



School of Excellence – Wallace Hall makes the Top 20!

Wallace Hall Academy recently received the honour of being ranked at number 20 in the Sunday Times Scottish Schools of the Year list. Delighted Mr Graham said: "The success of the school is down to the hard work of parents, pupils and staff of Wallace Hall Academy and

our cluster primaries. I am pleased to hear that our pupils' exam successes over the past three years have been recognised in this prestigious national league table. Pupils both past and present should be justifiably proud of their results and the positive reputation of the school. Academic achievement

is only one part of the positive attainment that all stakeholders of the school recognise and seek to promote. We are proud of all the successes of our young people in every sphere and are very pleased to celebrate the school's placing in the top 20 schools in Scotland.



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QI Scoops Top Award

The Queensberry Initiative project, a partnership programme between the schools of Mid-Nithsdale, the Queensberry Estate, local businesses and Third Sector groups, attended the Dumfries and Galloway Rural LEADER award ceremony on Friday 12 November – and came away with the Smarter Scotland award, a beautiful artisan-produced glass bowl to commemorate the achievements of this innovative partnership project.

The Initiative's key aims - working with the community and local businesses to support and challenge all the pupils in Mid-Nithsdale, to ensure

that all students are ready for work, to provide vocational opportunities, to make students more aware of rural opportunities and their environment and to give all students full access to the vast 'outdoor classroom' of the Queensberry Estate – were singled out for this award by the judges. The Initiative, which has been running at full strength for just over a year, has already impacted on the lives of young people and has plans to continue building on its successes to date.

Mr Graham stated as he and two senior pupils accepted the award on behalf of the Initiative: "This project is all about engaging our pupils with their community and the

countryside where they live. We are really pleased to have the hard work of the staff, adult volunteers and pupils honoured in this way."

The pupils who accepted the award had been representing the Initiative recently at the Scottish Learning Festival, along with 8 other pupils from all year groups in the Academy, talking about the project to teachers and other educationalists. For the Initiative, receiving this award is a truly positive way to mark the end of a very successful first year of this sector-leading programme. For more information and photographs of Queensberry Initiative activities please turn to pages 2, 4 and 5.



World of Words at Wallace Hall

by Robert Guthrie 2.S2

Oatcakes were on the menu at Wallace Hall Academy recently when local poet Hugh McMillan came to give a poetry reading to teachers and students. "A Short History of the Oatcake" was one of the poems he read at the event which was held on National Poetry Day. Schools throughout the UK took part.

Hugh has published many anthologies of poems since becoming a poet and they have been read by people all over the world. He explained that he is a history teacher at Dumfries Academy besides being a poet. He has been an inspiration to many people.

Some of the other poems he read to us included "Dear Jane", which was dedicated to his wife, Jane McMillan - who teaches English at Wallace Hall Academy. Hugh explained how the poem was very nearly never published because the first draft was actually gobbled up by a strange man as he was writing it on the bus.

He continued the transport theme by reading

"Another Lost Boy on the Cumnock Bus" and another highlight of his visit was his reading of "My Feet", which is a humorous account of his relationship with his own feet.

It was great to have Hugh come to Wallace Hall, and the students and teachers really got a lot of inspiration from it. So, on behalf of everybody who came to the reading, thank you, Hugh.



Starring role for Wallace Hall Academy pupils and the Queensberry Initiative

A BBC film crew visited Wallace Hall on 8th October to work with Mrs McMillan's S3 English class. This group of pupils had successfully pitched their programme idea about the Queensberry Initiative to BBC staff last June in the "Your Landscape Story – Our Crew!" competition. They were delighted when their idea was chosen for development and production by the BBC.

There was a long wait before the filming date was announced but pupils embraced the experience wholeheartedly and took direction and indeed acted out their roles with gusto.

Various groups and classes who were involved in activities in the Outdoor Classroom of the Queensberry Estate that day joined in the event with the starring role being undertaken by Lauren Dalgleish, a member of Mrs



McMillan's English class. Now everyone is waiting eagerly to see the result of their endeavours. Watch this space!



The Squisher squashes the competition!

In October six S1 pupils travelled to St Joseph's College for an Authority-wide S1 Enterprise Challenge event – and they came away with the first prize of £10 book vouchers for each participant and £200 for the school!

The pupils selected – Niamh Snailham, Hannah Jones, Olivia Mess, Ewan Davidson, Fraser Morton and Teigan Lord – were chosen from the three winning teams which competed in Wallace Hall during their P7 Induction Days. Their teachers had recommended them for their creativity, initiative and artistic flair. Ms Sharon McLean, Learning Leader, met with them for intensive preparation sessions before the big day. Their task was "to come up with a new and different business idea that takes inspiration from something local. Your business could be a product or a service – as long as it's a 'cool' creation and makes money."

This team of young entrepreneurs decided that they wanted their product to be 'green' and eco-friendly, something that people would actually be able to use and that would benefit the community. And so the Squisher was born: a family-friendly device linked to



local shops that compacts plastic milk cartons and makes them easy to recycle. Other aspects of the product that were important to the team and the judges were that it was easy for all to operate with a child lock to prevent accidents, offered rewards for loyal customers, was inexpensive to make and buy and was eco-friendly.

On the day of the competition the team worked under pressure of time to finalise their plans and then had to undergo a 'Dragon's Den' style experience, presenting their product to the other teams and panel of judges. They were delighted to come top in this competition and agreed that it had been a genuine learning experience for all of them, including Ms McLean!

Edinburgh Zoo Trip report by Daniel Holt

On Wednesday 24th November the Wallace Hall Academy S3 Intermediate 2 Biology students visited Edinburgh Zoo. At first we were allowed to explore the zoo by ourselves and then attended a lecture on the recently completed topic Evolution. We were told about the Corn Snake and its discreet scale colours due to alleles which will affects its camouflage and therefore its



ability to survive to breeding age. We then were split into two groups to tour the zoo. Our group was taken to the penguin exhibit first and given a short explanation of why penguins have white on their front and black on their backs. We were allowed to roam the zoo afterwards. When the day was over we went to the gift shop and left with a smile on our faces.

LEADER AWARD CEREMONY SUCCESS



Queensberry Initiative representatives accept their award

Queensberry Initiative Recent Activities





The Queensberry Initiative has made a very successful start to its second year of full operation. Above and on the previous page is a selection of photos which highlight recent activities of the wide variety of classes, QI groups and other events which are part of QI.

Charity Group Support the Teenage Cancer Trust

Report by Caitrin Stirling

Our S6 Charity Group's first fund raising week was in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust and took place from the 4th to the 8th of October. The seventeen members of the charities committee ran several very successful events throughout the week, collectively raising a grand total of over £1200. The bake sale that ran from Monday to Wednesday was particularly popular, featuring

delicious home-made cakes and biscuits from committee members.

Other events included tombola, Sumo-suit wrestling, leg waxing and a special wig-themed non-uniform day on Friday, a small fee being charged



for all of these. From the charities committee: "We would like to thank everyone for their support, we are very grateful." The committee is by no means resting on this success: the next charity week is already well into planning and it's safe to predict that it will be as much a success as the last.

European Day of Languages at Wallace Hall Academy



In September Wallace Hall Academy celebrated European Day of Languages, organised by the Higher French classes. Pains au chocolat were for sale at interval with Rory, Benji and Euan playing live French music including of a lovely rendition of Carla Bruni's "Quelqu'un m'a dit".

Food Hygiene Course



Recently pupils following our Hospitality courses had the opportunity to complete a course in Food Hygiene. Matthew Aitken from Auldgirth delivered the courses over two days in November and 32 pupils have been awarded a certificate from the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland.

The pictures show Stephen, our school Head Boy, modelling the latest fashion in catering wear(!) and Chris checking the effectiveness of hand washing.



Alton Towers Trip

by Jack Taylor

On October 1st Mr Jack, Dr Fulton and Mrs Dalgliesh took a bus load of Intermediate 2 and Advanced Higher physics students down to Alton Towers theme park for the day. It was a long day as well; the bus left Wallace Hall at 4:30 am. The journey was 5 hours in total but it was worth it.

When the bus arrived in the car park the rain was torrential but it could not do anything to decrease anyone's enthusiasm. As soon as the gates opened we were inside and already looking for the rides. We had 6 hours inside the theme park which was plenty of time to go on every ride twice for most people. Thanks to the

rain the park was very quiet and so barely any time was taken up with queuing. The most popular rides seemed to be the fastest ones. Nemesis, apparently the most intense rollercoaster in the world, was a personal favourite of 6th year pupil Sarah Edgar who said that it was the most exciting experience of the trip. Thomas Wall, another 6th year pupil who was by far the most excited person in the park, was thoroughly disappointed when we had to get back on the bus to head home.



Malham Cove - Higher Geography Trip

Report by Gillian Watret

It was raining as the Wallace Hall Academy pupils walked off the bus. An early start had been made on Friday 1st October. The bus journey was very exciting with the bus going up a narrow road and meeting farm traffic and drivers who struggled to negotiate the bus. We had to wait 20 minutes while a Volvo driver and farmer picked up stones the car had knocked off a dry-stone wall.

We all got togged up before leaving the bus. Some got a short lift in the fieldcentre minibus. We walked in

the pouring rain and everyone was kitted out in more waterproofs!

The first feature we saw on our adventure was Malham Tarn followed by some shakeholes. We then had to walk for ten minutes until we saw our next feature: a swallow hole. We also saw sinkholes where Malham Beck seeped into the pervious limestone bedrock.

Malham Cove was a dramatic feature of the landscape and we descended four hundred and twenty steps to get back to the bus park soaking but happy.



Prison Officers visit to AH Modern Studies Class

As part of their Advanced Higher Modern Studies course students study the penal system. They recently had a visit from two prison officers from Dumfries prison who explained how the prison operated and the programmes in place for the prisoners to provide rehabilitation opportunities.

The officers then answered the many questions from the pupils. The pupils will do a follow up visit to the prison in January.



China 2011 Teambuilding Trip

Students and staff recently took part in a team building afternoon at the Galloway Activity Centre, Loch Ken (www.lochken.co.uk). Students who are from across year groups and subjects were given the opportunity to make new friends whilst taking part in a series of challenging activities.

The Activities were the Climbing Wall followed by Flying Fox and a Leap of Faith from a platform 10m high! Mrs McNay, Mr Harley and Mr Miller completed this part with flying colours.

The second activity was watersports – canoeing and splashing about on the Seal Slide into a river. The weather was fine, we all got thoroughly drenched and topped the afternoon off with a nice hot chocolate.



Stationery Shop in the Library

A reminder that the following items of stationery are for sale in the school Library: pencils (30p), pencils with eraser tips (40p), pens (30p), erasers (30p), sharpeners (30p), protractors (50p), highlighters (40p), 15cm rulers (30p), 30cm rulers (30p) and 4GB data pens (£9.00). Any profit that is made from this venture goes towards purchasing new books for the Library. Donations of good quality books, in particular junior and senior fiction and study/revision guides, are always welcome. If you have books you are willing to donate please hand these in to Mrs Menzies in the Library. Thank you.

Haiti Concert

Report by Brenna Aston with
photographs by Iain Horton

Wallace Hall Academy is renowned for high quality music events and the most recent Haiti concert was no exception! Two evenings of stunning talent from pupils and the outside group, The Meningitis Trust Foundation, were appreciated by a collective audience of over three hundred and fifty viewers. Both nights were compered by Brenna Aston and Lisa Murphy, two of the four sixth year pupils who were involved with the initial organisation of the event. Tegan Kirkwood and Elisha Scott, the other half of the group, ran front of house making sure that all visitors to the school were well looked after.

Acts included a wide variety of performances, kicked off each night by the musical stylings of head boy Stephen Morrison with a hilarious rendition of "What's New Pussycat?". Also receiving praise for their singing voices were Emma Ackland, Amie Kirkpatrick and Rory Crawford, just to name a few. Charli Kennedy and Claire Nicolson ended the first act with their high-kicking trib-

ute to the musical "Chicago" which left the audience wanting more. The two nights also gave performers Kayleigh Rennie and Blythe Aitken their first taste of the spotlight and the roar of the crowd as they wowed audiences with their solo efforts. Blythe ended the night perfectly with Shakira's summer hit "Waka Waka" and was joined on stage by all involved and many unsuspecting audience members including Head Teacher Barry Graham and Depute Head Phil Cubbon.

The final amount raised over the two nights was a massive £2581 and all those involved are very proud of this achievement. The money raised will soon be sent to SOS Children's Villages, the world's largest orphanage charity, where it is hoped it can have some impact on the current outbreak of cholera. Huge thanks go to all who helped, donated or showed support by performing but especially to our community representative Liam Kennedy and to teacher Hayley Whyte for their invaluable support.



WHA Staff enjoy "Cooking and Dining"



It is not only pupils who have a wide range of opportunities in Wallace Hall Academy! On 17th November our staff were able to show their culinary expertise in a fun evening in the Home Economics department. Douglas Lisi, chef from L'Aperitif in Stranraer, demonstrated the techniques required to produce a delicious three course meal so we were able to make our own dishes. Of course the highlight was the dining part of the evening when we tucked into our prawn, avocado and smoked salmon starter, pork & leek en crouete

and finished off with mascarpone & white chocolate cheesecake. A most enjoyable and satisfying evening of professional development!!



Photographs
by
Iain Horton

Wallace Hall Academy Halloween Disco

Report
by
Laura Sloan





The Halloween Disco was a great success this year. Organized by the 6th year's social committee, pupils from all years made a fantastic effort to dress-up and so did some of teachers! There were prizes for the best dressed. Winners were **Girls: Olivia Mess, Boys: Aki Davidson, Groups: The Nerds.** The staff prize was awarded to Mrs

Menzies who dressed up as the poison apple from the S6 Snow White group.

A variety of music was provided by S5 pupil Stuart McDade. There was plenty of dancing in the Bailey Hall and outside in the street there was a ducking for apple competition. The evening was definitely enjoyable for all and great fun.

Heraldic Homework!

As part of their first year History course 1.N2 visited the Queensberry Es-

tate to look at the various heraldic shields and Coats of Arms situated around the castle courtyard. This visit was to assist with a homework exercise where the class had to design their own heraldic shield.



The class found this visit very useful and some excellent homework was produced.



Intermediate 1 Biology trip to Botanics



Over 20 pupils from the S3 intermediate 1 Biology class attend a work shop on "Growing plants" at the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. The day was designed to give a variety of practical activities to pupils on this course. We looked at different types of compost, how plants are adapted to different environments, and how to get seeds from many different plants. A highlight of the trip was when we visited all the greenhouses to see all the different foods that come from plants. The tropical greenhouse had a pond with huge lilies from the Amazon. The trip finished with 20 minutes in the beautiful new visitor centre and an opportunity to spend some money on Christmas presents.

Wallace Hall Academy P7 Induction Evening

Prospective pupils and their parents had the chance to look round our beautiful new school at the P7 Induction evening on Monday 8th November 2010. There was a wide variety of activities on offer for the pupils including Treasure Hunt Bingo in the Library, sugarcraft activities in the Home Economics department, some fun science activities and the opportunity to make some music in the Music department. Parents had the chance to attend presentations on a number of topics including Glow, the Queensberry Initiative, the Parent Council, and Literacy, Numeracy and Modules across the school. Overall the P7 pupils enjoyed their evening and we look forward to welcoming them as pupils after the summer.



Peer Mediation

by Caitlin Palmer

We have set up a peer mediation group at Wallace Hall Academy to give responsibility to pupils across the school by helping to resolve minor incidents between pupils before they get out of hand. Mediation is a way to resolve conflict where the people who disagree have a chance to sit face-to-face and talk uninterrupted, so that each point of view is heard. The aim is to come to a win/win situation, where both sides are agreeable to the solution. The mediator is someone

'in the middle' helping other people who are having an argument to sort out the problem for themselves.

There are 5 steps involved in peer mediation:

- 1) Agree to mediate;
- 2) Find out what has happened;
- 3) List the problems;
- 4) Get an agreement;
- 5) Settle the agreement.

At Wallace Hall 1st years and 6th years are involved in peer mediation, meeting regularly to get peer mediation set up and discuss any ideas or problems. We have decided

that peer mediation will take place in the medical room during lunch-times although on Thursdays it will take place in the parenting room. To organise a peer mediation session, there is a peer mediation box in the library where you can write your name and tutor group on a slip of paper and we will contact you to set up a meeting. We also have a phone number you can text with your details to organise a meeting and we'd like to thank Tesco for kindly donating the phone.

Peer mediators will be recognisable by a peer mediation badge and if you need a peer mediation session you can also go directly to a peer mediator.

End of Term House Events

On Friday 8th October all pupils at Wallace Hall Academy were given the chance to represent their house in an afternoon of inter house events.

S1 battled it out with some social games providing great hilarity and competitive spirit. S2 all took part in



a quiz where some fantastic scores were achieved but Cairn stormed away with the lead, with the top three teams coming from this house. S3 were challenged with a test of their initiative and creativity when they were asked to complete tasks including making a fash-

ionable outfit from black bin bags and designing a paper aeroplane that would fly the furthest distance. S4 and S5 spent the afternoon in the PE department playing for the honours in football, hockey, netball table tennis and basketball.

Overall a great afternoon was had by all with pupils enjoying the opportunity for a bit of healthy competition! The final house points awarded for the day were as follows: Cairn – 178, Nith – 112, and Scaur - 148. Thanks go to all staff for helping the afternoon to run smoothly and special thanks to our sixth year for helping out with all of the activities.

Remember that house points are awarded when you receive a merit so keep up the good behaviour and effort in the coming months to help your house get ahead!!



Contacting the school

A reminder that the school telephone number has now changed to **01848 332120**. The fax number is now 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.wallacehallacademy.com for the latest news and information.

Sugarcraft Club

Some pictures of the pupils and their handiwork in the Sugarcraft club which meets at lunchtimes on Tuesdays.



Drama Trip to Black Watch

report by Laura Sloan

Recently the Higher Drama pupils had the opportunity to attend the National Theatre of Scotland's production of Gregory Burke's "Black Watch" at the SECC.

The play depicts the lives of soldiers on the ground during the Black Watch regiment's placement at Camp

Dogwood during the Iraq war. It tells us what it means to be part of the Black Watch Regiment, what it means to be young soldier fighting the war on terror and what it means to make it back home again. It was absolutely extraordinary to be able to see this dynamic play in action. We were all moved by the emotion created by the plot, characters, movement and music.

During the Higher Drama course pupils get to study this extraordinary play and are very lucky to have had the chance to see the play in this unique setting. Higher pupils have enjoyed and feel they will benefit greatly from this experience.



Honduras Bound

report by Hannah Ferguson

Next June, a group of 6th years are embarking on a trip to Honduras, South America where they will do biological research and conservation in the jungle and on the shores. The Honduras group was up in Edinburgh at the EICA (Edinburgh International Climbing Arena), despite the snowy weather, in order to raise money for their trip next summer. Each team member was given a target of £200 to raise through sponsorships in order to do a terrifying aerial assault course up to 100 ft high. With their hearts racing and legs shaking, each student was successful in finishing the course with no help whatsoever and everyone was extremely proud of such a frightening accomplishment.



COMMON ROOTS – COMMON FUTURE

Common Roots-Common Future is the European pupil exchange programme Wallace Hall Academy pupils are involved in. We applied for funding through the European Union pupil exchange programme called Comenius and successfully obtained the full grant for the next two years. This has allowed us to run exchange visits with our partner schools in Germany, Iceland, Norway, Bulgaria, Hungary and Belgium.

A group of Wallace Hall pupils recently visited Urspringschule in Germany and we have further visits

planned to Belgium, Hungary, Norway and Bulgaria and again to Belgium in 2012 where our pupils will present the completed project to the EU. We will also have pupils from these countries visiting us over the next two years and would welcome any parents interested in being host parents.

The project does have its own website which can be accessed from the Wallace Hall school website and contains a large amount of information on our partner schools and the aims of the project. There is also information and pictures of our recent visit to Germany.



Wallace Hall's Pupil exchange to Germany.

Report by Lucy Frost, Isla Murgatroyd, Katherine Maxwell, Angus Blair, Patrick Lowry, Corin Halliday and Alec Gordon.

Towards the end of November and beginning of December a few pupils from the E-Twinning module went to Urspringschule in Schelklingen in Germany for a school week. It took longer than expected to arrive in Germany though because the snow caused a delay in the flights and we spent the first night in a hotel in Amsterdam.

During the week, we did various things involving some project work with the German pupils, the main topic being food. When we finally arrived at the school on the Monday, we made traditional German Christmas cookies which were later used for the buffet which involved the Scottish and German pupils and their host families. This was also for St Andrews day.

On Tuesday, after beginning our group work, we went to a bakery and made our own pretzels; this proved a difficult task for some of the pupils! These were also used at our buffet where traditional foods where presented.

On Wednesday, we went into the City of Ulm and had tour of the city where we shown some of the city's well known landmarks. We were also given the opportunity to climb the World's tallest church steeple. If it

we went to a neolithic museum and were taught how to start a fire the 'stone age way'! We then later prepared and cooked our lunch on this! After being out in the snow all morning we ended up in a thermal spa where we could swim outside but as the water was really warm we weren't freezing! When we were in the outside pool of the spa we had a competition to see who could last the longest lying in the snow. Looking back, this sounds insane but we were all so determined to win so were lying there for quite a few minutes in just our swimwear!

Friday morning, we left the school and made our way to the airport, where we were supposed to leave and come home the same day. We only managed to get to Amsterdam - then the fun started! Firstly, a de-icer truck crashed into the back of the plane, this resulting in us spending an extra night in Amsterdam in a 4-star hotel!

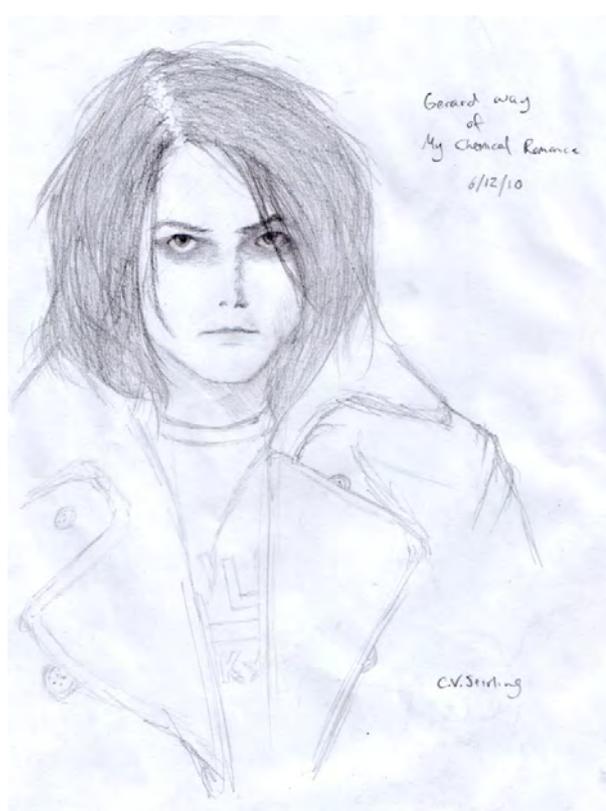
Saturday morning when we finally thought we were getting home, our flight got cancelled because of the snow so we spent a day in the airport until our next flight that evening which eventually got us home! Coming home was more difficult than we expected. Who knew the snow could be such a nuisance!



had been a clear day you would've been able to see for miles but as it was a very snowy cold day, like the majority of the trip, we could just see the German Christmas Market below us. On the Thursday,



Pupil Work



Gerard Way of My Chemical Romance;
portrait by Caitrin Stirling.

The lonely world

A lonely girl in a lonely world
A lonely heart and a lonely soul
She walks around the world so cold
No one there to hold her hand
She walks the world alone and sad
She wonders if she will ever find
That perfect someone to walk with her
In a world so alone.

By Stacy Haugen



The Hunt

The front wheel stopped
The rest of the bike did not
Instead, swivelling in an arc
around the spot
where the spokes no longer spun

My head rose

I felt the loss of control
Through the gaze of those watching
piercing my pride
the dirt shifting of its own accord
Collapsing like rubble
As the momentum forced movement
that the loss of solidarity allowed

The exposed rim of the handle
flashed
like teeth it pierced me
my belly
like a prey animal

leg trapped
The necessary moment of further
pain,
Escaping the bike's savage embrace
like a rabbit in a snare
biting its leg for freedom

The scar remains
like a grape to a raisin
over time it has shrunk
Its danger, daring
now dull, disappointment

Just a shadow.

by Jack Kehoe

The Race

On drizzling days we sit inside
As stale light trickles through the glass
Cheek to cheek, we place our bets

It's only a race in the end

Watching two droplets fill and fall
Gradually they leave something of
themselves behind
A trail of what they once were

Hand in hand, your drop wins by a foot
Mine has lost itself and is almost
nothing

It is important to read nothing into
raindrops

by Bryony Rose

Edinburgh's Tourists

The wind claws and shakes
the vulnerable pains
that warp the outside world
to swirls of dreary dull.

A dripping pair sit,
one with orange
attire that makes fruit cringe.
American.

They slump and swap
the clumsy black box
that captures their
sweaty faces and swollen
hands.

The Americans step out and
prepare
for the disheartening winds
that
sog their brash shirts and
string their hair,
to sightsee a beautiful city.

by Clair Rodden

Ship Shape at WHA

Wallace Hall Academy Sailing Club Instructors Jozien Black, Stuart Bell and Neil Miller held an open day for teaching and support staff at Castle Loch, Lochmaben.

The event was well attended by both staff and their families who enjoyed the fine sailing conditions and sunshine. Thanks go to Mark Joseph and his two daughters for providing safety cover and an introduction to the water. Frank Farrell did a sterling job with a leaky boat and Kellie Carmichael kept us all ship shape.



Runners Face their Demons at the WHA Half Marathon Event

The first WHA Half Marathon took place in the beautiful surroundings of the Queensberry Estate overlooked by the majestic 'pink palace' that is Drumlanrig Castle. Runners were led to the start by WHA pipers who blasted out a stirring Scottish ballad to prime the troops for the challenge that lay ahead.

The trio of races (the Queensberry Half Marathon, the Drumlanrig Demon 10k and the 3K Castle Fun Run) were hotly contested by athletes from as far afield as New Zealand. Former pupil David Vernon was the victor in the Drumlanrig Demon 10k finishing the course in a blistering 36 minutes 25 seconds with S5 pupil Chris Ponton following him home in 38 minutes 45 seconds to secure third



place. In the female section of the Drumlanrig Demon 10K, former pupil Stephanie Lawrie finished in second place and, along with David and Chris, won first place in the team section. In the Half Marathon the WHA team of Barry Graham, Ray Fulton and Neil Miller took the spoils with a combined time of 336 minutes 53 seconds.

Race administrator Diane Jarvie said: "Despite the weather we are delighted with the way things went for our first year. I look forward to beginning preparations for next year - after a short break of course!"

The combination of a beginner-friendly atmosphere, a tough course and the glorious surroundings of Drumlanrig Castle make this event a demon that's worth facing! More pictures and results on our school website - www.wallacehallacademy.co.uk.





SSFA Award

On the 12th November the Dumfries and Galloway Schools' Football Association held a special dinner at the Cairndale Hotel in Dumfries. The dinner was to celebrate 75 years since the inception of the association. The evening was attended by many representatives from youth football, including teachers, both past and present, representatives from local youth football teams, players who have gone on to represent the Scottish Schools' Football Association at various age groups as well as guest speakers including Frank Coulson, Fraser Sanderson and Craig Brown.

During the evening a number of awards were presented in recognition of the success and dedication of the staff, coaches and all those involved in any way with Regional Schools' Football. Our very own Ian Wilson was honoured with an award marking the contribution he has made over the last 30 years to developing schools' football. Well done Ian - all the staff and pupils at Wallace Hall Academy are delighted you have received this very well deserved honour.

Jack conquers the Hardrock challenge

Report by Thomas Wall

On the 3rd of October Jack Taylor, a pupil in 6th Year, took part in the Dalbeattie Hardrock challenge which is a duathlon held annually in Dalbeattie forest.

This competition consisted of a 10 mile run followed by a 16 mile cycle. Jack competed in the individual men's category and managed to beat over sev-

enty other opponents to secure first place and win the Kin-naird's cup. His time was 2 hours 21 minutes and 45 seconds, a good 2.5 minutes quicker than the runner up.

Jack hopes to better his already impressive time in this event next year. We wish Jack the best of luck in all of his future competitions.



Swimming to Success

Report by Angus Bruce



On the 8th of October this year Shannon McLelland, Rebecca Muir, Sophie Lawrie, Alix Muir, Abbie Houston, Connor McLelland, Angus Bruce, and Euan Murgatroyd went to DGOne to compete in the Regional Schools' Swimming Competition.

They came back with multiple gold medals making the school very proud. Those who won gold medals had their times put forward for the Scottish Nationals. All who took part gave of their best, working hard to succeed. Well done to all of them.

Update from your Parent Council.....

Following our recent AGM we are delighted to welcome Eric Wood and Richard Morton as Parent Members, Chris Simmonds and Joan Neilson as Co-opted Members and Mark Turner as Teacher Representative. We aim to post Agendas on the school website in the week prior to our meetings to give you an idea of what we will be discussing and any parent or interested community member is most welcome to attend – it would be lovely to see some new first year parents there! Our meetings will be held in the school at 7.30pm on the following dates:-

Tuesday 11th January 2011
 Tuesday 8th February 2011
 Tuesday 8th March 2011
 No April Meeting
 Tuesday 10th May 2011
 Tuesday 14th June 2011
 Tuesday 13th September 2011
 Tuesday 4th October 2011 AGM

Opportunities arise throughout the year to help organise and volunteer at events such as our annual Burns Supper and Half marathon and we are hoping to help organise a Health and Wellbeing Project for parents and pupils shortly so please contact me if you would like to know more about how you can become involved.

Our first big social in the "New" School Bailey Hall – the legendary School Burns Supper – is scheduled for Friday 28th January and, with a selection of musical and oratory talent from within and outwith the school all booked, it promises to be a great event. Whether you are a regular or newcomer to Burns Suppers this one is unique and not to be missed! Get together with some

friends and book your tickets now - ticket price £12.50 available from Caroline Menzies in the school LRC – let's fill the Bailey Hall and have a great night out with the added benefit of raising funds for the school.

I recently attended the first National Parent Forum Conference the focus of which was "Curriculum for Excellence – How it is affecting your children and what do parents need to know." This transition time is particularly confusing for many parents especially those with children in different years experiencing different courses and exams. The Parent Council will be working with the school over the year on how best to communicate the changes and developments in Wallace Hall Academy to parents but I would like to draw your attention in the meantime to the websites www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk where the conference presentations, general factsheets and examples can be viewed and www.engageforeducation.org a website launched by Mike Russell, the Cabinet Secretary for Education to enable parents to raise questions and share views on education directly with those responsible for it in the Scottish Government.

Finally, I would just like to add a heartfelt thank you to all the pupils, parents, staff and sponsors that participated in and supported us in the first Queensberry Half Marathon – Diane, the committee and myself really appreciated your efforts and you got a great write-up in the January edition of Runners World! We are currently considering moving the event – possibly to the end of March – to avoid clashes with a busy autumn local athletics calendar so keep training and watch this space!

Merry Christmas and I look forward to meeting you in the New Year.

Anne Stoddart

Reminder: Careers Adviser Information and Planned Attendance at Parents Evenings 2011



Appointment Procedure: S4/5 and 6 pupils may request an interview in school with **Maurice Gilligan, Careers Adviser**, either by asking their PT Pupil Support or a member of the SMT to arrange an interview or by contacting Mrs Menzies in the Library.

Careers Adviser Planned attendance at Parents' Information Evenings and Parents' Evenings 2011:

Thursday 17th of February 2011- Wallace Hall Academy- S3 Parents' Information Evening

Thursday 24th of February 2011- Wallace Hall Academy - S3 Parents' Evening

Tuesday 15 of March 2011 - Wallace Hall Academy - S1 Parents' Information Evening

Wednesday 16th of March 2011 - Wallace Hall Academy - S4-6 Parents' Evening

Wednesday 11th of May 2011- Wallace Hall Academy - S4/5 Parents' Evening

Thursday 9th of June 2011 - Wallace Hall Academy - S2 Parents' Evening