



July 2009

kehs newsletter

KEHS

KING EDWARD VI
HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

The 125th Year of Success

June 26th had a curiously quiet feel about it. No bells, no multi media with its compulsory music, just the gentle swish of material over the corridors. 1883 Day proved one fitting way to start to bring to a close our year of celebrations for the 125th anniversary of KEHS.

This year we used the opportunity of the anniversary to think about our past, our present and our future - exactly what it is we have to celebrate and how we want to build on the successes of the last 125 years for an even more successful future.

Almost exactly a year ago, we had our first 125 event, an exhibition arranged by the Old Edwardians that charted the progress of the school through artefacts and photographs. The start of the school year was marked by the 125 commemorative service at Birmingham Cathedral when we gave thanks for the work of all those who had gone before us in making the school what it is today. We launched the 125 Project, an art experience that has just had its culmination and its inspiration, speaking to the creativity within us all, which has been a strand running through the year. Nigel Argust, our Director of Music, commissioned an anniversary composition from a well-known, Midlands based composer, and instigated an internal composition competition, two of which entries have now had public performances.

We created greetings cards that reproduced watercolours of the school in New Street done by girls around 1910. A revised version of the history of the school, bringing it up to 2008, was written and the two authors spoke at a book launch in the early Spring, reminiscing about their own time at KEHS. Old Edwardian artists responded enthusiastically to the Art Department's idea of an exhibition showcasing their work and many visitors enjoyed the huge range of talent on display. April saw the 125 Symphony Hall concert, when Old Edwardian actress Lindsay Duncan spoke and one of our own sixth formers delighted the packed Hall with Greig's Piano Concerto followed by other performances showcasing the many musical talents within the school.

At a dinner in June, Lord Digby Jones helped us raise record amounts of money for the 125 Appeal, aimed at increasing our Bursary Funds. Then onto 1883 Day and a taste of what life at KEHS may have been like at the end of the nineteenth century. Project 125 culminated in the unveiling of 'A Portrait of a School', a fascinating painting, the result of a year's study around the school by Steven Earl Rogers, which will hang on the long corridor leading to the Dining Hall. All members of the school community had been encouraged to contribute their own individual interpretation of what the school meant for them and the Dining Hall hosted a remarkable selection of paintings, poems, installations, photographs, models, sculptures and miscellaneous personal responses to KEHS.

As you can imagine a huge amount of work has gone into all of these events from many members of the school community. While 125 celebrations have been going on, we have enjoyed other concerts, art and photography exhibitions, writers' workshops, lectures, competitions, games as well as what we haven't forgotten is our core activity in all this, lessons!

Linked to many of the events, we have been raising awareness of our 125 Appeal. The school has always welcomed girls from many different backgrounds and in order to continue to do so, we need to increase our bursary funds so that financial family circumstances will never deter the brightest girls in the West Midlands from applying to us. We have started on our fundraising and will be taking the Appeal forward next year.

125 is not quite over. Some final surprises await us at the end of term and next year will see the publication of the new school cookery book. So more still more for which to look forward!



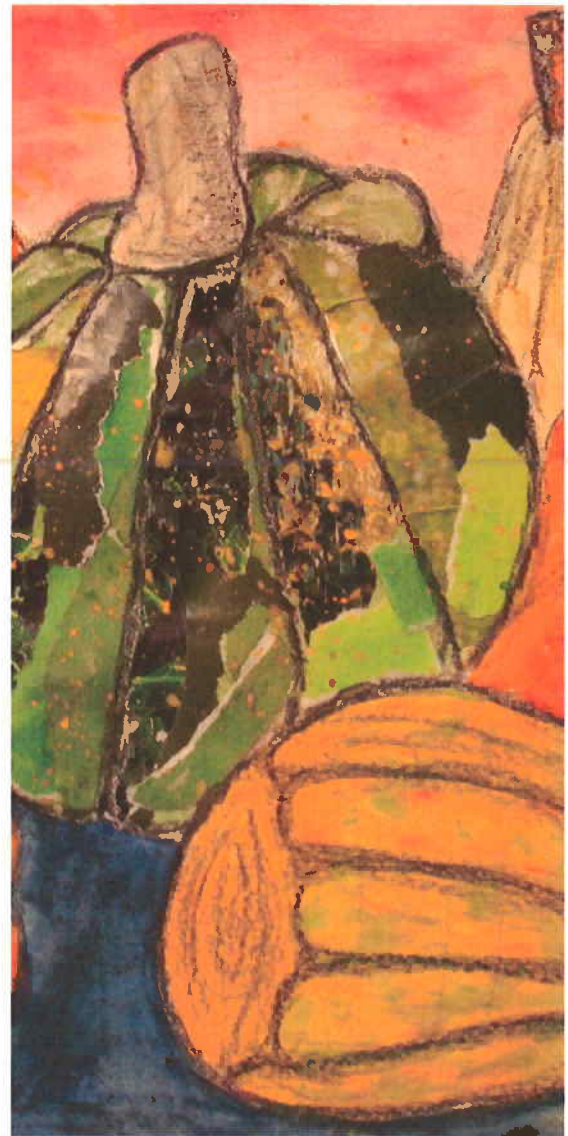
The Art Department at KEHS

The Art department at KEHS is based in The Peter Bennett Centre and consists of three teachers, Elizabeth Edwards (Head of Department), Olga Terry and Lynn Seamark (part-time).

Mrs Brace is the full-time technician.

There are two main teaching studios, a pottery, textiles studio, print-room, reference library, resource and computer base.

Regular exhibitions are held in the Peter Bennett gallery.



Lower School

All girls in the first three years of school have a rich and varied experience in art. They learn to keep a sketchbook which is an invaluable diary of all they do. Whether in drawing, painting, designing or working in clay or fabrics, they are encouraged to work to the highest standards and to practise matching their skills to their ideas. An annual exhibition of their work is held each October to celebrate their achievements.



Middle School

Each year we take on average 30 girls who study GCSE Art and Design. They build on good foundations and embark on individual and personal responses to a variety of themes. Over many years we have encouraged girls to keep highly informative and visually exciting sketchbooks and study sheets in order to support a wide range of 2D and 3D pieces. It is rewarding for the girls to see their end of course exhibitions which showcase excellence in this subject.

