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## 'TIS THE SEASON TO BE CHARITABLE

At this time of year we are reminded that Jesus said "sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." [Luke 18:22] Christmas is the time of giving, and this spirit has already been seen this term, with students participating in numerous charity events, raising huge sums of money. Highlights include the Sixth Form Pink Day (£993.71), Show Racism The Red Card Day (£1015.23) and Children In Need 2018 (£1406.00).

Writing about Pink Day, Najiya Ali, Year 13 Charities Committee Member, commented that "it was spectacular to see how many students, teachers

and staff got involved for such an important event; it was brilliant to see the incredible effort put into wearing pink."

Angela Pascua, Year 11 Human Rights Ambassador, was involved in running assemblies to each year group on the significance of the 'Show Racism the Red Card' day. Through these assemblies "we discussed the meaning of racism and the importance of supporting attempts to stamp it out. In PSE, we reiterated the message of our assemblies and emphasised the point of wearing red on Friday 19th October. We did this to visually illustrate our solidarity with the cause and to raise

money for this important charity."

Children in Need Day was another excellent day across the school, culminating in a spectacular concert on the evening of Friday 16th November, organised by the BTEC Performing Arts group. Charlotte Devine, Year 10 Music student, said the evening "was a fantastic experience for us to have the guidance from experts and the use of some of their equipment. Many thanks to students, staff and parents who attended and supported our event, and for helping us to raise so much money."

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### AN ADVENT PRAYER FROM THE CHAPLAIN

God Our Father, in this holy season of Advent, we pray for all those who struggle in their day-to-day lives, and especially for those who face sickness, homelessness, poverty or addiction. We ask that you continue to inspire in us the attitude of charity, and that we can always look out for and reach out to those who need us the most. As we look towards Christmas, help us always to be people of hope, peace, joy and love. Amen.

[continued from front page]

As well as money, the school has already donated over 200 chocolate advent calendars to the Bay Food Bank, and will follow this up with large food donations to the Bay Food Bank and the Salvation Army nearer Christmas, organised by Mr Clifford and 12R. Additionally, throughout Advent, students will continue to raise money for their chosen form charities.

A very Merry Christmas to everyone, we wish you all health and happiness at this festive season.

## ELECTION FEVER HITS STM ONCE AGAIN

On Tuesday 2nd October, we held our annual Student Council Elections, where every student in the school had the opportunity to exercise their democratic right to vote for their Student Council Representative. There was a 93.7% turnout across the school, which compared to 68.7% for the last General Election, shows students really care about putting across their one vote.



The winners were as follows:

- Year 7: Jacob Shaftoe & Erin Cockburn
- Year 8: Alfie Littlewood & Isabella Goodwin
- Year 9: Anna Fuller & Alisina Hassani
- Year 10: Ailish Bland & Cameron Hales-Owen
- Year 11: Cameron Nesbitt & Ellie Ozturk
- Year 12: Kenny Wight & Mollie Wilson
- Year 13: Niamh Hughes & Michael Wallace

Congratulations to all our winners, and good luck in your new roles as Student Council Representatives.



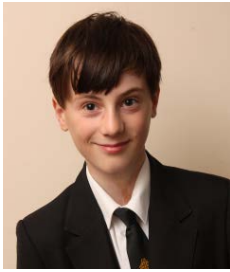
## TYNE & WEAR CITIZENS GAIN CRUCIAL SUPPORT FOR THEIR CONTINUED WORK

On Thursday 22nd November over 500 people gathered at Newcastle Civic Centre to hear the findings of the Tyne & Wear Citizens Mental Health Commission. This was an opportunity to present key findings and requests to public figures to ensure commitment to change across the institutions they were representing.

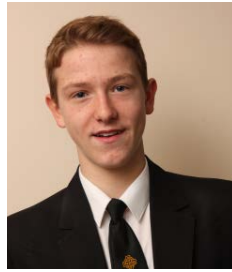
Many of our wonderful Sixth Form students were involved in the presentations. Rebecca Crow shared moving testimony to the VIP guests and challenged them to do something about the increasing strain on NHS services. Neave Miller, Alex Stephenson, Steph Potts, Rebecca Crow and Hannah Baldwin presented on our request that CAMHS work with students at St. Thomas More to re-design the clinic. They replied with an overwhelming yes. Former student Amy Cass, alongside Indion Chinna, Alannah Sweeney, Emma Malcolm, and Neave Miller presented on the request for mandatory provision of school counsellors in every school in England. They secured commitment from Catherine McKinnell, MP to take this issue to the governmental Health & Social Committee. Our student commissioners from the public hearings in June were also invited on stage to be formally thanked and presented with certificates. Rebecca Mould & Emily Whiting were timekeepers and kept the whole evening running smoothly.

The students on the night were absolutely incredible, as well as all those who have been involved in the process to this point. Congratulations and well done to them all!

- Michael Thompson, School Chaplain



**WILLIAM BEATTIE** likes music and reading, and is a member of North Tyneside Youth Council.



**CONNOR BOWRAN** likes playing all sports in PE, but particularly enjoys football, rugby and badminton.



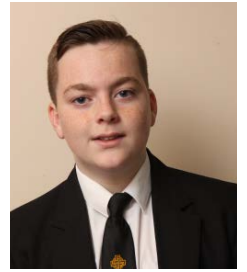
**EMILY COATES** is chatty and funny, and likes to play badminton in her free time.



**ALISSINA HASSANI** likes to be challenged. He also enjoys Graphic Design, politics and army cadets.



**DANIEL HENDERSON** loves playing football and sleeping.



**ALEC McCABE** plays football for his team on a Sunday. He also does boxing twice a week.

## YEAR 9 AMBASSADORS 2018/19



**AARYN McDONALD-BROWN** likes to read, write, draw and sing. She is also a trained first-aider.



**SUZIE McKENZIE** likes music and reading, and is a member of North Tyneside Youth Council.



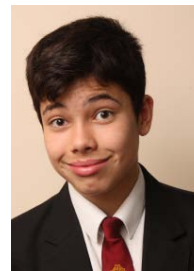
**VICTORIA PELEVA** loves learning about different cultures and talking to new people.



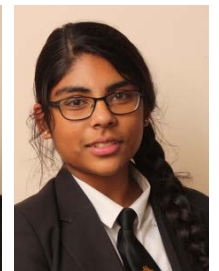
**AMY RIDDLER** loves sport, music and helping other people.



**ISSIE RITCHIE** wants equality for everyone. She is approachable and helpful to others.



**LUCAS ROWELL** enjoys playing sports including football, rugby and badminton.



**MISHAMA SOMY** likes reading, watching movies, listening to music and politics.

## GOVERNOR UPDATE

We had an excellent response to our recent Parent Governor elections, with eleven nominations for the two vacant positions. This is by far the most we have ever had, so thank you to all of the candidates. Using Parentmail for the first time appears to have been very successful with well over eight hundred votes cast, again a big increase on previous elections. We are delighted to welcome the two successful candidates, Linda Carr and Angi Gibson, onto the Governing Body for a four year term of office.

Next term Governors will be attending the Year 11 and Year 9 Parents' Evenings. They would like to talk to parents and carers about how the Governing Body works and answer any questions that anyone might have. Please come and talk to them and share your views.

- Mr Watson, Headteacher

## SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR HIRE



Did you know that you could hire the facilities here at St Thomas More Academy? We have a number of facilities available for hire.

Our facilities include 2 grass football pitches, 1 rugby pitch, an outdoor artificial multi-use pitch, a sports hall, gymnasium and dance studio. In addition, our main hall and training suite can be booked for a variety of non-sporting events. These

can all include the use of a changing room if required.

Find out more by scanning the QR code below or visiting [stmacademy.org.uk/facilities-for-hire/](http://stmacademy.org.uk/facilities-for-hire/)



# IN OTHER NEWS...



## A LEVEL HISTORY CONFERENCE

On Friday 16th November, we attended lectures by renowned historians Dr Anna Whitelock, John Morrill and David Starkey. Dr Anna Whitelock provided a contrasting outlook on the reign of Queen Mary, replacing the traditional 'Bloody Mary' view with the image of a courageous, transgressive political pioneer. The opportunity to gather different historical perspectives was invaluable.

- Lucy Penhall, Macy Russell, Hannah Baldwin and Stephanie Potts, Year 13

## PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPER WORKSHOP

We found the PWC workshop very helpful, informative and interesting. They encouraged us to think about what career path we would like to take in the foreseeable future. It also helped to open up our minds to all the different routes that are available when we leave college. They discussed the company and what they do, including showing us that they do more than just accountancy.

- Skye Arataki and Ella Krishnan, Year 11



## TABLE TENNIS STARS OF THE FUTURE

On Tuesday 4th December our Table Tennis team (consisting of Alex Kelly, Year 7 and Ethan Veitch, Kevin Abraham, Oliver Cuthbert and Daniel Campbell, Year 8) competed in the county finals, held at the Beacon of Light, next door to the Stadium of Light. The squad won all their games in pool A so qualified for the finals, just missing out on top spot to another North Tyneside school.

- Mr Young, PE

## WORD MILLIONAIRES

Rachel Bennett and Eve Keys, both from 7H, have become Year 7's first "Word Millionaires" for this academic year. They have racked up over 2,300,000 words between them in the first few weeks of the Accelerated Reader programme. Congratulations to both girls!

- Miss Edwards, Librarian



## YEAR 9 VISIT NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

On Monday 12th November a group of Year 9 students visited Newcastle University, starting with a MASH test, which stands for Money/Academic/Social/Health. This test helped us to see what mind set we had and to see where our strengths lay. We had a great day, touring the campus and learning about university. We found out that university is very different to school, with only a few lecture classes and tons of reading in your own time.

- Yasmin Hindmarsh, Year 9

## CELEBRATION OF DANCE EVENING

On 5th December 2018, students from across the school took part in the Celebration of Dance Evening to showcase what they have been learning in their Performing Arts lessons. The evening included contemporary, K-pop, jazz, tap and freestyle. On the night, all seats were filled as family and friends of all ages came to watch in our state of the art dance studio. The dancers performed incredibly and our audience were impressed.

- Alice Fairbairn and Caitlyn Robinson, Year 10





## STUDENTS GET THEIR CREATIVE JUICES FLOWING

Students have been honing their creative skills in preparation for a writing competition organised by the Literary and Philosophical Society in Newcastle. In November, Year 7 and Year 10 students were treated to workshops in school led by Jessica Wortley, who is currently working on a PhD in Creative Writing. Year 12 students visited the Lit & Phil Library for their workshop. St Thomas More had one winner and a runner this year so fingers crossed for next year! - Mrs McHugh

## TRYING TO COMPREHEND THE INCOMPARABLE

On Wednesday 10th October, we had the privilege of visiting Auschwitz. The graphic exhibitions provoked a deeper emotional understanding of an area of history we have studied throughout school. Visiting the ruined gas chambers felt surreal; it was difficult to picture the abhorrent events that the site is so notorious for. The powerful memorial at the end of the day deeply moved each and every member of our group. - Hannah Baldwin and Stephanie Potts, Year 13



## YEAR 7 AND YEAR 9 TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

On the 28th and 29th of November, 48 Year 7 students visited Ampleforth to meet Fr Bede, a monk at Ampleforth Abbey. Most people think a monk's life is boring and dull but during our time at Ampleforth we realised that all the monks looked happy to be there. Fr Bede taught us all about love and love of God, and we spent time planning the Mass that we celebrated at the end of our time there. Overall, it was a fantastic trip and we are very grateful for the opportunity. - Ashlea Seymour and Izzy Dutton, Year 7

At the end of November, Year 9 students travelled to the Emmaus Youth Village for a time of reflection on the theme of 'choices'. One of the activities was a debate between everyone on the topics of social media, happiness and choices we make. For our final activity we chose between a dance, drama or art workshop, then performed or showed our work at the end. The whole retreat was a fantastic experience as we spoke to people we wouldn't necessarily talk to in our busy school lives and had an incredible time full of many memorable experiences.

- Victoria Peleva, Year 9



## LAURA NELSON GYMNASTIC STAR

I am an Artistic Gymnast. This means that I compete in all four disciplines of bars, beam, floor and vault, for which I train 23+ hours a week at the City of Newcastle Gymnastics Academy. My coach is Paula Thomas, who competed at the Sydney



Olympics in 2000; I am very fortunate to be coached by her.

In September, I was part of the Silver Medal-winning team from my club at the British Teams Championships. Then in November, I travelled to Guildford to compete as an Espoir at the British Challenge Cup. I won Gold on floor and Silver on vault, finishing second overall and being one of only three out of 120 gymnasts who achieved the necessary score to qualify for the British Gymnastics Championships in Liverpool in March 2019. My next aim is to be selected for the England Squad.

- Laura Nelson, Year 8



# TEXTILES... THE FUTURE

Employment in the textile sector is growing year on year, with 15,000 further jobs expected to be created by 2020. The idea of textiles being a female dominated subject and based on fashion design only, is long outdated. The global demand for textiles is at a peak, with the UK Textile industry said to be worth approximately £9 Billion to the economy each year.

In the Textiles department we have made some radical changes to the curriculum this year, not only to reflect the changes to the structure of Design and Technology, but also to bring back the sense of enthusiasm and importance of what Textiles is really about as a subject.

We wanted to implement a curriculum, starting from Year 7, that would kick start their experience of Textiles and gather interest in the subject, learning skills that are transferrable to other subjects. We wanted to show students that Textiles is at the forefront of many courses these days, including many types of engineering, medical sciences, horticulture and fibre development, for example for military wear, transport and geo-textiles.



I like Textiles so much this year, I have made a bag, blanket and a scarf at home using the new techniques I have learnt in school - Jasmine Loxton, Year 8

What I enjoy about Textiles is watching my ideas come to life in fabric and developing new skills - Tanushri Puthalapattu, Year 8

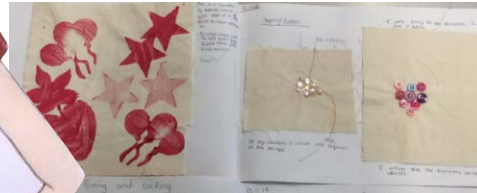
Textiles is so important as it is really relevant to society today and can help people understand current issues such as the impact industry is having on the environment

- Jessica Edwards, Year 13

(Jessica's work is shown in the middle)

## Year 7

Starting in Year 7, we really push the practical elements of Textiles, with students gradually building up a sketchbook through the year, starting with basic life skills such as stitching on buttons. This progresses into a design piece about mystical creatures.



## Year 8

A mix of ugly doll soft toys and t-shirts are designed and made by Year 8. The skills covered are tie-dyeing fabric, machine stitching, embroidery and a variety of decorative techniques.



## Year 9

We focus our attention on the environmental and recycling elements of the GCSE course, which is very much in the media at the moment.



## TEXTILES COMPETITIONS YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT

Do you think of yourself as a bit of a designer? Do you want the chance to show off your design skills to a wider audience? The Textiles department are currently running two competitions:

### GREASE IS THE WORD

This is your chance to design a skirt to be worn by one of the 'Pink Ladies' in the school production of Grease later in the year. The winning design will be made by the Textiles department and your name will appear in the production programme. Fully labelled designs must be submitted to the Textiles department by January 15th 2019.

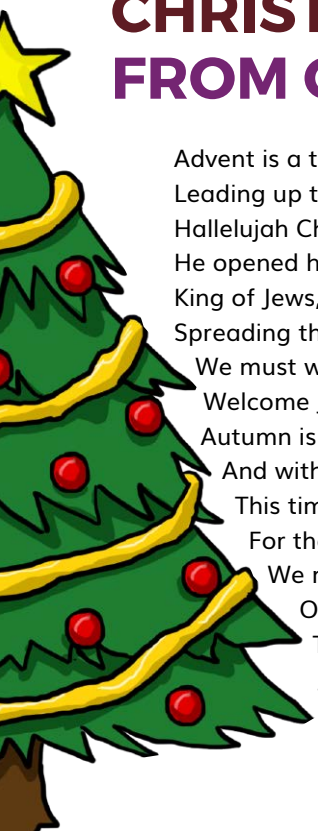
### PRODUCT IN A TIN

This national competition challenges you to design a 'Product in a Tin'. Your product can be made using existing products or ones you have made yourself (this will be more impressive). You must combine at least two different materials used in Design & Technology (wood, metal, plastic, textiles, paper/board). The best school entries will be put forward to the national competition. Deadline for entries February 28th 2019.


For more information on both competitions see: [stmacademy.org.uk/textiles-competitions](http://stmacademy.org.uk/textiles-competitions)



# CHRISTMAS POEMS FROM OUR CREATIVE WRITING CLUB



Advent is a time for preparation  
Leading up to the celebration  
Hallelujah Christ is born  
He opened his eyes with a smile and a yawn  
King of Jews, kind to all,  
Spreading the news, shouting God's call,  
We must wait for this special day  
Welcome Jesus and hear his say  
Autumn is over and Winter is here  
And with it bringing God's news and cheer  
This time is special for we must wait  
For the Christmas dinner piled high on our plate  
We must remember, and we must reflect  
Or lest I fear we will forget  
The real meaning of Christmas, the star on the tree  
Jesus who came to help you and me  
It's not about presents or about food  
It's about Jesus the King who spreads news of good  
- Madeleine Sarin, Year 7




Some people want gifts  
What I would like for Christmas  
Is Peace  
  
The sky is grey now  
Coldness fills all of the land  
The days are short, the nights are long  
  
Here comes the Christmas season  
  
As winter approaches  
Let us be grateful  
That we have a family to share it with  
- Alfie Riches, Year 7

## ICELAND 2018

Day one, after hardly any sleep due to excitement, we landed in Reykjavik and all got on the bus ready for an adventure. Our first stop was a constructive plate boundary which runs through the centre of Iceland. We then travelled on to the Blue Lagoon. It. Was. Incredible.

After a refreshing night's sleep, day two of Iceland awaited us. We made our packed lunches and hopped onto the bus to go to a greenhouse, where tomatoes are grown using hydroponics, geothermal energy and bees from Holland to pollenate the plants. Then it was time for the Golden Circle Tour, which was amazing! We saw the famous geyser Strokkur, but most importantly the lighting was perfect for a selfie. After this we visited the Gullfoss waterfall, Thingvellir National Park, where we could sit in the gap between the tectonic plates of North America and Eurasia, then on to Kerið Crater, a dormant volcano which luckily didn't erupt while we were there!

To start off day three, we travelled to the Lava museum in Hvolsvöllr, which was fascinating. We then went on to



get drenched walking behind Seljalandsfoss, climbed the 437 steps to the top of Skógar waterfall, and finally listened to Mr Murray's explanation of glaciers at Sólheimajökull Glacier. A solid 8/10 for quality according to all the tourists who stopped to listen to him.

- Amy Tullock, Erin Wood,  
Emily Rutherford, Isabelle  
Gott, Juliette Henzell-Hill and  
Aleksandra Szymczak, Year 10

## GERMAN EXCHANGE



Overall, our experience in Germany has been life-changing; we've had an amazing week that we'll never forget. Going to another country and living there for a week has affected our lives in so many positive ways. Throughout our trip, we expanded our knowledge of the German culture and language. In addition, we had the wonderful opportunity to travel and visit so many intriguing places, such as the Landschaftspark (a historic coal museum), Cologne (an incredible city of colour and culture), Schalke Stadium (which has the second largest football fan club in Germany), a chocolate museum and so much more. We also took part in German lessons in a German school, which was fantastic for building our confidence with speaking in German. Travelling around Oer-Erkenschwick gave us the opportunity to get to know our surroundings, and get to know the way of life in Germany. A special thanks to all the teachers who made this trip possible, we wish we could have stayed in Germany forever!

- Aleksandra Szymczak, Ellen Davey, Samantha Coates,  
Catherine Allan and Keira Edwards, Year 10





## PATRICK JURIC PLAYS TENNIS WITH A PRINCE

On the 17th October 2018, HRH Prince Edward visited Jesmond Dene Real Tennis Club as part of his tour of all the Real Tennis clubs in the UK to promote the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

Real tennis is a sport that was played at Hampton Court by King Henry VIII, and dates back to the 12th or 13th century. It is the sport out of which all other racquet sports developed; it is played indoors and has sloped roofs around the edge of the court, called penthouses, onto which you can hit the ball. I have been playing for about a year and would highly recommend it.

On the day of the Prince's visit, we found that he was actually very down to earth. We hit some forehands, backhands and serves over the net, competing to hit our serves into a basket; I hit the rim of the basket before the ball bounced out. I was the closest (closer than the prince)!

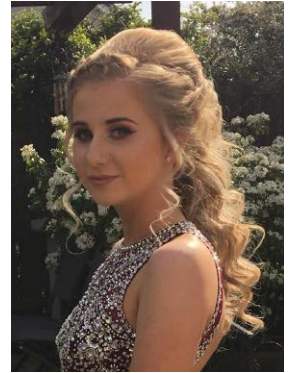
- Patrick Juric, Year 8

## EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

We are proud to share a few successes from our past students. 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](mailto:alogie@stmacademy.org.uk) and you may feature in a future issue of More Life.

### ELOISE WALLACE 2011-2018

At the beginning of Year 13 I was set on studying Psychology at University, but I decided to also look at other options. After attending the Employability Group, getting help with my CV and job interview tips, and getting tons of support from Mr Burnett and other members of staff, I successfully applied for a Business Administration Apprenticeship at Paper Temple Solicitors, and I have been working here since the middle of September. Having recently visited a friend who went off to Leeds University, I am still very happy with the decision I made. Apprenticeships may not be for you and the same goes with University; there is something out there for you, you just have to go find it!



### NIAMH JONES 2008-2015

After graduating with a 2:1 in Business and Management from Leeds Beckett University, my boyfriend and I spent six months saving and set off to travel the world in November! We started with two weeks in Vietnam, and are now exploring Thailand before heading to Australia, where we will spend Christmas and New Year. We don't plan on returning home until April!



### KATE MCGINLEY 2008-2015

I am now in my fourth year at Herriot-Watt University studying Textile Print. This is me with my work at the "Fringe" exhibition at Bamburgh House in Newcastle. I was given this opportunity because I had been interning at a taxidermy studio in the building. On display is the work I did for Joules and later developed for my own illustrated book "Tails of the Woodland".

## NEXT ISSUE EASTER 2019

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