



A Warm Welcome

We hope this edition of Associated Success will give you a flavour of quite how busy a summer term it has been. The various trips, conferences, leavers ball and assemblies and newcomers' events have been part of a wide range of activities that form a crucial part of life in the Sixth Form. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Associated Sixth Form please keep the evening of Friday 20th October free as we celebrate with a Golden Gala at the Royal Hall in Harrogate. This will be a wonderful night of music, dance and drama and we look forward to seeing you there.

Mr C Kidman and Mr J Sharpe.

Oxbridge Open Days 2023



Over 50 students from the Association visited Oxford and Cambridge for the open days in late June and early July. In Oxford students spent two nights exploring colleges and departments. There were subject talks, mock interviews, taster lectures, and meet-the-tutor events, plus plenty of opportunities to talk with current students and see the different kinds of accommodation available. On the first night in Oxford students stayed in either Christchurch, Magdalen or St Johns. The second night was spent in either Brasenose or Keble. Cambridge was a one-night stay at St Catherine's where students enjoyed a similar experience, exploring everything the university had to offer. These open day visits were instructive in informing students about all aspects of the Oxbridge admissions process.

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Careers Conference

On Tuesday 20 June, Year 12 were taken 'off timetable' to take part in the Year 12 Post 18 Planning Day. Set up by our experienced Careers Department, this carefully planned day enabled our Year 12s to gain a valuable insight into the opportunities awaiting them after leaving school.

Launching the conference was Matthew Chapman, Manager of Harrogate BID. Year 12 then made an official start on their UCAS application process with the help of their senior tutors and the Careers department. With 54 talks from industry professionals and employers during the afternoon, our students were able to tailor the day to suit their vocational interests.

We were delighted to welcome companies such as Nestle, BBC Radio York, Leeds Conservatoire and many more. Leeds Utd legend, Eddie Gray MBE, was even available to give advice about playing and managing football professionally. The Gap Year talk was a noticeably popular option provided by York Company 'Everything is Possible' filling the school Chapel for two sessions.

The whole day was inspirational for our Year 12s at a key time when they are considering what they would like to do after Sixth Form.



Senate and Congress 2023

The Elections took place for the new Congress at St John Fisher and Senate at St Aidan's in June. Students submitted speeches online and voting took place among students and staff.

Afterwards interviews took place at both sites for Congress and Senate Leaders. Congress Leaders

are: Will P, Josie C and Patrick W. At St Aidan's, the Senate Leaders are Jamie Green, Kirsten Elliott and Maddy Wilson.

The Congress and Senate will have a busy year supporting events such as Children in Need and working alongside the Sixth Form leadership team. Congratulations to

all those elected.



Work Experience

There have been a record number of Year 12 students taking part in work experience this year, building on their work related skills, increasing their confidence and growing their network of career professionals.

All students are asked to evaluate their experience following their placement and identify specific skills they have developed, such as this testimonial from Ray Jacques following his time with Stephenson's Control Systems.

'Going to Stephenson's has really helped me understand where my skills lie. I enjoyed both the practical side of building panels and creating wires etc but also helping to create the operating manuals. It definitely has made me more confident.



Zawadi Big Quiz

At the culmination of an extremely busy year Zawadi held their final event – the Great Big Quiz - in mid June. Questions in every school subject were set by teachers and there were also a number of picture rounds such as 'Can you name a book by its cover?' which was compiled by St. Aidan's Librarian, Mrs Kennerley. Refreshments including Zawadi's famous homemade cakes plus a raffle enabled the evening to raise a further £400 for Artizan International taking their annual donation to £3500. Staff members, parents and students all came to support the event and Zawadi Chair, Olivia Parris, presented the winning 6th Form team with a chocolate hamper.



Zawadi AGM

Student-led charity group, Zawadi, have held their AGM this term with an invited audience including Governors, Headteacher Mr Thornton and CEO of Yorkshire Causeway Trust, Jane Goodwin. They reported on all the events/ initiatives they have organised this year reflecting on what they have raised and learned in the process.

Zawadi is coming to the end of its 15th year and by the end of this term are on track to have raised a cumulative total of £50,000! Every penny has gone to enable disabled communities in Tanzania, Peru and Ecuador to learn new skills so they can earn money, support their families, integrate with their communities and lead independent lives. Their latest cheque for £3500, presented to Susie Hart at their AGM earlier this month, will mean Artizan International can finally get the cafe in Arequipa, Peru,

furnished and equipped so that they can start training their first deaf trainees.

Well done to the entire Zawadi team and a special mention to the four Year 13 students who will leave this year. Our Business Liaison Manager Mrs Farrar, who supports Zawadi, had something special to say about each of the leavers: Anwen who has been the creative force behind many of Zawadi's projects; Luas who is always smiling and willing to help; Sasha who is "enthusiasm personified" and finally Chair, Eve, who has managed the team brilliantly and has "presentation skills beyond her years". These are all amazing qualities – we are very proud of you all and wish you all the best for your future.



Leavers' Services

Year 13s from across the Associated Sixth Form came to the beautiful chapel at St John Fisher to give thanks and praise for their time at school. Poignant readings were given by Senate and Congress leaders and school leaders Mr Sharpe, Mrs Orton and Mr Thornton. We wish all in the Associated Sixth Form all the best for their future plans.

Parents/carers and students from St John Fisher also took part in a Leavers Mass on Wednesday 17th May. Led by Father Elliott, this was a lovely occasion held in the Chapel to mark the end of seven years association with the school for the majority of the students and their families. Mr Mort wished students all the very best with their futures and encouraged students to embrace the opportunities that the next few years would offer them.



Leavers' Assemblies

On Friday 19 May, both sides of the Association held Leavers' Assemblies. At St. Aidan's, this combined a brilliantly funny video painstakingly pulled together by Senate member, Toby Peyton featuring skits on Carpool Karaoke featuring Head of Psychology Mr Paynton! Awards were given for all manner of things including Best/Worst Trims in Year 13 and most likely Year 13 to appear on Love Island! The old Aidan's Flame sang everyone out with a rousing rendition of King of Kings. At St John Fisher, an assembly was held in the chapel. The students reflected upon their time in Sixth Form and staff thanked them for their service to the school. It was an emotional end to our Year 13 Leavers' school life. We wish them every success with their exam results and the road ahead.



Leavers' Ball

The Pavilions in Harrogate hosted the Leavers' Ball on Friday 23rd June. It was wonderful to see many of our Year 13 students celebrate with their friends and teachers and bring an apt end to their time in the Association. Nearly 500 students enjoyed photo booths, a sit down meal and a disco to end the evening. We wish all our Year 13 students the very best for the future.



Dance News

Congratulations to our Yr13 dancers who graduated from The Centre for Advanced Training this Saturday.

Some students have been on the scheme for five years, so it marked a significant close to a chapter of their lives before continuing their dance training at leading

conservatoires. Several students from St John Fisher and St. Aidan's are on the CAT training programme at Northern School of Contemporary Dance in recognition of the high standard of dance provision that is provided at both schools. We are pleased to announce that many of our students will

continue to attend this scheme and new pupils have also successfully auditioned for a place from September 2023. Pictured from left to right: Blossom Sabel, Lauren Chilton, James Tatterton, Neve Noonan and Lauren Magill. Well done and good luck with your future training.



Golden Gala

We are very excited to share the news about A Golden Gala: 50 Years in Association which will take place on Friday 20 October 2023, 7pm at The Royal Hall, Harrogate. It will be a wonderful evening of Memories, Music, Drama and Dance and we would love

to hear from our Associated Sixth Form Alumni. If you are a former Associated Sixth Former and are interested in taking part, please email: associatedsixthform@staidans.co.uk Tickets are now available via Harrogate Theatre's website.



Irish Music Success

Two of our Year 12s achieved great success at the All-Britain Irish music competitions (Fleadh Cheoil na Breataine) which were held at Stirling university recently. Cormac Keating was awarded first place in the 15-18 Uilleann Pipes competition and Eabha

Gavaghan (fiddle) likewise achieved gold in the 15-18 duet competition. Both students have qualified for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann which will take place in Ireland in August where they will compete with musicians from around the world.

Well done to the Fearnley Brothers!

Congratulations to Year 13 students Ben and George Fearnley! George has been nominated in the British Brass Band Awards – what an amazing achievement! Meanwhile, Ben has played his first concert with world famous Black Dyke Band. He was offered a place in the band a few months ago and has accepted! He can be seen here with former St.

Aidan's student Dave Smith who is also in the band. Black Dyke Band are famous for featuring in the Beatles hit Yellow Submarine.

We are so proud of you both and will look forward to following your exciting careers ahead – keep in touch!



Swing Band on Tour

The reputation of St. Aidan's Swing Band is well established in the UK with regular competition and festival successes at regional and national levels but opportunities for the Band to tour overseas, spreading the word about the world class quality of music at St. Aidan's to an international audience, have been limited in recent years. So, it was a new experience for the majority of the band to board a coach with instruments and uniforms to make the long drive south and across the Channel to visit new locations where their reputation did not precede them.

True to form, the band wowed their new audiences with their exceptional blend of precision Jazz and polished easy listening classics that never fails to attract and maintain a crowd who find it hard to believe that so much talent exists in one school; we were repeatedly asked if St. Aidan's was a specialist music school or whether we were a regional band.

From their base at Hostel H In Hasselt Belgium, the band toured through the 'sometimes too narrow for a coach', streets of Belgium and the Netherlands performing at venues ranging from bandstands to shopping centres with the smaller offshoot ensemble threestrikes even squeezing in an impromptu performance at Hasselt's Jazz Bar Mon Cafe.

Staff and students had an excellent time with opportunities to explore local culture in Valkenburg, Roermond, Maastricht and Liege and enjoying activities including a boat trip, bowling and a visit to a water park. The band was a credit to the school throughout the tour, making positive impressions on many locals, not just in their playing but at local events and in the way they conducted themselves at all times.

The final concert at Media Cite in Liege marked the last concert for a significant number of Year 13 students who have been dedicated to Swing Band for many years and the music served as both a celebration and a poignant farewell.

Never resting on their laurels, the music department under the leadership of Vicki Elliott is already looking forward to next year with preparations well underway for major production including 'the Little Mermaid' and the Gala celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Associated Sixth Form partnership with St. John Fishers.

For those who do not regularly attend the department's concerts and productions who might be unaware of just how exceptional music at St. Aidan's is, we extend a warm invitation; come and experience for yourself the quality of what St. Aidan's music department offers, but be sure to book early because tickets tend to sell out fast!



Induction Days

On Monday 26th June and Tuesday 27th June we began the transition for current Year 11 students into the Associated Sixth Form. It was fantastic to welcome so many students from new schools on Monday 26th June. Their day began at St John Fisher with ice-breaking activities, introductions to key members of staff and

a tour of the school. Students then moved over to St Aidan's for lunch, team building activities and a taster lesson in one of the subjects they had chosen for further study. The following day we welcomed our current Year 11 students. St Aidan's students started the day at St John Fisher gaining the opportunity to tour the school site

and then undertaking a taster lesson, while St John Fisher students did the same at St Aidan's. We are excited to welcome so many new students into the Association.



Law Students

Earlier this term, students from the Associated Sixth Form participated in a busy, intense day developing and delivering a public speech to a panel of solicitors from Irwin Mitchell Solicitors in Leeds. They were brilliant and were a credit to the Sixth Form. The lead mentor from the law firm said that she had never come across a large group of more highly motivated and conscientious students!

Students taking part were: Daisy Jackson, Olivia Longley, Alexandra Hargreaves Sinclair, Connie Murray, Luna Morillon-Rios, Lucy Walton, Grace Kilroy, Eliza Robertson, James Green, Eleanor Holden, Evie Lowes, Uriah Shloim, Dan Greathead, Ruby Williams, Cormac Keating, Kate Purvis, Aimee Keal, Charles Sharman, Nicole Crawshaw-Reed, Laurie Miller, Rowan Allen and Gabriella Kulis

Education Conference

On Saturday June 10th Year 12 sociology students; Maria, Lauren, Tabitha and Liv (and their teacher Mrs Wraight) attended the inaugural Quaker Education conference at Bootham School in York, entitled "How can Education create a better world?". The in-person conference, attended by 150 students with both UK and international delegates, was the culmination of a longer programme in which 8 Sixth form students had involved themselves in online conferences and submitted a short film on the conference title. The 4 students who attended the conference listened to some excellent speakers who included the mental health campaigner Natasha Devon and Ruth Ibegbuna, Founder and CEO of RECLAIM, The Roots Programme who urged

Psychology News

Our Year 12 Psychology students were given the fantastic opportunity to visit an exhibition and workshop with the local artist, Matthew Wyatt. His current curation contains 70 pieces of art, many of which are inspired and related to mental health. The inspiration for the collection is focused on 'Public Libraries as The People's Universities' and our workshop focused on 'Education – the means to deal critically and creatively with reality to learn how to transform our world starting with ourselves'.

The students were given a chance to interact with the artwork, much of which related to the concepts they had studied including Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Roger's Congruency, Dweck's growth mindset, and pieces relating to stress and addiction. The students then created their own self-expression to show their core values. These were exhibited alongside the collection. Thanks to all the Year 12s who took part. You were truly inspiring.

students to reject negative labels. In addition, the students were spurred into action with talks by Sam Freedman, senior fellow of the Institute for Government who talked to students about how to most effectively reach people of power, and Ben Rich, Liberal democrat policy advisor and current CEO of Radix, a cross party think tank who gave them a masterclass in manifesto writing. Working in teams of 8 the students produced documents which are being brought together as a manifesto for change in educational priorities which was presented at the 'Big Tent' event at the York Festival of Ideas, where Government Ministers, Shadow Ministers, leading journalists, commentators, local MPs and council leaders discussed their proposals.

Alistair Campbell Visits the Association

The Associated Sixth Form was delighted to host journalist, broadcaster and political strategist, Alastair Campbell, on Tuesday 16 May. The event was organised by the PPE Society, whose aim is to promote wider interest in humanities. We were delighted to welcome students studying History and Politics A Level from the Associated Sixth Form, Harrogate Grammar and Ashville. Although Alastair was in Harrogate to record the latest edition of his *The Rest is Politics* podcast and, later, to give a talk in the Royal Hall, he gave

his time generously. He started with an interview with the PPE Society's Lizzie Gibbin, Lucia Doyle and Jamie Green. In the Main Hall he started with a short introduction before answering questions from students. These covered an enormous range of topics from his views on the House of Lords and Brexit to the prospects for Kier Starmer, the role of the media in politics and whether he would ever stand for election. There was even one about Burnley! At the end he signed copies of his book for each student who'd asked a question

as well as posing for numerous photos and selfies. Throughout he was patient and charming, answering each question with insight, honesty and humour. It was fantastic to have someone of his stature and experience in school, and there is no doubt he inspired the audience of young people to get involved in politics.



London History and Politics Trip

A group of 44 students from across the Associated Sixth Form enjoyed a three-day trip to London in July. All students were studying either Politics or History at A Level. Our first stop was the Imperial War Museum, where the First World War gallery and Holocaust exhibition made a powerful impact. The centrepiece of the trip, however, was a guided tour of the Palace of Westminster followed by an engaging workshop on parliamentary law-making run by the Education Unit. Harrogate MP, Andrew Jones, met us as we arrived and spent time answering our questions. After Parliament, we took a 'flight' on the London Eye before walking to Buckingham Palace via Downing Street and Trafalgar Square. Our final visit of the day was to the wonderful Churchill War Rooms. On the first evening we watched Grease and, on the second, we watched the hilarious 'Play That Goes Wrong'. On the final morning we had some free time on Oxford Street before returning to Harrogate. This was a memorable trip that had something for everyone. It is highly recommended for anyone studying these subjects in Year 12.



Creative Writing Trip

From 10-15 July 2023, 17 Year 12 students and 3 staff visited the idyllic setting of Tŷ Newydd, the former home of British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and now the National Writing Centre of Wales. This trip has been established for over 20 years and was run successfully by our colleague Dr Pickford until his retirement last year, so we are delighted to be continuing with his legacy of creative writing in the Associated Sixth Form.

During the visit we were lucky to have two writers-in-residence, poet Jonathan Edwards and novelist Susan Stokes-Chapman. Each morning was spent in writing workshops, covering different aspects of both poetry and prose writing. Students have been encouraged to submit their work to the prestigious Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award which, if successful, will lead to their work being published. In the afternoons, we have enjoyed walks through woodland, to the beach and to the lovely

seaside town of Criccieth as well as some boisterous games of rounders. Students have all participated in food preparation and served as part of the daily kitchen crew rota - a great rehearsal for university life!

In the evenings, Susan and Jonathan both gave superb readings of their work, followed by Q&A sessions which gave students the opportunity to ask about their writing processes and their publishing journeys. We were also joined one evening by performance poet and rapper, Duke Al Durham, who performed a selection of his work for us and discussed his inspiration and motivation to write.

We hope to be running this trip again in summer 2024 - all are welcome. You don't have to be a student of English to join us; you just have to have an interest in writing. Watch out in Sixth Form assembly in the new school year for more updates.



Iceland Trip



48 adventurous Year 12 Geography students and 5 excited teachers set off for Iceland on Wednesday 5th July. Within an hour of landing, they were immersed in Iceland's incredible geography, with a drive past lava fields to the "Bridge between Continents", a footbridge spanning a fissure between the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates. After a hearty meal, the group spent their first evening at the world-famous Blue Lagoon, a spacious bathing pool set in a moody landscape of mossy lava. Averaging temperatures of 30-40°C, its silica-rich geothermal seawater is drawn from a 2,000m deep borehole and is said to rejuvenate the skin and soothe the soul!

Day 2 and they were up and off early. First stop, the Aurora Reykjavik Northern Lights Centre where they experienced the wonders of the Aurora Borealis, despite it being bright sunshine outside. As well as an interactive HD Northern Lights experience, students learnt about the science behind this amazing natural phenomenon. After a quick pit stop at the capital city's cathedral, Hallgrímskirkja Church, the group then headed for Þingvellir (Thingvellir). This national park is where Iceland's parliament was established in 930AD. The site straddles the Mid-Atlantic Ridge where the plates pull apart at an average of 3cm a year. The group walked among the rifts and saw solidified lava, as they learnt of the events that shaped Iceland's early history. Two more incredible wonders followed. Firstly, Gullfoss waterfall, a magnificent two stage waterfall which marks the edge of the highland shelf where the Hvita River plunges 33m into a mile long gorge, then Geysir, a spouting hot spring that gave its name to all the world's geysers.

Day 3 began with a drive through spectacular scenery – glaciers, waterfalls and volcanoes all around. First stop was a former farm site demolished by a Katla eruption in 894. Superstition encourages passers-by to add to the cairn marking the site, so that's what the group did. Judging by the number of cairns, Icelanders (and tourists) are clearly very superstitious! Passing through lava fields and past old sea cliffs now inland and high up on the hills, they made their way towards Jökulsárlón. It was so worth the long drive! Iceland's famous and much photographed glacial lagoon is also one of its deepest lakes. Enormous icebergs, some the size of houses, carve off the Breiðamerkurjökull glacier tongue. The glacier protrudes into the lagoon and as chunks break off they shoot to the surface, creating a spectacular sight. The larger ones are grounded on the floor of the lagoon, while smaller ones drift in the wind, queuing up to travel downriver towards the ocean. Downstream of the lagoon the group explored the 'Diamond Beach'. As icebergs break up in the surf, some are washed ashore again, stranded on the black sand like giant sparkling diamonds and sapphires. The last stop of the day was at Skaftafellsjökull – an outlet glacier accessed by a quick hike right onto the ice. What a day!

The last full day in Iceland did not disappoint! The group took the ferry to Heimaey Island on which they climbed the still-active volcano which last erupted in 1973. This eruption led to a full evacuation and increased the size of the island by more than 2.5km². The views from the top of the deep red volcano were spectacular. After descending the group headed for Eldheimar, a new interactive exhibition about the 1973 eruption. Next, they got back on the coach for a driving tour of the island, before stopping to walk along the cliffs to see the world's largest puffin colony. The puffins alone were enough of a treat, but while watching them come and go from their nests, a minke whale appeared in the sea at the foot of the cliffs. Amazing! After some free time around the local town, the group returned to the mainland, with some seeing more whales from the side of the ferry. A dream come true! The group's last evening was spent in Reykjavik, with a delicious meal and a walk around the centre and along the sea front with the backdrop of a stunning bright orange sunset. A perfect end to a wonderful trip.

Lourdes

The first week in July marks the annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes, France, for the Diocese of Leeds. A group of our sixth formers joined up with other young people from schools all around the Diocese to take part in the pilgrimage and provide assistance to those pilgrims who were sick and elderly.

The sixth formers fully embraced all the virtues you would hope to witness in Lourdes.

In our fast-paced modern world teenagers often get a bad press, but seeing them caring for their pilgrims was so positive and uplifting.

As the older members of the youth group they held a more prominent role within the 'hospitality team'. Their duties involved helping some of the elderly and disabled pilgrims with meals, assisting them to attend daily Masses and services, either by pushing wheelchairs, or accompanying them to the Sanctuary.

Lots of fun was had during the daily social events, serving refreshments in the pop-up cafe, chatting and helping with the quizzes.

Sunday night bingo, singalong/karaoke was a huge success - Neil Diamond being particularly popular.

We were all so proud of our students who were a credit to themselves and the Associated Sixth Form.



Goonhilly

14 Fantastic Year 12 A Level Physics Students have travelled down to the Lizard Peninsula this term with Mr Park and Mrs Towse to visit Goonhilly Earth Station for a week long visit/ work experience, looking at Space Science and satellite communications

They saw inside Goonhilly 6 (a 32 metre dish used for Deep Space

Observations), steered a 13m antenna to receive data from a specific satellite, had meetings with Spaceport Cornwall, witnessed the making of a comet, had talks on orbits, studying Astrophysics at Uni, Fourier Analysis, Probability, Statistics and so much more. They also worked on their own projects to present at

the end of the week.

Life isn't all hard work though. They also went to a sculpture park, visited some of the fantastic beaches and even had a 2 hour surfing lesson.

Does life and learning get much better than this? We don't think so.



Under 19s Football

The St John Fisher U19s Football Team have enjoyed a successful and highly enjoyable season this year, which culminated in them winning the NYCSFA U19s County Cup competition. This achievement was the product of a genuinely impressive team spirit that was created by all the players and characterised by their commitment and support of each other during training sessions and in matches.

Attendance at weekly training sessions exceeded 20 players almost every week and the standard of football being played ensured that team selections were always competitive. In total, 32 players represented the team during the course of the season.

The team progressed through the knockout stages of the County Cup by recording victories over Thirsk School (10-0), Ermysteds (1-0), Stokesley (5-0) and South Craven (3-1), before facing Queen Ethelberga's School in the final.

The match was kindly hosted by Queen Ethelberga's and played in front of a vocal crowd of home supporters. As a spectacle the game was a fantastic advert for youth football with both teams playing some impressive football. After taking a 1-0 lead in the first half with a well worked goal that was set up by Alex Rennocks and finished by Max Jordan, Queen Ethelberga's then equalised just before half-time, before going on to take a deserved lead shortly after the interval. The home side then proceeded to dominate possession in the game without being able to break down the determined and disciplined St John Fisher defence. With approximately 10 minutes of play remaining Ed Svenson scrambled an equaliser from a corner to make the score 2-2. With both teams looking to force a winning goal, the game became rather frenetic and very open, with chances created at each end. The match was then settled in dramatic fashion in the final minute of normal time; a cross field pass saw Jude Sheriden-Hawley out sprint his defender to get to the ball first before being fouled whilst preparing to shoot. Despite muted protests from some Queen Ethelberga's players, the referee correctly awarded a penalty which team captain, Dan Riddington, calmly dispatched to secure a 3-2 victory for St John Fisher School.

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Trampoline Success for Toby!

Well done to Year 12 student Toby Williams who competed in national age group championships this term in double mini trampoline and came first in the 17-21 age category at the age of

17. Toby now stands a strong chance of being selected for both the British Championships in September and the World Championships in November. All this after a long break from the sport.

