatives, combined with our excellent existing subject-based and cross-curricular societies, will give pupils the opportunity to extend themselves beyond the normal curriculum from an early age. As a result, the Cheltonians will ultimately be in the strongest possible position to tackle the competition of university entrance with added confidence and enthusiasm.

*Mr Duncan Byrne
Deputy Head (Academic)*



Duncan Byrne was educated at Dulwich College and Trinity College, Cambridge where he read Modern Languages and was a Choral Scholar. After starting his teaching career at Colfe's School, he was Head of Modern Languages at Whitgift School before moving to Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School in 2006 as Director of Teaching. He is married with two young sons and his interests are singing, cycling, running and the Arts.

An inspirational record for charity

Last term, 14 year old Fran Ball (3rd Form, Ch) achieved something that many people only ever dream of; she wrote, produced and recorded her own song 'Hey Soldier', coming up with the music as well as the lyrics.

Inspired by lessons about WW1, as well as plaques in College Chapel and news coverage of the conflict in Afghanistan, the talented singer (and pianist!) put pen to paper and produced a moving track which she has made available for purchase online, with all proceeds going to the veterans' charity 'Help for Heroes'.

The song has already been downloaded by hundreds of people and just goes to show what can be achieved with talent, determination and compassion.



To listen to the song and to download it, please visit: <http://franball.bandcamp.com>. Truly stunning.

Focusing on learning

I am delighted to be returning to Cheltenham College from January 2011 as Director of Learning. The creation of this role reflects College's commitment to pupils' learning and its further desire to improve the educational experience it offers. Educators increasingly appreciate learning as a fundamentally important part of the teaching and learning process: effective education is as much about how pupils learn as how teachers teach.

I am excited about leading the focus on improving learning. Experience in working with learners of all ages, from nursery to post-graduate education, has developed my insight into the skills and attributes of effective learners, the principles of which apply across age ranges. I look forward to helping College pupils to increase their understanding of how they can learn effectively, so that they are actively involved in their learning, feel empowered to take control of it and experience success.

By developing study skills, pupils enhance the quality of their learning and their attainment. It is essential that each pupil should develop insight into his or her own learning strengths and styles, and also that the desire to learn is fostered: study skills should be fun and creative so that pupils not only know how to learn but are motivated to do so. Developing the basic study skills such as note taking, essay planning and effective listening all contribute to scholastic success. Becoming familiar with association and memorisation strategies enhances retention. Mastering revision skills and examination technique can significantly boost attainment. Managing personal organisation and time becomes increasingly important in secondary school and prepares pupils for higher education and lifelong learning.

Creativity and independence should also be fostered. More opportunities will be introduced at College into the educational programme for pupils to research areas in which they have a particular interest and to develop projects of their choice. By Upper College, pupils will



develop an extended personal research or practical project which will provide invaluable experience and support university applications.

I very much look forward to my renewed association with teachers, pupils and parents at Cheltenham College.

Dr Mary Plint
Director of Learning

New Head of Upper College



Last term saw the appointment of Mr Jon Pepperman, Head of History and Politics, as the new Head of Upper College. He shares his plans and thoughts with us:

The Head of Upper College is a role that has been created in order to help sharpen the academic focus among the Sixth Form, a job that will

be increasingly important in the ever more competitive university market. My aim is to take a broad overview of the whole picture of College achievement, tracking each pupil's progress in terms of their effort and the grades they attain. I will then work with both pupils and tutors to put together individual learning plans for pupils as necessary. Crucially, this will not only be for those pupils not performing as expected but also for those who need stretching at the upper end.

“We will also be introducing a new academic extension programme, which will offer regular lectures to the Sixth Form on a broad range of topics.”

This individual approach will start with A level choices when pupils are in the 5th Form. It will ensure that pupils are making logical decisions, both with a view to giving themselves the best chance of getting the best possible results at A level and also to choosing the right A levels to give them the best chance to read what they want at University.

We will also be introducing a new academic extension programme which will offer regular lectures to the Sixth Form on a broad range of topics. This will be accompanied by an independent project in the Lower 6th, which will give pupils a chance to explore in detail an area that interests them and produce work in a variety of media. Some will pursue this through the EPQ route, or through entry into a national essay competition. While being of educational value on their own, such projects will undoubtedly enhance UCAS personal statements and ease the university application process.

It is an exciting prospect to be taking on such a job during a period of real positive change at College and I greatly look forward to adding an increased focus on academic achievement to the already excellent pastoral provision in the Sixth Form.

Mr Jon Pepperman
Head of Upper College



This term, the Chamber Choir was given the unprecedented opportunity of travelling to Cambridge and singing an Evensong service in one of its finest Chapels with one of the most eminent and most celebrated choirs in the country; Trinity College Choir. A mixed choir of around 25 members, it is currently listed as the fifth best choir in the UK. The choir is directed by the enigmatic and slightly eccentric Stephen Layton, who is one of the most successful and respected of contemporary conductors.

After a tense and lengthy bus journey, we arrived at the entrance to Trinity College, clasp our cassocks and feeling more than slightly apprehensive. Having admired Trinity's beautiful grounds and the astonishing 'Wren Library', we deposited our robes in the College and made our way to a local Tea Shop, 'Fitzbellies'. Anyone who is as yet unfamiliar with this establishment is strongly encouraged to pay it a visit; the Chelsea buns are out of this world and the scones are a triumph. With our 'Fitzbellies' full, we made our way over to the Trinity College Chapel, where Stephen Layton was to rehearse the pieces for the service with

us. Although his style of conducting seemed unconventional at first, Layton spectacularly brought us together as a choir and encouraged us to 'triangulate' (by this he meant 'pay attention to the other members of the choir, rather than staring fixedly at the conductor').

After this inspiring rehearsal, we were joined in the stalls by the Trinity College Choir and underwent another strenuous hour of creative 'moulding' at the hands of our maestro conductor. The skill and professional attitude of many of the members of the Trinity Choir astonished us, as did the sheer volume that the bass section was capable of. It was fantastic to be given such an opportunity and for a number of us, being a member of such a choir in the future became a more tangible prospect.

By the time the service began, many of us were already feeling slightly tired, with two hours of relentlessly intense 'moulding' under our belts. However the service was, according to an enthusiastic member of the audience, 'magnificent', and the two choirs were said to complement each other beautifully. After the service we were glad to find an extensive dinner laid out for us in the back of the chapel, and settled down to socialise with members of the Trinity Choir. We returned to Cheltenham with a proud sense of achievement and a determination to approach our choral pursuits at College with renewed enthusiasm and vigour.

Wouter Vorstman (U6, S)

An Archivist's plea for help!

Some years ago I heard an interview on the Today programme by someone from the British Library. She said that she knew exactly what to do to preserve and store a traditional book and ensure it would be available for someone to read in the future – whether that was the next day, the next year, the next century or several centuries hence. On the other hand, if she was given an electronic record, she did not have that same confidence.

For centuries, archivists have been able to store books and photographs simply by protecting them and putting them on shelves in an environmentally controlled room. They would then still be there, in as good a condition, when someone wanted to consult them – whenever that was. But the same can not be said about modern media, which is an archivist's nightmare! I have been told that

you cannot guarantee the quality of a CD beyond 10 years. I wonder what will be the lifespan of digital photographs and audio material? Even if the media itself does not deteriorate, will there still be a machine able to read or play it?

In the Archives Department at Cheltenham College we have a small number of these difficult items. How can we ensure their survival for future generations – or even for our own generation? We are already unable to view some of the items, so do not know what gems they may contain. For example we have old floppy discs (8", 5¼" and 3½"); large reels of film; gramophone records (33, 45 and 78 rpm); glass plate negatives; reels of 35mm film; video and audio cassettes. And how long will it be before DVDs become obsolete as well?

Working with the ICT Department we hope to migrate material to a more modern medium. However, as neither the Archive staff nor the ICT

staff have enough time on our hands, we are appealing for volunteers. If you would like to be the first person in a long time to see what is on an old reel, or to listen to some old College recordings, please get in touch – we'd love to hear from you!

Mrs Christine Leighton
Archives Department



A co-educational world

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a parent in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a single-sex education for their daughter but a co-educational school for their son... This supposed truth has become an especially hot topic in recent years as the dominance of girls and indeed, all single sex schools in the academic league tables, has been matched by their demise in actual numbers. In the last decade alone, more than 130 single sex schools have either closed or gone mixed.

The hey-day of single sex education, which flourished until the late twentieth century when economic reality drove the move towards co-education in the independent sector, was the era that many current parents experienced when growing up themselves. Of course, it is not possible to compare academic results with such times; the examination system has changed too fundamentally and in favour of girls as most experts interestingly agree. So, did girls reap the benefit? Well, yes, in many areas they certainly did; there are more female doctors, vets, lawyers, politicians, managing directors and even head teachers than before – but still not as many as there should be and concentrated in a very small range of professions. Regrettably, 40 years on from the Equal Pay Act of 1970, women in the UK still earn on average 15% less than their male counterparts. This golden age of single sex education therefore did not quite deliver, even though we might look back with pleasantly rose-tinted spectacles.

To a certain extent, the co-educational argument can be simply resolved as a lifestyle choice: the convenience of dropping off ones' children at the same school gates has significant appeal. However, delving deeper to beyond the classroom,

there are very strong arguments for co-education. Girls' only Heads may dismiss the argument that single sex schools hinder the social and inter-personal development of girls yet almost all independent schools place an extraordinarily high value on precisely these facets. Only a handful of girls' schools can see their girls compete in a CCF field gun competition and fewer still take their girls trekking to Nepal or paragliding over the Adriatic. How many offer shooting or cricket to their girls? How many can stage a Variety Show or Choral Evensong with the same real-life sharing of experience and teamwork as a co-educational school can? And crucially, how can girls' schools provide their pupils with the opportunity to lead boys?

“In the last decade alone, more than 130 single sex schools have either closed or gone mixed.”

As a society we both psychologically and legislatively believe in the concepts of gender, racial and religious tolerance. Why then, should we assume that single sex education would help women compete effectively in the world beyond school? Surely it is better to educate girls to be self-reliant, self-confident and self-respecting in their dealings with boys within the protected and secure environment of a school, rather than leaving them to learn these lessons in the pastoral isolation of university or work? The ability of both sexes to collaborate with, understand and be aware of each other in both a working and social environment is a crucial life skill.

I believe passionately that co-education is the right choice for most girls. It does not limit a girl's academic potential; it exposes her to greater choice both academically and in extra/ co-curricular activities. Co-education provides

depiction of air and distance in his two 'Virgin of the Rocks' paintings. This led on to Giorgione's Tempest; an image essentially focused on air and tempestuous sky as an emotive vehicle. The second part of the talk was centered on Turner and Constable's technique of 'skying' as a precursor to the landscapes of the Impressionists. The Biologists followed with a presentation on 'Why life evolved around the Carbon Atom', closely followed by the Chemists' insight into the Chemical Elements and the Periodic Table, including a live experiment. We also had an excellent explanation from the Physicists on Nucleosynthesis and where the elements came from, incorporating the Big Bang, the formation of the stars and so on.

The English department then investigated 'Earth', with specific reference to the theme of mortality and burial, introduced via Shakespeare's



Karen Davies was educated at an Anglican grammar school in Manchester before reading English Literature at Girton College, Cambridge. Five years in the City were followed by an MBA from Warwick Business School and an extended period as a Management Consultant. A long-planned career change into teaching took her to Millfield School where she spent 7 years and was Housemistress of a Sixth-Form Girls' House. Karen has two children and a keen interest in hockey, cricket and skiing.

girls with the opportunity to learn leadership in an environment that reflects the world beyond school and is therefore the ideal preparation for the world of university and work. True equality of the sexes is not about girls being the same as boys but about them having equal opportunity and ambition, not to mention having the confidence and assurance to take advantage of them!

Ms Karen Davies
Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Hamlet as a pre-cursor to the War Poets of Brooke, Sassoon and Owen. Excerpts from the poems added real drama to their piece.

The Musicians finished the evening, exploring 'Water' in music across the ages, starting with Schubert's 'Wohin' set to words by W. Muller. Inevitably Debussy was featured, drawing good parallels with Impressionist art, as was Wagner's Romantic Overture to the Flying Dutchman.

Thank you to all Heads of Departments for their input and also of course, the students themselves who did the lion's share of the work and a truly impressive job in presenting on the night. Next term shall see us host another such evening; this time on the Renaissance on Monday 7th March from 7pm in TLG. All are welcome.

Mr Nick Nelson
Head of History of Art and Housemaster



College hasn't performed a pantomime in decades so the Queen's / Southwood performance of Cinderella was awaited with great anticipation. It turned out to be a huge success, attracting a full house which is a rarity for a House production.

We only had a month to rehearse, so from the start rehearsals were intense. Special mention must go to Sam Holliday and Rufus Collier who could not have been more perfect as our two ugly sisters – or more provocative or amusing!

Another special mention must go to Flavia Bruce-Smith, a new member in Lower 6th, who stepped

in to play the role of Cinderella. She played the part wonderfully and in true pantomime style.

The whole production was great fun, a lot of laughs and I thoroughly enjoyed directing it. We had highs and lows, as well as moments when I thought we wouldn't ever get ready for the stage, but in end the cast pulled together to make this a memorable performance.

I would like to thank Mrs Chipman, Madame Bates, Mr Lambert and Mr Spry, without whom the pantomime might never have happened. I would also like to thank the cast; you were amazing and truly hilarious.

Jessica Shepherd (Q, U6)



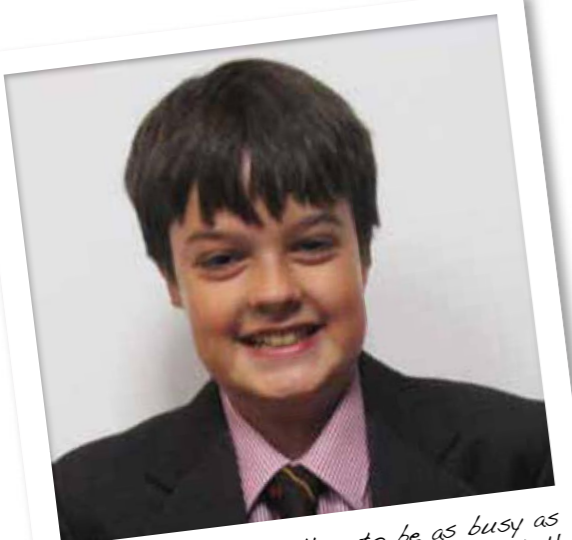
A fascinating Sixth Form Cross-Curricular evening

On Monday 15 November, Art History, Science, English and Music married up in a Sixth Form Cross-Curricular evening themed on 'The Elements' in TLG. The basic premise was for each department to explore one of the four substances (Earth, Air, Fire and Water), each regarded as the fundamental constituents of the world in ancient and medieval philosophy.

The Art Historians began with 'Air', initially looking at atmospheric and aerial perspective, from Roman Pompeian mural frescoes to Leonardo's

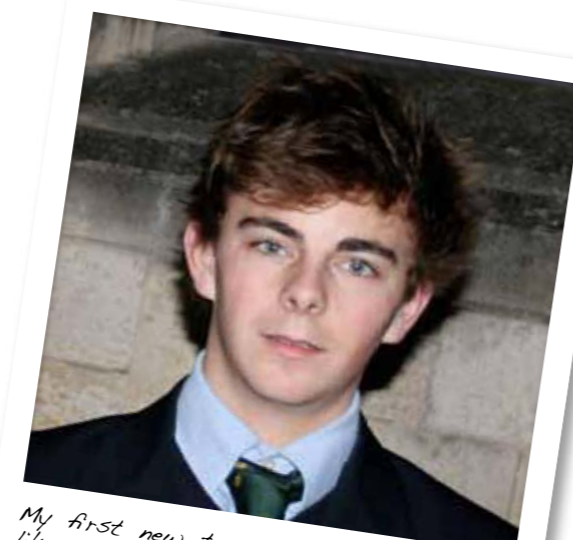
Joining the College community

As the first term of the 2010 academic year drew to a close, we asked some of the pupils who joined us in September to give us their thoughts on life at College. This is what they had to say:



I did not expect College to be as busy as it is but it is a lot better than I expected! I think having a tutor is incredibly helpful because every morning there is someone to talk to if you need help and won't judge you at all. Being treated like an adult makes you feel more mature.

Charlie Bond, (3rd Form, S)




My first new term at College has felt like a whole new world compared to what I've been used to in the past. It's been everything I expected and more. It's tiring but absolutely worth the effort because you have so much fun here.

Charles Dee (L6, S)



Wow what a busy life you have at College! It's a fantastic, thriving community, where everyone has the chance to achieve his or her ambitions and dreams. My favourite part is the 3rd form challenge!

Georgina Thorpe (3rd Form, Ch)



College has surprised me by how much of a family everyone really is, especially your own House. I love seeing the sight of an Upper Sixth, who has a lot more experience in College, playing either pool or table tennis or even helping younger people with work.


Jamie Jamieson-Black (3rd Form, H)



The amount of things one can achieve and accomplish in one day at College has wowed me; it is great to know I can participate in sports, activities and drama, both of which I was involved in, as well as achieving good grades in my preps and exams. Since coming to College I have been involved in many new things, such as the 3rd Form Challenge every Wednesday. This entails helping the 3rd formers with their activities each week, from cooking to rock climbing. I have never done anything like this before or interacted with the younger pupils, so it is a great way to meet new people, guide them and to learn how to be a good leader and role model for them when they move up into the Sixth Form.

As a new Sixth Form pupil, I find it brilliant at College in every aspect.

Natasha Williams (L6, W)




The biggest thing which has wowed me is in Chapel at the start of the day, looking at the heads come in. The thing I like most at Cheltenham is that I can try new sports, activities and subjects. The Houses are great fun and in the first few weekends we did loads of activities, meeting new people. The teachers are also helpful and kind, giving you time for questions and things you are stuck on in the lesson.

Morgan Williams (3rd Form, H)



College is a place where you finally learn to be independent, where you meet new people, and where you have a massive range of opportunities. The teachers here are amazing and once you have settled into your House it feels a lot like home.

Harriet Lacey, (3rd Form, A)



I have now been here for about 3 months and I am very surprised about how my opinion about school has changed. Here you can see and feel that teachers love teaching and the most important, that they love their subject. Their engagement and their enthusiasm is wonderful and nothing to compare to my old school. Another thing I wasn't prepared for are the strong bonds in the different communities, like those in the Houses or during sports. Overall I have a real family feeling in my House and I am really impressed by how the Houses support each other. There are also so many opportunities I never had before and lots of activities I actually had never heard of!

Michael Allinger (L6, H)



College is definitely different from how I expected. I only really go home to sleep but this is a positive thing as I like being busy! It is lovely to have a House to go back to at break times and it's nice to have a place to store all your belongings like a second bedroom. Although College life can be stressful I think that I will look back on these years as being the best in my life!

Harriet Lloyd-Smith (L6, Q)

The importance of independent learning

One of our key priorities is to prepare students well for GCSE and A Level examinations. However, just how much focus is placed on another crucial but often overlooked element; preparing them for University style learning? Independent learning is something that College is consistently aiming to facilitate and encourage, setting pupils up for a life of successful learning rather than just help them shine in their school careers. This is something we hope will set our pupils apart.

“To get an A grade for effort in their subjects, future Sixth Formers will have to demonstrate independent learning in their work”

Independent learning is not simply extra work of a student's own choosing, nor is it simply setting the more able student extra work to do. It is the willingness and ability of students to be more responsible for their own learning, to enquire, to find out and research, to set themselves their own questions. Universities and employers need people who can organise and take control of their own learning, motivating themselves to work rather than relying on tutors and teachers. All degree programmes require students to engage in self-study and to work things out on their own – in some courses lectures are often only minor parts of their learning.

“The importance of helping pupils understand the way in which they learn cannot be under-estimated.”

The increasing focus on developing such skills within College will set pupils up for success after school, ensuring they leave here fully ready for the next step in their academic career. It will also impact positively upon their studies at GCSE and A level. Over the coming months, developments will include a Sixth Form Research Essay competition, encouraging student-led magazines and publications, growing the existing Upper College Society where students lead on academic 'papers' which they have prepared, a Headmaster's Project Prize for the Third Form and protected academic extension time in the timetable. We also will be enhancing our external lecture programme and establishing more

pupil-led cross-curricular evening events. To get an A grade for effort in their subjects, future Sixth Formers will have to demonstrate independent learning in their work! All of these initiatives are aimed at taking learning outside of the classroom and into the wider world in due course.

The importance of helping pupils understand the way in which they learn cannot be under-estimated. All too often students simply learn by rote or cram for a test, without really stopping to question their method of learning or their genuine understanding of the subject in question. Helping pupils come up with strategies to make their learning more effective and, to quote a well known workplace cliché, to think willingly outside the box, is crucial to their development as inquisitive and self motivated learners. Too often schools simply focus on teaching and overlook this part of the educational process. With the help of Dr Mary Plint, the new Director of Learning, we will be focusing on a number of questions and helping students in a number of areas including:

1. How to organise independent time and study periods effectively – study skills
2. How to ask the searching questions – looking beyond the facts
3. How to seek out extra resources and read around topics – information search and electronic research skills

4. How to read ahead and plan in advance for lessons and future subject areas
5. Revision skills and exam preparation – using new 'ace your exams' techniques delivered by external experts
6. Helping teachers understand different learning styles better
7. Teachers' comments on students' work: how students should use them to make work better next time.

Not only will such a focus help students to do better in their exams, it will also equip them far better for university and the world of work, a crucial role of any excellent school in this modern knowledge society we live in.

Dr Alex Peterken, Headmaster and Mr Nick Nelson, Head of History of Art & Housemaster



A taste of Naval life

For 3 days in December, naval cadets Meggie Wang (Ch) and Tom Lowe (S), plus Lt Harrison, joined 80 cadets from schools across Britain in staying on HMS Albion, the ship used by the Royal Marines to provide a dock for amphibious landing crafts. From experiencing the culinary delights of the Junior Rates Mess to visiting a frigate (HMS Argyll), a nuclear submarine (HMS Courageous), rock climbing and even learning unarmed combat with the Royal Marines, the pupils' naval skills were tested right to the limit!

A larger group of Naval cadets also enjoyed a trip to Portsmouth this term as part of the College wide CCF Field Day. This time it was a day on the Solent, powerboating and planning motor vessel routes to the Isle of Wight...



A Mastermind appearance



On 22nd October a number of Cheltenham College pupils and staff were surprised to see me appear on the BBC's Mastermind programme. This had been recorded in May, some months before my arrival and had not particularly been at the front of my mind since: the excitement of appearing on

television had rather been superseded by my taking up the Deputy Head (Academic) role in College.

I have been asked a great deal since why I decided to enter and what one has to do to get onto the televised stages. Firstly, I have always had a good memory for facts (relevant or irrelevant) so friends have long joked about me being a perfect "Phone a Friend". I enjoy watching the show and I was encouraged by a plea for applicants broadcast during the 2009 Mastermind series to apply.

After applying online and undergoing both a telephone interview and final selection quiz in London, I was invited to Manchester for the recording of the Mastermind programmes in mid-May. Contestants had to submit three specialist subjects and, as something of a 'jack of all trades', I chose the History of the Tour de France, the Life and Works of Dmitri Shostakovich, and the History of the French Fifth Republic. The Tour was my first round subject, an unsurprising choice considering

I am a French teacher and a keen cyclist who never travels abroad on holiday without his bike! The others would be my subsequent choices if I progressed through to the later rounds.

While I never anticipated progressing onto the final stages, I revised hard on the Tour de France over Easter and felt prepared, if a little nervous when confronted by the famous black chair. A score of 15 on the specialist subject round exceeded my expectations and, although I was frustrated by the start of my general knowledge round, where I momentarily 'lost the plot' and got six wrong in a row, I found my concentration towards the end and scored a respectable 27, coming 2nd by a single point to the winner. In many ways this was the perfect result since the Semi-Final was scheduled for the first day of term in September; not a day I could afford to miss as a new Deputy Head!

*Mr Duncan Byrne
Deputy Head (Academic)*

Swimming the Channel for charity

In September, Southwood boys donned their trunks for a sponsored swim in order to raise money for Age UK. The aim was to swim the distance of the English Channel in under 8 hours, with as many people as possible in the House being involved.

Over 40 pupils took part and we exceeded our expectations by actually swimming three times the

distance of the Channel, finishing on 102km. We managed to raise over £1,400 through sponsorship and this money was all put towards Christmas boxes, which we gave to Age UK at centres and homes in Cheltenham in the last week of term. The boxes, wrapped in Christmas paper, consisted of tinned hot meals with stew and vegetables, along with a Christmas pudding and custard, tea, sugar, cereal, and other Christmas treats. The additional

money raised was used to provide Christmas cakes and biscuits for a care centre that some of our pupils visit on a Wednesday afternoon as part of our Community visiting programme.

*James Fletcher
(U6, Southwood Head of House.)*





Beyond the classroom

It is often said that the first place to stretch pupils academically is in the classroom. To challenge pupils at all levels and to build on their learning is something all teachers should do, and do well.

However, in today's exam-fuelled world there is a great deal more that College has to offer in fostering intellectual curiosity, academic rigour and the ability to learn independently. Our pupils enjoy a huge number of opportunities to enhance their learning in both co-curricular and extra-curricular settings through a multitude of clubs and activities. Indeed one of the great characteristics of College is our drive for inclusion. All that we do both inside and outside the classroom encourages participation at all levels.

“There is nothing teachers like more than when a pupil asks a searching question in their particular specialism.”

At departmental level there are preparation lessons for Oxbridge candidates and subject societies; the Morley Society (Politics) and Mathematics Society in particular are thriving and the recently inaugurated Science evenings have proved successful with a great many pupils. The Philosophy Society also meets regularly in joint sessions with The Cheltenham Ladies' College.

There are many opportunities within departments for national challenges such as Olympiads, which, being pitched at the interface of A level and undergraduate work, push pupils' limits academically. The UKMT Mathematics Challenge has equally been popular and highly successful with many pupils at both intermediate and senior level. Chiarsocuro and the Science Newsletter invite pupils to contribute articles and letters on Art and Science & Technology respectively.

Pupils are also encouraged to enter prize essay competitions set by University colleges, in which success not only enhances learning but also University chances in the UCAS process. On a College-wide footing, the main objective of Lower and Upper College Societies is to bring together able young people to engage in debate, public speaking, performance and a plethora of other intellectually stimulating activities.

“Pupils enjoy a huge number of opportunities to enhance their learning in both co-curricular and extra-curricular settings”

Recently, of course, the innovation of the A* at A level and, to a lesser extent, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), have been heralded as beacons of academic excellence in the current

post-16 national examinations system. A* is intended to distinguish those who are gifted from those who are 'just' extremely well prepared. EPQ is a vehicle for those who enjoy originality and a depth of insight that taught courses simply cannot allow for. If you have an original idea for research, a talent to exploit or even want to make a video documentary, the EPQ is for you. Both cater for gifted learners and both are accessible to our boys and girls at College.

“All that we do both inside and outside the classroom encourages participation at all levels.”

We believe strongly that any involvement beyond the confines of a prescribed specification will add value, enhance chances at public examinations and make for more interesting and engaging young people.

The message is clear: be proactive and get engaged! Quite simply, there is nothing teachers like more than when a pupil asks a searching question in their particular specialism, goes beyond the call of duty in an exquisitely crafted prep or gives an original, thought-provoking paper or presentation.

Mr John Jones
Head of Chemistry

A host of talents in Newick House

To many outsiders, Newick House has been known as the haven of sportsmen in the College but on Thursday 18 November in TLG, the House showed a very different side to its character.

A spectacular evening concert was laid on, showcasing a wide variety of acts and talents. Nick Knudsen (U6) and Will McNeile (U6) gave superb classical performances on the piano and clarinet respectively, whilst the House's very own saxophone quartet entertained the audience with some lively jazz pieces. There were also some acoustic guitar song renditions from Fred Nesbitt (U6) and George Barnett (U6), as well as a hilarious version of Jay-Z's New York, (renamed "Newick") from the House's resident tutor, Mr



Arnold. The evening also showcased the comic talents of some of the House's leading actors, James Strutt (L6), Charlie Turrell (L6) and Oliver Thornley (L6), and saw some superb tricks from two budding magicians, Christian Humphries (5th form) and Lawrence Xue (5th form).

The evening was most warmly received by a large audience and it was fantastic to see so much ability on show, as well as to be part of such a

warm and colourful evening. Next term sees Newick House up with Ashmead for a House play, where we will see even more boys develop their gifts in what will hopefully prove to be another successful evening.

Mr Fergus Llewellyn
Housemaster of Newick House



A fashion show extravaganza

On 12 November, the Textiles Technology Department hosted a superb fashion show, converting Big C theatre's stage into a long catwalk for the models to display their work.

The show was mainly organised by the Upper Sixth formers, with the help of the Lower Sixth. A huge amount of work was put in back stage with organisation, hairstyles and make-up. It was a fantastic evening, with loud music, bright lighting and above all, an enthusiastic and supportive audience ranging from the Headmaster and staff to parents and pupils.

The garments that were displayed included corsets designed by the 4th Form and all GCSE, AS level and A level exam pieces. There was a large range of clothing modelled, including evening dresses, children's wear, jackets,

coats, jumpsuits and even fitted blazers. The coursework results, which included all folder work and the actual making of the garments, all scored either full marks or just below.

The occasion was held in favour of Cancer Research UK, and with donations from the audience we managed to raise a total of £140 on the night. We also handed out charity bags for people to put their unwanted clothes in. Many thanks go to Miss Hubbard, the Textiles Technology Technician, for all the hard work she put in and for motivating all the models and textiles students to put on such a great show!

Amelia Bianchi, Textiles Student (L6, Ch)

Water polo goes from strength to strength

The College water polo club has had an excellent term, including success against local Universities and also in the first round of the U18 English Schools' Competition, held here at College. The team secured impressive victories in all three matches over Sherborne, Warwick School and Petroc, putting them through to the second round of the Championships in February.

This term also saw the first ever U16 fixture, with a solid 8-6 victory over Radley. The U16s now look forward to the first round of the U16 English Schools' early next term. Particular mention should be made of **Josh Baldwin** (U6, Xt) who captained the U18 side well, leading by example and scoring 21 goals this term. Other notable performances have come from vice captain **Peter Wild** (U6, Xt), in goal, and **Rhys Edwards** (5th, S), the U16s captain.



Water polo is a relatively new sport at College and continues to grow under the leadership of Tom Carpenter, who is himself an experienced player, currently playing in the Second Division of the British Water polo league. From 5 or 6 players in 2008, Mr Carpenter now trains a squad of around 20 members competing at both U18 and U16 level. Impressively, the U18s have played 9 matches this term, winning 7, drawing 1 and losing 1.

For more details on water polo, including stats and player profiles, please visit:

www.cheltenhamcollege.org/water-polo

*Mr Tom Carpenter
Chemistry & Master-in-charge
of water polo*

Rackets Champion visits College

Jamie Stout, Rackets World Champion, came back to College in November to play in front of a packed gallery. He was in fact halfway through defending his World Championship, having beaten the world number 2 and challenger 4-0 in New York, which meant that he needed to win only one game in the 2nd leg at Queen's Club. Clearly a warm up game at College was going to sharpen him up...

For the match at College, he teamed up with his old College partner, Alex Coldicott, and played College's First Pair, Richard Owen and Chris Stout in a highly entertaining exhibition of first class rackets; a match made a little spicier by the sibling rivalry. Jamie Stout and Alex Coldicott won 2-0, before the Stouts teamed up for a further two games.

College has enjoyed much success recently on the schools' circuit: as one of 16 schools to play the game, we are currently holders of The Faber Cup which rewards all-round success at all age groups, and in the 2009-2010 season, we managed to make 6 of the 8 finals. So far this year we are

ahead on points, with December's Finals Day at the Public Schools' Singles competition seeing Alex Duncliffe-Vines win the U16s, Richard Owen come runner up in the Foster Cup and Adrian Montagu reach the semi finals of the U15s, knocking out the number 1 seed along the way.

As the forerunner of squash, College's court was reopened in 1988, making us one of the more

recent additions to the schools lucky enough to have a court. That we have so many boys currently playing, as well as Old Cheltonians, is testimony to College's successes on a national level.

*Mr Karl Cook
English and Master-in-charge of Rackets*



New online shop for games kit

Parents are now able to order and pay for games kit online via our new webshop, which can be accessed via the sports pages of the College website:

www.cheltenhamcollege.org

Orders can either be delivered to home or to College Houses.

Hockey and netball news

Congratulations to the senior girls' indoor hockey squad who have qualified for the England Hockey National Indoor Finals on 15/16 January, beating Dean Close, South Dartmoor and Canford in their group round. Good luck to all the girls involved.

Netball has also been under scrutiny this term, with the arrival of Post Graduates Ella Harvey and Lucy Solari adding significant weight to the games programme and in particular to the Netball Club. From next term, Ella will be taking a lead role in coaching and we are also delighted to announce that we will be employing a further 3 external coaches to boost Netball's level of expertise.



Launch of Cheltenham College Fitness Club

New this term at our Sports Complex are various fitness classes open to everyone, complementing the circuit training sessions on Monday and Wednesday evenings at 6.15.

Classes include:

Weight Circuits and Strength & Conditioning on *Tuesday and Thursday evenings*

Rise and Shine Fitness on *Wednesday mornings*

EASY Fit on *Monday and Friday mornings*

All Over Body Workout on *Tuesday evenings*

Free taster sessions will run in the week commencing 17 January 2011. For more information, please contact:

Mr Alan Deadman, Sports Complex Manager:

T: 01242 705 551

E: deadman.alan@cheltcoll.gloucs.sch.uk

Regular Giving Update



A huge thank you to all those parents, OJs and OCs who have already made their commitment to the Cheltenham College Charitable Trust Regular Giving Programme, raising funds for Scholarships, Bursaries and the development of our facilities to benefit all pupils.

If everyone was able to make a regular gift that is meaningful to them it would help make a real difference to our community. You can also, of course, make a single gift if you would prefer. We can claim Gift Aid on all gifts made by UK tax payers.

If you have any questions or would like another Gift Agreement please contact: Heather Eggelton, Development Operations Manager:

T: 01242 706812

E: eggelton.heather@cheltcoll.gloucs.sch.uk

Showcasing talents in the College Variety Show



The College Variety Show has become something of an institution and a highlight of the Drama schedule. This year's show contained a rich array of musical, dancing and comic talent, with a fire juggler emerging in our midst, creating a certain amount of trepidation at the beginning of the show.

The Variety Show is excellent for highlighting performers who do not always feature in other productions as well as showcasing future talent in the drama scene. There was certainly no shortage of volunteers for auditions and the keenness to be part of it is a tribute to the spirit of the event. Our directors this year were Pete Wild (U6, Xt) and

Nick Knudsen (U6, NH), with Demelza Leng (U6 Ch) as Stage Manager and, along with her team, Bookings Officer. They did a fantastic job bringing it all together - a truly valuable exercise in teamwork, leadership and pupil organisational skills.

The Variety Show also has the serious purpose of collecting money for Gogar Primary School in Rongai, Kenya and highlighting the opportunities for Gap work and school expeditions. This year we collected nearly £4,000, which will go towards materials and the making of desks, further paving and outdoor furniture as well as, possibly, the start of a new building project.

Mrs Emma Taylor
Head of Extra-Curricular Drama



Open mornings

Junior School 3 – 13 | Saturday 12 March | From 9.30 am

To register, please visit the website or contact the Junior School Admissions Office on:

T: 01242 522 697

E: roskilly.lucinda@cheltcoll.gloucs.sch.uk

www.cheltenhamcollege.org

College 13+ & 16+ | Saturday 19 March | At 9.30 am

To register, please visit the website or contact the College Admissions Office on:

T: 01242 265 662

E: registrar@cheltcoll.gloucs.sch.uk

www.cheltenhamcollege.org

Note from the Editor

Should you have any comments or suggestions for improvements to this newsletter, please do feel free to contact me. As always, I would like to thank all members of the Common Room and College pupils for their contributions. *Rachel Vicary, Editor*

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