



ST THOMAS MORE FEAST DAY EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

On Thursday June 22nd, our community gathered at Our Lady's and St. Columba's Church, Wallsend to celebrate the Feast of St. Thomas More, our school's patron. Colin Finlay, Governor and former Assistant Headteacher, with his grandson William McAndrew, Year 8 write, "The students and staff took over the church for the day to present displays and activities which reflect the community of the school and its families. The range of

talents evident was amazing. The church was packed for the evening celebrations which began with concelebrated Mass, followed by an opportunity to hear about life at our Academy. Thank you to everyone at STM for sharing their special day with us. Echoes of the final hymn, 'Oh Happy Day', spilled out of the main doors during rehearsal and performance, sounding great and no doubt lifting the spirits of many a passer-by."

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win the County Cup**

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**"MAY GOD
CONTINUE TO BLESS
THIS SCHOOL THAT
WE ARE LUCKY TO
HAVE."**

Father Anthony, parish priest of St Columba's, writes:

"Thursday evening was a truly wonderful celebration. There was a most prayerful atmosphere in the Church and one of fun and laughter afterwards. The parishioners have commented on the lively faith of the students who took part in the celebration. May the blessing of peace rest on all in the Academy."



A former parent commented: "What a lovely occasion, it was great to see so many young people and families all taking part in a joint event between school and church. May God continue to Bless the school that we are lucky to have."

LOURDES 2017

On the 15th April, a group of Year 12 students travelled to Lourdes for the annual pilgrimage, supporting disabled and disadvantaged children.

"Lourdes is a place where my belief in God has been reinforced. This is down to the smiling faces of everyone as well as the way Lourdes brings different nations together, all sharing a common belief." - Joe Myers

"This week has been one of the most enlightening, amazing experiences of my life. My outlook has changed and I've never felt more lucky and thankful for what I have. I am now aiming to complain less about trivial issues and be more grateful and happy." - Fay Staker



IN THE SUMMERTIME.....



BEACH TOUCH RUGBY FESTIVAL

On Monday 26th June the Year 8 and 9 girls' rugby team participated in a Beach Touch Rugby Festival at Longsands beach. When we arrived at the beach it was packed with over seventy teams from all over the North East. There were so many people that the group photo had to be taken from the road above Longsands. The competition consisted of a series of six-a-side matches throughout the day; we won all of our matches except one against RGS that finished 2-1. When the tournament was over we reluctantly made our way back to school, our trainers filled with sand. - Ruth Clark, Year 8



GIRLS' CRICKET GIVEN A 'CHANCE TO SHINE'

On Thursday 18th May 2017, the U15 Cricket girls attended the 'Chance to Shine' tournament at Tynemouth Cricket Club. The weather was lovely and sunny which created a great atmosphere for playing cricket. There was a quick rain shower but this didn't dampen our spirits or stop us from playing some excellent cricket. Everyone played their best as we played 9 other schools from across Northumberland, with all the games being very tight on points. We made it to the semi-finals but lost out by one run. However we all enjoyed the day. - Jessica Emami, Year 9



UNDER-19s FOOTBALL TEAM

Our Under-19 Football team have had a really enjoyable season. They finished an excellent fourth place in the top division of the Northumberland League. The team then went on to beat Astley High 6-0 in the Subsidiary Cup. The boys have represented the school with distinction, showing graciousness in defeat and humility in victory all season. Well done to a great bunch of lads! - Mr Burnett

PE UPGRADE COMPLETED

We are pleased to announce that the building work that has been taking place in the PE department since summer 2016 is finished, and the new facilities are already being used by students.

New dance studio with retractable seating for performances:



New front of the school:





On 31st March 2017, the Year 7 rugby team travelled to Dame Allan's School to compete in the County 7s competition.

In our group we managed two wins and a 3-3 draw against Royal Grammar School, allowing us to progress as group champions into the final four, along with the other two group winners and the best runner up.

After a closely contested win against Ponteland Middle and a draw against Kings Priory, we faced RGS again for a chance to win the County Cup.

The RGS went one try up early in the game but we hit back with a try straight from the restart. In the second half we took control and made two quick breakthroughs, eventually winning the game 3-1. This meant that we had won the Rugby County 7s, an achievement that has never been done before by a St Thomas More Rugby team.
- Connor Bowran and Lucas Rowell, Year 7

YEAR 7 RUGBY TEAM WIN THE COUNTY CUP

JUDO CHAMPIONS

On Saturday 8th April 2017 I represented St Thomas More at the British Schools Judo Championships. This major national competition has over 600 competitors, and to gain entry I had to win Gold at the regional qualifier event in Tynemouth in January.

In the National competition I fought in a new weight category of under 48kg. I won my first two fights with maximum points. My third fight was very frustrating as I was in control of the fight and leading by two scores, but was then thrown by a slightly higher score in the last five seconds of the fight.

After losing this fight I had to fight in the Bronze repechage, but I

fought well, achieving maximum points and securing the Bronze medal.

- Ellie Hutton, Year 9

On the weekend of 29th/30th April, Ellie went one better and achieved a gold medal in the British Judo Council's National Championships in the Junior Female 10-12 44-48kg category. Huge congratulations to Ellie on this fantastic achievement!



Congratulations to Daniel Henaghan in Year 11 for his success in recent Judo Competitions. On 22nd April, Daniel placed first in the Special Olympics in Scotland. This follows Daniel's success over Christmas, where he was awarded Special Olympian, Judo Athlete of the Year. Congratulations to Daniel from everyone at St Thomas More.



EVENTS IN SCHOOL



WORLD WAR ONE WORKSHOP

On Tuesday 4th July we went to Durham University to learn about World War One, starting with an historical walk around the city, including a memorial podium to the soldiers from Durham. When we came back from our walk, we learnt about the battle of Passchendaele and General Haig, before taking part in a debate about who General Haig made his choices for. We had the more difficult side of the argument but still managed to win the case.

- Grace Garfoot, Year 9

SHAKESPEARE DAY IN THE LIBRARY

Our Year 7 Girls' Book Group organised a Shakespeare Day in the school library on Tuesday 20th June. We made tragedy and comedy masks, organised treasure hunts and took quizzes to see which character from Shakespeare's plays we were most like. We even decorated the library in a historical Shakespeare theme including Shakespearean insults! We all learnt a lot about Shakespeare and had fun too.

- Lily Purvis, Year 7



JAMES GETS 'ON HIS BIKE'

For my Year 13 Resistant Materials project I decided to make a bike out of wood. After numerous ideas were tested, I settled on a bike made out of plywood. The suspension was reclaimed from an old motorbike to add a sense of personality to my piece, and the layers of plywood you can see are the result of careful hand-shaping that I did to fit round the wheels. It is fully functional meaning that yes, I can ride it just like a normal bike (albeit carefully!) - James Stephenson, Year 13

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY 'EXPLAINED'

On Tuesday 4th April a number of pupils from Year 10 met some students from Cambridge University. They shared with us the importance of university, but also how to overcome some of the difficulties, including finance. The cost of university can be something that puts people off, but they were explaining that it should be possible for most people to go, as long as they work hard enough. We really enjoyed the session.

- Dominic Lawrie and Thomas Seagrave-Hindmarch, Year 10



BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

Twelve of our Year 12 students entered the 2017 Intermediate Biology Olympiad run by the Royal Society of Biology. Over 5600 students nationally participated in the competition. All students achieved well, with Jessica Bouron being awarded a "Highly Commended" certificate and Callum Stewart a "Commended" certificate. Well done to all who participated!

- Mrs Woodman

MATHEMATICAL SUCCESS

On Wednesday 10th May I attended a prize-giving at Newcastle University for the Maths Challenge. 66 out of the 1192 entrants were invited to receive a prize or certificate, two of whom were from our school. Aaryn McDonald-Brown, Year 7, received a certificate for getting over 80%, while I received a prize for being the only person to achieve 100%. After the prizes, we listened to Dr. Tom Nye give a short talk on prime numbers and the Goldbach conjecture.

- Stella Pozzi, Year 8



AND OUT OF SCHOOL



YEAR 8 SEATON SLUICE GEOGRAPHY TRIP

Over the course of two days (Thursday 8th and Friday 9th June) all of Year 8 went on a trip to Seaton Sluice. After a study of Seaton Burn, we walked down to Collywell Bay to learn about the processes of erosion that had created Collywell Stack, and how these processes are still going on today. After delicious fish and chips, we played some games on the beach and ended up covered in sand because we were a bit competitive!

- Amy Tullock and Lily Hughes, Year 8

MY MONEY WEEK

26th – 30th June 2017 was My Money Week. This is a week where we learnt all about money, including how taxes work and many other skills across the whole school, giving us the chance to win prizes in every lesson. Teachers handed out 'STM money' to students who answered questions or did something particularly impressive, giving students an added reason to get involved in lessons. This week added a fun new twist to the average school week.

- Daniel Adams, Year 7



ART TRIP TO EDINBURGH

On Wednesday 17th May, Year 10 Art students travelled to Edinburgh. The minute we stepped off the train we headed to the first of four galleries, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. There we met a wild array of exhibitions, but the one that caught my eye was 'The Lamp of Sacrifice' by Nathan Coley. It was a cardboard scale model of the 280 'Places of Worship' listed in the 2004 edition of the Edinburgh Yellow Pages.

- Amy Brown-Joyce, Year 10

DIOCESAN EUROVISION SONG CONTEST

On Wednesday 10th May, seven Year 9 students participated in the Diocesan Eurovision Song Contest at Carmel College in Darlington, with their original German song "Wilde Tiere" meaning "Wild Animals". All performances were amazing and really creative! As well as performing a song, there were also various activities including a Musical Themed Quiz, A 'Team Chant' and even a Dance Off to the Spanish version of a Shakira song.

- Abbie Herron, Year 9



BIOLOGY TRIP TO EDINBURGH ZOO

On the 24th of March, all the AS level Biology students went on a trip to Edinburgh Zoo as part of their topic about Biodiversity and Protecting Animals in Zoos. We spent the morning being shown round by keepers and being told about the work that the zoo does, we then attended a workshop where we participated in various activities. We then had the afternoon to look around the zoo and see all the animals, including penguins and tigers.

- Emily Ashton, Year 12

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE IN HEXHAM

On Friday 23rd June we took a group of Year 9 students to Dukeshouse Wood in Hexham for outdoor adventure. Those involved included students who have chosen to study PE in Year 10, students who have represented St Thomas More in school teams and students who have helped with leadership activities within the PE Department. They were outstanding on the trip; many conquered fears and it was most pleasing to see them work together to solve problems.

- Mr Towns



ART EXHIBITIONS 2017



- Amy-Maria Rollins, Year 13



- Lydia Clark, Year 13



- Holly Hammell-Purvis, Year 11



- Nisha Mohindra, Year 11



- Matthew Smith, Year 13



These last two years of Art at St Thomas More have been an inspiring time. In the last twelve months my overarching topic of 'Folded' was initially a challenging one, as all that came to mind was folding paper (origami)... As always however I found inspiration in the classical world, exploring the ins and outs of ancient Roman and Greek Statues in a plethora of styles, specifically the deep folds of cloth often situated on those statues.

- Nathan Leese, Year 13



VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

An incredible 7 year journey has eventually come to an end! For those who have joined us along the way, each and every person has made such a contribution to the St Thomas More RC Academy experience.

A great thank you to all teachers and staff who have supported us as young people and who have helped us to prepare for what is to come. It is without a doubt that the school and staff have been behind every achievement, success and celebration, and we are grateful for the encouragement we have received.

A sense of family and belonging will forever be associated with St Thomas More and, as we head into the next chapter of our lives, it is evident that we will all hold dear the lessons and laughs that we have shared together. Hopefully many years of health and happiness will bless us all. Thank you class of 2017!

Hannah Schubeler, Year 13 Prom Queen



PROM 2017





MARTIN BLAND

SPRINGS INTO ACTION

I first started doing gymnastics at the City of Newcastle Gymnastics Academy when I was 8 years old, and switched to trampolining at Apollo Trampoline Club, where Olympian Kat Driscoll trains, in June 2015. In my first year I qualified for two UK competitions, achieving a Gold and a Silver at NDP Level 5. In 2016 I moved up to Level 8 and repeated my Gold and Silver in the UK competitions, adding a fifth place at the European Loule Cup in Portugal.

2017 has already been an exciting year for me as I have now moved up to Elite Level. In the first competition of the year I was placed second, in the process qualifying for the British Finals in September. If I also do well in my next competition I will have a chance of being selected for the World Age Games in Bulgaria in November. Later this year, I am hoping to qualify for the "Team GB Pathway programme", which will allow me to train at the British team's base in Liverpool.

- Martin Bland, Year 9

EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

We are proud to share a few successes from some ex-pupils, in this case from one family. If you or a member of your family are a former student of St Thomas More and have a story to tell, please let us know at alogie@stmacademy.org.uk and you may feature in a future issue of More Life.

CAPTAIN JAMES COWEN

2001 - 2006

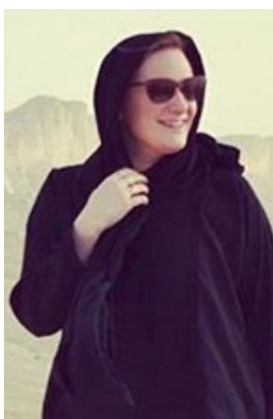
After leaving STM I attended Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College and went on to read French and Politics at Newcastle University, under sponsorship from the Army. Following a year at Sandhurst, I gained my Commission as a Second Lieutenant and was deployed to Afghanistan as an Intelligence Officer. I have subsequently been promoted to Captain and Second in Command of C Squadron 1st The Queens Dragoon Guards. My military service to date has taken me across the world from Africa to South America to the USA both operationally and as a sportsman representing my Regiment at Cross Country Skiing, Athletics and Rugby.



FLORENCE COWEN

2002 - 2009

I read French and Italian at Liverpool University before setting off on several years of adventure. Immediately after the Libyan revolution in 2011 I moved to Tripoli and worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, putting my languages to good use during a time of national turmoil. Having used my languages to work in Russia and Turkey, I have recently returned to Saudi Arabia, where I currently work for the Saudi Royal Family.



JOSEPH COWEN

2004 - 2010

Since leaving STM I have spent each ski season in Meribel, France. I started as a barman, but now work as a DJ on a French radio station. During the summer breaks, I have done many things, including a summer as a butler on a Mediterranean yacht, another working for Gordon Ramsey in the South of France and, most recently, I spent the summer hunting poachers in Africa.



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