



The
Mount School
York

Reflections

FEBRUARY 2021

Junior School celebrate Carnival!

CELEBRATING EXAM SUCCESS

57% of all A Level grades
rated at A* - A.

SPACE TO BE

We create an environment
where girls feel protected
and happy to be themselves.

MOUNT MUSICIANS PLAY ON

Mount musicians continue to
perform despite the current
challenges & restrictions.



It certainly has been a year like no other . . .

Welcome to this edition of *Reflections*. As we reach the halfway point of the School year, we take the time to ‘reflect’ on all that has happened thus far. It certainly has been a year like no other! Whatever unexpected challenges we have met, School life has continued whether it be in the classroom or online. I have been extremely proud of the way The Mount community has pulled together and supported one another through these times.

Girls returned to the School triumphantly in the Autumn Term and it really was a joy to hear laughter and chatter down the corridors, as new girls settled in and friendships blossomed. Friendships made at school often last for a lifetime. Respect for one another is an important part of The Mount’s ethos and crucial to helping evolve successful friendships.

Several safety measures and routines for keeping a safe distance were put in place at the start of the year, including a one-way travel system in the corridors, hand sanitiser stations throughout the buildings and regular scheduled hand washing, new timings for lessons and staggered lunch times for girls to eat safely in their bubbles. All of the girls from Early Years to College adapted quickly to the new systems and various social distancing measures.

During the Autumn Term the School enjoyed many highlights which gave the girls time and space to pursue their love of learning and revel in unleashing their capabilities, so important to be able to do during these impressionable years. We continue to pursue excellence in teaching and learning, providing girls with opportunities to explore their interests in different subjects and to stretch them academically.

The start of the Spring Term saw the announcement of a second national lockdown and the School swiftly re-configured plans for the start of term. Teaching staff very quickly reassessed and uploaded lessons onto TEAMS and teaching seamlessly returned into full swing remotely. The whole community adapted in great spirit demonstrating the resilience we are so proud to instil in Mount girls. Thank you for the huge parental support shown to all staff with one parent commenting, “Thank you to all the staff at The Mount for coping so well and dealing with so many last-minute changes!”

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Reflections*. I look forward to what the rest of the academic year will hold. It is truly encouraging to know that whatever events are thrown at us, we have the experience, aptitude and resilience to carry on and the support of a wonderfully compassionate community.

Adrienne Richmond
Principal



The Mount CELEBRATES EXAM SUCCESS

57% OF ALL A LEVEL GRADES RATED AT A-A* AND 84% OF GRADES RATED B AND ABOVE

The 2019-2020 academic year had an unusual ending, with A-Level and GCSE examinations being cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, our 2020 College leavers’ dedication was rewarded as they celebrated extraordinary results, with 57% of all grades rated at A-A* and 84% of grades rated B and above.

“I am tremendously proud of the College II girls. They have worked extremely hard over their two year A Level courses. Despite the unusual circumstances of their last few months at School and the cancellation of exams, in true Mount style the girls always remained upbeat and motivated. Throughout lockdown our dedicated staff provided girls with online lessons completing the course syllabuses. Girls then undertook extended study sessions designed to develop their study skills for university and beyond. The excellent results received are extremely well deserved. I congratulate all the girls and wish them every success for their future,” said Ms Richmond.

As is tradition at The Mount, College leavers have gone on to study at their first-choice universities reading a variety of subjects including; Medicine (after taking a gap year), fashion design at Ravensbourne University, Veterinary Medicine at Nottingham, Early Childhood Education at the University of Sydney, Australia, Accounting and Management at Queen Marys University London, Psychology at a number of different universities, Geography at St Andrews and Performance Costume Design for Stage and Screen at Edinburgh.

GCSE pupils celebrated excellent results.

- 48% of GCSE grades awarded were 8/9 grades
- 70% of the grades were 7, 8 or 9
- 95% of girls achieved at least 5 GCSEs of grade 6 & above

“It’s like a dream come true, honestly. Veterinary Medicine is what I’ve wanted to do since I was seven!” said Sophie who achieved straight As.

“It’s really nice to know that my hard work paid off. I couldn’t have done this without The Mount; all the opportunities and help I’ve been given were just incredible.”

Alicia 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’s love of Art and Design has been nurtured as she progressed through the School and has seen her win many design competitions. She celebrates 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.”*

Hannah, who earned straight As and A*s, said, *“I couldn’t have asked for better results. I’m so happy. It’s really nice to know that my hard work paid off. I couldn’t have done this without The Mount; all the opportunities and help I’ve been given were just incredible.”*



Families enjoy a socially distanced results day



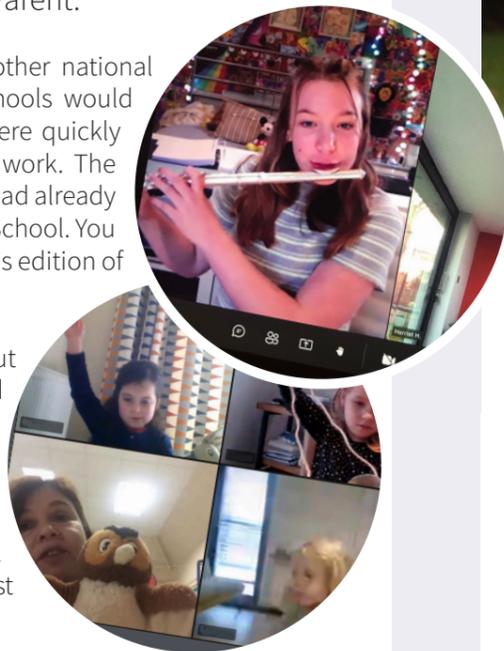
Remote Learning Returns

“I am truly impressed by the hard work and determination shown by the girls and their teachers during lockdown learning.” - Mount Parent.

The start of the Spring Term was met with the announcement of another national lockdown. Following Westminster’s announcement on 4 January that schools would not return to classroom teaching, The Mount leapt into action. Lessons were quickly rolled out online with a mixture of face-to-face lessons and independent work. The School remained open for children of Key workers and boarding pupils who had already returned. They also took part in the online lessons supervised by teachers in School. You can read more about the online experiences provided for girls, throughout this edition of Reflections or by visiting our website mountschoolyork.co.uk.

Junior School’s innovative online learning ideas even went viral! Tweets about their recreation of giant skeletons and ‘Café With a Difference’ were retweeted across the globe and seen by over 120,000 people. They have attracted a dedicated online fan club from around the world. *“Looking for inspiration, follow this school - I love the diversity of their projects!” @HeggiePippa*

While online learning has created very interesting opportunities, we all look forward to the day girls may safely return onsite, the School buildings are just not the same without all of our pupils!



A true friend continues a friend unchangeably

William Penn

In October the topic of our daily texts was ‘Friendship’. Friendships made at School often last a lifetime, Old Scholars frequently comment how lucky they are to still be in touch with their School friends and how grateful they are to have been part of a caring and compassionate community.

Led by our Quaker ethos, we aim to teach girls to respect and value every individual. It is through this mutual respect for their peers that we see friendships blossom across the whole School. When girls move up a year group in September and new girls join the School, The Mount makes every effort to help the girls bond with their new cohort and settle in with their new routines.

“We were very lucky to get a trip to Carlton Lodge on the Friday before half term. We started off with the zip wire. It was so scary when your foot steps off the top and you feel like you’re going to die. A few of us were quite nervous on the zipwire but we cheered them on, like proud mums.” – Romy and Milly, Year 7

For girls joining the Senior School, the Year 7 adventure trip is a rite of passage. This time away from School taking part in team activities, provides the perfect opportunity to bond as a year group as well as making fun memories. In past years it has been a 3-day residential, but this year due to Covid-19 restrictions, we were unable to run the residential. We were, however, extremely fortunate to be able to take the girls on a day trip.

Of course, the 2020-2021 academic year has seen a change to how the girls can socialise as they can currently only physically associate within their bubbles, whilst adhering to social distancing. In the Senior School, a range of additional activities have been created aimed to engender a feeling of belonging to a community, even in a time of social distancing. Events such as Film Nights, the Art and Photography challenges, and the York-to-New-York challenge have brought pupils together socially but also providing them with a mutual goal.

The return of lockdown in January highlighted the importance of keeping in touch. Mount Girls found several ways to keep friendships blossoming, from weekly online workouts, taking part in online quizzes to conversations during Form Time. Year 6 girls even took part in a Virtual Year 7 day, meeting the external girls joining the School in September.

“We encourage the girls to seek creative ways to go forward with people and relationships, to look to make friendships, and to have true understanding of others. It’s heartening to see that lockdown has actually encouraged girls to think creatively to keep in touch. The respect shown for one another by the girls is crucial for making our community one in which we feel cohesive and welcomed. It is no wonder that former pupils are proud to have been part of a caring and compassionate community,” explains Ms Richmond.

In the Autumn Term the Art Department launched its first-ever Photography & Video Competition, with the winners announced during the Spring. The theme was ‘Friendship’.

Girls produced a wonderful selection of photographs, videos and animations representing what friendship means to them. Each entry has been awarded two House Points.

The winners, as judged by Mrs Milton are: Beatrice (Year 9) with her black and white portrait. Beatrice says that friendship is *“being happy and contented with someone”* and the second winner is Milly (Year 7) who produced a hand-drawn animation based on ‘just a chat’ that can make all the difference to your day.



Year 7 Adventure Day at Carlton Lodge

SPACE TO LEARN

SPACE TO THRIVE

SPACE TO BE

“What I like about The Mount is the feeling of being safe while also having the space to grow through independence and responsibility. Even though The Mount is big compared to my primary school, it still has the same family-feel running through it, which makes it feel very special.” – Livia, Year 8



At The Mount we are proud to be able to provide girls with not only the space to learn, but the space to thrive and just to be themselves.

Paying close attention to the girls’ mental health and wellbeing is an important part of School life. The Mount’s approach of multi-tiered interventions might not be realised by the girls, but it is omni-present. From PE classes to health & wellbeing sessions with our on-site Health Centre’s registered Nurse, girls are taught to understand their own wellbeing.

“With the inevitable social upheaval wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting the girls’ mental health during this period has been just as important as continuing their education.”

With the inevitable social upheaval wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting the girls’ mental health during this period has been just as important as continuing their education. We have therefore taken pre-emptive and responsive measures, over and above our usual support. At the start of the Autumn Term in the Senior School we adopted a five-lesson per day timetable, with longer breaks to allow girls more opportunity to relax and reconnect with friends. We extended Form time to provide time for Personal Tutors to assess pupils’ ongoing wellbeing. Additional drop-in sessions with pastoral tutors which, in conjunction with

our existing peer mentoring system mean that girls know there is always someone to talk to, allowing them time and space to share and understand their experiences.

Social distancing measures and restrictive guidelines meant that some activities have had to be re-thought. Extra-curricular activities were focussed on providing ‘bubbles’ the opportunity to continue with sports and music activities within the restrictions. Junior School girls made the most of the spacious campus from exploring the woodlands in lessons to playing playground games in their breaks. Games, sports and outdoor activities create natural endorphins boosting girls’ mental health.

Social events are a valuable outlet, for girls to relax and have fun. With social distancing and the ‘rule of 6’ outside of school, girls found it difficult to celebrate special occasions. In recognition of the times, we encouraged girls to celebrate occasions in School within their bubbles. Year 10 girls held a surprise birthday party in their Form Room for a fellow classmate. *“It was one of the nicest things I’ve seen. The girls really wanted to make the day special for her,”* smiles Year 10 Tutor Ms Bok. Aware that Halloween was a bit

different for children this year, College girls were inspired to arrange a day of fun in School. They approached Mrs Perks, with the idea of a whole School Halloween dress-up day. Touched by the concern the College girls showed for the younger members of The Mount community, how could she say no! Ghosts, witches, zombies, skeletons and even Scooby Doo made their way to The Mount for the day. Girls from Early Years through to College put a lot of effort into making the day fun for all, not just dressing up but also decorating the School. The College girls organised a truly spooktacular Halloween Day, achieving their goal of providing amusement and fun. As one parent noted, *“Given kids can not do much for Halloween this year we really appreciate School hosting the fun and mayhem.”*

“Our priority is and always will be to create an environment where girls feel protected and happy.”

In February 2021, Children’s Mental Health week coincided with the third national lockdown. Despite not being in School, pupils were still provided with the opportunity to reflect on the week and its theme ‘Express Yourself.’ In the Junior School girls embraced Children’s Mental Health Week with a series of daily ‘express yourself’ challenges. During Global Thinking lessons, they explored different ways we keep our minds healthy and talked about different feelings and emotions. *“We also talked about how we can*

exercise our minds by exercising our imagination,” said Rachel Capper, Head of Junior School. On the Wednesday they celebrated ‘Inside Out Day’. The girls spent the day wearing their clothes inside out to show that you do not always know how people are feeling on the inside. Sometimes it is different to how they look on the outside, so it is important to be kind to others. Senior School girls also supported Mental Health week in their PE lessons.

Knowing that physical activity helps boost mental health they chose their games lessons to ‘express themselves’. Year 11 girls took a break from the rigours of GCSE studies for a fun fancy dress high intensity interval training (HIIT) session run by Izzy and Ruby (Year 11). It was evident from the smiles on everyone’s faces, it was lots of fun!

At The Mount we are fortunate, indeed, to be able to provide safe spaces for the girls to continue to thrive during this time.

“As the needs of girls change, we have the space to evolve with them. Our priority is and always will be to create an environment where girls feel protected and happy. Mount girls are happy and confident in themselves because The Mount has the space to be,” explains Ms Richmond.





Junior Explorers & Creators

Themed around 'Explore, Discover and Create', our exciting Junior School Creative curriculum encourages enquiring minds by providing them with a variety of learning experiences, and so far this year the girls have enjoyed a plethora of exciting and engaging lessons.

The girls were welcomed back in September to the news they were all to be intrepid explorers travelling to Brazil for Carnival! Junior School girls explored the culture, music, geography and excitement of Brazil. They took part in a samba drumming workshop, after which they created their own samba rhythms which they digitally mapped on Garage Band. In Art, they focussed on renowned Brazilian artist Romero Britto and his use of colour to design their own colourful tee-shirts. They became climate scientists to decide which city would be better for England to play their first World Cup game and looked at life in the rainforest. Finally, they choreographed their own samba dances. The Brazil topic culminated in a re-creation of the famous Rio Carnival. The girls let their hair down in their new tee-shirts and showed off their samba dance moves!

In the second half of the Autumn Term, a package arrived from the British Museum in London, sending Junior girls on a quest to learn more about the most dominant society of Mesoamerica ... the Mayans! The girls travelled back in time with British explorer Alfred Maudslay to help research his findings. They discovered a world of towering

staircases and temples, drinking vessels with a link to York, and ancient legends. They designed and built a staircase of Mayan writing, wrote their own names in Mayan hieroglyphics and made their own pots using techniques the Mayans also used. Consulting the source materials of Maudslay and Frederick Catherwood, they studied the ancient city of Copan and recreated it in Lego. Finally, they created an ingenious virtual tour of their lego city, thanks to the green-screen technology.

"Our creative curriculum is excellent!" - Isabelle, Year 5

Although the Spring Term saw lessons return online, this did not stop our Junior School teachers from delivering the innovative curriculum. In their Science-based

theme, the girls discovered lots about the human body, to achieve a Junior Doctor's Diploma! They learnt all about blood and its components even creating their own blood smoothies. The trainee Doctors spent time researching Strange But True Facts about the body, using Flipgrid, a video discussion platform, to report their intriguing investigations. They were tasked with recreating models of teeth and the human skeleton using household or classroom items. They learnt about our mighty muscles, then created their own video fitness and exercise routines - move over Joe Wicks!

As we chatted to the Junior School girls to learn more about the creative curriculum, it was evident from the smiles on their faces and the enthusiasm with which they spoke that their imaginations have certainly been sparked!



"I enjoyed doing the Lego. I've learned about where the Mayans lived." - Jessica, Year 3



"I enjoyed designing the tee-shirts and dancing in the carnival." - Edith, Year 5



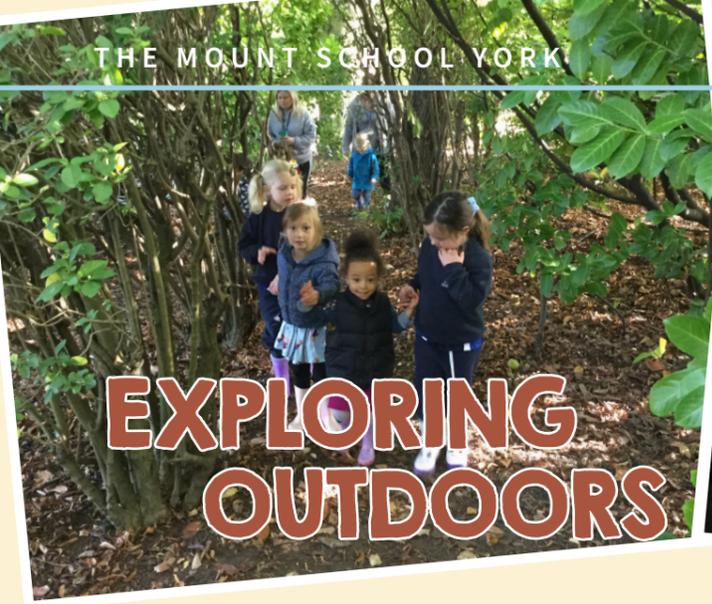
"I liked our PE chats and doing the PE exercises." - Susannah, Year 2



"I liked learning about how the Mayans invented hot chocolate, and how they made pigment out of flowers." - Emilia, Year 6



"I liked the carnival, doing the samba dance. We made our own samba dances, and designed our own tee-shirts." - Agnes, Year 4



EXPLORING OUTDOORS

Nestled at the bottom of the playing fields, The Mount's on-site Forest School is a wonderland, firing children's imaginations. Here they learn skills and apply and create theories about the miraculous world around them.

The Autumn Term provides an excellent opportunity for Early Years children to learn about the changing seasons. The young children made the most of exploring the woods and investigating the Autumnal season. They compared textures they could find, from spiky conker shells to smooth kernels, observed the leaves changing colour, and made their own fireworks display using brightly coloured leaves. *"Even a simple task such as using natural materials to build a house for their creature, teaches them to construct with a purpose in mind and recognise different purposes for a variety of resources. And of course, there are the simple pleasures to be had in climbing trees and fallen logs with their friends,"* comments Rachel Capper, Head of Junior School.

In January, as the older children embraced Remote Learning, the Early Years classroom remained open. The children took full advantage of having a quieter campus to themselves! The children enjoyed the colder weather at the start of the term by playing in the snow and making snow creations. Inspired by the visiting birds in early Spring they made their own bird feeders to hang around the School grounds. Creating the bird seed and lard feeders enabled the children to practise their fine motor skills. They tested their skills further by threading Cheerios onto pipe cleaners!

Of course, as well as taking advantage of the spacious campus Early Years children at The Mount benefit from a specialist Early Years Classroom and bespoke curriculum, sparking their curiosity and creativity through exploration and play. The children have enjoyed many activities this year including Music lessons with Mrs Burr, cosmic yoga, sessions for gym dance and movement with Ms Harvey and French with Madame Weller. A highlight of the Autumn Term was the Nativity performance in which the youngest children took to the stage for the first time.

Early Years children enjoyed a special treat in February as they had their own juicing tray! They squeezed and smelled different fruits and jellies before deciding whether to use their juice to make a lemon and lime cake or a soup. *"The children always enjoy seeing what's on the tuff tray, they love the messy play! A great way to practise concentration and fine motor skills is cutting fruit and jelly cubes. Some great concentration and scissor skills were shown, and the children enjoyed wonderful fruity smells!"* explains Ms Kendall, Early Years Teacher.



CREATING INDOORS

"And move into Vrikshasana..."

During Covid restrictions, our boarders have discovered new ways of appreciating our spacious, sprawling grounds whilst observing new routines introduced to keep everyone safe.

Unfortunately, external trips have not been able to take place this year due to the lockdown restrictions. However, our boarders have been lucky to have constant access to the School's wonderful facilities. Girls have been keeping active working out in the Fitness Suite, following exercise tutorials in the Sports Hall and partaking in games such as Battle Ropes which brought much laughter and amusement. They have enjoyed weekly Sunday Yoga sessions run by one of our Resident Graduates, providing a tranquil atmosphere to relax and de-stress, helping them prepare for the week ahead. The traditional weekly Boarder's Quaker Meeting has also continued, a time in which the whole House comes together for quiet reflection.

Our playing fields, which are called New, have also provided a safe area for girls to be outside in the fresh air. Whether it be running to the Couch to 5K programme, chatting with friends on a walk or just sitting in the Spring sunshine, our outdoor space has been all important for the girls' fitness and mental health at this time. Wellbeing Walks have meandered over to the Knavesmire, whilst others have expanded their running routes to take in the local landmark.

Boarders have also been kept entertained by many in-house activities such as quizzes, board games and film nights. They have flexed their cordon bleu skills taking part in cooking and baking challenges and enjoyed crafting. At Christmas the boarding bubble enjoyed their traditional Christmas celebrations, decorating the house, carols on the stairs and enjoying a Christmas meal all together in a formal dining setting.

While we look forward to the time when the restrictions will be relaxed, the girls' resilience and creative skills developed during Lockdown will remain with them for life.



'STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE'

"The Mount has given me incredible opportunities to further my understanding of subjects that interest me." – Recent College II Leaver

One of our School aims is to 'inspire girls to strive for personal excellence.' We are committed to bringing out the best in every girl in all that she does. Within the classroom we instil our girls with a love of learning. Tradition is combined with dynamic and forward-thinking teaching to equip girls with the skills, ambition and confidence to succeed.

Pupils are encouraged to freely explore topics and ideas that interest them, sparking their interests and desire to achieve. Our Early Years Foundation Stage encourages this by having enough flexibility in the curriculum to be able to adapt teaching when the pupils are entranced by a particular idea. When Florence was fascinated by paper aeroplanes, the entire class took a session to make their own paper aeroplanes and practice flying them. They talked about being pilots and travelling far.

The Junior School's creative curriculum encourages the girls' natural enthusiasm for learning and funnels their curiosity to delve more deeply into their topic of interest, as they did this Autumn with Rio De Vida and the ancient Mayans (read more on pages 8&9).

Our expert teachers are constantly striving to find diverse ways to bring learning to life, such as when Year 9 became film critics for a morning to review a selection of short films for York's BAFTA-qualifying international film festival, Aesthetica, which was fully online for the first time this year.

"All of the films were very unique and different from each other. We watched five or six films for each category and wrote notes about the themes, how much we enjoyed them and how high we would rate them. We all enjoyed watching the films, which were each different in their own special way. Our Year's favourite short film overall is called Mall." – Libby and Lilia, Year 9

When learning about the first World War, Year 9 girls were tasked to ask their parents and relations what roles members of their family had had in the war. They made posters of what they had learned, and shared their findings with their classmates. Creating that personal connection with the conflict literally brought home the historian's craft. *"I loved looking at all the records. There was a tonne of lists and then you spot the person who was in your family and you are like - woah!"* - Lily, Year 9.

In GCSE French, Year 11 pupils got a firm grasp of key words, important for understanding the detail and nuance of a sentence, by working on vocab retrieval, translating French negatives using the Wheel of Names to practise recall and translation. Girls studying Modern Foreign Languages for GCSE benefit from a weekly session with a native language Conversation Teacher to work on their speaking skills. This builds their confidence, spontaneity and accuracy for the GCSE speaking exam, which accounts for 25% of their final mark.



Junior School girls celebrate excellent LAMDA results



Year 11 artwork



Senior School Cross Country Champions



Year 7 celebrate International Languages Day



Sisterly support whilst Remote Learning



The 2020-2021 College Leadership Team



Where are they now? We catch up with Mount Old Scholar, Siima Sabiti

Siima Sabiti joined The Mount Senior School in Year 7 as a boarder. Siima is a former Head girl, an honour she holds dear. *“I’ll never forget being called to Miss Barbara Windle’s office, and then Mrs. Porteous giving me the phone to call my parents to give them the news. I was so proud.”* After leaving The Mount Siima studied at King’s College London for a degree in Law. She is now best known as a media personality in Uganda. *“I am a media personality, specifically radio. I also play the flute and used to perform regularly (until lockdown, of course). I am a voice over artist and one of the hosts of the ‘Not Radio’ podcast in Uganda.”*

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think back to your years at The Mount?

So many things! My years at The Mount were definitely some of the best in my life. I learned so much and truly grew as a person. I suppose the first thing would be how grateful I am that we were taught that girls can do absolutely anything!

What is your fondest memory of The Mount?

The day I joined The Mount was the day before my 12th birthday. My Dad brought me to school, and I was introduced to my Nutcracker*, Rebecca. When Becca found out it was my birthday, she went around School House with a pillowcase, asking everyone to put in a little gift for me. The next day, my very first breakfast in that dining hall, EVERYONE started singing Happy Birthday! I was mortified and chuffed to bits at the same time! Becca brought me the pillowcase which was stuffed with everything from chocolate, to a small teddy bear, to mouthwash. I was really made to feel at home.

How important an influence has the Quaker ethos been to you?

The Quaker ethos has been extremely important. I worked in the media for almost 10 years, hosting a breakfast show on radio and managing the station. My working hours were hectic, I literally had no social life, and finding moments of stillness was very difficult. Every day, I learned to find time to just sit in silence, to reflect, to just BREATHE. And I know this all comes from everything I learned at The Mount.

*The Nutcracker is the name for peer mentors at The Mount, a tradition that is still ongoing today. An older girl is paired with a younger girl to help her settle in to School life and act as a confidante.

Have any influences from your time at The Mount helped you through life?

One major thing I learned at The Mount was a sense of responsibility, for oneself and for others. As Head Girl, I had no idea, initially, of what that meant. It was more than my fellow pupils voting for me, more than members of staff putting their faith in me. I learned that I could be a leader. Being conscientious, empathetic, and taking the time to understand the people I work with, I believe, has led to several positions in my career that have propelled me further.

Describe a moment in your career thus far, which you feel was connected to your Mount education.

I can think of many. Throughout my time at The Mount, I had Speech and Drama lessons they taught me how to use my voice, how to stand up straight and project. Apart from working on radio, I also MC at events. And I have had to present ideas and concepts in front of top bosses and board members, a daunting task no matter who you are. But being a Mountie has taught me that my voice matters, and that I must use it.

Looking ahead, what are your hopes for your future?

In these times, the future is so uncertain. My hope is that my country Uganda, and the world, can come through this Covid-19 crisis, and be better for it. I hope that I can continue to use my voice for the causes that matter to me the most, and that I can continue to be an example of everything The Mount has to offer for young girls and women of the future.

“One major thing I learned at The Mount was a sense of responsibility, for oneself and for others.”



SOCIALLY DISTANCED NETBALL & MORE...

We caught up with Miss Emma Howell, Head of PE, to find out more about the challenges of socially distanced sports and keeping active in lockdown!

“As we can’t yet play fixtures against other schools, girls were missing the challenge of competing and so the PE department came up with the ‘York to New York challenge’. The girls were set the challenge of running, swimming,

“When term began, I was delighted with how dedicated the girls had been with pursuing physical fitness during lockdown; they had found innovative and fun ways to exercise and keep active while at home.

In the Autumn Term we were back to a full programme of physical activities as soon as possible following the restrictions in place. The girls were particularly happy when we re-opened the swimming pool! The squad swim sessions are always extremely popular.



rowing, walking, dancing the distance from York to New York. They worked collectively as the Junior School and in Senior School Year groups to see who could get the closest to the final destination. The challenge was met with enthusiasm, energy and friendly competitiveness, with even the staff creating a team!”

Miss Howell comments, *“It was a fantastic challenge, all the girls were engaged and active. It was nice to see them working together in their Year groups. They were particularly inspired to see if they could beat the distance achieved by the staff.”*

“Playing netball was slightly more challenging as we introduced ‘socially distanced netball!’ The girls took to the challenge competing in their bubbles. They have also enjoyed football, badminton, yoga, dance aerobics, cross country running across our playing fields, and just being active,” explains Miss Howell.

Year 10 girls chalked up the greatest distance (510 miles) with Junior School girls right behind them covering a massive 426 miles. Together, the entire School ran, swam, rode and moved 3,489 miles within a week, taking us not only as far as New York, but almost as far as York, Pennsylvania!

“Year 10 kicked off the term by taking part in the York to New York challenge, in which you had to cover as many miles as possible, whether that was on foot, on a bike or even on horseback. Around a third of the miles were covered by cycling, approximately 25 miles were ridden on horseback and the rest were completed altogether as a year group, in our PE lessons. We all tried our hardest to do as much as possible. We have also adjusted to social distance netball which has proven to be tricky, but we’ve had a lot of fun playing netball again after not having played for six months.” – Jemima and Ophelia, Year 10 reporters for Tramlines Nearly Live

Creative Writing

Autumn Term celebrations provide multiple opportunities for girls to unleash their imaginations, both within School and public competitions.

Congratulations to Milly and Chloe, both in Year 7, who came first and second in a Winter-themed essay competition run by the youth in the National Citizens' Service. Well done also to Peggy (Year 6) who won in her age group.

The selection, below, of excerpts of the girls' work, is a mere glimpse of their creative talents which they hone throughout the year.

Excerpt from *The Yule Cat*, by Asta, Year 7

It was Christmas Eve and Kristoff couldn't get to sleep. He decided to run downstairs and grab an extra blanket. As he walked past the window, he noticed how empty and bare it was. The other children in his village could afford the traditional shoe that all Icelandic children leave out the night before Christmas Day. There would be no sweets left out for him. Even the naughty children get something – even if it is rotting potatoes. The 12 Yule men of Christmas hadn't come to Kristoff's house. They had no sheep for Sheep-clo'd to steal milk, they had no leftovers for the Pot-scraper to take, they could not afford sausages for the Sausage-swiper to swipe, but Kristoff knew they did have candles. The last of the Yule men comes on the 24th looking for candles to steal, but if you've been good he fills your shoe with sweets. Kristoff felt cold and sad, clutching his blanket. He was also afraid because they had been too poor to buy new clothes this Christmas. Everyone knows that the Yule cat is on the prowl tonight and he eats the children who don't have new clothes. His mother had told him the cat wasn't real, but he still had a shimmer of doubt at the back of his mind. 'What if it is real and I get eaten?' he thought. 'I think I'm going to stay down here for a while...'

A Sonnet, by Emma, Year 9

The things I like off the top of my head
The feel of the sea and newly cut grass
The smell of a book and freshly baked bread
And the tweet of birds as they fly past
Moments of a forest, smell of old stone
To start out into the endless desert
Step on a plane and travel far from home
But there are things I like much more than this
Such as aeroplane windows to look out
At the eternal moving mountains
We call the clouds.



Soldier's Point of View, by Berlin, Year 9

Dear all waiting for me to come home soon,
I am writing with my experiences
Of my living in the trenches this June,
The summer sun is shining high and bright
Flowers bloom over the bodies of some,
And I love to say with all my delight,
That I will indeed be coming home soon,
And hoping to be there by Christmas night.



It is Christmas night already, and so
We won't be coming home for a long time.
And my leg is broke. Thought you should know,
They are all gone, all my friends are gone
It is just me here. Writing to you,
I wish I was with you and all at home,
Not alone, with endless fighting around me.

Year 6 girls studied the poetry of Ted Hughes and created their own poems based on his styles.

My Kitten, by Hetty, Year 6

My kitten is a carousel going round and round
My kitten is a pogo stick bouncing up and down
My kitten is a soft pillow lying on my lap
My kitten is a spy lying still and flat
My kitten is a marshmallow getting toasted by the fire
My kitten is a mountain climber, climbing higher and higher



Pastel Moon Has Risen, by Peggy, Year 6

Pastel moon has risen
Like a night light turned on
Glowing brightly in the sky
Will not fade 'til morn'.

But hedgehogs in its leaves
Like buried treasure in the beach
A dormouse in a hole
Like a stone in a peach.



MOUNT MUSICIANS PLAY ON

The Autumn Term is ordinarily packed full of music Meetings, musical recitals, concerts and festive music celebrations. However, due to the restrictions in place in School and in music lessons, many events were not able to run in the usual way. This did not stop The Mount Staff, who were determined to continue to run the events to showcase The Mount girls' many talents and so music recitals, concerts and performances moved online.

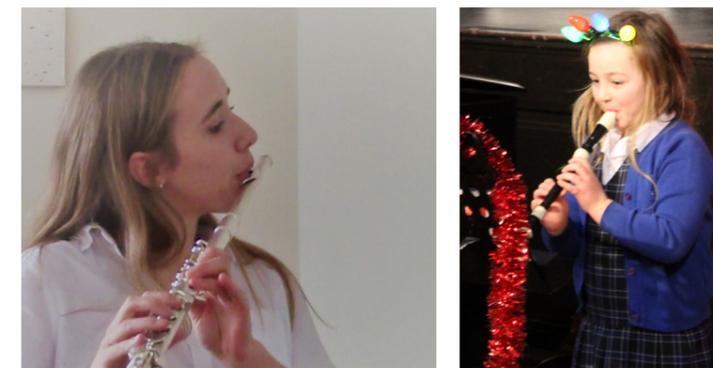
The Music Department produced a series of online recital videos in which our Music Scholars and talented musicians demonstrated their musical prowess. Soloists in Junior School had the chance to try their hand at a live performance with their informal Concert, performing in front of the Junior School, with an online recording provided for parents to watch.

"It was a bit scary because I'd never done it before. I feel more confident now and I also liked watching my friends perform." - Eleanor, Year 5.

The Senior School Christmas Concert rang in the seasonal celebration with performances by soloists, bubbled ensembles and the Senior Choir in their bubbles. The separate pieces were recorded individually and then layered together to produce the final video for the event. A highlight in the concert saw Denva (College II) take a seat at one of the new Steinway pianos and let inspiration take over as she composed her own beautiful piece of music.

"Playing with the String Quartet in the Esther Tuke room was a real highlight." - Becky, Year 10.

In light of government suggested principles for safer singing during the pandemic, the Junior School found innovative, creative and fun ways to perform their Christmas production of *The Nutcracker*. The girls narrated the story over their own drawings and artwork. The musical elements were imaginatively re-thought under Covid restrictions with a torchlight dance, a body-percussion dance, percussion ensemble and a boom-stick ensemble. The production culminated with a very moving performance by the signing choir performing a British Sign Language version of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.



Online Music Recitals included:

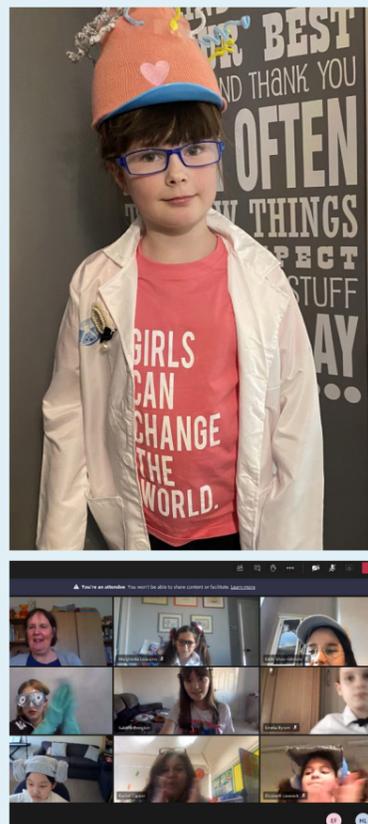
- Martha (College I): *Playful Pony* (Pucihar); *Tambourin* (Gossec)
- Sian (Year 9): *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* (Mascwitz & Sherwin); *My Ship* (Gershwin & Weill)
- Eleanor (Year 11): *Un Amanecer en Santa Maria* (Ruiz); *Petites Litanies de Jesus* (Grovlez)
- Madeleine (Year 10): *Presto Op 1 No 9* (Handel); *Intermezzo* (Mascagni)
- Lily (Year 11): *Burn* (Miranda); *She Used to be Mine* (Bareilles)
- Kyra (Year 7): *Nocturne in E minor* (Chopin)



In celebration of International Day of Women and Girls in Science on 11 February, our Junior School girls were tasked with a three-part challenge! After learning about a variety of leading women in Science and STEM, they chose one woman to further research and using Flipgrid recorded a short video about her and her work. The girls chose women across an awe-inspiring array of specialisms, from aerospace to medicine to zoology! Their informative presentations covered women such as Edith Clarke, Marie Curie, Amelia Earhart, Birute Galdakis, Jane Goodall, Mae Jamieson and Sally Ride. Isabelle was inspired by one of our parents and CodeClub Leader Ruth Laird. Isabelle interviewed Ruth to find out all about her work in IT and coding.

The second challenge tasked the girls with becoming successful Scientists themselves! Modern scientists wear white coats, but we asked what will women scientists wear 100 years from now? The girls transported themselves to 2121 and designed their futuristic work outfits. We were very inspired by Catherine's 'Girls can change the world' tee-shirt!

The final part of their challenge was: As a scientist in 100 years time, what are you going to discover or invent? On International Day of Women and Girls in Science, during live lessons for each year group girls presented their costumes and inventions to Miss Wilson, Miss Capper and Ms Richmond. They were particularly impressed by Amelia's 'ARL Unit 3003,' a bracelet that at a touch of a button can transport you to another country and can help you communicate in any language including alien!



PRIZE WINNING HISTORIAN

Congratulations to Phoenix in College II, who was awarded the coveted first prize in the prestigious Robson History Prize, hosted by Trinity College Cambridge. Her win was praised by Dr Richard Serjeantson, Director of Studies in History at the College who said, "Many congratulations on writing such an intelligent, interesting and well-researched piece of work."

Phoenix, who joined The Mount in the Sixth Form, said, "Before I came to The Mount, I would complete my classwork and homework, but would not necessarily take on clubs or competitions. Now, I realise that it's about more than that; College encourages you to explore what you think are your boundaries. The main thing I've gained so far is taking more opportunities."

THINK AND LIVE ADVENTUROUSLY



Welcome to The Mount

Kim Buckley



Our new Drama teacher, Kim Buckley, joined the School this year and, despite social distancing restrictions, has been the toast of our Drama and Public Speaking pupils.

Mrs Buckley completed a BA (Hons) in Theatre, Film & TV at York St John's University, and then completed a Graduate Teacher Programme to gain her Qualified Teacher Status and later gained The National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership.

What drew you to a career in teaching?

It is hard to say, but I suspect it came from a desire to enhance young people's lives through the creative

arts in the way theatre inspired me, as a teenager and young adult.

Who is your hero?

At each institution I have taught at, there have always been inspirational women in leadership whom I have looked up to and admired. They, coupled with motivational speakers and academics such as Brene Brown and Peter Crone are my combined heroes!

If you were not a teacher, what would you be doing career-wise?

Teaching isn't that much different to acting, I've always been in plays or performing in some way. I would have loved to have been a voice over artist or radio presenter.

Currently Reading: A new play called *Lava* by James Fritz

Favourite TV Show: *The Crown*

Favourite Pudding: Tiramisu

Favourite Songs:

Tiny Dancer and *Your Song* by Elton John, *Shallow* by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper.

Podcast or book:

Podcast

Chocolate or Crisps:

Chocolate

CELEBRATING UNSUNG HEROES

At the end of 2020, Sixth Form girls released a six-minute video in which girls and staff paid tribute to the teams working behind the scenes, for all their support and hard work.

The heart-warming messages of thanks highlighted the work of the cleaning staff, chefs and the maintenance team as well as teachers and support staff at The Mount.

The video was published and circulated to the School community in the final week of term, with a message from students Georgia and Charlotte, who compiled the video, combined with interviews they had conducted.

"We wanted to say a big thank you to everyone this year for coping so well with these unprecedented times."

"Members of the School community wanted to say a huge thank you to each and every unsung hero who has worked tirelessly this year. Our video is a video that celebrates the hard-working 'unsung' members within the School community."



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