



Passport to Paris

Robert Guthrie

Thirteen pupils, accompanied by two members of teaching staff, recently travelled to the illustrious French capital of Paris to immerse themselves in the culture of the city.

Throughout the trip, pupils and staff had the chance to sample the unique cuisine by purchasing a typical French lunch and eating out numerous times.

Participants also had the chance to practise their French speaking and reading in everyday situations such as travelling and ordering food. Everyone was also able to take in the gorgeous Parisian sights like the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower and Sacré Cœur.

Michael Craig, one pupil who travelled to Paris, said: "It was an amazing trip. Experiences like looking from the top of the Eiffel Tower or watching a street performer on the steps of Montmartre were unforgettable."

The trip was a huge success. Thanks to Mrs Pinkerton, Miss Smith and Mr Docherty.

For more photographs from the trip please go to page 4 of this newsletter.



Fairtrade Fridays



Fairtrade Fridays have become a welcome treat at the end of the week for many Wallace Hall pupils.

Running on a fortnightly basis, the Fairtrade tuck-shop specialises in offering the school community the chance to enjoy some fairly traded chocolate and other snacks on a Friday at morning break.

Volunteers from the Fairtrade group give up their break time to sell our products, including well-known Fairtrade brands like Divine and Traidcraft chocolate, and healthier alternatives such as Eat Natural bars. Prices start at 30p. As well as our tuck-shop, all teas and coffees used at Wallace Hall functions, parents' evenings and our breakfast club are also now made using Fairtrade brands.

Jane McMillan, the teacher working with the group commented: "As well as enjoying the goodies, pupils are learning how global trade works. Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions and sustainability for producers in developing countries and pupils are realising that how they spend their pocket money has an impact on that."

Art meets Science at WHA

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All S3 pupils taking Art and Design and Science joined together for an Art meets Science – Science meets Art lecture in the Bailey Hall on Thursday 9th January. The lecture, delivered by Professor Roy Burdon FRSE, is part of a new series of curriculum-linked talks and lectures funded by The Holywood Trust.

Professor Burdon explained how scientists and artists can each be viewed as explorers and how throughout history diverse artists, architects, engineers and scientists have shared interests and insights.

The lecture was organised by Mr Davolls, one of our Art Teachers at Wallace Hall Academy. Mr Davolls said: "We were delighted to welcome Professor Burdon to Wallace Hall Academy. His lecture was very interesting and gave our pupils a real insight into how art has informed science and vice versa."



Pre-order Promotion

As part of a promotion to encourage pupils to pre-order their school meals from our school canteen, DG First organised a prize draw for all pupils who use the pre-order service.

The prize was an iPod Nano for the lucky overall winner with iTunes vouchers for the runners up. The winning ticket belonged to Kayleigh Grierson, S4.

The photograph on the left shows Kayleigh being presented with her iPod Nano by Mr Blair, DHT watched by Mrs Alison Kennedy, Catering Supervisor at Wallace Hall.

Buttons, Beads and Bows

Mrs Black's Higher Art and Design pupils are going to be doing some research on costume jewellery in the next few weeks and are looking to gather together a collection of materials suitable for making jewellery. This could be pieces of old costume jewellery, buttons, beads, bows, button boxes, sewing boxes, knitting needles, crochet hooks, wool, yarn, thread or any other craft materials that could be used for this purpose. If you have any bits and pieces that you are finished with, please hand these into the Art Department. Thank you.

Trip to Strathclyde University Biolab

report by Chloe Davidson

Four pupils from our Advanced Higher Biology class travelled up to Strathclyde University to take part in a Biolab organised especially for schools.



Our experiment was called the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR), used to multiply DNA fragments to produce many copies. This technique is used in



Forensics to examine DNA from blood or evidence found at crime scenes, but we got to use slightly less exciting vegetable DNA!

This experience was valuable to us as we learn about PCR in the class, and it was a great opportunity to consolidate this topic with a practical activity which the school can't provide because of the expensive equipment required (the PCR machine cost £5000!). It also allowed us to see inside a University Laboratory, which most of us will hopefully be working in next year.

Thanks to Miss Clark for organising and taking us on this trip.

Art trip to Edinburgh

On Thursday 12th December, students from S4, S5 & S6 visited three of the main Art Galleries in Edinburgh. On view was the work of Louise Bourgeois, Viviane Sassen, contemporary book illustrators, a collaboration of Scottish Artists work (The Nation) and the permanent collections on show.

This fantastic, worthwhile trip was topped off with an impromptu life drawing class in one of the rooms in the Scottish National Gallery.

All students responded enthusiastically to the artwork on view and their positive attitude and exemplary behaviour was commented on by gallery staff.



Paris Trip



P7 Open Evening

report by Annabelle Guthrie 1S1

On the 25th November 2013, P7s from across Dumfries and Galloway flocked to Wallace Hall Academy for an open evening where the pupils got the chance to try some taster lessons. The parents also had a busy evening in store attending a variety of presentations about different aspects of the school from Mr Graham, other staff and pupils.



also a little bit nervous. This evening helps a lot though and I really enjoyed all of the classes I went to."

I asked Mr Graham what he thought of the evening. He said: "I was delighted to welcome our prospective pupils and parents to

great ambassadors for our school. I look forward to welcoming our new S1 pupils in June 2014 for our Induction Days."

I think the P7 open evenings are brilliant as it gives the P7 pupils time to see the school, maybe for the first time, and the chance to meet some of the teachers.

The evening began with the children congregating in the Wallace Hall primary school gym before going to their taster lessons. Each taster lesson lasted roughly 20 minutes: pupils modelled animal shapes from sugarpaste in Home Economics, played sports in Physical Education and learnt about the Vikings in History, amongst a wide range of other opportunities on offer.

Penny, one of the P7s, said: "My favourite activity was drama. It was really fun." Some of the P7s said they were excited about coming up, but others admitted to being a little scared.

Molly said "I am excited but I am



Wallace Hall Academy and hope that they left with a deeper understanding of the opportunities our school has to offer. Our current pupils did a fantastic job, delivering various presentations and acting as guides throughout the evening. They were



Hannah's Mosaic Masterpiece

As part of the S3 Art and Design expressive unit, pupils are required to produce a still life based on the sea: the sea shore, the seaside or seafood.

Mrs Black offered the pupils a number of objects to choose from and encouraged them to look for inspiration from artists they admire. Hannah Brown from 3.C2 chose a painting by William Turner which focuses on a stormy sea scene. She chose collage as her medium to produce her final piece. This was a great idea but a very time consuming one as the pieces she used to build the collage were minute.

Mrs Black said: "Hannah brought her finished piece back into school after the Christmas holiday. I was stunned to see how much work she had put into this and totally blown away by the quality of her artwork. Her finished piece is now framed and on display outside the school library for everyone to enjoy and appreciate."

Hannah added: "I had a real sense of satisfaction once I had completed my collage but the whole process seemed to take forever."



whapples meet the public



Pupil members of the **whapples** board had an industrious December making Christmas cards for the Thornhill Community Christmas Fayre held on

Saturday 30th November 2013. That morning, board members were kept busy setting up the **whapples** stall, displaying the cards and ensuring that all was ready for promoting the community orchard to the public when the Fayre opened for business that afternoon.

The public were really interested in what the pupil board were doing and impressed with the variety of skills which they had used to plan, set up and run their social enterprise. **whapples** board members who volunteered their time on the day were Mia Osborne, Molly Kitson, Cameron Wood, Lucy Doig, Ian Carlisle, Sharon Glendinning, Jean Turner, Leanne Peoples and Anne Marie



Wood. It was a great opportunity for board members to interact with the community, to share their knowledge and to do a little fundraising for the **whapples** orchard - all in one afternoon!



There is still time to sponsor a tree and this can be done by contacting any of the Queensberry Initiative staff at Wallace Hall Academy for a sponsor form. Keep an eye on the **whapples** Facebook page for news of the orchard.

Stationery Shop in the Library

The following items of stationery are for sale in the School Library: pencils (40p), pens (40p), erasers (40p), sharpeners (40p), protractors (50p), highlighters (40p), 15cm rulers (40p), 30cm rulers (40p) and 4GB data pens (£9.00). As a result of pupil demand, scientific calculators (£10.00), headphones (£2.50), headphone jacks (50p) and jotters (60p) are also now on sale. Any profit that is made from this venture goes towards purchasing new resources for the Library. We also accept donations of good quality books for our Library, in particular junior fiction, senior fiction and study skills books. Please hand any book donations in to Mrs Menzies in the Library. Any books that are not suitable for our shelves will be taken to a charity shop. Thank you.

Halloween Disco

At the end of October, Wallace Hall S6 Christmas Dance committee staged their annual Halloween Disco evening – a night of spooky fun followed for both pupils and staff of the school.

Chloe Davidson Wallace Hall Academy's Head Girl and committee member said: "Pupils and staff made a great effort with their costumes and we had some fabulous outfits on display. Even Mr Graham got into the spirit of the night by dressing up as the Grim Reaper. Everyone had fun and the money we raised will be used for this year's prestigious S1/2, S3/4 and S5/6 Christmas Dances."



Halloween Disco



Halloween Disco



Halloween Disco

Wallace Hall Academy globetrotters visit Iceland

report by Robert Guthrie



When someone mentions 'Iceland,' your thoughts may well drift to the supermarket chain. However, for a number of Wallace Hall Academy students taking part in the Europe-wide Comenius Project, the possibility of visiting the geothermal powerhouse of a northern-European country has become a reality.

The Comenius Project is organised by the European Union and allows students from all over the continent to experience

lifestyles totally different to their own.

Pupils have the opportunity to see the sights of foreign countries, compare ways of life and kindle new friendships.

One of the important aspects of the Project is that pupils are greeted with home hospitality, meaning students gain a unique insight into international lives through experiencing home life too.

Wallace Hall Academy is currently twinned with eight other European schools from Belgium, England, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Norway and Poland.

Aiden Halliday, Millie Parks, Jo Hutcheson, Lily Gonlag, Elspeth Nicholson and myself, Robert Guthrie, were the pupils from Wallace Hall Academy who had the unique opportunity of travelling to Reykjavik, Iceland to be hosted by pupils of Fjölbrautaskólinn í Breiðholti.

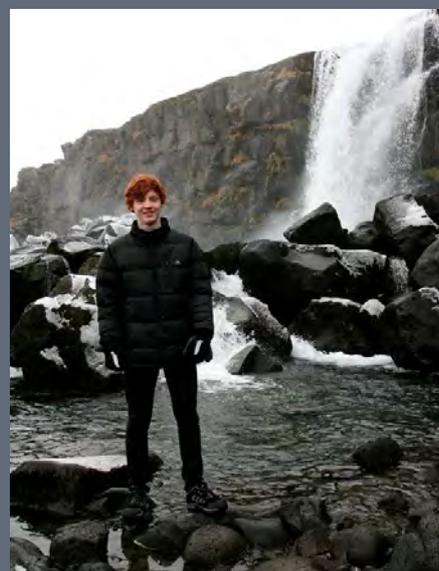
Whilst visiting Reykjavik, pupils took part in a wide range of activities. For the projects, pupils worked in small groups comparing cultural differences and usage of resources in their countries.

Wallace Hall pupils also

experienced the international food court, where food was provided by the host and partner countries. Some had the chance to sample the Icelandic national delicacy, cured shark, which may not have gone down as well as previously thought for some.

Pupils also experienced the thrill of the Blue Lagoon, one of Iceland's many spas which are heated entirely from the power of the earth.

A day trip following the route of the 'Golden Circle' – Iceland's



historic sights – was also in store. Students visited Thingvellir – the site of the first representative democracy, Gullfoss – a stunning waterfall and also Strokkur Geysir – some of the many geysers which shoots water as high as 20m from the surface.

Pupils also visited the confluence of the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates – the site of regular earthquakes - most of which are minor, thankfully.

Some of the students also hiked



great success: "The trip was really beneficial with our students learning a lot about Icelandic culture and history. They also had the chance to sample Icelandic food such as cured shark. It is fantastic that Wallace Hall Academy pupils have been able to take part in the Comenius Project."

Pupils and staff from both sides of the exchange left with fond memories and new friendships which will last for years to come.

After the success of this visit I'm sure it will not be too long before Wallace Hall Academy pupils meet up again with their Icelandic partners.

up Mount Esja, the spectacular, snow-covered mountain which surrounds the beautiful city of Reykjavik. The summit provided a picturesque and superb view of the city and surrounding areas.

Lily Gonlag, one of the six pupils who travelled to Scandinavia commented on the experience: "It was really fab. We got to meet so many new people and experience a new culture which was really cool."

Millie Parks, also part of the Comenius group, stated: "My favourite outing was when we went to the hot springs and the Blue Lagoon. The steam from the hot springs made everything feel pretty surreal."

Comenius Co-ordinator, Alan Harley, said that the trip was a



Forestry Module

report by Cameron Parkin and Nicholas Willetts

Pupils in our Forestry Module have been on a number of exciting visits this year. The first was to a Forestry Commission woodland in Galloway to learn about wildlife management. One interesting thing we learnt was how deer are prepared for packing and shipping off to different buyers. We also found out about the humane process of culling the deer and how this is managed by the rangers.

We also visited a forestry harvesting site where we saw trees being felled by high-tech machinery. The sheer power of the harvester became apparent to us as it cut down tree after tree relentlessly. During another trip the foresters were planting Norway Spruce at Morton Wood. We enjoyed this because we managed to plant 80 trees in an hour but this was nothing compared to the average 2000 trees planted during one working day.

As part of our Forestry Module, we also had the opportunity to try ditching. Ditching is where you cut



channels for water to run off the path to ensure that the path does not get too muddy. Wet conditions on the day helped illustrate just how crucial this process is to maintaining access to woodland areas.

We have really enjoyed our time on the Forestry Module - the best bit has been getting out and about into the countryside rather than just learning from books.



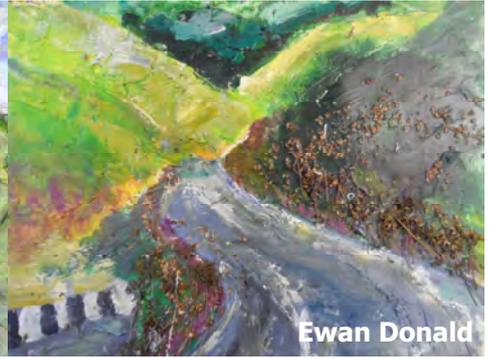
QI Inspired by local landscapes QI



Martha Beynon-Gray



Todd Hay



Ewan Donald

The Dalveen Pass provided the inspiration for the above pieces painted by Mrs Black's S4 Art and Design class. Initially, the pupils used mixed media, including plaster, dried flowers and seeds. They then added the finishing touches with acrylics.



Jessica Fergusson



Ewan Donald

As part of the same project, Mrs Black's S4 Art and Design class visited Morton Castle. This trip was organised by Queensberry Initiative. The pupils spent some time looking at the castle and the local landscape, taking inspiration from the beautiful surroundings. The pieces above are by Jessica Fergusson and Ewan Donald. They are made from recycled cardboard using ink, paint and varnish. The pupils' work from this project is now on display in our Bailey Hall.

First Year pupils' artistic collaboration in the style of Joan Eardley



Mr Davolls' S1 class recently produced some artistic pieces in the style of Joan Eardley. This was a collaborative exercise where the pupils worked together in small groups. The piece on the left was created by Fergus Hiddleston, Danny Ronan, David Rennie, Martin Bonnar and Aidan Connor and the piece on the right by Claire Armstrong, Caitlin Wells, Rachael Prince, Catrina Harvey and Emily Kennedy.

The Fused win "Battle of the Bands"



A group of Wallace Hall Academy's talented music-makers from S6 recently won Eden Festival's 'Battle of the Bands' competition. The Fused, comprising Lauren Dalgleish, Hamish Brown, Liam Stevenson, Seb Summers and Si n Davies, won £200 which will be used to benefit the school's music department.

"We were very pleased that the panel chose our performance as one of the top three in the competition," guitarist Hamish Brown said. Lead vocalist Lauren Dalgleish, added: "There were some really great acts. It was a tough competition."

Sixth formers at Wallace Hall Academy recently practised those all-important interview techniques with the aid of Thornhill Rotarians. Not quite the Dragon's Den but for 60 pupils their CVs, university personal statements and verbal skills were all put under examination in this exercise.

School Head Boy Lewis Morrison said after his session that he had gained a lot of valuable guidance about the need for work experience on his CV, a sentiment echoed by many of his friends. Rotary's lead inquisitor Stan Young commented that this year's candidates were again of the highest standard and the interviews promised well for their futures across the vast range of their career aspirations.

The smiling faces show Lizzie Smithard, Ryan Sims, Ainsley Huxham, Matthew Hollinsworth, Nicola Bell and Lewis Morrison with Rotarians David Marshall and David Payne after the obviously not too onerous session of interviews.

Rotary Interviews

report by David Marshall



Christmas Baking Sale

In December, the S2 study skills class worked together to produce three Christmas recipes. The recipes were custard cream snowballs, reindeer cupcakes and fruity Santas.

S1 classes were invited to come to the Pupil Support Base at lunchtime and try out some of our Christmas tasty treats. Pupils made a small donation and this money will be put towards another collection taking place in school to raise money in support of people affected by recent events in the Philippines. A special thank you to Mr Corrigan who donated money on behalf of 1N2.





Entertaining the community at Christmas

A number of our pupils visited Briery Park to entertain the residents and bring in some Christmas cheer. All of Mr Riley's S2 class sang, played and introduced their pieces to their audience.

Mrs Davies' choir also visited Briery Park the same afternoon and sang some carols and Christmas songs, with some audience participation along the way. The entertainment was very much appreciated by all and our pupils found the whole experience very worthwhile and enjoyable.

Nuclear Weapons Debate

report by Antonia Webster and Maisie Rands

On Monday the 11th of November, Dr Fulton's Higher Physics and Miss Stuart's Higher Modern Studies class came together to have a debate on whether or not countries should have nuclear weapons. The two classes were split into small groups which represented the countries and organisations. We had half an hour to prepare a strong argument on whether our countries were for or against nuclear weapons.

We then delivered our arguments to the rest of the two classes and three chosen judges. Each argument had to consist of quality content and to be presented well. Everyone showed a good understanding of the issue of nuclear weapons and gave a good presentation.

Once everyone had spoken to

the class, the judges then marked us all out of 15. The results were then announced, in 3rd place was South Africa, in 2nd ICAN and in 1st place was Japan. The whole class then voted for or against countries

having nuclear weapons, two thirds of the class voted against them.

We all learned a lot from this lesson and now have a greater knowledge of different countries' attitudes to nuclear weapons.

We thank Dr Fulton and Miss Stuart for organising and making this lesson a success.



Warhammer Club

The Warhammer Club continues to flourish at Wallace Hall Academy.

Warhammer was introduced to pupils at Wallace Hall Academy a few years ago by one of our former S6 pupils, Euan McIntosh. Euan left Wallace Hall last year to go to university and the club is now led by one of our current S6 pupils, Gordon Walker, supported by another of our S6 pupils, Matthew Hollingsworth.

The club meets every Wednesday evening in the library from 4pm to 5.30pm. If you would like more information, please speak to Gordon directly or see Mrs Menzies in the library.

Lessons from Auschwitz

report by Lizzie Smithard

The Lessons from Auschwitz (LFA) project aims to educate young people from every background about the Holocaust and the important lessons to be learned for today. Since 1999, over 20,000 students and teachers have taken part in this ground-breaking project.

Schools are invited to apply to take part in the project and around 180 pupils and 20 educators (from schools and the trust itself) are allocated places in each session. From Wallace Hall Academy, Luke Bell and I, Lizzie Smithard, were chosen to take part. Based on the premise that 'hearing is not like seeing' we were prepared to undertake the huge responsibility of becoming an LFA Ambassador. For this to happen we needed to attend the orientation seminar, the visit, and the follow up seminar.

The orientation seminar focused on the victims' lives before the war. We heard a touching testimony from a survivor, Leslie Kleinman. He told us about his experiences as a 14 year old boy in Auschwitz Birkenau and how, other than himself and his eldest sister, none of his family managed to survive. This was followed by a question and answer session.

We were then separated into working groups of about 18 pupils; in our group we had pupils from other schools from our region such as St Joseph's College and Lockerbie Academy. We spent time speaking with them about what our expectations were from the visit and the potential impact this visit may have on us.

Our visit to Poland started at 5.00am on the 30th October when we arrived at Glasgow Airport. Our plane left Glasgow at 7.00am, landing in Poland at 11:30am. Our first port of call was a Jewish Cemetery in Oświęcim, the town that was renamed "Auschwitz" by the Nazis. The holocaust wiped out the Jewish community in Oświęcim

and the continued resentment of this treatment was demonstrated in 2005 when the graveyard was desecrated by a group of young Polish people.

Following the visit to the graveyard we travelled to the site of Auschwitz I. Auschwitz I was known as the work camp as it was designed as a holding area rather than as a death camp. Auschwitz I wasn't built by the Nazis, they used an old Polish army barracks for the camp. Auschwitz I has the infamous sign "Arbeit Macht Frei" as you enter, meaning "work makes you free". We were stunned to see how much devastation there had been in this camp, particularly as killing wasn't the main objective here.

Some of the barracks have been converted into part of the museum. Behind the glass windows in the museum are the remains of some 40,000 people: hair, shoes, suitcases, clothes, pots and pans and shaving brushes. You can also see the gas canisters used.

Our guide was excellent. She had extensive knowledge of the events of the Holocaust and was able to relay them to us in a manner which we will never forget. She herself was married to a man whose father was in Auschwitz as a political prisoner.

From Auschwitz I we travelled to Auschwitz II – Birkenau. This is the site "Auschwitz" is most associated with and where the majority of victims were murdered. Every pupil outside Birkenau was handed a candle which we were to light later on in the day at a memorial service. Before we entered the camp we were taken to the Watch Tower, situated above the railway track. Auschwitz II – Birkenau was designed as the centre for mass destruction - the "final solution". It has four gas chambers on the site with a huge crematorium attached to each. Our guide from camp showed us around Birkenau and we felt very moved as we waited on the railway platform, stood outside



the gas chambers and viewed the Sauna house.

Our visit concluded with a memorial ceremony which was held between two of the gas chambers. The Rabi who came from London with us delivered a traditional Jewish Ceremony to celebrate the lives of those who died. He told us the story about how his pregnant grandmother escaped to Glasgow after his grandfather was captured and taken to Auschwitz. This was just one of a large number of touching stories we heard throughout the day. These tales really brought home the magnitude of the destruction and are important reminders of the atrocities that took place.

We attended a follow up seminar on the 10th of November, organised give us an opportunity to relay our feelings about the visit and what we plan to do to raise awareness in our school and local communities.

Luke and I decided that we would deliver a Powerpoint presentation at our school House assemblies as we believed it was more important to show everyone, rather than just a few of our classmates. We rounded off the assembly with a short video of survivor's stories, produced by the Holocaust Educational Trust. This is a very powerful piece of film and can be found on their website.

There is no doubt that our trip to Auschwitz was a harrowing and emotional experience - certainly a lesson which neither of us will ever forget.

Independence debate creates in-depth discussion

report by Robert Guthrie

If someone were to mention the date 18th September 2014, would you know why that day's significant? Would you know why that day will be the day when you may well make the biggest political decision you've ever made? The question is, rather, would you know exactly how to vote in this year's Scottish Independence referendum?



The 18th September 2014 is the day when Scotland decides. Every Scottish resident who is aged 16 or over will go to the polls to answer the question "Should Scotland be an independent country?"

Wallace Hall Academy is one school which has ensured its pupils will make an educated choice later this year.

The school welcomed six of Southern Scotland's politicians and activists in December, giving pupils the chance to get to the heart of the Scottish independence debate.

The debate is particularly topical at the moment, as on 26th November 2013 the pro-independence "Yes Scotland" campaign launched their White Paper on Scottish Independence – essentially the prospectus which Scots will vote on this September.

Representing the unionist

campaign "Better Together" were Councillor Richard Brodie (Scottish Liberal Democrats), Elaine Murray MSP (Scottish Labour Party), David Mundell MP (Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party).

On the other side of the debate, representing the "Yes Scotland" campaign were Councillor Andrew Wood (SNP), Joan McAlpine MSP (SNP) and Gail Lythcoe from 'Yes Scotland'.

Each candidate had the chance to present their party's opinion on the independence issue in a minute-long statement before the debate.

"Scaremongering" was one word which arose a lot throughout the debate, as both sides said that youngsters should research the facts and learn about the arguments at the heart of the debate. The representatives also made it clear that the media frequently put spin on political debate and so a tactic used in politics is "fear", making the voters think of the worst possible scenario.

The "Yes" side predominantly argued that independence would give Scotland total control over the issues which matter to the Scottish people, that it would be a continuation from the Scottish Parliament who can only decide on some issues with Westminster

deciding on things like broadcasting and tax.

On the contrary, the "No" argument said that there are many questions that remain unanswered and that independence would be a 'leap into the dark' with much uncertainty over issues such as Scotland's membership of the EU or NATO and whether we would have enough money to survive on our own.

Throughout the afternoon of the debate, students from across the upper school year-groups posed a wide range of questions to the political representatives from the two campaigns.

Steph Wells, S5, who will be eligible to vote and witnessed the debate, said: "The debate was very informative and I think it was needed in order to prevent an ignorant vote in the election later this year."

Ben Wicks, S4, who also attended, commented: "The different ways of scaring us into voting for or against were easily noticed and I'm glad that the MPs pointed those out to us. I liked how they acknowledged that Scotland has the resources and capabilities of becoming an independent country and then how the politicians went on to say why it might not be such a good idea. It was good to witness a genuinely important debate."

Organised by Modern Studies teacher Emma Stuart, the afternoon was a fantastic success and gave pupils an insight into the independence debate. It has certainly given our pupils some food for thought and allowed them to be in an informed position prior to casting their vote.

Thanks go to Miss Stuart and the representatives who attended.



Zoolab Visit



First year pupils had a jungle-themed treat on Friday 13th December when Zoolab staff members arrived at Wallace Hall Academy to showcase their tropical animals and insects ranging from tree frogs to tarantulas.

Organised by geography teacher Neil Miller, the pupils gained an insight into how animals adapt, survive and thrive in habitats all around the world. Mr Miller said: "Zoolab took my class on a journey through the many layers of the tropical rainforest, from the dark



forest floor to the dizzy heights of the canopy."

Ruaridh Higgins commented: "The most interesting animal I saw was the cockroach. They have really powerful back legs and they are pretty indestructible: they can basically hang upside down, they can fall from any height and still survive and they can be left in a freezer for a year and when they are defrosted they will still be



living. They can survive if their head is chopped off but will die eventually because they need their mouth to drink. Cockroaches eat carpets, wood and plastic."

Joseph Blaylock added: "I particularly enjoyed learning about the tarantula. The ranger told us that the males live for only 6 years while the females live for 30 years - the males usually get eaten by the females. Also their ears are on their feet and they have 8 eyes. If they get angry they flick their hairs into people's eyes, bite you with their fangs and inject poison into you."



The visit from Zoolab was a joint science-geography venture on biodiversity. The event demonstrated to our students the importance of variation of life forms within a given species, ecosystem or biome. Zoolab animals visiting Wallace Hall Academy included snakes, tree frogs, giant land snails, African millipedes, rats, cockroaches and scorpions.



Higher Drama pupils take centre stage



On Thursday 14th November 2013, the first year of the Higher Drama class presented an evening of twelve original plays, written, directed and performed by the class.

All the plays were linked to the common theme of the number 12 and they explored this theme in a variety of ways. For example, 'The Troll' looked at cyber-bullying taking its inspiration from the 12 function keys on a qwerty keyboard, 'The 12 Days of Christmas' took a humorous yet macabre look at the type of gifts people might give at Christmas, 'The Twelve Stages of Life' explored key moments in an individual's life through projected images, mime and

music and 'The coming of Adolescence' took us through that seemingly sudden change when children become teenagers.

The evening was a great success and these are some of the comments from the audience: "Good, strong, very accomplished performers ..."; "Very good standard of acting ..."; "Totally enjoyed the evening ..."; "I really enjoyed all the plays, there were lots of strengths – too many to mention ..."; "It was all very professional and the amount of work that had been involved was evident throughout"; "Be proud of yourselves, this was an impressive evening" and "Advertise so that more people could come."

Our Budding Mathematicians

Last session, four Wallace Hall Academy pupils took part in the Enterprising Maths Challenge held in Dumfries High School. The pupils involved were Hannah Jones, Reid Paterson, Niall Holden and Suzie Wedge.

The pupils performed really well and finished up in 6th place, only a few points off the eventual winners. Mr Davidson, Learning Leader for Numeracy said: "I was pleased our pupils did well in the competition and I am very proud of how they performed on the day. Well done to all of them."



1.C1 Ornithologists Go Wild



QI

A group of young ornithologists donned their wellies and waterproofs in the autumn when they trekked to the wilds of Dabton Loch in search of some of our native bird species.

Accompanied by Ella McLellan, a visiting ranger from the RSPB

Mersehead nature reserve, class 1.C1 gave up their entire lunchtime to undertake their quest.

Sadly, some of our native species are in significant decline and there were few sightings of the small birds, such as the chaffinch and the pied wagtail, which used to flourish in our

hedgerows.

The pupils were rewarded, though, by the presence of a family of mallard ducks which has made Dabton its home. In addition, Ella the ranger brought along a number of interesting specimens, such as a pair of owl's wings, which sparked lots of questions from the students.

Prior to the trip, class 1.C1 had been reading 'Skellig' by David Almond. One of the central characters in the novel has wings and owls make an important appearance too. It was nice to tie 'Skellig' and Dabton Loch together.

The trip was organised by Queensberry Initiative (QI). Jamie Pape, Queensberry Initiative Development Officer, said: "This was a fantastic chance for pupils to see the links between what they read and the world around them. QI has forged an excellent relationship with the RSPB and Ella and her specimens really brought 'Skellig' to life. We hope to be able to build on this relationship and involve the RSPB in future learning opportunities."



QI



QI



QI



QI

Budding Photographers

report by Oishin O'Hara

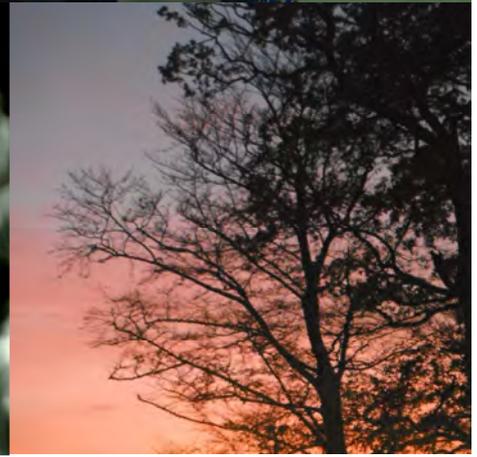
I am really interested to learn more about photography and had the idea to start up a photography club in the school.

I asked Mr Harrison for some advice and we decided to go ahead and start a club, meeting every Thursday evening from 4pm to 5pm in the library. This has been a resounding success with members

taking a variety of photographs from still-life compositions indoors to landscapes outdoors.

Everyone has had a brilliant time and we have learned how to use Photoshop and how the different buttons on our cameras work.

To the right and below are some examples of photographs members of the club have taken.



Ruari's Gift



Last year the school received a significant donation of folio and rare books from Ruari McNeill, MA.M.Phil, in the understanding that they were to be used to benefit the pupils of Wallace Hall Academy.

Ruari, who is a well-known and respected face in the arts and education world in Dumfries and Galloway, indicated that the most valuable books should be sold and the money gifted to the school with the remaining books being retained in the school library to be enjoyed by future generations. He was extremely helpful with this process, visiting the school on a number of occasions where he catalogued the books and sourced potential buyers for his collection.

Barry Graham, Head Teacher at Wallace Hall Academy said: "This was a most generous donation from Ruari and it was extremely kind of him to gift his collection to Wallace Hall Academy.

"I understand that Ruari has had a long and illustrious association with the theatre and we felt it would be most appropriate to use the money raised from the books that were sold to purchase a silver trophy in Ruari's name to be awarded for Higher Drama.

"The trophy will be presented for the first time at our senior awards ceremony at the end of April this year. I hope Ruari will be able to attend the ceremony and hand over the trophy to the very first recipient."

Contacting the school

The telephone number for Wallace Hall Academy is 01848 332120. The fax number is 01848 332564 with the email address: woffice358@ea.dumgal.sch.uk. Our office staff are your first point of contact. They will be pleased to deal with any enquiry you wish to make regarding your child and to put you in touch with the relevant member of staff. Outside office hours you may leave a message on our answering machine. Please contact us if you have any problems. We are here to help. Visit the school website: www.wallacehall.co.uk for the latest news and information.

Bronze Award

During the induction days in June, all S1 pupils spend one period in the library where they are introduced to how the library works and are given the opportunity to select a book or two to take home .

For the Bronze Award, which is a voluntary activity, pupils are asked to read one or two books during the summer holidays and complete two activities: designing a new book cover and writing a letter to the author.

The completed activities are handed into the library during the first few weeks of the autumn term, a winner is chosen in each class and a prize awarded to all six winners.

All who take part in the Bronze Award are presented with a certificate by Mr Graham. Winning entries for the Bronze Award this year were as follows: 1.C1 - Emily Kennedy, 1.C2 - Georgia Watson, 1.N1 - Hailie Alison, 1.N2 - Emily McVicar, 1.S1 - Chloe Williams and 1.S2 - Neil Macdonald.

Mrs Caroline Menzies, the school's Library Assistant, said: "I am delighted so many of our new S1 pupils chose to enter into the Bronze Award this year. The standard of entries was particularly high with a lot of time and effort obviously being put in over the holidays."

The Bronze Award is in preparation for the Silver level which starts in earnest in August during S1. This is completed as part of the

S1 English course where pupils are timetabled for one period a week in the library. For the Silver Award, pupils are asked to choose ten books from twelve different categories, with only one book being chosen per category, and complete an activity on each book they choose. The categories include Science Fiction, Fantasy or Magic, a book set in the past, a poetry book or a book meant to make you laugh. Most pupils progress to the Gold Award which focuses on widening the range of authors pupils are familiar with.

The award scheme aims to broaden every young person's reading experience and to develop an enjoyment of reading.



1.C1



1.C2



1.N1



1.N2



1.S1



1.S2

A flavour of Scottish life for Comenius visitors

report by Robert Guthrie



When around forty international school students descended upon Wallace Hall Academy in November, everyone knew exactly why – The Comenius Project.

Due to Wallace Hall Academy's second-time involvement in the European Union's Comenius project – led by Alan Harley – it was the turn of the Scottish students to give our European partners a flavour of life in Scotland.

Pupils and staff from Iceland, Hungary, Belgium, Norway, Estonia and Germany were present.

The majority of exchange students arrived on Sunday 3rd November throughout the day in time to spend the evening settling in with their host families.

Some Scottish pupils, particularly those who had been to Iceland, Hungary and Germany, already knew their partners and got on well.

Others enjoyed kindling new friendships and they will visit their partners again in future exchanges in Belgium and Norway.

The first two days were predominantly project work, comparing lifestyles and cultures – particularly regarding this year's theme which is water usage. Each school also gave a presentation on where they come from. On Monday evening, however, most attended the movie night which was a good ice-breaker, particularly for the recently arrived Estonian students.

In the evening, a number of Scottish pupils accompanied the international ones on a trip to the

Riverside Museum and to Braehead for shopping.

Thursday saw a trip to the oddly triangle-shaped Caerlaverock Castle. Packed with its history and situated in beautiful surroundings, this visit gave everyone a true taste of the tranquillity that Dumfries & Galloway has to offer.

In the evening, the international food court and ceilidh event was



held at the school. All countries had a table of food from their country, so parents, staff and pupils were able to get a flavour – quite literally

– of all the present cultures.

In the Bailey Hall every country performed a traditional dance or song from their country. The Germans decided to go one step further with a quiz. The Estonian pupils sang and one member of their party played a traditional Estonian tune on the piano. Everyone had a lot of fun with the Belgian boat song and everyone enjoyed watching the Norwegian students' rendition of Ylvis' pop song "The Fox." The Hungarians sang folk songs with the Icelanders singing and dancing, encouraging everyone to get up on the floor to join them. Finally, the Scots showed everyone how to dance the "Gay Gordons", a massive hit with all. Entertainment was also provided in the break by Aiden Halliday, Angus Bruce and Peter Wall, performing as their band "Sticks and Stones." The evening was a fantastic cultural success.

On the final day, the Estonian and Hungarian students unfortunately departed but the remaining students – Germans and Icelanders travelled to Ayr with the Scottish contingent to have fun at Laserquest and go bowling. Everyone agreed that it was a casual and relaxing way to spend the last day.

On Saturday morning, the Icelanders and Germans left for Glasgow and we regretfully said our last farewell to them and their teachers. All participants have added their counterparts on social networking sites such as Facebook, ensuring solid friendships for years to come.



Our Christmas Dances

report by Robert Guthrie

More than four hundred pupils, alongside over thirty members of staff, attended Wallace Hall Academy's prestigious Christmas dances at the end of last term. There is no doubt that the three evenings were a Christmas and cultural celebration for all.



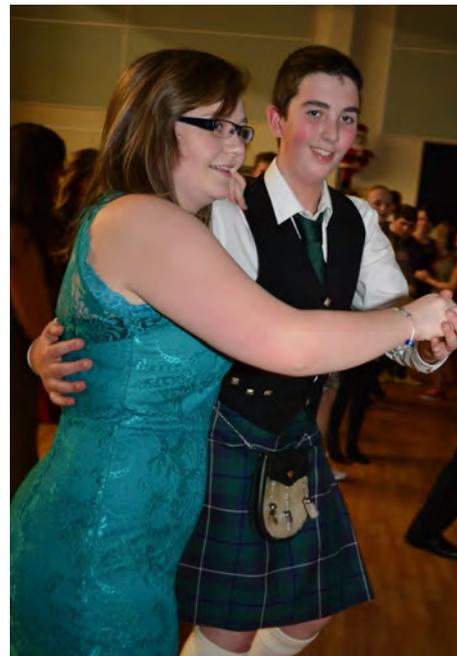
Dancing to the sound of the award-winning Jim Gold Scottish Dance Band, for the S5/S6 dance, and the David Kennedy Scottish Dance Band, for the S1/S2 and the

S3/S4 dances, pupils and staff demonstrated their fine footwork in Scottish dances ranging from the Dashing White Sergeant and Virginia Reel to the Britannia Two-Step and Orcadian Strip the Willow.

At the senior dance, before the dancing began, pupils and staff had the added luxury of sitting down to a delicious three-course meal. This was expertly prepared and cooked by the Wallace Hall Academy kitchen staff and served by Mr MacKellar and his team of S4 waiters and waitresses.

It was clear that everyone attending the dances enjoyed themselves thoroughly in what were formal, yet fun, occasions.

Claire Manson from the S6 Dance Committee commented on the success of the three evenings: "It was brilliant that so many of our pupils and teachers came along to our Christmas dances. The dance floor was full for every dance and our three comperes, Mrs Miller, Mr Rae and Mr Dillon, kept us moving in the right direction. It was a sad



night too as we said farewell to Mr Cubbon and Mr Jack who are both moving on to new schools in the New Year and we wish them well for the future."

Thanks go to the S6 Dance Committee, DG First Catering Staff, the Jim Gold Scottish Dance Band, the David Kennedy Scottish Dance Band, our comperes, members of staff and all the students who attended.





Senior Christmas Dance



S1/S2 Christmas Dance



S3/S4 Christmas Dance

Showcase of raw talent in WHA's November Concert

report by Robert Guthrie and photographs by Sarah Kerr

Wallace Hall Academy staged another astounding and successful November Concert in the Bailey Hall on Thursday 21st.

Pupils and staff from across the year-groups performed as individual musicians and as bands and groups. Acts included singers, pianists, guitarists, the Brass Group pioneered by instructor Ali Paxton and

performances from two of Wallace Hall's extraordinary bands – Sticks and Stones and The Fused.

A number of members of staff also performed in the String Group led by Derrick Spence, one of our music tutors at Wallace Hall Academy.

Music teacher and event organiser, Nick Riley, commented: "

We had a fantastic variety of music for everyone to enjoy with something for all tastes. The musicality of our pupils never ceases to amaze me and it was a privilege to share the stage with some very talented musicians."

Jordan Tweedie, who played his euphonium in the celebration of sound said: "The concert was great because there were new acts and it was fantastic to hear and see such a variety of music. Concerts like this are so beneficial because it boosts your confidence and inspires you to go out and perform more often."

See selection of photographs from the concert below.



Little Red's Hiding Wood



everyone had snacks and story time when pupils heard how Little Red escaped the big bad wolf. Thankfully there were no wolves around and the group could move on to Tree Art with a difference! Pupils made their own trees on the grass, making sure that they could label all of the parts of the tree including crown, branches, trunk and roots. The finished articles were very impressive with pupils using natural materials to create their masterpieces. Unfortunately, they then had to dismantle the artwork but Mrs Wood and Miss Peoples explained the importance of leaving the environment as the group had found it.

The morning passed very quickly with so much to do. Before the pupils knew it they were back on the bus and heading back to school. QI Project Officers gave the pupils some worksheets to work on after lunch to help them remember everything they had learned in the woods.

Pupils from WHP P2 have been busy with their class project, Little Red's Hiding Wood. Mrs Young and Mrs Kennedy from WHP approached QI Project Officers to find out how they could take their project outdoors. Mrs Wood and Miss Peoples planned a morning on the Queensberry Estate which was really hands-on and allowed the P2 pupils to explore the woodland environment - just like Little Red!

The day started with the pupils being transported by minibus to the Queensberry Estate where they were put into two groups to start the activities. Mrs Wood and Miss Peoples were the group leaders for the morning and were supported by teaching staff and parent helpers.

Fruit and nut dispersal had been studied in class so the first task of the morning was to identify a hazel tree and hunt for hazel nuts. The pupils discussed how the nuts are dispersed, with the squirrel being a popular culprit along with wind and water. The group leaders were very impressed with the onomatopoeia skills of the P2 pupils at the Marr Burn – splish, splosh, gush, whoosh.

The Buccleuch gardeners allowed the group to have special access to the Heather Hut where



Christmas Trees from Buccleuch Estates

Wallace Hall Academy would like to thank Buccleuch Estates for providing the school with two beautiful Christmas trees.

The larger of the two trees had pride of place in the Bailey Hall, with the other one situated just outside the library for all visitors, staff and pupils to enjoy.

The trees were delivered to the school early in December and were decorated by our S6 Social Committee in time for our Christmas dances.



Kickboxing success for Evan



One of Wallace Hall's fourth year pupils, Evan Cringean, has recently been commended for his success in kickboxing. Evan is now the Scottish Kickboxing Association Youth Champion for this year, after putting up a good fight recently.

Under the tuition of David Sibley, Evan started kickboxing two-and-a-half years ago and trains twice a week at David Keswick Centre, Dumfries. Evan said: "I started kickboxing thanks to several family members taking part already. For the four months before the Championship day I had to maintain a diet of healthy food – something which I did slip up on a few times. I had to lift weights and do tough cardio exercises too.

"For my training period I was taught by three-time Scottish Champion Reece Lewis. I was amazed to win as I had to fight an 18-year-old. To make sure that rules were followed there were in fact three referees, compared to the usual one. I hesitated to go into the final at first but David, my coach, wouldn't let me walk away. It was only a two minute-long fight but those two minutes felt like an eternity. All in all I really enjoyed the experience and was so pleased to win in the end."

Emily selected for Scottish Squad

Wallace Hall Academy's Emily Morton, S4, has been scoring success recently after being picked for the Under 16 Scotland Football Squad, her talent having been spotted at a national camp in the summertime.

The first cup Emily brought home as part of the team followed a match against Luxembourg which Scotland won 3-0. Emily also plays with Dumfries Ladies' FC. She attends training at Dumfries High School with Scottish Football Association and Queen of the South coaches. In addition, Emily spends Wednesday evenings in Hamilton training with the South West region.

"Playing for my country was a really good experience," Emily said. "I really hope that I continue to be selected and involved with the Scottish Squad."

Wallace Hall Academy is currently in the process of setting up a girls' football team as part of its promotion of sport across the year groups.



Finlay swims to success



Finlay Gibson, one of our S1 pupils, recently won his very first swimming medal at the Dumfries and Galloway Regional Disability Swimming time trials.

Finlay really enjoys his swimming and trains most evenings in

Dumfries. His favourite strokes are the crawl and the breast stroke.

Finlay was thrilled to be presented with his bronze medal and, following his successful swim, was invited to be a member of the Dumfries and Galloway team taking part in the National Swimming Championships for junior swimmers at Scotstoun Pool in Glasgow. Well done Finlay.

S3 Dr Turner's Hockey Tournament



The S3 hockey team set out to King George Vth to play in the Regional Tournament on a bright but very cold day at the end of October.

The format is an 8 aside half pitch, round robin competition. Wallace Hall played teams from Dalbeattie, Moffat, St Joseph's, Lockerbie, Langholm, Dumfries High and Kirkcudbright. The games were very competitive and involved lots of running!

At the end of the competition our team was third behind the two teams who had narrowly beaten us, Moffat, and deserved winners Lockerbie, who had won all of their matches.

The squad included: Erin Dobie, Justine Crosbie, Lauren Johnstone, Charlie Geddes, Meagan Wood, Demi Brown, Georgia Clark, Caitlin Harley and Tyme Milligan.

Rugby Roundup

report by Claire Manson



A group of 19 girls from Wallace Hall Academy travelled to Scotstoun Stadium in Glasgow last November to play in a rugby 7s tournament.

We had 9 players eligible for the under 18s section and, as there were 6 teams entered, we played 5 matches. We won 2, lost 2 and drew one which left us sitting in third place overall. There were ten players able to play for the under 15s. As there were many more teams entered in this section, the competition had to be split into two pools where teams played 5 games each.



For a lot of the girls it was the first time they had played in a tournament of this size. It was a great experience for all and particularly exciting as the prizes were presented by Peter Murchie, a Glasgow Warrior.

The day was enjoyed by all and we would all like to thank Mr Mack for organising the trip and taking us.



Sun shines on athletes at Drumlanrig Castle

report by Robert Guthrie

With glorious sunshine, a slight chill in the air and glistening frost, Wallace Hall Academy's Half Marathon event served up to a full measure of excitement for the third consecutive year.

10th November 2013 saw the Thornhill-based secondary school stage its Queensberry Half Marathon, Drumlanrig Demon 10k and 3k Castle View Fun Run in the picturesquely autumnal setting of the Drumlanrig Estate, owned by The Duke Of Buccleuch.

The invigorating and refreshing weather raised the spirits of competitors, spectators, volunteers and staff. Athletes of all ages – children and adults – from all over the nation were able to perform to their highest levels of ability.

Races were started by Sally Coombs, one of the committee members and hard workers behind the event's organisation.

Events First Aid also did a fantastic job, being on hand throughout the day to attend to any sports injuries.

As the event was being held on Remembrance Sunday, everyone observed two minutes' silence to remember those who have fallen in all conflicts. Organisers also issued runners with poppies to put on their vests as a symbol of respect.



All the races attracted a lot of participants with over 150 taking part throughout the day.

The Castle View Fun Run – the shortest race at three kilometres but nevertheless an exciting route

taken by runners of all ages – was very well-attended. Many runners gained very plausible times indeed.

In first place with the Secondary School medal was current Wallace Hall Academy pupil, Eloise Coombs with a time of 11:56.

Finishing second – and claiming the adult medal – was former Wallace Hall Academy pupil Stephanie Lawrie, finishing in 12:10.

Oliver Adkin took third place with a time of 13:18. Finlay Bainbridge was presented with the Primary School medal.

An equally exciting route, but slightly more challenging was the Drumlanrig Demon 10k.

Jim Buchanan finished first with a time of 37:39, also qualifying for the 10k Male Veteran award. Upon receiving his award, he said: "It's an excellent race which provides a challenge. It is so well organised too. This is the fourth time I've run the course, so it's nice to have the benchmark from each year. The Drumlanrig Estate is such a





picturesque place for the event. I look forward to next year."

In second place was a member of Dumfries Running Club, Richard Beck, crossing the finish line after 37:51.

Taking third place was Joasia Zakrzewski in 38:11.

With a time of 39:40, current Wallace Hall Academy pupil Euan Murgatroyd took home the Junior 10k prize.

Sian Finlay with a time of 47:38 took the 10k Female Veteran award.

Competitors in this year's Queensberry Half Marathon put up an equally fierce contest.

Coming home in first place, nearly 15 minutes ahead of the other competitors, was Kyle McLellan. The former Wallace Hall Academy pupil, running for Nithsdale Athletic Club and on behalf of Edinburgh University, achieved a time of 73:16.



Roger Greenaway of Central Athletic Club finished second with a time of 88:42.

Dumfries Athletics Club's Adam Dickie snatched third place after 89:51.

Claiming the Male Veteran award was Malcolm Lyons, finishing in 91:07.

Dorothy Dundas of the Morton Milers claimed the Female Veteran award with a time of 112:58. She commented on her success, saying: "I was running to raise money for The Meningitis Trust because my uncle passed away about a month ago from the disease. I was already signed up for the Half Marathon but that gave me an extra boost.

"I thought the motivational signs throughout the course were excellent, except for the one that said 'you're looking good,' because I knew I definitely wasn't!

"The Drumlanrig setting is stunning too. It's what gets you up that hill. I'll definitely be running again."



Diane Jarvie, School Support Manager at Wallace Hall Academy and Race Director, commented on the success of the event: "What a fabulous day! The sun was out and



the estate was shown in all its glory.

"Entries were up again in the 10k though down a bit in the half marathon. However, Kyle McLellan made up for that by setting a half marathon course record of 73:16 which I'm sure will be hard to beat in future years.

"I would like to thank the Duke of Buccleuch and his staff for allowing us to hold our event on the estate and for all their support before and on the day. Thanks must also go to our sponsors E4D&G and Tesco.

"Unfortunately one of our race stalwarts and committee member, Sally Coombs, couldn't run this year due to injury but she did a grand job of starting the races and presenting the prizes.

"Dumfries Running Club deserve a special mention. Not only did they add our event to their Grand Prix calendar which meant they were well represented but they were very encouraging to us as organisers. That meant a lot.

"Lauren Hyslop took over my former role as Race Administrator this year and worked incredibly hard at dotting all the 'i's and crossing all the 't's and she did an amazing job.

"Last but certainly not least I have to thank our marshals and volunteers for being superb - the compliments keep on coming.

"We simply couldn't put this event on without your support and we are grateful to you all. Well done folks."

It is evident that once again the Wallace Hall Academy Queensberry Half Marathon, Drumlanrig Demon 10k and 3k Castle View Fun Run were a big success. It's an event which will be running for a long time, that's for sure.



Queensberry Half Marathon / Demon 10K / Fun Run



Queensberry Half Marathon / Demon 10K / Fun Run

WALLACE HALL ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL NEWS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - JANUARY 2014



At our AGM in October 2013, I was privileged and pleased to be re-elected as Chairman of the Parent Council. David Parkin was also re-elected as Vice Chairman.

At the same meeting, we were also delighted to welcome five new members to the Parent Council, these are as follows: Duncan Bramley, Fiona Graham, Belinda Kitson, Rob Nicholson and Morag Walker.

It is good that there is a continuing and increasing interest in Parent Council. The group of new members provides some balance and is representative of the pupil year groups in the school.

At recent meetings we have been receiving presentations and hearing details on the curriculum for all years in response to the requirements of Curriculum for Excellence and the objective of providing pupils in first, second and third year with a broad general education. We are working with school staff to help communicate this to parents.

We have decided to establish a Parent Council Facebook page. This will not replace any formal communication channels from the school about specific pupils or concerning other school activities or arrangements. Rather it is seen as an additional information channel which parents can share information and hear of matters which might be of interest to them. We have an active sub group of Donna Johnstone and David Parkin working alongside Barry Graham on this project.

We were pleased recently to receive a good response in the form of bids for Parent Council funding for various school groups.

From our own fund raising activities we had £1,100 to allocate and at our recent meeting we agreed to support the following clubs and activities:

- The English/Drama and Art Departments for funding for a one day festival of words for S1 and the Cluster School Primary 7s.

- The Sailing Club/Rural Skills/Activity Tourism/Forestry for purchase of a harness and memory card for an HD camera.
- The Warhammer Club for a set of rules and models.
- The Pupil Community Projects Group for pupil activities such as coffee mornings at local care homes, Easter Egg hunts for young children in Thornhill and to encourage other community focused projects.

We have asked for some more information on another bid and anticipate that there will be some further funding available to allocate in the near future.

We have another busy year ahead, which will include our involvement in the selection and recruitment of a new Depute Head Teacher following Phil Cubbon's departure to join staff at Dumfries High School. On that note I would like to put on record a thanks to Phil for his work within the school and in particular for his help in Parent Council.

As always I am pleased to hear from any parent or pupil on any subject which they would like to raise with me regarding the school.

At the time of writing, I have just had a look at an article in a newspaper. This states that across Dumfries and Galloway, schools averaged some of the best attainment levels in Scotland. The leading school noted in the article is Wallace Hall Academy in categories of attainment of five or more Standard Grades at credit level, and in the further measure of those going on to achieve 3 or more Highers. Another outstanding result for the school! Congratulations to pupils and staff.

Brian Johnstone, Chairman

We hope you enjoy this edition of our school newsletter. It is packed with articles and photographs highlighting all the good things taking place at Wallace Hall Academy along with features focusing on the achievements of our pupils and staff. Thank you to all pupils, staff, parents and members of the community who have submitted articles and photographs for publication. Thank you also to everyone who has helped proof-read and edit our newsletter. We are always really pleased to report on the successes and publish information about the many, varied interests of our young people. If you have taken part in a competition, have an interesting hobby or if you have any pieces of work that you are proud of and would like published, please speak to Mrs Menzies in the Library and she will help with articles and photographs.