


Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

Report for the Student Committee of Governors

April 2010

Students have been involved in a wide range of activities since the last report in October. Some activities have been arranged by subject areas; others have been organised by students themselves. Individual and group achievements have been celebrated and community links have been developed.

Student Association

- The first half of the autumn term ended with a chance for QE members, both students and staff, to see if their old school uniforms still fitted and to get involved with our back to school themed fundraiser. The Student Association Office became a tuck shop at break time and, at lunchtime, there was the school fashion catwalk where students and teachers showed off their costumes in a packed Common Room in the hope of winning prizes. £250 was raised for the NSPCC through donations and the tuck shop sales.
- 
- A significant amount of money for a range of other charities has also been raised by the Student Association. For Children in Need, the main event of the day was leg waxing when brave volunteers came forward and were waxed by other students in the Common Room to raise money. The SA's President and Vice President Thoryn and Dale were among the participants. Face-painting and a cake sale also occurred. Donations were collected throughout the day and, in total, £400 was raised. At Christmas the Student Association Executive organised a range of Christmas activities to raise money for the Make a Wish Foundation. 120 Candy Canes were delivered around college so friends could wish each other Merry Christmas in a novel way. There was also a Christmas themed quiz which SA members created and hosted in the Common Room in the run up to Christmas. Teams were charged for entry and the winners received confectionery as their reward. In total, the Christmas activities raised over £65. Valentine's Day was also a great opportunity to raise some more money for charity. 53 roses were sold and the £106 raised went to "Tiny Tickers"; a charity which helps babies and children with heart problems.

- The Christmas Shoebox Appeal was also very successful. The SA promoted and organised this annual shoebox appeal over the festive season for disadvantaged children in Romania. Tutor groups brought in items such as toys, sweets, and colouring books to make up the boxes which were decorated and wrapped. 97 boxes were collected and sent off to Romania.



- Charities have also benefited from various cake sales which the SA has helped to organise. Projects have included a World Challenge event in Namibia and community work in Tanzania.

- To mark Remembrance Day, a display was created outside the Student Common Room which included information and literature connected with past and current conflicts and with the work of the Royal British Legion. Poppies were sold in the run-up to the day and £110 was raised. On the day itself, there was a two minute silence at 11.00.

- The annual Battle of the Bands this year saw seven bands compete: All at Sea, Hayley and Jade, Marquee, Bittersweet, AngerMouse, Honour Amongst Thieves and Left Foot First. They competed in two heats, held at the Forum and the final was held in the College's Main Hall in front of a capacity crowd. The winners this year were Marquee, who gained £200 worth of recording time and the Liam Harker trophy. Rise from the Ashes, last year's winners, made a special guest appearance to end the competition.

- The SA Executive has also made solid links with other organisations this year. The most notable of these links was established with Prior Pursglove College. The SA established contact with this college through a NORVIC Student Services Conference, which Dale and Thoryn attended in York. This meeting allowed Dale and Thoryn to share thoughts and ideas with other student executives from the North East. They remained in contact with the students from Prior Pursglove and since then their Executive has been to visit our college whilst our SA has been to see them. Both organisations felt they benefited greatly from the experience and agreed that they learnt a great deal.

- Strong links have also developed between the students and the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Elizabeth Mann and Tony Winnett, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Durham Branch of CPRE, have visited the College on several occasions to publicise their work and to enlist the help of students as volunteers. Their latest visit to the



College involved a presentation to about 100 members of the Student Association where they talked about their work, inspiring students to get involved in campaigns against littering and generally to be interested in preserving the beauty of the countryside for future generations. Students have provided the CPRE with their views about key issues, filled in questionnaires and attended meetings both inside and outside of College.

- The SA has also worked closely with various local and community groups who have set up stalls and discussed issues in the Common Room. As such, greater awareness has been raised of, amongst others, the following: the Teen Arriva Card; the Big College Health Check; Gay Advice Darlington and Durham; World AIDS Day; Daisy Chain charity; Evolution and the voluntary sector; Local Democracy and the work of officers connected with Anti-Social Behaviour, Environmental Campaigns and Police Community Support.
- Various music sessions have occurred in the Student Common Room with performances by students, staff and local groups and choirs.
- Members of the Student Association Executive have continued to listen to and relay the views of students by hosting regular meetings of the SA; discussing key issues with Senior Management; engaging in consultation with external agencies such as Darlington Arts Centre and the Borough Council and by participating in a number of college committees and focus groups. The students have also been actively involved in the appointment of members of staff including that of Assistant Principal (Finance and Information).
- A lively election campaign arose from the 4 candidates wishing to become the next Student Association President. Posters were displayed around college, t-shirts were worn by the candidates' supporters, sweets were offered to prospective voters and all the candidates made short videos about themselves which were shown to the rest of the students via the college's VLE. The campaigns culminated with speeches in the Common Room where the candidates set out their manifestos and with a Question and Answer session where they had to think quickly and provide responses to some quirky questions. Over 1400 students voted, and Robbie Atkinson was elected President with Lucy Atkinson voted as Vice-President. Both are thrilled to have been elected and are looking forward to the opportunities and challenges their roles will bring.



Business and Leisure

- Travel & Tourism second year students organised a fun event for friends, family and QE students. Activities included a magician, speed dating, Blind Date, Take Me Out, raffle, buffet and a performance by student band 'Struck by Kings'. The students organised the whole event including deciding the entertainment, marketing, health & safety and managing the finance. The money raised was split between supporting Travel and Tourism visits to Barcelona and Birmingham and two chosen charities – McMillan Cancer Support and St Teresa's Hospice. Over 100 people attended and the event raised over £1,000.



- A collaborative project has occurred between second year Travel and Tourism students and Dunn Street Primary school in Jarrow. The idea of the project was to provide positive role models, and to motivate the primary school children to think about college and university in later life. Our students carried out a presentation on how they had progressed to the point they are at and outlined what their future plans are in terms of university or work. In return, the Dunn Street Children took the role of tour guides and presented a fantastic walking tour around their local area of Jarrow. Easter eggs and contact details were swapped and an excellent day was had by all involved.
- A Level Travel & Tourism students planned and organised a three night visit to Barcelona as part of their course. The students were allocated individual roles to plan the visit and, between them, they made all of the arrangements for the trip. The trip provided many educational opportunities and raised greater awareness of Spanish culture. Visits included the Nou Camp, Olympic Venues, Ramblas and Sagrada Família.
- As part of their course, Leisure Studies students made a visit to Castlegate Quay, an artificial white water facility in Middlesbrough. The students were there to study how customer service was delivered within the facility and to evaluate the effectiveness of this. Following a talk and a tour of the facility, wet suits and life jackets were issued along with the necessary safety talk. Few if any of the students had experienced Bell boating before, and certainly not in the tropical waters of the Tees in March. The visit provided case study material for their external exam whilst the trip to Hollywood Bowl gave the students the opportunity to compare and contrast the voluntary and private sector leisure industries. Following a talk on customer service in the private sector, the students became very competitive in a bowling competition.

- Leisure Studies students held a Wild West Night and quiz evening to raise funds for an educational visit and to meet the requirements of one of their A Level units of study. The event had western themed games and a buffet. However, the outstanding activity was the line dancing. The students coached the audience through the dance and over 70 pairs of feet joined in which was great fun. Approximately £500 pounds was raised for the Great North Air Ambulance. The evening was a huge success and was superbly supported by students' friends and families. Local businesses and organisations generously donated bingo and raffle prizes. Throughout the organisation of the event, the students worked really hard to ensure a successful outcome. The whole evening had a very professional feel, helped by the decorations and students' hard work.
- As part of their course, A Level Leisure Studies students organised a three day visit to YMCA Lakeside in the Lake District. The students took on responsibility for every aspect of the trip, and had to work together to ensure the event was successful and enjoyed by all. Whilst in the Lakes, students completed challenges such as a high ropes course, raft building and kayaking. The water temperature made some of the activities, particularly the gorge scrambling, very challenging but the students really persevered and benefited enormously from the whole experience.
- The GCSE Leisure and Tourism students made a trip to the seaside in order to visit the Blue Reef Aquarium at Tynemouth. The students visited the facility, had a talk by the manager and looked at a range of strange sea creatures. The students carried out the visit to collect information towards a unit on human resources and recruitment. To provide contrast, the students then went on to the ice rink at the Life Centre. The students got a huge amount from the visit; not only did they see a facility operating at first hand but they also gained an insight into all of the possible career opportunities in the area.



Creative Arts

- 'Identity' is an exhibition staged in the glass corridor of Darlington Arts Centre by students studying on the BTEC Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art & Design. The work shows the diversity of ideas that have been produced during the first stage of the students' course. The twenty-eight students on this course have selected drawings, paintings, prints, photographs, textiles, graphics and three-

dimensional design to represent themselves in this exhibition. It is a showcase of emerging creative talent and the first stage of an exciting journey towards them each achieving their ultimate future ambition of becoming a successful artist or designer. During the course the students have the opportunity to explore a variety of specialist pathways and to experiment with a wide range of different materials and processes. This gives them a range of options and new challenges which help them to decide what area to specialise in at university. Strong drawing skills are an essential skill that enables them to visualise and develop their ideas. All produce individual outcomes for taster projects in fine art, textiles, fashion design, graphics & illustration, photography, three dimensional and spatial design. These experiences help them to build up exciting and very personal portfolios for degree interviews.

- Nine students on the BTEC Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art & Design took on the challenge of transforming an empty shop in Darlington's Town Centre. The opportunity for this came from the Town Centre Management Team as part of its Regeneration Programme which is designed to avoid empty shops being unattractive and deterring potential new businesses from moving into empty



premises. In the former hairdresser's store 'Changes' in Horsemarket, the students created an exciting large-scale three-dimensional installation constructed from intricate paper manipulations. Colour and movement were introduced by three digital projections showing fragmented images from current BBC World News. The students intended to reflect not only the local community, but also to suggest the important connection to the global community. People's knowledge about what is happening in other places is through news programmes, which is why 'Breaking News' was fragmented through the installation. This also implies that we often don't get the whole picture. The students had the demanding challenge of designing and building the artwork in just two days so that John Denham, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, could see it when he visited Darlington on 4th March. The Minister met Tim Fisher and Rita Smith, Director of Creative Arts, and spoke to some of the students who worked on the project. John Denham was particularly interested in the way the news was a factor of the piece. The students involved were: Chloe Tate, Charlotte Mason, Judith Wilkinson, Samantha Oliver, Jessica Everitt, Jenny MacCallum, Louise O'Neil, David Fawcett and Justin Ramsden. The installation was on display for the whole of March; projected 'Breaking News' was seen at intermittent intervals throughout that time.

- The Christmas Concert took place on December 16th to the usual packed hall. Items were provided by the Big Band, College Orchestra, Choir and numerous soloists. New this year was an entertaining

World Music Group which is directed by Alec Jackson. The World Music Group meets every week and explores, through performance, the influence of world music upon a wide variety of genres. Students have performed African drumming, South American music, Gospel singing, Bhangra and Polynesian Monkey Song.

- The annual Leschinski music competition was held at College in February and, after intense deliberation, the judges awarded prizes to James Lane and Stephanie Ross. This competition is an annual event which started in 1985 with the prizes being donated by Mr W W Wolf in memory of Olga Leschinski, his piano teacher in Berlin who was a refugee from communist Russia and who was later murdered by the Nazis. There were 15 competitors this year who performed an extensive variety of pieces on a range of instruments from electric guitar to alto sax and flute. The judges, Ian Robinson and Shaune Eland who are both brass teachers in the Durham Music Support Service, found the standard very high and it was extremely difficult to nominate the prize-winners. James and Stephanie are both second year students. James won first prize for an original piece he played on his guitar 'DADGAD Rolling Slap'n'Tap'; Stephanie's singing of Parade's 'You Don't Know This Man' won her the second prize. James and Stephanie are extremely talented and versatile musicians. James's first instrument is the guitar but he can play very much anything and Stephanie, as well as being an excellent singer, is a master of the keyboard and piano. In addition to devoting a lot of time to their



music and studying AS Level Music, James and Stephanie have other demanding academic commitments. James's A Levels are in Philosophy, English Language and Performance whilst Stephanie is studying A level Biology, Chemistry and Maths. Next year James will go to the University of Central Lancashire to study Creative Music Practice whilst Stephanie will enjoy a gap year doing voluntary work linked to music.

- The Big Band Concerts go from strength to strength and both nights in March had capacity audiences, with approximately 200 audience members attending over the two nights. As well as the Big Band, a piano solo was provided by Tom Lewis and a Bob Marley tribute band directed by Mike Hepple also entertained the audiences.

English, Media and Drama

- The A2 Performance reggae band 'Trenchtown Six' performed at the Vibe awards in January.

- AS and A2 students went to the Theatre Royal Newcastle in February to see 'Chicago'.
- 'Trenchtown Six', 'The Beatlettes', 'Bitter Sweet' and several solo performers - Hayley McCabe, Joe Prattley and James Lane - all from the Performance Studies course performed a sell out Friday night gig in the East Hall of the Arts Centre in March.
- A Level Theatre Studies students had the opportunity to meet a well known theatre and television actress when Katherine Dow Blyton came into the College to talk with them. Katherine was able to take time out from her commitments at the Civic Theatre - where she was appearing in the national tour of Kes - to meet our students. Katherine has worked in theatre and television for over 20 years and, although best known for her role as Sally Hunter in Hollyoaks, she has a wealth of experience in the performing arts. The students were enthralled by her knowledge and were intrigued by some of the advice she was able to pass on to them. Although they were interested to hear about life in front of the camera, they were also keen to learn about the process of making theatre as well as the challenges faced by a working actress in a very competitive industry.



Enrichment

- Students at QE want to make a difference! A new event called 'Make a Difference' was organised by students and staff at the College to promote equality and celebrate diversity. The well-attended event encouraged students to make a difference in the society in which we live by voting in elections, partaking in volunteer work and by being aware of different groups within our community. Many organisations were represented including the YMCA, Amnesty International, Give Racism the Red Card, Gay Advice Darlington, Darlington Association for Disability and MIND who deal with diverse issues ranging from mental and emotional well-being, to worldwide political and social injustice. There was also a performance from the College's World Music Group and tasters of food from around the world. The event successfully celebrated the diversity within our community and raised awareness about key issues students engage with both in College and outside of it.
- A group of 10 students participated in a "Global Agendas Conference" at the University of Hull. Over 150 students, from 13 colleges of the norVIc federation of sixth form colleges, spent a day representing member countries of the United Nations General Assembly. Our students represented

Afghanistan, Australia, Belize, Cambodia, Bhutan, Gabon, Jamaica, Malta and Romania and they had to research their countries' views on a range of matters. Throughout the day, delegates debated a diverse range of challenging world issues including slavery, international peacekeeping, environmental sustainability, human rights and globalisation. Members of staff from the sixth form colleges and the university's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences acted as facilitators in the discussion groups. The students had to propose resolutions which were debated and voted upon by all delegates. There were many lively and fascinating debates and our students participated fully and represented the College in a very positive way.



Humanities

- Thirty six first and second year Archaeology students travelled with four staff to Luxor, where they boarded a Nile cruise ship for one week to experience the land of the Ancient Egyptians. Our students had sole use of the ship and enjoyed all of the activities arranged for them, including an Egyptian themed evening, and Nubian dancers. The first day started with a trip to the Valley of the Kings, with some students taking the opportunity to visit Tutankhamun's tomb. The first years went into the large tomb of Ramesses VI, KV9, which is decorated with incredible scenes taken from the Book of the Dead, in fabulous colours that make it difficult to believe it dates back to 1145 BC. This tomb is one of the key sites that must be studied at AS level. The massive temple complex at Deir el Bahri, the mortuary temple of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut and another key site, that of the less frequented temple complex of Medinet Habu, were also visited giving the students an excellent introduction to the variety of styles used in temple construction. The Viking III then sailed on



towards Aswan, stopping at Kom Ombo temple in the evening, and the students were able to visit the local bazaar. In Aswan there was the opportunity to travel even further south by coach, to the border with Sudan, to visit the magnificent temple of Abu Simbel. One very popular excursion was a camel ride across the desert to visit a traditional Nubian village. This enabled the students to see how people have survived in this arid area as little has changed

in hundreds, if not thousands of years. This was particularly beneficial to the second year students who have to study the development of settlements and civilisations as part of the course. Philae Temple is another site saved from flooding by moving it piece by piece and reassembling it on a neighbouring island, and as it has an exceptional Graeco-Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Isis, it also helped the students who have been studying the religion and ritual of Ancient Rome. After a felucca ride on the Nile the students had a trip to see the tombs of the Nobles, which emphasised the difference between the burials of pharaohs and those of lesser men. Back in Luxor, the students spent a few hours in the massive temple at Karnak which is another key site; its sacred lake reflecting the awe inspiring structures raised by successive pharaohs. Many of its treasures were seen in a visit to Luxor Museum, and the small Mummification Museum nearby was very useful in showing archaeological evidence explaining this process. Throughout the visit the party was accompanied by an Egyptologist whose extensive knowledge enhanced the site visits and ensured that the students received an outstanding opportunity to absorb the history and archaeology of this ancient culture.

- 24 students and 2 staff visited York University for a History taster day in November. They attended lectures, had a tour of the campus and met some current York University History students.
- Two Modern History students, Hannah Johnson and Emma Whitfield, and teacher John Gilmore visited Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland in November as part of the Lessons from Auschwitz Project. The students attended two seminars in Newcastle before and after the visit to Poland and discussed their experiences with other students in College during the January History Club and in class. They also gave a presentation to the Darlington Rotary Club and created a display for the College Library.
- In December, 45 Tudor History students and 3 staff visited Fountains Abbey near Ripon. They took part in a seminar using historical sources and had guided tours of the remains of the monastery.
- 31 teams took part in the annual History Christmas Quiz this year ;a record number. The top three teams won prizes.
- 44 students and 5 staff visited Rome in March. The trip was a great success and students visited a variety of sites including the Colosseum, the Vatican Museums and Monte Cassino, where one of the most fierce battles of World War II took place.



- History Club has continued throughout the year. There have been talks about Muhammad Ali, the Holocaust, the misuse of History in the film industry and Oliver Cromwell. A visiting speaker from Durham University delivered the lecture on the misuse of History in the film industry. All of the sessions have been well attended.
- In March, students studying Politics and Citizenship welcomed three of the town's parliamentary candidates to the College to answer questions and give insight into their policies. Jenny Chapman (Labour), Edward Legard (Conservative) and Mike Barker (Liberal Democrat) were invited to discuss issues with the students to enhance their A Level studies and to encourage interest in the democratic process. More than 100 students were present at the lunchtime meeting which was chaired by Principal Tim Fisher. Questions asked were far ranging and included queries about university education and tuition fees, the war in Afghanistan and the economy. This was a real opportunity for the students to hear at first hand the policies of the three major parties. It was informative and interesting and helped the students to organise their own College mock elections later in the month.
- A group of students studying A Level Politics participated in a truly memorable visit to Washington DC. The QE group joined forces with 46 students from Shrewsbury Sixth Form College and enjoyed a full week's political itinerary which included tours of the Capitol Building and the Supreme Court



along with gallery tickets for both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Cultural experiences such as visiting Arlington Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial, the National Museum of American History, the National Holocaust Museum and the Washington Monument and White House were also laid on. In addition, the students were privileged to meet Senator Bernie Sanders and had thought provoking meetings with

speakers from the National Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, the National Rifle Association and the chief lobbyist for the National Abortion Federation. Due to the collaboration with Shrewsbury Sixth Form College, our students did not only get to experience America's capital city, but they were also able to discuss Politics with students from another college which was extremely beneficial.

Mathematics and Computing

- In November, 78 A Level Mathematics students chose to be involved in the UK Senior Mathematical Challenge and voluntarily gave up their lunchtime to do yet more Maths! They sat what was, in

effect, an exam testing their ability against thousands of other students from all over the country.

Four of the students – Lucy Blacklock, Michael Dyson, Liam Fletcher and Adam Shield - gained top marks and were awarded gold certificates. Liam also received a certificate for obtaining the top result in the College. In addition, a further fifteen students achieved silver certificates and nineteen students won bronze certificates. The number of entries was the highest the College has ever had and the enthusiasm of all the students who entered is something to celebrate.



- 17 ICT and Computing students and 3 teachers boarded a coach bound for Disneyland Paris in February. The visit was organised by a company called Study Experience who arranged the transport and accommodation at Hotel Cheyenne in Disneyland resort. The main purpose of the trip was to learn about the use of ICT in the wider world and the students, along with approximately 800 students from other schools and colleges, attended 3 seminars based around ICT use in Disney. The most popular proved to be about computer aided design of rides and particularly roller coasters; security of Disney's online systems and programming of interactive animated shows. The students also had plenty of time to socialise and enjoy the rides in the park before returning to College.

Modern Foreign Languages

- In November, 12 A Level German students visited Berlin. They stayed in a budget hotel and visited places of historical interest, famous sights, Christmas markets and various museums. As A level students are studying the film "Goodbye Lenin", about German reunification, this trip to Berlin also enhanced their understanding of the film as well as provided them with an ideal opportunity to put their German oral skills into practice.
- 20 AS German students visited the German Christmas Market in Leeds. They had a guided tour in German as well as lots of free samples of German Christmas food. They had the opportunity to ask questions as well as spend some free time in the market to explore the delights of a German Christmas and put their German language skills into practice.
- Mirabelle Medrano-Haste, a student studying A Level German, took part in the UK-German Connection Christmas competition and was named as one of three national winners. The UK- German



Connection is an organisation dedicated to increasing contacts and understanding between young people in Germany and the UK. Students were asked to write in German about their own Christmas, make up a Christmas story or write a magazine article on Christmas. Mirabelle, who is half Swedish, wrote a beautiful piece about the Swedish Christmas she celebrates every year and definitely deserved to win. Mirabelle is exceptionally talented when it comes to languages. She speaks German, Swedish and English and is currently learning Spanish. She intends to study German at university when she leaves QE and her ambition is to eventually become a translator or interpreter. Mirabelle received a festive prize and her work was published on the UK-German Connection website.

- Vicky Ramsden was invited by the British Council in London to give a presentation at the Anglo-German Fellowship Programme Briefing at the British Council in January. She presented to staff and students, giving advice and tips following her recent trip to Germany on the Programme in October 2009.



- In February, 10 AS German students attended a German Open Day followed by the annual North-East German Challenge at Newcastle University. The students enjoyed a very comprehensive tour around the School of Modern Languages and various other areas of the University. The tour was conducted in German by Marlene Kostolowsky, who is a German native speaker and final year student of French and Chinese. The group was also accompanied by another German native speaker on placement from Rostock University. Following the very informative tour, the students participated in the North-East German Challenge where they competed against other local sixth form colleges in a quiz on the history of the German language. Following the quiz students then attended a literature session, where they studied a piece by Kafka. The day ended with a film performance from some Year 11 German students and an award ceremony. All QE students received certificates for their excellent participation during the day.
- Two AS German students, Harriet Endersby and Sophie Aisbitt, won places on the British Council's Anglo-German Fellowship Programme and spent two weeks in Mülheim an der Ruhr in February. They attended the College's partner school Otto-Pankok Schule, staying with German families while they completed research projects. Their trips were fully funded by the British Council. In preparation for their visit, both students attended a briefing at the British Council offices in London.
- For the third time a student from the University of Duisburg-Essen has completed a work placement at QE. Katharina Auerswald, 24, who is studying English and Design and training to become a teacher, worked at the College in March. She was fully involved in all Department activities and mainly worked with students, individually or in small groups, to help to build up their confidence

when speaking in German. This programme continues to be a great success and is extremely beneficial to all involved. It is intended to continue this programme and the College looks forward to hosting another student from the same university later in 2010.

- Maria Kurth, a German native speaker and student from the University of Rostock, who is currently studying at Newcastle University and working for Routes into Languages, visited the College in March. She participated in three classes, working with students in small groups. The event was extremely successful and students commented on how much they enjoyed the contact with a native speaker.
- Katharina Auerswald and Leon Dvoracsek - two students from Germany - have just completed placements at QE. Katharina was at QE for 4 weeks working with students studying A Level German whilst Leon was at the College for 3 weeks helping in the Languages Department and also attending lessons in Biology, History and Maths. Katharina is a student at the University of Duisberg-Essen reading a degree in English & Design; 17 year old Leon is still at school in Hanover. Both Leon and Katharina enjoyed their time at QE and their contribution to teaching and learning was very much appreciated by both students and staff.

- In March, the Firewalk theatre company from Zaragoza, Spain gave a lively performance of "Robinson Crusoe" in Spanish to a packed hall of QE students, members of the public and students/teachers from invited schools.



- All of the A2 French students attended a study day at the Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle. They watched the film 'Entre les Murs' ('The Class') and then participated in several workshops delivered all in French by Newcastle University's language department. Four students have gone on to study this film for their specialist presentation topic in the A2 oral exam.

- In March 34 students spent a wonderful week in Paris, visiting celebrated sights such as the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, Arc de Triomphe and the Orangerie museum, as well as soaking up the more atmospheric quarters of the Sacre Coeur and Montmartre. They had the additional challenge of staying with families, living as the French do, eating French food and conversing with their hosts. QE students rose to this challenge, delighting their host families with their friendliness, politeness and linguistic ability. Throughout the week the families commented on how wonderful our students were



and how they spoke the best French of any visitors that had ever stayed! They were true ambassadors for QE and for Darlington.

- The Programme Area's successful 'buddy' scheme has continued, whereby our A2 students practise with AS students for their oral exam in their free time. They have a series of questions to ask and tasks to complete, but can also share their experiences and top tips. Some second years have even set homework!
- 17 students are completing the OCN French Literature course – a record number! They have been looking at a range of works, from 20th century novels and plays to 16th century poetry. This course received particularly high praise from the moderator last year.
- 3 students have been entered for the AS & A2 Polish exams which is, again, a record number! They are preparing for these exams with Dorota Dye, our Polish evening class teacher, on a Wednesday afternoon. These students, together with Dorota's supplementary programme Polish class, created a fantastic stall at the recent 'Make a Difference Day'. They prepared all sorts of posters and leaflets about Polish traditions and customs and made some very tasty Polish food.



Science

- Six AS and A2 Chemistry students visited the School of Applied Science at Northumbria University in October for a Master Class in Crime Science. The students had an opportunity to develop an understanding of Crime Science and were involved in practical exercises with a 'who dunnit' scenario to solve.
- In December, sixteen A2 Chemistry students visited Northumbria University for the day to complete some analytical work involving spectroscopy and chromatography. The students prepared samples of aspirin and analysed them to assess their % purity. They also compared the components of frozen and fresh spinach using TLC and were given a guided tour of the spectroscopy department.
- During the first two weeks in February, three students - Joe Goody, Ajitpal Hans and Phil Ruane - took part in the first round of the 42nd International Chemistry Olympiad. This involved a challenging

written test of chemical knowledge. Four students from across the country will be selected to represent the UK at the 2010 final in Tokyo.

- In November, the College hosted the Institute of Physics (IoP) annual Schools and Colleges lecture for the first time. Each year the IoP choose a topical physics issue and asks a guest presenter to tour the U.K. to deliver a lecture about it. This year it was Dr Andy Newsam from Liverpool University who entertained over 200 students from QE and local schools on 'Exploring the Universe'.



- In December, the College also hosted an evening public lecture on behalf of the IoP, given by Dr Kevin Chalut from Cambridge University on the subject of the Physics of Cell Development.
- All of the AS Physics students visited Durham University in December to hear the Christmas lecture, this year on the topic of 'Making light work for us'.
- As part of Science and Engineering week, a group of 5 PhD Physics students from Durham University came to College in March to run a practical workshop with 20 of our Y12 Physics students looking at the polarimetry of ice crystals.
- In March, 30 A2 physicists attended a 1 day master class in particle physics at Durham University. At the end of March, Dr Pete Edwards from Durham University visited College to give a lecture on 'The Big Bang Machine', to approximately 100 AS and A2 students and staff.

Sport

- QE has been named North East College of the year for 2009 by British Colleges Sport. The award is in recognition of the College's contribution to all aspects of sport in the region. QE participated in almost all regional competitions in 14 different sports throughout the year with over 120 students competing at this level. Much success was enjoyed with a record 38 students winning their respective regional titles in 10 events across 8 different sports,



giving them the opportunity to represent the

region at the National Sport Finals at Loughborough University in April 2009. At Loughborough, champions from 7 regions in England plus Wales and Scotland competed in 14 different sports to determine the British national champions. More than 2500 young people took part in the championships and 6 QE students came away with 8 medals in 3 different events. In trampolining, Gareth Lee and Callum Braines won gold as part of the north-east winning team; in the girls' doubles table-tennis, Laura Whaley and Katie McTague won bronze; in the pool, Emma Willson won 2 silver medals in the 50m and 100m breaststroke and, as part of the north-east swim team that finished second, Emma and Laura Bailey came away with silver medals. In national trials, 18 QE students were selected to represent the North East region last year. A further 6 students were then selected for England squads - Rachel McKnight in football, Rachel Dauber in netball and Nick Baldwin, Katherine Hobson, Lauren Morgan and Amber Hyde in rugby. QE teams also participated in British Colleges Sport national cup competitions, with the netball team reaching the quarter finals. To be named College of the year is a fantastic achievement – the North East region is extensive, running from Northumberland down to South Yorkshire so the competition was fierce! The College had a great amount of success last year but, as well as this, the award is also to recognise the fact that QE always participates in competitions - even when we have no chance of winning. Our students are also renowned for their sportsmanship and fair play.

- After rigorous selection trials, three students won places in the British Colleges' North Rugby Union Squad. Sam Errington, James Hyde and Cole Henderson then faced strong opposition in December when they played against the Midlands and the South in two trial games for the full England squad. Sam won a place in this elite squad and played internationals against Wales, Ireland and Portugal. Sam found the trials really demanding and challenging but was very proud to have been chosen to play for England. Sam has a mature and professional attitude to training and displays excellent qualities as vice captain of the College team. At QE Sam is studying A Levels in PE, Business and Leisure. In the autumn he will go on to Leeds Metropolitan University to study Business Management.
- QE student John Chapman has taken his talents in volleyball to new highs and is proving formidable on the international stage! John was selected for the England Junior Men's Volleyball Squad in the recent NEVZA (Northern European Volleyball Zonal Association) U19s Tournament in Denmark and is now likely to go on to represent his country in further international competitions. His success in Denmark was phenomenal and the finale of



his week was when he was the only English player to be voted onto the Tournament's 'Dream Team'. He beat off competition from all the top players from the other nations which included Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. At QE John is studying A Levels in Leisure Studies, PE and Business Studies. After his final exams in June he hopes to go onto Leeds Metropolitan University to read a degree in sport. His ambition is to be a PE teacher - and an international volleyball star!

- In February, Rebecca Johnson fought in her first international Karate competition at Sheffield. She competed in both the singles and team kumite for 16-17 year olds in the under 68 kilos category. Rebecca has been part of the England squad for almost a year now. She first started karate at the age of seven and now, ten years on, she is a black belt. She trains with her coach two or three times a week and also teaches a junior Karate class once a week. England training is on top of this at weekends.
- Two QE students have won places in the England Colleges' Football Squad. Right back Sam Dunphy and forward Glenn Donaldson both made the 22-man squad following a rigorous 4-stage trial process which culminated in a final selection weekend at Lilleshall National Sports Centre. To add to their celebrations, both players recently made their international debuts as England Colleges got their season off to a flying start against a very strong Australian squad at AFC Telford. The Australians have dominated most teams on their ten game tours of China, England & Ireland but the game at Telford ended in a 3-2 victory for the England boys with both Sam and Glenn making significant contributions. The standard of the squad this year is better than ever so both Sam and Glenn can be



proud to be among the best 22 college players in the country. Their achievement is even more impressive as they are both first-year students and therefore two of the youngest players in the squad, which is Under 19. They will now go on to play Home Nations matches against Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as a tournament abroad.

- The College's Football A Team is through to the Albert Knox Cup Final, are League Cup Semi-Finalists and are still in with a chance of winning the league. The Football C Team won the Cleveland Schools Division 2 title and is in the Eric Bell Cup Final.
- Boxercise classes have been offered at the College as part of Sports Unlimited, an initiative funded by Sport England to improve the health of young people. A variety of partners are supporting the

project locally, including Darlington's School Sports Partnership and Darlington Borough Council with the backing of NHS Darlington, Tees Valley Sport and local clubs.

Miscellaneous

- At the fifth Best of Darlington Awards Ceremony, an extraordinary number of QE students were shortlisted in various categories. For Academic Excellence, first year student Josh Phillips was acknowledged for his outstanding GCSE results attained at Hurworth School. Josh's 14 A* grades were an amazing achievement and Josh was named the overall winner of the category, being presented with a cheque and certificate by QE Principal, Tim Fisher. Laura Williams and Jonathan Coulthard were also shortlisted for this award.

Laura's accolade was for her incredible A Level achievements; she already had 5 A levels before she came to QE in 2008 and will attain another 3 before she leaves in the summer to study at Cambridge University. Jonathan's nomination and shortlisting were for his outstanding academic performance in AS Levels and work on an



extended physics project; Jonathan has a conditional place at Oxford University for the autumn. Hannah Russell was shortlisted for the Student of the Year award for her academic achievement and her courage and determination to overcome cerebral palsy. Hannah left QE last year and is now studying at Gloucestershire University. In the category Putting Darlington on the Map, Hannah Marshall's contribution to volunteering and sport, particularly football, was recognised. Hannah is one of 10 national ambassadors for British Colleges Sport. Also shortlisted in this category was Penny Porter, QE's Head of German, for promoting international links with Germany, Spain and Russia. The Best of Darlington Awards Ceremony was hosted by Darlington College in association with the Darlington Partnership. An audience of 300 people enjoyed the glittering and entertaining ceremony.

- The achievements of many QE students were also celebrated at the Vibe Awards which were held at Darlington's Civic Theatre. The Contribution to the Community award was won by the College's Student Association Executive and Hannah Marshall. Hayley McKay was awarded the prize of Outstanding Achievement in the Arts, and the Outstanding Achievement in Sport award was won by the College's Football Focus Student Management Team, Emma Willson, Hannah Marshall and John Chapman. There were also performances at the ceremony from Marquee, winner of this year's Battle of the Bands, and from the College's A2 Performance Studies reggae band "Trenchtown Six".

- QEVerve – the college magazine – was launched this year .The idea of producing a college magazine was mentioned in the autumn term to a group of creative writing students. Three of these students, Hannah Wood, Helen Greetham and Emma Graham said they were keen to give it a go so, in early September, the 'college magazine' meetings began. Word spread and soon Dan Howden was enlisted onto the team. Dan and Hannah were already the editor and sub-editor of the 'Yella' in Shildon – a sister magazine of Darlington's Town Crier - so both had previous experience of pulling a magazine together and sustaining it. Meetings took place for several weeks to discuss format, style and content. The first decision the team made was that it should be bi-monthly, thereby giving the team enough time between editions to research, collect, collate and format articles accordingly. Eventually, a launch date was set for late November; the idea being that pre-Christmas would be the best time to do this. After great deliberation and utilising opinion polls, the name QEVerve was chosen to reflect the college's atmosphere of great vitality and liveliness. Jo Cocking, a Foundation Art student, undertook the role of front cover designer and Justin Ramsden, another Foundation Art student, became the magazine's photographer. Each other member of the team was allocated a role to fulfil. For example, Helen Greetham was appointed as creative writer and Emma Graham as film and CD critic. Other students and areas of the College contributed articles. The editors printed 100 copies of the magazine for launch day, after running off a test print. Posters were displayed around College and cakes were made to give away free with each magazine. The team worked very hard in the Common Room and around College to sell the magazines. This paid off, as 100 more had to be printed to meet demand. QEVerve was born. Subsequently, a second edition in February and a third edition just before Easter were also successful. The team has enjoyed working on the magazine and all maintain that the experience has been invaluable, particularly for anyone wishing to take up a career in journalism.

- Students and staff at QE gave a warm welcome to Elfrida Savigear on her appointment as College Chaplain. Elfrida took over from Chris Wardale who retired from the position at the end of the summer term. Elfrida is associate priest at Holy Trinity Church in Woodlands Road and her appointment continues the strong links between the College and Holy Trinity. Although an Anglican priest, Elfrida's remit at the College is multi-faith and she has introduced herself to students by being present at a Student Association meeting and by holding a stall in the Student Common Room.



- The Christmas Carol Service at Holy Trinity Church was a chance for the wider college community to celebrate together as it was open to students, staff, parents and governors. The service consisted of

readings from students and staff and the singing of well-known carols. Mince pies and mulled wine were enjoyed after the service and there was a collection for Children's Societies in the UK.

- Fourteen students have been offered places at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge; a record number for the College. Their places are conditional upon achieving the highest grades at A Level in this summer's exams but all are determined to do their utmost to secure their places. Nine have been offered places at Cambridge: Andrew Williamson – Geography; Laura Williams – Law; Laura Raine -



Veterinary Science; Michael Dyson – Maths; Rachael Roberts – Architecture; Adam Shield - Natural Science; Charlotte Pollock - Natural Science; Sophie Madden – History; Georgia van Raalte – Theology. The five with Oxford offers are: Sam Hurst – Law; Jonathan Coulthard – Physics; Helen Robb - Politics, Philosophy & Economics; Michael Parry – Physics and Helen Greetham - Archaeology & Anthropology.

- Students have experienced various events to give them a taste of studying at Oxford or Cambridge universities. A visit to the Oxbridge Roadshow at St.James's Park, Newcastle was arranged whilst those interested in studying Classical Civilisation, English, Geography, German, History, Philosophy, Politics, Spanish or Theology attended the Oxford Humanities Open Day which involved an overnight stay at one of Oxford's colleges. In March, an interesting and informative Oxbridge evening was held at college when prospective students and their parents benefited from talking with current Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates, including ex-QE students, and from listening to a presentation from a member of staff at King's College, Cambridge.
- Advice about applying to Oxford University was also offered to a group of students and staff from Country Garden School in China. The Chinese students were in Darlington as guests of Hummersknott School and they visited QE for a morning to receive a presentation about interviews at Oxford and to speak with current and ex- QE students. The visit was very successful and well-received by both sets of students and staff. Three of the Chinese students went on to receive conditional offers at Oxford University. The members of staff from County Garden School stated that the students were able to show their best at interview after having their confidence boosted by their visit to QE.
- To assist with their applications to university, over 150 first year students attended a presentation on Teesside University's Passport scheme which is designed to help students applying to any Higher

Education institution. Students interested in applying to study at Newcastle University attended a talk by a member of the university staff on its Partners scheme.

- Students due to begin university in September attended a series of talks by Chris Turner and Dougie Shawel, Student Support Officers at Teesside University, about financial matters and assistance available to them before and during their time in Higher Education.
- Students applying for university courses where they will undergo interviews – teaching, social work, most medical and nursing courses as well as Oxbridge applicants – received interview practice and preparation sessions.
- Sophie Miller won the College’s Creative Writing competition and the runner-up was Michael Lamb. Their prizes were presented at an award ceremony by local poet, Jo Colley, who also spoke about creative writing in general.
- Fifteen students participated in a Young People’s E-Safety Conference organised by Darlington’s Children’s Trust and Darlington Partnership. The students discussed how to stay safe, particularly when using modern communication technologies and key messages from the event were disseminated to young people across Darlington.
- QE students performed a specially choreographed dance at the Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony at the Arts Centre in January. The event also featured a personal testimony from Sylvia Hurst, a member of the Association of Jewish Refugees, and several readings and prayers.
- During February, students and staff participated in a Health and Well-being fortnight. Various sporting activities occurred at lunchtime and directly after college including cricket, badminton, futsal, volleyball and boxercise. A Chlamydia Screening team and Contraception and Sexual Health Nurses visited the College, and all students and staff were encouraged to participate in the Big College Health Check; a national online survey. Other ways to access support and advice regarding health and well-being were also advertised.
- As part of the Health and Well-being fortnight, the College also supported LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans) History Month. Members of Gay Advice Darlington and Durham held a stall in the Common Room to talk with students and a postcard campaign happened via tutor groups. Displays were also put up in the Atrium; Library and Student Common Room to reinforce the message that the College celebrates diversity, values equality and respects individual identity.

- In March, the College organised an Employment and Gap Year Fair in the Main Hall. At the event, various organisations were represented including employment agencies, gap year organisers, members from the voluntary sector and local employers including Durham Constabulary and Headlam Hall. The event was very well attended and students received useful information and advice about current part-time employment opportunities and about their longer term plans.



- Engineering scholarships have been awarded to Ben Appleby, Gary Mason, Fraser Edwards and ex-student Ian Wilson. These students were successful after a selection process as part of the "Encouraging Engineering" programme and will receive £1000 a term at University.
- 20 students are to embark on the adventure of a lifetime. In June 2011 they are to visit Namibia with World Challenge – a youth development organisation. Whilst in Namibia they will be working on a community based building project, including building sustainable gardens, and a classroom in a primary school. They will also visit the Etosha National park to take in the magnificent beauty and view some of the native wildlife. In order to go the students had to undergo an application process, and then have to raise a substantial amount to fund the visit. The fundraising has begun with a superb cake sale in the Common Room, with a display of cakes to die for.
- Lauren Wise is a member of the Air Training Corps and over the last two months she has won the Fryer Shield of Excellence for the best cadet in the unit; won the Air Training Corps Sports trophy; has a regional recommendation for the Dacre Brooch and has become Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Durham 2010.
- In September, student Matthew Harrington designed a website for the Darlington and District Town Twinning Association and the site has proven to be extremely successful in enhancing links with Darlington's twin towns - Mulheim an der Ruhr in Germany and Amiens in France. To keep the site up and running, Matthew has now volunteered to work with the Association to update information. To visit the website please



go to www.darlingtontownwinning.co.uk . Matthew is studying A Levels in Media, Business, IT and Critical Thinking. He hopes to go to university to read a degree in website design.

- QE student Hayley McKay won the Hurworth's Got Talent competition in December. She took first prize with a performance of "Over the Rainbow", beating 17 other acts. The event took place at Hurworth Grange in front of a packed audience who voted for the winner.

Laurence Job

April 2010