

MOSA NEWSLETTER

Fidelis In Parvo



Hello from The Mount

I am delighted to be writing to you at the start of this new academic year, and hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter. It is the first in what will be a new series of MOSA newsletters, as we move to producing shorter but more frequent newsletters over the course of the year.

I hope you are keeping safe and well, wherever you may be in the world. The past few months have been very challenging for everyone, and certainly the most unusual of my teaching career! I have often thought of our Old Scholar community and wondered how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected your lives. Having spoken with a few MOSA members over the course of the pandemic, I know that many of you have had to adapt your lives to the 'new norm' of staying at home more and living in isolation, but have done so with determination to still live your lives in as full a way as possible, thinking of others and showing great resilience.

Of course, the last few months have brought many challenges and changes to the School and I hope this newsletter gives you an insight into current life at The Mount. As we went into lockdown in March, remote learning very quickly became the new norm and it became clear that electronic communication was going to be the only way that people living in isolation could keep in touch with their family and friends. Holding the MOSA AGM in June via Zoom was an example of how we have all had to adapt. As the running of MOSA moves to be under the wing of the School, we will continue to drive MOSA forward in new and innovative ways, using technology available to us to develop and enhance our communication.

We do love to hear from Old Scholars and I urge you to make contact with the School at any time. Although we may not be able to welcome you into School in person at present, we would love to hear from you virtually. I always enjoy speaking with Old Scholars on the telephone and hope to do more of that over the coming months. Please feel free to contact me via my PA, Fiona Hernandez, by emailing principal@mountschool.york.co.uk should you wish to have a chat at any point. I very much look forward to speaking with more of you over the course of this year.

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



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School Life in Lockdown

Many Old Scholars have been asking about The Mount and how we have been affected by the Covid-19 global pandemic. The sudden enforced closure of the School in March was not easy for anyone, pupils, staff or parents. Teaching staff and the School's Leadership Team pulled together to provide Remote Learning for pupils whilst remaining open for children of Key Workers.

The Mount School has been using Microsoft Office 365 tools and Microsoft TEAMS for teaching in School for many years. Teachers were able to quickly adapt their teaching to provide continuity in learning at home. *"Teachers worked with pupils in many diverse ways, including providing video and written instructions, photo assignments and setting self-marking quizzes which pupils could answer and mark themselves. There were individual and group tutorial sessions, and teachers were able to dynamically provide their pupils with feedback through TEAMS,"* commented Bridget Perks, Deputy Principal.

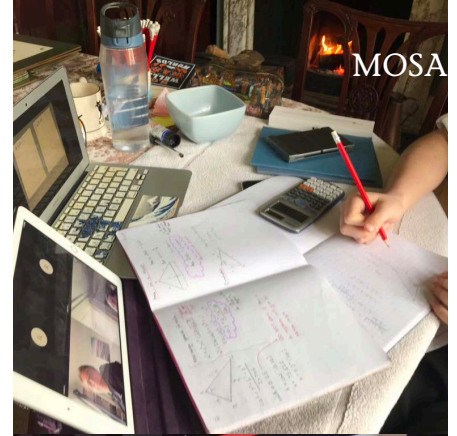
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Lessons were taught online in a variety of ways. English lessons were posted to Junior School girls online, via TEAMS, one week they were set the task to write about dragons! The girls used SeeSaw, an online animation tool to create stories about their dragons. The girls also enjoyed story time as Junior School teachers live streamed themselves reading various tales. In Senior School, English Teacher Mr Dawson brought to life HG Wells' classic tale, *The War of the Worlds*, with an extra-special twist. *"I recorded each chapter as a podcast, and the girls began sending in requests for a different accent or voice in each one. So we had Greg from Glasgow, Barry from Belfast, Harry from Huddersfield, Prime Minister Boris Johnson and even Gru from the Despicable Me films!"*

Teaching remotely did not stop our Science Teachers from setting practical lessons. Year 9 were challenged to make a model of a cell using readily available items at home. Girls raided their kitchens to create labelled 3D models of a typical cell, using Jaffa Cakes, pasta, noodles and jelly! College Biology pupils created their own quadrats at home and carried out biodiversity studies in areas local to their homes. Video conferencing proved an invaluable tool for Remote Learning, particularly in Modern Foreign Languages. GCSE and A Level Language pupils took part in video calls to practise their speaking and listening skills and receive feedback from their teacher.

Senior School girls expanded their digital skills learning to work with Microsoft Stream, to make short videos and animations. The skills they learnt, came in handy during the final week of term, when girls competed in a four-day long House competition comprising of a variety of activities across a range of disciplines including Sport, Art, DT and STEM. Mr Davies, Head of Digital Learning commented, *"The girls benefited tremendously from this practice in the competition. But also, in a wider context, connected online working is the way of the future. Having this experience in sharing digital work across multiple platforms will be a key skill for business in the future."*

As the weeks of Home Schooling went on so did our teachers' determination to keep girls engaged with their online lessons. As they began their revision Year 11 PE students played an online game of Snakes & Ladders, with a twist!



Before they could roll the dice, the girls had to answer a PE revision question correctly. Girls in the Junior School were treated to their very own interactive ‘Big End of Year Picture Quiz’. Ms Wilson asked everyone to mute their microphones, so that they couldn’t shout out the answers by mistake. The girls really enjoyed taking part in the visual quiz, as did their parents!

It was important for us that children’s home-schooling experience did not all take place in-front of a screen and that creativity was still inspired. Junior School pupils were asked to submit a piece of artwork they created from the resources they had at home. The girls rose to the challenge and lots of ideas were shared on their class TEAMS sites. Chalk drawings, glitter paints, sewing and baking were just some of the examples sent back! Girls in Years 7 to 9 were tasked to use their Design Technology lessons to create a product to fit inside a tin. They were certainly imaginative with their handmade designs including jewellery and toy mice. Year 11 artists had the task of choosing and reconstructing a famous piece of artwork, using themselves or their family as subject matter. We did enjoy seeing the girls’ creative recreations! A-Level artists were inspired by the #portraitsforhsheroes campaign and painted portraits of NHS workers.

The lockdown did not stop Mount staff from challenging the girls to live an active life! Exercise was important not just for the girls’ physical health but also for their mental health. In the Junior School, girls kept an Exercise Diary. Each week they sent it in to Miss Harvey, Junior School PE teacher. She was delighted to learn of the girls’ activities including; running, rollerblading, trampolining, yoga and even flying a broomstick! The girls were also encouraged to get outdoors and were set tasks such as den building. Senior School girls made fitness plans and created their own workout videos. College girls kept active by running Thursday lunchtime exercise sessions using Zoom. They held a Zumba class, a Just Dance session, yoga, Pilates and stretches. 40 girls from Years 6-11 also took part in an online dance workshop with actress Tara Sweeting who taught them choreography from the award-winning musical, ‘Six’. The term culminated in a virtual Sports Day in which girls competed in a series of events from home including, jumping, running and throwing.

The sense of community so unique to The Mount, continued, despite the physical distance between us all. Head of Junior School, Miss Capper, made sure she caught up with each Year group at least once a week. They enjoyed an informal chat via TEAMS which included what the girls had doing, how they were finding the online learning, and asking any questions or concerns they may have had. Ms Richmond, Principal, also joined Class Chats with every year group learning more about the work the girls completed from home. Girls in Senior School used their usual Form Time for a virtual catch up, checking in on each other and with teachers. This provided a way, whilst not being able to see one another at School, of girls keeping in touch and supporting one another remotely!

The School community found many ways to keep up traditions. Ms Richmond produced weekly Morning Meeting videos, College Leavers performed their Leavers Play and shared their memories of the School via video, The Strawberry Ball was held via Zoom and the term ended with an interactive live online Meeting.

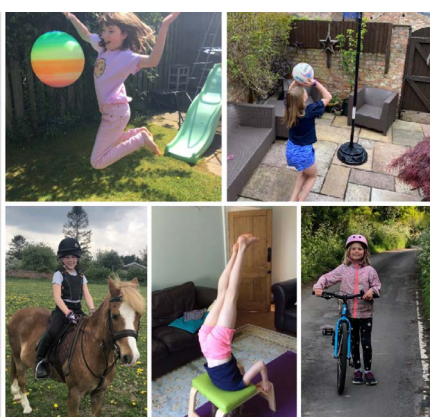
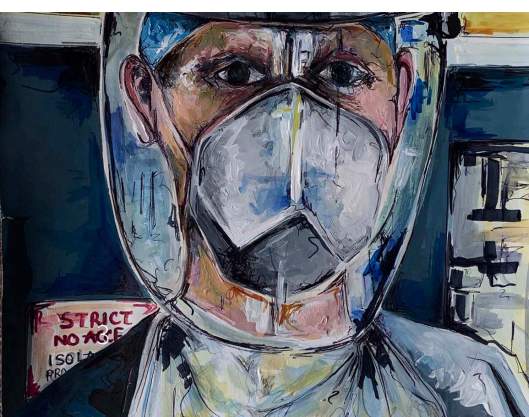
The Mount School did not close completely as we remained open throughout lockdown for the children of

Key Workers, who were able to access remote lessons in School. They made the most of a quiet School building and became intrepid explorers. Ms Wilson took the Junior girls on a very special tour! They enjoyed exploring the secret staircases and doors throughout the building.

Although it was a very challenging term, the staff at The Mount were determined to continue to provide the girls with a high standard of education. The feedback from parents about how well-focused, organised and driven their daughters had been to get up each day for home-schooling and to follow their timetable, was wonderful to hear. The hard work, dedication and commitment of our staff and pupils was a great success!

“I just wanted to let you know how grateful we are to you and your staff for the efficient way they have, and are handling this awful situation. As I type this, my daughter is beavering away at an assignment and she has had regular contact with both her teachers and friends.” - Mount Parent

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Exam Success

The cancellation of public examinations in the Summer was something we could not have predicted at the beginning of the year. Despite the news, the girls in Year 11 and Year 13 remained committed to their studies and online lessons. The girls worked tremendously hard - hard work which was rewarded in August with outstanding exam results!

Hannah Walton-Hughes was delighted to receive her A Level results achieving straight A* grades. Hannah, who joined The Mount in Year 7 commented, "It has been a really lovely reward because I couldn't have asked for better results. It's really nice to know my work paid off! I couldn't have done this without The Mount and all the opportunities and support I've been given." Hannah is taking a gap year before going on to study English with Creative Writing at the University of Nottingham.

Alicia Lake who joined The Mount at the age of three, has always been creative and, from a young age, her desire has been to become a fashion designer. Alicia celebrated achieving an A* in her Art A Level and an A in Design Technology, plus an A in Classics. Alicia is especially happy as she is one step closer to her goal after earning a much-coveted place to study Fashion Design at Ravensbourne University in London. Alicia said, "I'm really happy about my results, it's a relief after everything that has happened with lockdown. Whenever I needed help, my teachers were always supportive."

Sophie Lofthouse also celebrated achieving two As and an A*, securing a place to study Veterinary Medicine at Nottingham University. "I love Biology, so Maths and Chemistry were the ones I was worried about. It's like a dream come true! Veterinary Medicine is what I have wanted to do since I was seven, and now at last it feels like it's tangible," said Sophie.

"I am tremendously proud of the girls. They have worked extremely hard. Despite the unusual circumstances of the last few months and the cancellation of exams, in true Mount style the girls always remained upbeat and motivated. The excellent results received are extremely well deserved. I congratulate all the girls and wish them every success for their future." - Adrienne Richmond

A LEVEL	GCSE
A* : 16%	8-9/A* : 48%
A-A* : 58%	7-9/A-A* : 76%
B-A* : 84%	6-9/B-A* : 84%
C-A* : 94%	4-9/C-A* : 94%

College girls will be taking up their places at University in a wide range of destinations and courses including Business, English, Fashion Design, Geography, Psychology and Veterinary Science.

The New Normal

Like many people across the world The Mount Community is adapting to a new normal. On September 9 we welcomed girls from Early Years to College back to the School, for the first time since March. It was wonderful to hear the chatter and laughter of the girls as they were reunited with teachers and friends.

At The Mount, we are very fortunate to have a spacious campus with large classrooms, dedicated study areas and ample outdoor space. This provides our girls with a safe and secure environment for them to continue their education with very little disruption. The girls have the space to learn, space to explore and most importantly space to be themselves. There are of course several safety measures in place following the government guidelines. These include a one-way system around the site, the wearing of a face covering for visitors and pupils and staff in communal areas, and staggered lunch times. The girls have quickly adapted to the new normal in true Mountie spirit, demonstrating the resilience we are proud to nurture in Mount girls.

MOSA CHANGES

For many years the running of MOSA has been overseen by a dedicated group of Old Scholars making up the MOSA Committee. Each year a Chair was elected to run the Committee. In recent times it has become hard to find a candidate with the time and commitment needed to be the Chair meaning the responsibilities have fallen to the same few people. It therefore became clear that MOSA could not continue to run in the same way and needed to move forward with the School.

At the 137th MOSA AGM in June, which was held remotely over Zoom, the MOSA Committee agreed to handing over control of MOSA to The Mount School York. Working with Adrienne Richmond, a set of Terms of Reference were drawn up and accepted at the AGM. The terms of reference are comprehensive and a positive way forward for all parties. [The Minutes from the MOSA AGM along with the Terms of Reference are attached to the email you received with this newsletter.](#)

Adrienne Richmond, said, *“I would like to thank the MOSA Committee for their hard work and dedication over the years. I have very much enjoyed working with the ladies on the Committee and recognise that making the decision to transfer the running of MOSA to the School was not easy. At The Mount we are very excited to be able to continue to drive MOSA forward and we are committed to keeping the*

core of what MOSA embodies and stands for at the heart of all we do. Keeping old scholars connected and developing new ways to network across the Association is the top priority.”

The first task for the School will be implementing a new database for Old Scholars. This will ensure that all data is held securely and most importantly will help us with more consistent and easier communications between Old Scholars and the School. In the coming months we will be collecting up-to-date data and may need your help reaching out to Old Scholars – watch this space!

We will continue to run the annual Reunion Weekend. It was with a heavy heart that we had to cancel the event in 2020. Next year we will run an event in some format - at School or virtually.

As we implement these changes and restructure staffing at The Mount, Lucy Marsh will not be returning as the Alumnae Officer. We would like to thank Lucy for her time at The Mount and for the hard work she has put in to set up the introduction of a new database. Alumnae Communications will, for now, become part of The Mount’s Communications Team overseen by Kate Linfoot, Director of External Relations. The team can be contacted via mosa@mountschoolyork.co.uk

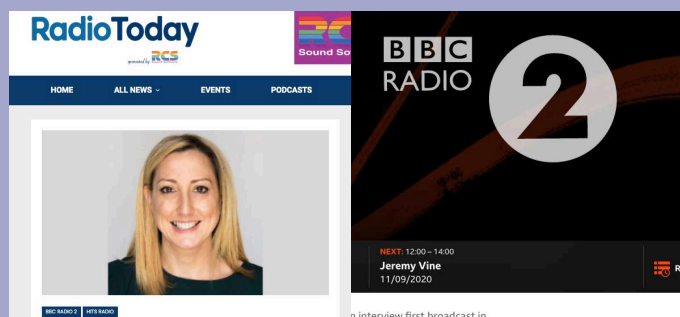
Laura Busson Joins BBC Radio 2

Congratulations to former Mount pupil Laura Busson (nee. Sayers) who in August, was announced as the new Commissioning Executive at BBC Radio 2. This was a hotly competed role with well over a hundred applicants from right across the media industry.

Laura joins BBC Radio 2 from her role as Senior Exec Producer of Breakfast and Talent Development at Hits Radio. She is no stranger to the BBC having worked at Radio 1 for thirteen years – some of the highlights of her time there include picking up multiple SONY Awards, trekking across a Kenyan desert for Comic Relief and publishing a book based on her teenage diaries after Scott Mills broadcast extracts to the nation.

No doubt inspired by her time at The Mount, Laura is a huge champion of diversity as a Senior Leader of Bauer’s ‘Women in Radio’ scheme.

Barbara Windle, former Principal of The Mount School commented, *“This is excellent news. At school, Laura was best known as a gifted visual artist. She found her way into broadcasting quite soon after qualifying and now she continues her stellar career in the media.”*



IN VOGUE!

Dame Judi Dench becomes British Vogue's oldest cover star

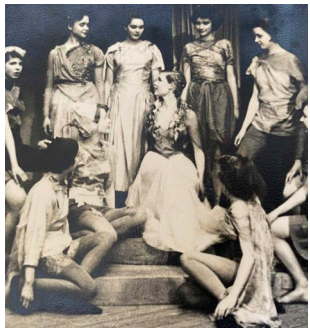
Mount Old Scholar Judi Dench has become British Vogue's oldest cover star, securing her first front page for the style magazine at the age of 85. The Oscar-winning actress was photographed just before lockdown for the magazine's June issue. Throughout the issue, Dame Judi speaks about her legendary acting career, her past loves and living in quarantine.

Interviewed by Giles Hattersley, British Vogue's features director, Dame Judi commented on self-isolating at her home in Surrey during Covid-19: *"I am sure I feel like everyone else, such unprecedented times are quite hard to comprehend,"* she said. *"What is a good thing is that it has made people aware of the predicament of others who are completely alone. If a great deal of kindness comes out of this, then that will be a plus."*

Read the full feature in the June issue of British Vogue or by visiting www.vogue.co.uk/news/article/judi-dench-june-2020-issue-british-vogue

Dame Judi is photographed in a pink, floral silk organza Dolce & Gabbana trench coat for the magazine. Much less stylish, she says, was the costume of the much-maligned Cats film. Dame Judi said she was perplexed by her appearance in the film. While she had expected to look elegant, she said she instead ended up as *"a battered, mangy old cat. A great big orange bruiser. What's that about?"*

Dame Judi's talk of costumes led us to look back through the archives at some of the outfits worn in School productions over the years. Below are some examples of the wonders we found, including Judi, herself in 1953's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream, in which she played Titania Queen of Fairies (pictured above). We would love to hear some of your memories of productions and Mount fashions over the years – send your photos to mosa@mountschool.york.co.uk



Costumes at The Mount

The Wizard of Oz

Utopia Ltd



Wendy Thompson welcomes Kate to The Mount

An Audience with **KATE PRYER**

A Classics and Law Graduate
with a passion for Justice.

Last academic year, Kate Pryer, 24, returned to The Mount to speak with College girls about her life and career path since leaving school. The Classics and Law graduate visited us just before leaving her native York for Phoenix, Arizona, to take up a six-month work placement with defence attorneys helping inmates on death row who have not had a fair trial.

“I hoped to inspire the girls to do something slightly different than what everyone else may be doing,” said Kate, who has always had an interest in human rights and was part of the School’s Amnesty group while she was at The Mount.

Kate read Classics at Newcastle before taking a law conversion course with the University of Law. *“A representative from Amicus, the charity I’m going over to work for, came and gave a talk at uni and I knew that this US volunteer placement was something I would really enjoy.”*

“For me to up sticks and move to America for six months, that confidence is something I’ve definitely got from The Mount.”

“It’s very easy to criticise our (British) justice system because of course we live in it and see all of its flaws, such as the London Bridge attacks where people were released from prison early against the judge’s wishes. But having learned about the American justice system and attended talks by death row defence attorneys, I think we are quite lucky to have a justice system that is relatively fair and not based on race or ethnicity. While we can criticise our justice system, when you look at the American justice system in 2019 there are still alarming statistics showing for instance you are three times more likely to go to death row if you have killed a white man than a black man. We may see news or tv shows from America and think, ‘Oh, that can’t be real; it’s 2020!’ But actually, it is still incredibly racially driven.”

Kate reflected on the impact The Mount has had on her life. *“Everyone at uni would tell me, ‘Oh, you’re really confident, you’re good at public speaking and you’re so outgoing,’ and I would think, ‘Not really.’ I’m like this now because when you’re at The Mount, everybody in your year is like that, so you feel it’s very normal that everybody is confident, everyone puts their hand up, everyone is a leader and there are no followers. At uni, where everyone has come from different schools, that’s when I realised what The Mount*

has given me. For me to up sticks and move to America for six months, even though I know no-one out there, but I thought ‘I’ll just do it’: that confidence is something that I’ve definitely, definitely got from The Mount.”

Visiting The Mount also stirred up reminiscent memories for Kate, *“I loved the school traditions, like Morning Meeting and singing the school text. When I tell my friends about it, they say, ‘Oh that’s a bit weird,’ but I actually liked the traditions, and even sitting in silence. I couldn’t wait to leave when I was here and now that I’m back I realise it’s such a wholesome school. It’s such a lovely way for a girl to be educated.”*

“The Mount has fully shaped me as a person. I had my ups and downs but I always felt supported. If I hadn’t come to this school, if the staff weren’t as caring, if the classes were big I’d have so easily been lost in the crowd. I would definitely not have reached my full potential and I would not be who I am today. As cringe as that sounds, it’s true.”

Kate’s passion for a fair system of justice was clear to see for the College girls and perhaps inspired them again in the Summer. Following the recent and continuing Black Lives Matter protests, College Business students began researching the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The students studied the policy statements from Sainsburys, British Gas, John Lewis and British Airways. Inspired by our Quaker foundations, the girls also looked at the Quaker family of Joseph Sturge, who founded Anti-Slavery International, and his daughter, Sophia. Some of our older pupils also took part in peaceful protests for the Black Lives Matter campaign held across York (pictured below).



Victory in Europe Day Memories

On the 8 May 2020, the UK commemorated the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day. Due to the lockdown many plans for ceremonies had to be cancelled and festivities took place within people's own homes. A group of Scholars from 1950-1956/57, most of whom are now 80 years old, held a very successful Zoom Meeting, to catch up and commemorate VE Day. Over the video conferencing platform, they shared their memories of VE Day. Most of them were just five years old, the age children start school today, so they are some of their first memories. Here they share their stories of the special day.

"I was the youngest in a big family so was allowed to join in a street party in the care of my big sisters. My eldest sister made me a white dress, out of old net curtains, and the other sisters made red and blue flowers to sew on it."

"I remember dancing around a bonfire that had an effigy of Hitler on top. It was rather eccentric but patriotic."

"I remember watching my uncle and my father get up a silver birch tree in the garden, rig up a flagpole and raise the union jack. I also remember the grown ups, earlier, saying how Hitler is 'in hiding'; and I imagined him crouched behind a bush in the shrubbery!"

"After six years of blackout my friend and I were entranced at the flags and bunting that suddenly appeared on houses and we wandered from street to street to see them."

These memories have now been passed on to the history department at The Mount, so in future lessons about the end of the Second World War, pupils can hear first-hand experiences from Mount Old Scholars. Mount Junior School commemorated VE Day by making Union Jack bunting to display in their homes, much like the families back in 1945.

MOSA REFLECTIONS

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 mountschool.york.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@mountschool.york.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



ONE
TO WATCH

Flora Carr

Drama Writer, RadioTimes.com

The Mount English Department were delighted to note former Mount pupil, Flora Carr's job as Drama Writer at RadioTimes.com. As Drama Writer, Flora writes about film and television covering everything from Big Little Lies and Fleabag to Good Omens and The Handmaid's Tale. In her time at RadioTimes.com Flora co-launched the site's successful #WomensWords campaign, which aimed to promote female screenwriters and draw attention to the gender imbalance in the television industry.

You can read Flora's articles at www.radiotimes.com/author/floracarr/