



I am delighted to share with you our second MOSA newsletter since the School took charge of the Association. I hope you enjoy the articles and reading more about life at The Mount and stories from MOSA members. We always want to hear from MOSA members and we welcome and encourage more contributions. Please keep sharing with us any stories you have for future editions; we very much enjoy hearing from MOSA members from around the world.

The challenges of working in a socially distanced manner have been extreme this term but staff have worked hard to ensure that pupils have been given as wide a range of experiences as possible adapting lessons and activities in ever creative ways. We continue to be fortunate in that we have not had to isolate any Year groups this term due to Covid-19. To have got through a full term in this way is a huge achievement for the whole community. In November we had a spot check visit from the Health and Safety Executive and after careful scrutiny of our risk assessments and Covid-19 safety practices, they left being very satisfied that we had everything necessary in place and we were given no recommendations for improvement. This was a great endorsement for the School. I have no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect all of your lives; please know The MOSA community is always in my thoughts.

As we approached the Christmas holiday, a daily text reminded us: *“Not what we have but what we enjoy, constitutes our abundance.”* Thinking of the Quaker testimony of Simplicity, it is simple things in life and the experiences we have, not the possessions we own, that bring true fulfilment. The simplicity of enjoying one another’s company during our Christmas festivities is an example of this and I hope that you can create some lasting memories over the coming weeks after what has been a very different and difficult year for us all.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

With best wishes,  
**Adrienne Richmond**  
 Principal of The Mount School York



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*“In a world of people who couldn’t care less, I want to be someone who couldn’t care more.”* (Anon)

In the first week of the Autumn Term, one of our daily texts read: *“In a world of people who couldn’t care less, I want to be someone who couldn’t care more.”* It was extremely appropriate to describe the current feeling of The Mount community. As a community, we could not have cared more for one another over the past difficult months. This is all credit to how the entire School lives our Quaker values, thinking of others and showing compassion and understanding for other people’s needs. Throughout the whole term, Mount girls not only continued to care for one another but also the wider York community.

**As a community, we could not have cared more for one another over the past difficult months. This is all credit to how the entire School lives our Quaker values.**

Electing the School charity was completed virtually this year. Each year group used their Form time to discuss possible charities and came together collectively to put forward one specific charity. Each year group composed a brief email about the charity and the work they do. The information was sent on to each girl and staff member at The Mount along with a link to

vote in a doodle poll. The charities to select from were all local to York and Yorkshire. They included the Yorkshire Rose Dog Rescue, York Special Care Baby Unit, SASH (Safe and Sound Homes) and Yorkshire Air Ambulance. Each charity was different offering a diverse range to choose from showing the range of care and passions felt across girls in The Mount. In a very close vote, the charity selected this year was St Leonard’s Hospice, an independent charity providing specialist care and support for local people with life limiting illnesses. Their care also extends to support the families and carers of the ill, many of whom have been part of The Mount community. Events that have raised money for the charity this term include, Halloween Dress Up Day and Christmas Jumper Day.

In September, Cadbury House hosted a delicious Macmillan Coffee Morning for the entire Senior School. The girls were invited to bring in scrumptious treats which they shared in their respective bubbles during Choc Lunch. The event raised money to support Macmillan Nurses, and the girls’ efforts raised a truly incredible £270. Due to current COVID restrictions, The Great Mountie Bake Off had to be postponed until the Summer Term. The girls of Terry House wanted to use the time they would have dedicated to the event to help others so they organised for donations to be made to the York Foodbank, a charity that relies on public support and is part of The Trussell Trust’s network of 428 foodbanks, working to tackle food poverty and hunger in our local communities, as well as across the UK. *“We want to make sure that no one in our local community has to go hungry and invited donations of items which are high priority such as, nappies, biscuits, sponge puddings, tinned fruit, jam, dog food and any other long life food products,”* comments College I pupil Denva. Due to the girls’ publicity efforts and the abundance of donations received, multiple deliveries of goods took place to the Foodbank over the Autumn Term.

As Christmas approached, we began thinking about wider friends and family and those who matter to us most. Ms Richmond asked the girls to take the time to think



**The College Leadership Team created a video to 'Thank Unsung Heroes'. They asked girls throughout the School to thank those who have helped them through this eventful year.**

about who matters to them most and how they thank them. In particular she asked them to think about how this Christmas, they were going to stop and show their appreciation for the special people in their life. Inspired by her words the College Leadership Team created a video to 'Thank Unsung Heroes'. They asked girls throughout the School to record a video message to thank those who have helped them through this eventful year. Georgia (College

II) said, *"We wanted to celebrate the unsung heroes around school; an unsung hero is one that does great deeds but receives little or no recognition for them."* Those thanked in the video included, the catering staff, the cleaning staff and the maintenance staff as well as the support staff who all work behind the scenes to keep the School running. Also thanked were the teachers and the girls themselves for adapting so well to the new social distancing and safety restrictions in School this year.

The festive season also saw the Junior School children exploring ways of sharing festive cheer with others. The Early Years children enjoyed creating Christmas cards and decorations for the residents of Ebor Care Home on Poppleton Road. They discussed in class the purpose of the decorations and agreed to have hearts as their theme. Once completed the decorations were carefully boxed up and sent on to staff at the care home. Ebor Care Home management were delighted, and said, *"The decorations are lovely, we will enjoy putting them on our tree this afternoon. The Christmas card designs look fabulous!"* Meanwhile, Junior girls created rainbow Christmas decorations for the Elmbank Hotel community Christmas tree, with personalised messages of seasonal cheer.

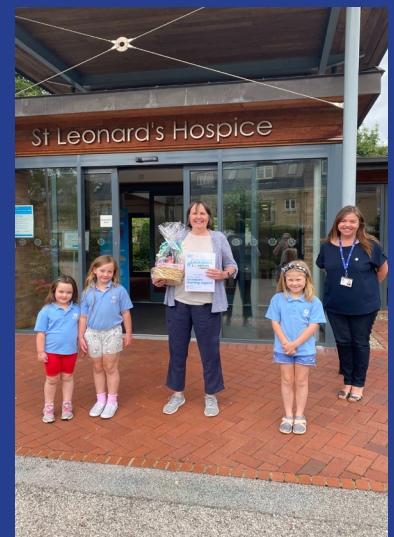
On World Kindness Day, the text for the day was a quote from the Dalai Lama: *"Be Kind whenever possible. It is always possible."* There is no doubt that Mount girls know it is always possible to be kind and strive to be caring individuals. It is a theme the School frequently addresses, as kindness is the core of being a good person and at the heart of our Quaker ethos. We are very proud of Mount girls and how caring of one another and the wider community they are. Mount girls have been especially considerate supporting friends through these strange times. As one parent said recently, *'It is so nice to see how thoughtful our girls are becoming in looking out for each other.'*



## Lockdown Award Winner

Congratulations to Junior School Teacher Miss Jan Wilson who won the St Leonard's Hospice Lockdown Lovelies Award, in recognition for her hard work throughout lockdown. Miss Wilson was joined by some of her proud pupils and Miss Capper, Head of Junior School, as she collected her certificate from the Hospice.

Miss Wilson was nominated by parents who said, *"She became our unwavering, guiding light through the murky circus of juggling our children working from home, battling on the frontline and our new lockdown lifestyles. She is one of those special individuals that the children will remember as being a key part of the lockdown experience."*



# Dr Bryony Mathew appointed Ambassador to Iceland



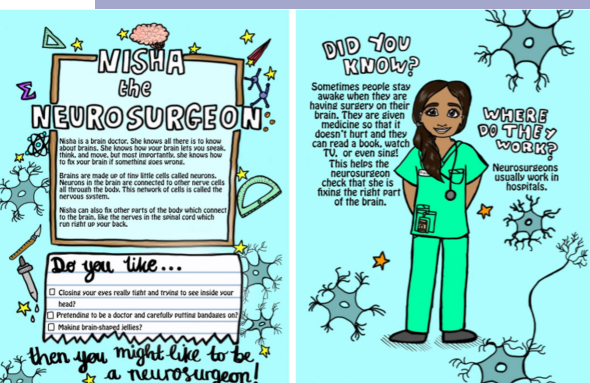
Our congratulations to Dr Bryony Mathew, a former pupil of The Mount, who has been appointed as the next British Ambassador to Iceland. She is the first woman to hold this position. Dr Mathew will take up her appointment in August 2021.

Dr Mathew said, *“I am absolutely delighted to be appointed as the next British Ambassador to Iceland. I’m looking forward to getting to know this incredible country and working with the UK Iceland team to further strengthen the great friendship between the UK and Iceland. I am particularly pleased that I will be the UK’s first female Ambassador to Iceland, it’s a huge privilege.”*

After studying Experimental Psychology at University, Dr Mathew did a Master’s in Biological Anthropology at Durham and a PhD in Neuroscience at UCL. She joined Her Majesty’s Diplomatic Service in 2005 and has served in London, Bangalore, and Beijing. This year Dr Mathew has been Deputy Director of Operations in the Foreign Office COVID-19 Taskforce.

Dr Mathew has also written two children’s books, demonstrating the breadth of careers available and to inspire children with careers they’ve never even heard of, showing them the world of opportunities that await them. *Qubits and Quiver Trees* introduces children to 30 new careers, from polar scientist to cobot matcher. *Blue Broccoli and Nanobots* aims to inspire more girls to go into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) careers and depicts 32 fictional female role models who are all pursuing exciting careers in STEM.

*“Children as young as 6 think girls aren’t as good at science. We need to show children that girls can do anything. All STEM careers are for girls and boys. I hope Blue Broccoli and Nanobots inspires them! #WomenInScience”*



## MOSA UPDATE & NEW ARCHIVIST

We are pleased to be able to let you know that the running of MOSA has now formally transferred to the School after the decision was taken at the MOSA AGM in the Summer Term. MOSA bank accounts have now been closed and the MOSA monies are now sitting safely as restricted funds under the School.

We are delighted to announce that we have appointed a new Librarian and Archivist, Sarah Moore, who will be taking up her post in January. Sarah will be working across both the Junior School and Senior School libraries. Sarah will also be looking after the School archives. With over 200 years of Mount history to document, this is of course a big and exciting task. We regularly receive donations of old photo

albums, school correspondence, uniform and School publications from MOSA members. Sarah looks forward to organising these archives and working with The Borthwick Institute at the University of York, where many of our archives are held.

Working alongside Kate Linfoot, Director of External Relations, Sarah will also be the main link with our Old Scholar community and manage Alumnae relations.

If you have any memorabilia or items you would like to donate to the archives please contact Sarah Moore on [mosa@mountschool.york.co.uk](mailto:mosa@mountschool.york.co.uk) or send it directly to the School.

# MOUNT TRADITIONS LIVE ON



**This year national lockdowns and changing restrictions have led to pupils and families living a very different lifestyle. School for the girls has remained a constant and so it has been extremely important for us to keep Mount traditions alive in these times. Traditions provide a sense of comfort and belonging. They bring girls together and enable them to connect as a community. Mount Staff have been extremely creative and innovative in finding ways to adapt these traditions so that they can continue in a safe way.**

Even though Bonfire Night 2020 was cancelled, Games in the Dark proudly continued, keeping alive this the century-old tradition, albeit in a socially distanced manner with girls taking part via their respective bubbles. As with all Mount traditions, it all came together with good planning mixed with a dose of chaos, collaborative support, creative ingenuity and an overarching sense of fun. This year's theme was 'Dolls' and to get around the problem of covid restrictions, the girls came up with the clever solution of using an 'escape room' format, allowing the rest of the School to compete safely in the confines of their Form rooms.

The cancellation of the bonfire meant that the oldest and youngest pupils in the Senior School were not able to start the bonfire fireworks, instead they were invited to light the advent candles in the Christmas Meeting. Christmas Meeting was also rethought this year. The Music Department, like many others, has been met with several challenges. Changing restrictions on the types of instrumental lessons taking place, plus social distancing measures, meant that rehearsals and performances could not take place in the usual way. Our musicians knew the festive season would not be the same without our wonderful choir performing the traditional carols, so choir 'bubbles' and musicians from Year 10 and above were recorded and layered together to create video performances - all within the safety guidelines. These recordings along with readings from girls in Year 5 and above were then edited together to create a 'Christmas Meeting' video. The girls watched the video together in different locations throughout the School and the video link was shared with parents and the MOSA community.

The College I Pantomime is a time-honoured tradition in the Senior School, written, directed, performed and produced by the College I girls themselves. Many of the current College I girls had been looking forward to taking on the task since watching their first College Pantomime in Year 7, and not even a global pandemic was going to stop them having their turn in the limelight! This year's College I created a brilliant and joyous video production of "Snow White and the 7 Deadly Sins of The Mount". The scenes which would normally feature the girls running through the streets of York in costume were crafted thanks to the girls' own creativity and greenscreen technology. Senior School watched from their Form rooms and were even treated to an ice cream during the interval, delivered by the College I girls in their pantomime costumes.

We hope to be able to reinstate all of our traditions and events very soon but, in the meantime, we know our dedicated staff and pupils will continue to find creative ways for key traditions to live on.



WE WANT  
TO HEAR  
FROM YOU!

If you would like to contribute to future editions of the MOSA newsletter please contact -

[mosa@mountschoolYork.co.uk](mailto:mosa@mountschoolYork.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you!

# TACKLING THE PANDEMIC

***“I stepped up at 81 years of age to become one of Alaska’s contact tracers.”***

**- Patricia Watt**

Our opening article told how girls at The Mount continue to demonstrate kindness and consideration at this difficult time. This desire to help extends beyond our current cohort and is also demonstrated by our former pupils.

Pat Watt, attended The Mount in the 1950s. She went on to work as a Scientist and now lives in the USA. As a retired Scientist, Pat followed the developments of the Covid-19 pandemic closely. Inspired by the Quaker values instilled in her during her time at The Mount, Pat wanted to help during the pandemic. ***“I stepped up at 81 years of age to become one of Alaska’s contact tracers. My years at The Mount and the Quaker values that became part of me have seen me well throughout life,”*** she explains. Here Pat tells us more about the role she has played as a contact tracer.

“As most everyone knows, the US federal government response to the coronavirus epidemic has been largely non-existent. Public health organizations and the various states and localities were left holding the bag. Since I trained as a scientist, and am retired, I followed what was happening closely. With time on my hands, I knew that contact tracing was going to be essential if there was any hope of reining in the spread of disease. I took the online Contact Tracing training course through the Johns Hopkins University, thought “I could do this,” and looked for an opportunity to volunteer. I learned that the Alaska Department of Public Health had contracted with the University of Alaska to recruit, hire, and manage contact tracers. The National Guard and the City of Anchorage similarly contracted with the state. I applied to the University program and went through a rigorous training program, was hired, and after an intensive on-boarding process was finally deployed as a contact tracer in September. At the same time, the state had gone from using paper records in March, to using spreadsheets in April, to at the end of August transitioning to a database management system.

Altogether there are about 250 contact tracers for the state, across the four teams - state public health, University, National Guard, and Anchorage. I work three days a week, for 5-6 hours each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. At 81, that’s about all I can manage! At the moment there are too many new daily cases to do much contact tracing - most of what we do is interview positive cases to ensure they are safe and able to isolate, while only tracing contacts of those priority cases which are the most likely to spread disease. Then we do our best to get their contacts to quarantine. It’s intense and interesting work.

So, I sit at my desk with two computers, one provided by the University with high levels of security and encryption for handling personal health information, the other (my iMac) for everything else, 2 additional email addresses, and 4 more passwords. I have a Bluetooth device in my ear, and my iPhone nearby, to talk to people who are often sick, scared or lonely. I provide what support I can to them at the same time as I extract details of their situation. I meet twice a day with my co-workers. All done through the miracle of WiFi and the Internet. Intense and interesting work indeed.”

We thank Pat for her hard work and all other MOSA members who are helping to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

## Mount School Pupil receives Covid Vaccine

A Mount School pupil will become the youngest person working for The Leeds Teaching Hospital to receive the Pfizer vaccine. Charlotte, a College student, has been chosen to receive the vaccine as part of The Leeds Teaching Hospital’s inoculation roll out. Charlotte, who works as an Assistant Nursery Practitioner, took a job at The Leeds Teaching Hospital earlier this year as her way of helping others during the Covid 19 pandemic.

*“I was gobsmacked to get the call to offer me the vaccine. I really didn’t expect it!”* explains Charlotte. *“My first thought was ‘are you serious?’ because there are so many more people who need the protection more than me. I am young and healthy, and I didn’t want to take it away from someone else. There are so many hard-working people in the NHS who deserve it. The hospital explained that it will be useful for the younger generation to see that young people are in need of and receiving the vaccination too. So, if it helps to encourage others, I am very happy to have the job. I feel privileged to have been chosen and to represent young people.”*

# NETBALL COURTS MAKEOVER



Over the Summer holidays The Mount netball courts were given a new lease of life. The courts were repainted with a new multi-purpose surface. The new surface was funded by The Mount School Association who are now looking into future development projects to fund. This term the addition of new flood lights, funded by the School, has meant that training in 'bubbles' has been able to take place on the darker evenings.

## Sports - Then & Now

The refurbishment of the Netball courts led us to look back through the archives at some of the sporting activities at The Mount comparing them to those we enjoy today.



*100 yards race 1952*



*100 metres race 2018*



*Hockey match c.1900*



*A Gym team photo 1902*



*A winning relay team c. 1990s*



*An Early Cricket Team.1890*



*Sports on New 1950*



*Netball Team Photo 2006*



*Yoga 2006*



*Excursion 1954*



*Duke of Edinburgh Expedition 2020*


# Funding creative writing

Each year The MOSA Further Education Fund provides up to two grants for Mount Old Scholars to continue their education. Last year, Dominica Campman, saw the notice on The Mount Old Scholars Social Forum Facebook and applied for the grant.

*"At the beginning of 2020, I applied for and won a Mount Old Scholars Association grant to fund a "blog and website writing course" at [www.ukwriterscollege.co.uk](http://www.ukwriterscollege.co.uk). I wanted to take the course to improve my business prospects," explains Dominica. "I have been working at it all through lockdown and beyond and completed my last article mid November. This article will be published in their blog and compete for a yearly international writers award which is very exciting. I wrote two more articles which I aim to publish, the writing bug has really bitten me."*

*"I had a wonderful time. I carved out a few hours a week from my surprisingly busy working day, as a German translator, living in Spain, and as a mum to two teenage boys. I sat at my little table outside, looking across the hills towards the sea and let myself be inspired. It does actually work to find a special time and place to create, for me at least. Thanks once again for the generous grant that funded this opportunity"*

For any Old Scholar needing support in continuing their studies or studying for a new career, The MOSA Further Education Fund can provide two grants per annum of up to £500 each. If you would like to be considered for an award, please submit an application with your details (including the years you were at The Mount) and your reasons for applying. Applications should be no longer than the one side of A4. Applications should be addressed to the Principal, Adrienne Richmond and emailed to [principal@mountschoolyork.co.uk](mailto:principal@mountschoolyork.co.uk) and received in School by **31 January 2021**. Applications will be considered by The Mount School Foundation Prizes and Awards Committee. Successful applicants will be informed by the end of the Spring Term.



It is with great sadness that we let you know that Sue Parsons, who taught Chemistry/ Science at The Mount for several years, lost her battle with cancer in November. Sue was a bubbly and engaging teacher – a real 'character', as well as being actively supportive of the wider school, for example in the Music department. Our thoughts are with Sue's family and friends.

*"This is such sad news, Dr Parsons was such a lovely lady and was one of the main reasons I chose to pursue a career in science."*

*"Dr Parsons was a big inspiration for me to become a teacher myself, and I will always remember the fun I had in A level Chemistry! Always such a wonderful, kind woman!"*

*"I always loved her energy and humour."*

**Sue Parsons**



Each Term, we invite a Mount Old Scholar to be interviewed for the School Termly Magazine, Reflections. Old Scholars tell us more about their lives, careers and the memories they have of The Mount. To read previous interviews please visit [mountschoolyork.co.uk/mosa/mosa-reflections/](http://mountschoolyork.co.uk/mosa/mosa-reflections/)

If you are interested in being interviewed or if you have any articles you would like to contribute to the next MOSA Newsletter please contact [mosa@mountschoolyork.co.uk](mailto:mosa@mountschoolyork.co.uk).

[mountschoolyork.co.uk](http://mountschoolyork.co.uk)

*'An examination of whether exposure to Quaker values at school affects adult character.'*

Zoë K Simms a teacher at Sibford School and a Quaker, has decided to further her Quaker Studies by conducting private PhD research at Birmingham University. She is examining the influences of a Quaker education and asks for the help of old scholars from the years 1985-2000. If you would like to sign up to answer some questions or for more information please contact Zoë K Simms, [ZKS906@student.bham.ac.uk](mailto:ZKS906@student.bham.ac.uk)

[mosa@mountschoolyork.co.uk](mailto:mosa@mountschoolyork.co.uk)