

UPDATE



Going for it
in Zambia
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UPDATE

ART EXHIBITION

Vardean College opened its doors to the public to showcase the outstanding work of its A Level students in June. Visitors were welcomed to view the exhibition over a period of four days.

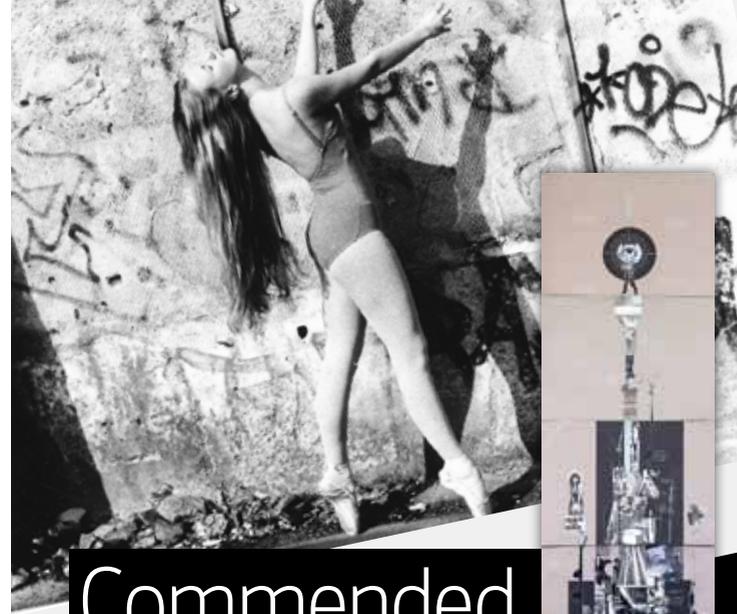
As part of the exhibition, Molly-Mae Brissett-Haigh revitalised the cyanotype process that dates back to the birth of Photography in the 19th century by creating a series of life sized portrait silhouettes.

Molly-Mae created the images as part of her Photography A Level and has now gone on to follow an Art Foundation course at City College to continue developing her experimental approach to art. The Cyanotype process was discovered in 1842. The process involves exposing a surface coated with Ammonium Iron III Citrate and Potassium Ferricyanide to a source of ultraviolet light, such as sunlight. An image is created by exposing through a contact negative or by placing objects directly on top, a photogram.

Judged by Ofsted to be 'outstanding,' 'innovative' and 'exemplary', Vardean College Visual Arts supports the work of more than two hundred A Level Photography, Fine Art, Textiles, Graphics and 3D Design students from Brighton, Hove, Sussex and further afield.



BTEC ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS VISITED **THE CASS SCULPTURE FOUNDATION**, NEAR GOODWOOD IN OCTOBER. THE 26 ACRE PARK EXHIBITS LARGE SCALE SCULPTURES BY **BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS**. STUDENTS SKETCHED, TOOK PHOTOS AND PAINTED WATERCOLOURS OF THE INSPIRING WORK THEY SAW. HEAD OF VISUAL ARTS **ROB MACDONALD** BELIEVES A TRIP TO EXPERIENCE THESE MONUMENTAL WORKS FOR REAL IS ALWAYS PREFERABLE TO SEEING THEM ONLINE. THE STUDENTS ARE JUST 2 MONTHS INTO THEIR LEVEL 2 BTEC CERTIFICATE COURSE AND ENJOYED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PAINT OUTSIDE.



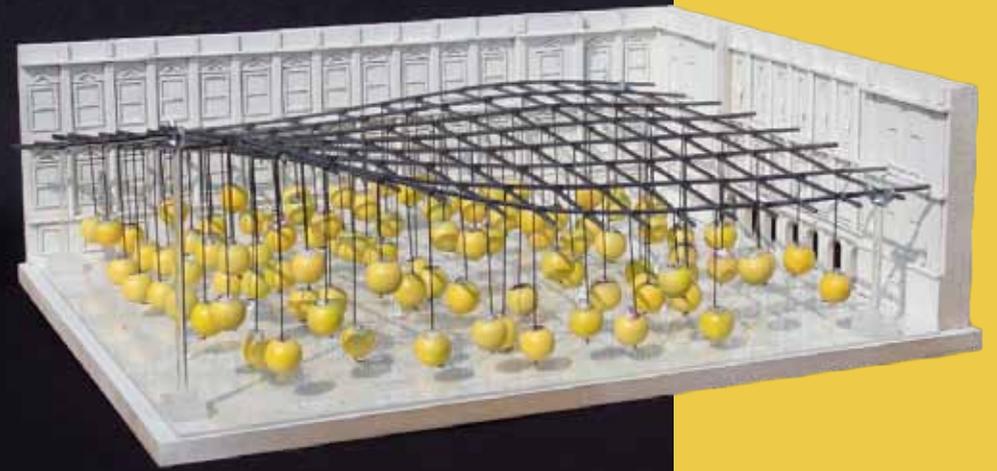
Commended by the Royal Academy

2014 has been a record year for entries to the Royal Academy's A Level Summer Exhibition Online, with over 2,100 submissions from 361 schools across the UK. 1,280 young artists between 16 and 18 years old have entered what they feel to be their most exciting or important artwork. The final online exhibition, Functions of a Hand includes 36 works displayed in three virtual galleries. A further 70 works have been commended in a shortlist. The work of two Vardean College students - William Page (3D and Fine Art) and Phoebe Bowdige (Photography) had their work commended by the judges - an outstanding achievement!



STUDENTS TIE UP THEIR ART SKILLS

In a joint venture between Vardean College and Fabrica Gallery, 26 Art Enrichment students honed their skills at such things as basket weaving and rope making last term. Under the watchful eye of Annemarie O Sullivan, the students explored the possibilities of how they could create a giant structure to fill Fabrica. The skills they learnt from Annemarie soon adapted to a group idea for the creation of a giant web. The 4 sessions were spread over 3 months with the students initially working on a series of tasks where they had to design smaller structures that were either using ropes, created by them from grass rushes or such strange and unusual building materials as sprouts, withies and potatoes. The sessions were a part of Fabrica's Young People's programme and Vardean College's Art Enrichment sessions.





ART STUDENT PUNCHES ABOVE HIS WEIGHT **JEM WARD**, AN EX-ART STUDENT AT VARNDEAN COLLEGE, WAS FEATURED IN THE **NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY** THIS SUMMER AS PART OF THE BP PORTRAIT AWARD “**NEXT GENERATION**” PROGRAMME. JEM IS PICTURED HERE HARD AT WORK ON THE FINAL LARGE PAINTING OF HIS A LEVEL ART COURSE. THE NEXT STEP IN JEM’S CAREER IS THE **ART AND DESIGN FOUNDATION** COURSE AT **CITY COLLEGE**. WHEN IT COMES TO ART, JEM IS A KNOCKOUT!

Hannah’s Journey of a Lifetime



Last June, Varndean College student Hannah Fox was given an amazing opportunity to go on a journey of a lifetime to Africa by a charity called Journey of a lifetime Trust (JOLT) which helps make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of young people from the ages of 14-21 who have faced significant disadvantages in their lives. In 2009, Hannah was diagnosed with Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension, a rare neurological disorder that affects 1 in 100,000 people and required frequent admission to hospitals and an extensive treatment plan including 38 lumbar punctures, 5 shunt surgeries, ICP monitoring and 60 tablets a day for a year. However despite this and having certain

caring responsibilities within her family, Hannah continued with her GCSE studies and sat some of them whilst an inpatient in hospital. This enabled her to progress to study A levels at Varndean College and then university to study Psychology.

She was nominated by her Additional Support teacher for this Journey of a Lifetime to Africa and was absolutely amazed to receive the news that she had made it down to the final 24! The journey consisted of 4 weeks in July and August of challenging, yet rewarding, travelling through South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zambia. Prior to the journey however each young person had to raise at least £650.



CINEMA AND THEATRE IN ONE

On 20 September, 20 AS Lang-Lit students and 2 staff attended a one-off screening of ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ by Tennessee Williams. As a set text on this course, it was a great way of getting ahead of the game and seeing it come alive before we actually read it in class later this year. It was also an exciting opportunity to see a play that is rarely staged these days in the UK. Although we didn’t go up to a London venue to watch it, a more affordable, filmed version, which was beamed directly to The Komedia’s big new screen proved to be the next best thing.

The National Theatre’s current acclaimed production was more than three hours long but an unforgettable experience. Gillian Anderson’s portrayal of Blanche Dubois and her conflict with Stanley was raw and passionate and a bit more raunchy than any of us were expecting. Her performance was also tragic. By the end of the night, there wasn’t a dry eye in the place. A brilliant show and a great night out.

Carla’s Photography goes International

It was from an early age that Varndean Photography student Carla Dahr found an interest in cameras and photography. However, Carla suffers from Dyslexia and Hyper Mobility Syndrome and has not found any of her achievements easy, but through her drive and ambition, and with the support of family and friends, developed the confidence to put together an exhibition of her work in Quillan, France. One of her very close family friends Judith Corcho (BA hons JP) who lives in Quillan always supported Carla’s talent and it was through her that this exhibition was able to take place. The exhibition took place in the Tourist Office of Quillan in May/June and was a collection of landscapes, featuring pictures taken from Quillan, as well as Carla’s home town of Brighton, London, Canada, America and other places she has visited.



STUDENTS WORK WITH **MAX STAFFORD CLARK** AND **STELLA FEEHILY** ON A PLAY WHICH CELEBRATES THE NHS ‘**THIS MAY HURT A BIT**’

IB AND A LEVEL THEATRE STUDENTS ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO REHEARSE AND PERFORM SCENES FROM **STELLA FEEHILY’S** PLAY. THESE SCENES WILL BE PRESENTED AT **THE SALLIS BENNY THEATRE** ON 14 JANUARY AS PART OF AN EVENT DESIGNED TO RAISE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE **VITAL ROLE** THE **NHS** IN ITS CURRENT FORM PLAYS IN OUR LIVES. DIRECTOR **MAX STAFFORD CLARK** AND **STELLA** WILL LEAD A **WORKSHOP IN NOVEMBER** TO KICK START THE PROJECT. THEN, THE STUDENT RUN COMPANY WILL REHEARSE AND DIRECT SCENES WHICH WILL BE **PERFORMED ON THE EVENING** AS PART OF A PROVOCATION TO DISCUSSION AND DEBATE.

FIRST YEAR IB STUDENT **JAKE PARSONS** AND HIS BAND **CASCADES** HAVE JUST RELEASED A SINGLE ON SOUND CLOUD. 'CASCADES ARE A BAND FROM BRIGHTON/SHOREHAM WITH AN **AVERAGE AGE OF 15,**' SAYS JAKE. 'WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER AS A FOUR FOR JUST OVER A YEAR AND ARE SOON TO RELEASE OUR SECOND EP AS A BAND. WE ARE **ALL MULTI-INSTRUMENTALISTS** AND LISTEN TO A VERY WIDE RANGE OF MUSIC WHICH COMES ACROSS IN OUR OWN MUSIC, MAKING IT HARD TO PIN DOWN A CERTAIN 'GENRE' FOR US TO FIT INTO. WE WERE **ESPECIALLY HAPPY** WITH THIS NEW SONG AS, ALTHOUGH IT MAY SEEM LIKE YOUR AVERAGE INDIE-ROCK SONG, WE THOUGHT IT COMBINED ALL OF OUR RESPECTIVE INFLUENCES TOGETHER **TO MAKE SOMETHING UNIQUE.**



<http://soundcloud.com/cascadesbanduk/whydtm>



LONDON VISIT

Year 1 Public Services students visited Downing Street and The Houses of Parliament as part of their Government Unit. This year during their visit to London, they also went to visit the art installation at the Tower of London called 'The Tower of London Remembers'. It consists of 888,246 ceramic poppies representing the number of British fatalities during the First World War. The installation will be dismantled on 22nd November and the poppies are available for purchase. We have bought one as a tribute and in remembrance, as students will study the effects of War in the War and Conflicts Unit later this year.

Successful History & Politics Students



Two ex-Politics and History students from Varndean have continued to excel in their academic careers. Dan Gill, who is reading History at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, has won an award for coming top of the class in his second year of study. Politics and History teacher, Jill Arnold said "We are delighted to hear about Dan's outstanding achievement. He was always an exceptional student; not only did he get A* in all 4 A levels he took (History, Politics, English Literature and Economics), he achieved a staggering 100% in all of his second year modules at Varndean College."

Liam Stanley, who also studied History and Politics, has recently been appointed as a lecturer in Politics at Sheffield University, having achieved a first class degree, followed by an MA and PhD in Politics from Birmingham University.

Roy Cullen, who taught Liam Politics, said, "Liam really made the most of his time studying Politics and was an active member of the Politics Society."

Zambia Volunteer Programme

This summer a group of 17 students and staff took part in Varndean's Zambia volunteer programme. The aim of the trip was to provide much needed help for rural schools in Zambia. The college has a long-standing relationship with a community in the northern part of the country.

Students on the trip helped to make much needed desks and benches for two classes of primary school children. The students built two toilet blocks to replace existing pit latrines. They also taught English, science, maths and sport to groups of secondary school pupils. It provides our students with a fantastic experience, most of them have studied World Development or Sociology at Varndean before they go. The trip gives them the opportunity to see much of what they have learnt about in practice.

It's not all hard work though as the last week was spent in Livingstone, a tourist town by the mighty Victoria Falls. Everybody got a chance to relax, some students spent time by the swimming pool, some brave ones did a bungee jump and we all spent a memorable night in the middle of Chobe National Park. Having spent our days brick-laying, cutting wood, nailing planks, teaching children and cooking for 17 people, it was a relief to return home. However it wasn't long before we began to miss the country and its lovely people.





DofE Gold for Sam

Sam Woolven has received the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award. He completed his Bronze and Silver Awards at Vardean School before going on to add the Gold Award at Vardean College. To achieve the award, Sam volunteered at Balfour, his old primary school, completed a 5 day outdoor activities residential course (pictured below), took part in a 4 day expedition, worked on stage lighting for the college's productions, and played for the college rugby team. Sam said, 'I really enjoyed working towards all 3 awards and to get the gold was a great sense of achievement.'

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for the college's productions, and played for the college rugby team. Sam said, 'I really enjoyed working towards all 3 awards and to get the gold was a great sense of achievement. Teachers at Vardean College and Vardean School were so supportive and generous with their time; running training and real expeditions, developing skills and co-ordinating activities'.

Sam completed this award whilst studying for the International Baccalaureate at Vardean College and is now in his second year at Exeter University reading International Relations. He has continued to use his technical theatre skills, developed on the Award, as General Secretary of ExeTech, a society which provides technical support for Exeter University theatre and events.

Ex-student Des Lynam visits

Back in June, a group of ex-students of Vardean Boys' Grammar School, including television presenter Des Lynam, visited Vardean College to see how things had changed since they studied their O' levels here 55 years ago! They enjoyed talking to current staff and students and seeing the developments to the building. They were impressed by the new facilities that are now open for students, including the new library and fitness suite. At the end of the tour, Paul Rhymes, Head of Sport (pictured with the group) chatted with Des about sport here at the college.



THE SUSSEX CUP

Vardean College 2nd year BTEC PE students organised the Sussex Cup in April. The tournament began with teams divided into three groups, each consisting of five teams. Contesting Group A was City College, Chichester High, Colliers, Central Sussex College and St Paul's, while in Group B, Shoreham Academy, Chichester College, Bedes, Bishop Luffa and Ifield battled for a place in the later stages. Group C held hosts Vardean, BHASVIC, Cardinal Newman, Felpham and Steyning Grammar. City College ran out eventual champions of the tournament after coming from behind in the final to beat Cardinal Newman 3-1.

First Class Childcare Student

Here is the success story of ex-Vardean Childcare student Georgia Buss who has recently graduated from her three year degree course in Primary Education with First Class Honours. "I started my time at Vardean College in 2009, where I studied for 2 years to gain my BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development.

The main reason I chose to attend Vardean College, aside from its beautiful grounds and supportive tutors, was because of this course. At the time, I found that no other college in Brighton offered a full time course which incorporated experience within various childcare settings. For me, this sounded like the ideal course, as it would provide me with the knowledge and experience I needed to pursue my dream of a career in teaching.

Throughout my time on the course at Vardean, I was able to gain a deep understanding of children's needs and abilities across all age ranges. My learning was supported by classes in college, hands on courses and various

placements in childcare settings. Having the chance to experience first-hand those things that I was learning about, not only gave me confidence in working with children, but in turn supported my decision to become a teacher.

When the time came to apply for university, I was set on studying Primary Education and my tutors were extremely supportive throughout this process. I was advised as to which course and universities were best for me and what to include in my personal statement. The generous support given by tutors at Vardean College helped me gain a place at one of the most recognised universities for Primary Education; The University of Roehampton.

Two months ago, I graduated from The University of Roehampton with First Class Honours and was offered my first job as a Primary School Teacher. If I had taken a different route after finishing high school, I may not have made it to where I am today, so I have Vardean College to thank for my success."



STUDENTS AT VARNDEAN COLLEGE PARTICIPATING IN THE **YOUNG ENTERPRISE COMPANY SCHEME** ATTENDED A TRADE FAIR AT THE HOLMBUSH CENTRE IN SHOREHAM BACK IN THE SPRING. THE STUDENTS FORMED A COMPANY CALLED **KA-OS LIMITED** AS PART OF THEIR BUSINESS STUDIES COURSE THROUGH THE YOUNG ENTERPRISE CHARITY WHICH GIVES STUDENTS A REAL INSIGHT INTO RUNNING THEIR OWN BUSINESSES. THE STUDENTS CREATED **BESPOKE T.SHIRTS AND PILLOWCASES** WITH A TRUE BRIGHTON & HOVE THEME. AMONG ONE OF THEIR CUSTOMERS WAS **CLLR DENISE COBB**, PICTURED WITH ONE OF THEIR UNIQUE TONGUE-IN-CHEEK DESIGNS.



Politics Trip

What does Parliament do? How do our MPs represent us? What is the role of judges in our system of government? All questions waiting to be answered by A-Level Politics Students from Varndean College during their visit to London in October 2014.

Taking the train and tube, we emerged into the rain at Westminster for a quick walk up Whitehall and glance at the main government departments and a peek through the gates up to Number 10 Downing Street.

Our first scheduled stop was the UK Supreme Court, opened in 2009 across the road from the Houses of Parliament and representing the highest court in the Land. It is here that the most important appeals cases are heard both for the UK and for many Commonwealth countries including many human rights cases. An informative talk on the court and its powers in Court number 2 was followed by the opportunity to sit in on two cases being heard in live session. A particular highlight was seeing Lady Hale, the Deputy President of the Court and the only woman of the 12 Supreme Court justices presiding over a case concerning police officers in Trinidad and Tobago.

After lunch we moved on to Portcullis House, home to the offices of MPs, their staff and researchers to begin the second part of the day with a tour of Parliament. It happened to be the first day back of the new session so there was a real buzz around the place. We were in Central Lobby to see the Speaker's procession and then went up into the public gallery of the House of Commons to watch Home office questions. Theresa May and her team were fielding questions on issues relevant to her department. After this we were able to sit in the House of Lords for a time again listening to questions, this time on foreign affairs.

SIX BOOK CHALLENGE

Varndean College is encouraging its students to take part in the Reading Agency's Six Book Challenge. Participants are encouraged to pick 6 books, poems or articles and record their reading in a diary. The benefits include improved literacy skills and boosting self-esteem. 90% of those who take part say they feel more confident about reading. This year's completers (Judith Franke, Reman Shebab and Jinye Wu) are seen receiving their official certificates from the College Principal, Dr Phil Harland.



IMPRESSIVE A LEVELS RESULTS

Varndean College is again delighted with the success of its students who have once again maintained an impressive A Level record. The overall pass rate this year was 98%, with 49% achieving A*-B and 76% achieving A*-C. Two thirds of A level subjects had a 100% pass rate. The college also recorded a high AS pass rate of 87.2%

All Visual Arts courses (Fine Art, Graphic Design, 3D Design, Textiles and Photography) achieved 100% pass rates at both AS and A2, with over 90% of A level students achieving A* - C grades at A level. This follows on from the 'outstanding' grade for Visual Arts from Ofsted when the college was inspected in 2012.

College Principal, Dr Philip Harland, said: "I would like to congratulate all of our students. They have been a delight to teach and thoroughly deserve their success. I would also like to thank my staff for their hard work in helping students to achieve these excellent results, particularly against a backdrop of reductions to funding. Behind these figures lie countless individual student success stories at all levels. Varndean College looks set to have outstanding value-added again this year."

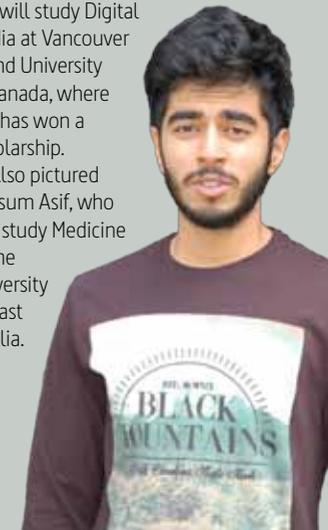


Best Ever International Baccalaureate Results

Students and teachers at Varndean College celebrated their best ever set of exam results this year for the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Forty-six students sat the demanding international qualification which requires them to study English, Maths, Science and three other subjects alongside a range of other activities. The college received its highest marks ever, with an average score of over 36 points, equivalent to at least three A grades at A Level for university entry.

There is a strong international focus on the IB Diploma. Student Felicia Fischer from Burgess Hill will study Digital Media at Vancouver Island University in Canada, where she has won a scholarship.

Also pictured Haysum Asif, who will study Medicine at the University of East Anglia.



YOUNG VET

Ex-student Veronica Freeborn has joined the very small number of students throughout the country who have won a place at the Royal Veterinary College.

Veronica's story highlights how dedicated and determined she is to become a vet. Initially she was rejected by four universities she applied to with at least one citing "not enough contribution to society outside college". This was because Veronica was at home helping her mother through her stays in hospital and during her subsequent recovery and personal support that her mum still needs today. Despite the time she dedicated to supporting her mother, Veronica still managed to fit in 15 weeks of work experience at a stables, a cattery, a dog rescue centre and a farm.

However, once she got her A Level results (A*s in Biology, Chemistry, English Literature and an A in Maths), Veronica emailed and phoned the Royal Veterinary College. Her persistence eventually paid off and resulted in her being offered her a place with just three weeks' notice. Veronica said "I'm more excited than daunted at the moment. I expect a lot of very hard work ahead of me but it will definitely be worth it."



News from the Chemistry Department

Two Vardean Chemistry students, Eliza McHugh and Emily Brownings, were recently selected by the Society of Chemical Industry (SCI) for 'The Best Chemist' award and upon receiving their awards at Reading University on 1 October, Eliza was also selected as runner up for the Best Chemist in the SE region.

The Thames and Kennet Group of the SCI hosted the annual Best Sixth Form Chemist Awards, at which 30 schools/colleges from across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey and East Sussex took part, selecting one candidate each for the Best Sixth Form Chemist award. The overall winner was Shyam Taylor from Royal Grammar School in Guildford and second prize went to our own Eliza McHugh. This event was a unique opportunity to reward excellent young chemists, but also to encourage them to take up a career in science.

Also, after winning the South East England regional event back in the summer, Vardean Chemistry students reached the National Final of the Schools' Analyst Competition held at the University of Central Lancashire, and achieved a fantastic third place. First, second and third placed teams in the National Final received prizes of £1,000, £600 and £300 respectively with the other finalists receiving £100 each.

Teams were required to undertake various practical analytical determinations based on problems relevant to industrial or social needs. These were judged for skill, understanding and accuracy. Each competition aimed to provide some tasks which are relatively familiar to the students such as titrations and others which are likely to be unfamiliar, such as chromatographic separations or atomic and molecular spectroscopy. In this way, competitors learned new skills, as well as demonstrated their existing knowledge, skills and aptitude for analytical science.

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Autumn 2014