



Lucy scoops Young

Critics' Award



Third year pupil Lucy Doig has won a prize in a prestigious national writing competition.

Lucy and her classmates recently took part in *The Guardian* newspaper's Young Critics' book review competition. Pupils chose one of the eight novels shortlisted for the Guardian Young Fiction Prize and each submitted a 200-word review giving their opinions of it.

Lucy, who had reviewed Katherine Rundell's new novel, *Rooflopers*, was overwhelmed by the news of her win. As well as receiving

books and a book token, she was a guest of honour at the prize-winners' reception in London during the October holidays, where she met a number of well-known authors.

Lucy said: "Winning the Young Critics' Award was a real surprise. I was delighted to travel down to London to receive my prize and I really enjoyed meeting the authors. It was amazing to be part of such a high profile, glittering evening."

More details on our Wallace Hall pupils' entries for the Young Critics competition inside on page 18.

Senior Wallace Hall Academy students have just returned from one of the most emotional and thought-provoking pilgrimages of their lives.

Thirty-one young historians, along with five members of staff, visited some of World War One's most famous memorials and cemeteries and witnessed the horrific legacy that conflict leaves behind.

Over the course of five days, pupils and staff visited points of interest such as Vimy Ridge, Thiepval Cemetery and Memorial and Tyne Cot Cemetery.

Full report and pictures from the trip inside.

WHA pupils visit the Battlefields

report by Robert Guthrie



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Record Time Rewards

Report by Rachel Shnapp

Last year the Young Enterprise (YE) group came up with an ingenious up-cycled product which went on to win the team a number of awards at the Dumfries and Galloway regional finals.

The group consisted of Ailie Bryson, Imogen Leask, Daniel Smith, Caitlin Murray, Arran McLachlan, Rory Kilgour and Matthew Holden. They came up with the inventive and original idea to fix a clock face to old records, creating beautiful retro (and environmentally sustaining) clocks while making a profit of £273.07 in the process.

As the group headed off to the National Finals of the YE competition they were truly excited, yet anxious about arriving late - last minute road closures meant that the team experienced a few anxious moments on the journey. Having managed to arrive in time to see (most of) the welcome ceremony, they set up their stall in the Thistle Hotel, in Glasgow, where they were then interviewed by past winners and various top business people. They also had to give a short presentation under pressure to quickly explain the ethos behind Record Time. The judges then marked their stalls and product in many different categories such as relevance, innovation, communication and success against their objectives.

The next stage of their day was for the Managing Directors to be judged. For the Wallace Hall Team, Ailie Bryson had taken on said role. The wait for the results was spent at a Gala dinner which the group attended. Prior to this

the group attended a reception with Sir Tom Farmer, who talked to each group individually about their product and their business.

The group was awarded the 3rd place Marketing award, and soon after it was announced that Ailie had been awarded the Managing Director of the year award, and was told she had been the best managing director they had seen in all the years of the competition.

It was her dedication, insight and commitment to the project that had paid off and earned Ailie the award. Ailie will now attend the Annual Conference of the Institute of

Directors in March.

Mr Arrowsmith - who runs the YE group - said he was "particularly thrilled, but not surprised by Ailie's achievements, and I am sure this will

stand her in good stead as she continues her business career."

Recognition at the National Finals is a first for a Dumfries and Galloway Young Enterprise group. Mr Arrowsmith also said that he was "delighted with the work, creativity and the pro-active approach which has been displayed by the group."

Ailie herself remarked that "as a group we were delighted to reach the national finals and achieve recognition at this level. I believe our success is as a result of having such a well-balanced, capable team who worked conscientiously towards a common goal. On a personal note I am delighted to have been awarded the title of Managing Director of the Year and look forward to building on and furthering my business experience by studying International Business this year at Strathclyde University."

The Young Enterprise group is a clear example of how sticking in and working hard can truly pay off.



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.

Bestselling author visits Wallace Hall

Elizabeth Wein, author of New York Times bestseller *Code Name Verity*, recently took time out of her hectic writing and publicity schedule to drop in on a Wallace Hall Higher English class to talk about her books, sign a few copies, and give tips to aspiring writers.

The class enjoyed getting a flavour of her gritty and realistic spy novels set in the Second World War, and hearing about the sheer hard work involved in writing and publishing successful fiction. Her top tips for young authors? Quoting fellow American James Thurber, she advised: "Don't get it right; get it written." Just as importantly, Elizabeth told the class that the secret of good writing is to write about things you care about – excellent advice for any student.



Zoo Trip

report by Amy Kerr



On 24th June twenty one pupils from Mrs Simpson's and Mrs Weir's Higher Biology classes visited Edinburgh Zoo accompanied by Mr McEwen and Miss Landers. We learnt about 'Rainforest Conservation and Biodiversity' which linked with what we were learning about Natural Selection,

Biodiversity and Evolution in class. We visited the animals and explored the zoo which consisted of yawning gorillas, big cats which were too close for comfort, peeping meerkats and friendly otters.

One of our lessons included information about Rainforest Conservation and problems such as illegal pet trade, poaching, traditional medicine methods and palm oil plantations. We then met and held two of the animals we talked about in the lesson, a Royal Python who was surprisingly timid and Hissing Cockroaches that were lazy.

After this we walked straight to the Panda Exhibition - the only place pandas can be seen the UK. First in the smaller observation room we saw a very sleepy panda called 'Yang Guang' whose name means 'Sunshine'. His keepers



describe him as a good-natured gentle giant. Then we saw 'Tian Tian', a more active panda whose name means 'Sweetie'. She is described as having a playful nature and being quite fussy when it comes to what bamboo she eats.

Sadly after visiting the pandas it was time to head home. Happy but quite sleepy we left the Zoo after a good day out.

Magical Macbeth

Anyone who attended either, or both, of the two *Macbeth* performances in June witnessed a jaw-droppingly effective production. Those who could not make it missed one of the best school productions seen at Wallace Hall, or indeed anywhere. It was stunning. Shakespeare would have loved it.

The challenge with performing Shakespeare is that the dialogue can be hard to keep track of. What this production did was strip it right down to the key scenes which meant that the action came thick and fast. Helpfully, a series of images appeared on a screen as a backdrop to the action. This cleverly allowed the audience to make sense of major developments within the play, such as the witches' prophecies of Macbeth's future titles and the impending arrival of Macduff at

Dunsinane Castle.

It was a highly visual production. The choreography of the action was superb. Several of the big scenes were delivered in a completely original fashion. Lady Macbeth's descent into guilt-ridden madness was a case in point. Nine (nine!) witches enveloped her in their gothic blackness as she attempted to wash from her hands the blood she imagined was there. Tilda Borrows as Lady Macbeth brought great tenderness to this moment, showing that even when you get away with murder, you never really get away with it.

Any time the witches took centre stage, their appearance in three groups of threes was completely chilling. Vamped up entirely in black, with blood red lipstick, they intimidated anyone who came before them. Their dance routine was quite something too.

Best of all for movement and

lighting was the final scene when Macbeth had run out of time and space. Fate had caught up with him at last. Faced down by Macduff whose wife and children he had butchered, Macbeth embarked upon one last bloodbath. Dylan Ross captured perfectly Macbeth's maniacal moments as he cut down all before him before embracing his own death.

And if the staging was dazzling then the music was divine. Lauren Dalgleish's rendition of 'Miss Otis Regrets' will stay with anyone who heard it, as will Siôn Davies' drumwork synchronising perfectly with the executions of the final scene. The band played big numbers with verve and passion, their standout being John Lee Hooker's 'Boom Boom'.

This production was so good that it deserves to be part of Wallace Hall's repertoire. If you did not see it this time, you really should do yourself a favour and catch it next time.



Audience Appreciation

The following is an extract from a letter we received from a member of the audience who attended the Friday night performance of *Macbeth*. We would like to share these comments with you.

"Somebody asked me last night what part of "Macbeth" was my favourite and I couldn't give an answer; I was completely blown away by the whole experience. But I am going to try to look at the component parts which made the evening one of those that I will always remember.

"The very start had me hooked. The band and the singer were outstanding. I have heard them at school concerts, but had no idea their range extended to that type of music. Their clothes of course were perfect as well, and the choice of song could not be better. As soon as the first bars of "Mack the Knife" sounded, a thrill ran through me, as I realised absolutely from then that I was going to have a unique experience.

"The staging was amazing – apparently simple, yet clearly meticulously planned. I was pulled right away into the world of the Macbeths and the witches – scarcely hags, but yet so evil, and effortlessly controlling the lives of those around them. Even having the witches as the ones shifting the benches etc. was so clever – it avoided the intrusion of stagehands and emphasised their control. They all looked fantastic in their elegant black outfits, and they all moved so smoothly. I was worried that the high heels might cause a problem, but they took the extra height completely in their stride.

"The inclusion of the band as part of the play was inspired. Taped music would have been okay, but the live band was so much better. The songs had obviously been carefully chosen

to blend in with the action, and raise it to a new level. That was the case with all of the songs, but the highlight must be the shooting scene at the end, where the music and the action were as one. Having just typed that, I am saying to myself, "No – how can you chose a best song?"

"The actors all came across as professional, and they should all be extremely proud of their part in making the whole. I don't know how much work went into learning how to die after being shot; or in knowing how to glide across the stage being wickedly beautiful, but it was worth it!

"Macbeth and his Lady were outstanding even allowing for such a high overall standard. Their interaction with each other was so complex –tender and loving yet controlling. It is almost impossible to pick out my favourite part from each of these performances – if pushed, I think the "out damned spot" by Tilda (who is making a speciality of having her hair messed up!!) and the descent into madness by Dylan right at the end. The tension in Macbeth as he paced the stage pulling at his collar had me on the edge of my seat.

"It was a great play to choose, as most people have at least a basic knowledge of it, so even if some of the words were somewhat archaic, the idea came across. For those who might be a bit rusty on the story, the programme was extremely useful as a reminder.

"I was impressed with the



choice of the parts to stage – it was a summary, but it did give the main story, and I had no sense of missing out on anything.

"If I had to take issue with anything, it would be that we came on the Friday rather than the Thursday. If I had been there on Thursday, I would have bought a ticket for the Friday as well.

"Surely there must be a festival or a competition that this performance could be entered into? I do try to see professional performances when I can, and this is up there with my previous favourite – Warhorse in London. Other people deserve to get the chance to see it!

"When I am feeling stressed, I bring back to my mind other days and other times, some of complete relaxation, others of excitement. Friday evening just past will be up there among the best.

"Please please pass on my congratulations to all those involved in this amazing show, and my thanks for enriching my life."



Magical Macbeth







Cairn House Captains

Photograph on the left shows our Cairn House Captains for 2013 - 2014

Back Row (L - R): Rachel Shnapp (S6), James Robertson (S3), Luke Bell (S6), Adam Dalglish (S4), Emily Burnett (S4).

Middle Row (L - R): Zara Kennedy (S2), Caitlin Harley (S3), Harris Maxwell (S2), Rhianna Lawson (S5).

Front Row (L - R): Matthew Godridge (S1), Emily Kennedy (S1), Emma Holden (S5).

Nith House Captains

Photograph on the right shows our Nith House Captains for 2013 - 2014

Back Row (L - R): Oliver Rideout (S5), Michael Craig (S5), Tom Kehoe (S6), Nick Willetts (S4), Marianne Willetts (S2).

Middle Row (L - R): Jemma Gordon (S1), Joseph Blaylock (S1), Chireille Scott (S6), Tyme Milligan (S2).

Front Row (L - R): Lorna Rideout (S3), Lucy Doig (S3).



Scaur House Captains

Photograph on the left shows our Scaur House Captains for 2013 - 2014

Back Row (L - R): Claire Manson (S6), Shaun Wicks (S4), Niall Holden (S3), Nicola Bell (S6), Kathryn Park (S5).

Middle Row (L - R): Aleksei Wishart (S1), Emma Thomas (S5), Nicole Lough (S1).

Front Row (L - R): Jack Roberts (S2), Caitlin Greenwood (S2).



whapples

news

At the end of June **whapples** had two working days where the whole board put their heads together to discuss how to further develop the orchard. They visited the orchard to inspect the trees, finding that they were looking well: only a few had died and needed to be replaced.

Several funding applications have been submitted to relevant grant schemes. If successful, there will be internal paths constructed around the trees thus making the orchard accessible to all, whatever the weather. A monument to acknowledge all the tree sponsors will also be erected within the orchard and benches will be placed around the monument. This will allow for outdoor learning to take place; a key part of the Curriculum for Excellence. Rural Skills classes have been making use of the orchard by creating frames for the



raspberries to grow up. While they were out there they also found a hedgehog family that is living in the orchard.

Jean Turner, **whapples** Administrative Assistant, has been leading the **whapples** grant funding drive with the assistance of Gillian Watret, Modern Apprentice in Wallace Hall Academy, who supports the Queensberry Initiative and **whapples** two days each week. Jean and Gillian are real assets to the enterprise and have been working hard with the board to ensure the infrastructure of the **whapples** orchard is in place for a grand opening next year.

whapples now has its own

website www.whapplesorchard.co.uk which is updated regularly and contains an online sponsorship form. There are still a few trees to be sponsored and we have decided to launch a competition: when we reach our target of having 100 trees sponsored, all sponsors will be entered into a prize draw to win a £25 voucher of their choice.

To sponsor a tree either visit our website or fill in a sponsor form. Also, please keep an eye on our Facebook page for up-and-coming news on how the **whapples** orchard is progressing.



Celebrating Success

Wallace Hall Academy was the scene of two very important end of year events on Wednesday the 12th of June.



Georgie Blount

In the afternoon all First Year pupils, invited guests and family supporters were piped into the Bailey Hall to celebrate the successes of 2012/2013. Mrs Wilson opened the proceedings and introduced Mr Graham who delivered his annual report accompanied by photographs of the key moments of the year. He emphasised the important principles that pupils at Wallace Hall Academy are encouraged to value. Marianne Nicholson and Harris Maxwell followed this by delivering their pupils' review which was enjoyed by all. Benjamin Haynes then electrified the proceedings with a confident performance of "Johnny B. Goode". Mrs Kirby, an English and Pupil Support Teacher at Wallace Hall Academy and the Queensberry Initiative Development Officer, took as the theme of her address to the assembled pupils the importance of "grit" – showing determination and perseverance in order to achieve their goals. Nathan King, an award-winning performer of Burns' poetry, then recited an extract from "Tam O' Shanter". Following this

enthraling performance, the S1 awards were presented by Mrs Gall and Mrs Kirby. The afternoon concluded with a vote of thanks from Maia Smyth.

Later that evening it was the turn of the Second and Third Year award winners. Once again, Becky Walker and Mhari Prentice piped the pupils, staff and invited guests into the Bailey Hall for this well attended ceremony, welcomed by Mrs Fraser. Mr Graham reminded the audience of the pupils' achievements throughout the year and the importance of curricular and extra-curricular attainments. Lucy Doig and Nicholas Willetts provided the pupil review, entertaining the audience with some light-hearted reflections. Lauren Johnstone and Imogen Gordon performed "Close Your Eyes", a piece for voice and guitar of their own composition. Then Mrs Fraser welcomed back Mr Turner, now Head Teacher of Dumfries High School but until March Depute Head Teacher at Wallace Hall Academy. Mr Turner, with his usual wit and warmth, reminded the pupils of their years at Wallace Hall and also how proud everyone is of their successes. The



Pat Kirby

Second Year pupils were then presented with their awards by Mrs Wilson and Mr Turner. Justine Crosbie entertained all with her confident performance of 'Willie Wastle' by Robert Burns. Following this the S3 awards were handed to the prize winners by Mrs Kirby and Mr Turner. Molly Bain was particularly honoured to receive the Joan Inglis Memorial Rose Bowl for progress and originality in Art and Design. Mrs Fraser, the compere for the night, closed the proceedings by thanking all who had made such a worthwhile occasion so very special.



Photograph above shows Valerie Inglis, Molly Bain and Mr Turner with the award which commemorates Joan Inglis' time at Wallace Hall Academy and her artistic proficiency.



S1 Activity Centre Weekend

report by Freya Sale and Tabitha Springgay

As a new S1 pupil at Wallace Hall Academy we are offered the opportunity to visit the Kingswood Activity Centre where a weekend of exciting teambuilding activities is organised. This is a great chance to get to know our new teachers and classmates while having fun.



When we arrived at Kingswood on the Friday we were all put into different groups and did loads of enjoyable activities. One of the best activities was the 3G Swing

which was when you had to get pulled up by the others in your team. When you were as high as you wanted, which was about 30 feet off the ground, then everyone would go "1,2,3 GGGGG." You would then swing really high while screaming very loudly.

Another good activity was "Zip Line". You wore a harness and you climbed up a tower until you got to the third floor. An instructor then harnessed you onto a rope and told you to put a rope around your shoulder. When you were ready to go they started to pull a yellow rope to keep you up and you either got the choice of sitting down and the instructor pushing you off or you could jump yourself. Once you were in the air you zoomed to a tyre which everyone tried to touch. When you slowed down a bit you had to throw down the rope and lower yourself down to about 29 feet off the ground. When some of the teachers tried this their faces were a picture.

We also enjoyed the activity



known as the "High Equilibrium". Wearing a harness, 2 people had to climb up a pole and sit on a see-saw. When they were at the top they had to stand up and either push each other off or play thumb wars. It was about the same height as the school.

Everyone on the trip had a great time and we all came home tired but happy having made lots of new friends. We think that every future S1 group should go to Kingswood.





S1 Activity Centre Weekend



S1 Activity Centre Weekend



S1 Activity Centre Weekend

Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club is now open from 8.45am until 9.15am in "The Street".

The club is organised by our S6 prefects and aims to promote the idea that a good breakfast sets you up for the rest of the day.

The following items are currently on sale at the breakfast club: tea, coffee, hot chocolate, fruit juice, milk and toast.

If demand is sufficient, it is hoped that the menu will expand to include a variety of cereals in the very near future.



Evening of Entertainment

report by Gordon Neilson from Thornhill and District Rotary Club

More than 100 senior citizens from Mid and Upper Nithsdale were recently treated to an excellent evening of entertainment in Wallace Hall Academy's Bailey Hall.

The event was organised by Thornhill and District Rotary Club. Providing the entertainment were students from Thornhill's Wallace Hall Academy. In a programme which covered music, song, dance and recitation, the talented Wallace

Hall students did their audience proud. The evening was topped off with tea and tray bakes courtesy of Wallace Hall's Home Economics students.

Thornhill Rotary's Community Chair Joan Neilson said: "I am sure everyone thoroughly enjoyed their evening. I am most grateful to Anna Beynon of Wallace Hall who directed the young entertainers and to Dumfries and Galloway Council who supported the event."



Nathan King and Catherine Anderson recite *Tam o Shanter*



Picture shows the young Wallace Hall entertainers with Thornhill Rotarians and members of their audience.

Moorland Filming Project



Four Wallace Hall Academy senior pupils have been given the opportunity to pilot a film project through the Scottish Countryside Alliance Educational Trust (SCAET). The Trust has been following the work of the Queensberry Initiative (QI) for the past year and decided that QI offered them the perfect opportunity for experimenting with a film competition. Supported by Leanne Peoples, QI Project Officer, the Trust has been negotiating to start this project for several months. If this pilot works out well then the competition in its second phase will be open to schools across Scotland.

Sebastian Summers, Joseph Mahoney, Ewan Donald and Thomas Logan volunteered to work as a team with several professional filmmakers and Catherine Midgley,

Education Officer for SCAET. The boys were introduced to the various roles in a film project and were guided in planning their own short film. They have had two days'

filming on location on the Queensberry Estate and have interviewed a gamekeeper, a beekeeper and several other countryside experts.

Meanwhile, the boys themselves have been filmed by the professional crew to provide a record of the process for SCAET. Sebastian Summers said: "Although I have had a fair amount of filming experience with Take One, Scene One (a Dumfries-based film project), I have learnt a lot about location work and the difficulties of working in the great outdoors with a camera. In particular, I found the lighting a challenge as the sky was very grey on our first filming day."

The team will be editing their short film during their module time over the next few weeks with the support of Simon Myatt, our school ICT technician. If the end product is judged to be of a suitable standard it will be premiered at the Robert Burns Centre this winter.



Queensberry Initiative at the Scottish Learning Festival

"Transforming Lives through Outdoor Learning" was the focus of the seminar led by Queensberry Initiative (QI) staff at the Scottish Learning Festival held recently at the SECC in Glasgow.

This is the fourth time that the QI team have been invited to present at this prestigious educational event and indicates

how highly regarded the work of QI is within the wider educational community.

QI Project Officer Anne Marie Wood said: "We were delighted to be invited to share our experiences of working in the Outdoor Classroom and hope that other schools will explore how they can incorporate outdoor learning and partnership working into their curriculum."



Prize scoop for S3 English class

Lucy's Young Critics' Award (see front page) was part of a big team effort by S3 pupils in Mrs McMillan's English class.

Librarian Caroline Menzies purchased the eight novels shortlisted for the Guardian Young Fiction Prize and with a very tight

timescale – a fortnight for the whole process – Lucy and her classmates passed the books around so that each pupil could read one and produce a review of it.

The young critics of Wallace Hall proved more than equal to the task of circulating the books quickly and working within the very tight word limit set by the judges. Everyone in the class succeeded in submitting a review electronically by the deadline. Teacher Jane McMillan commented: "This competition is a great chance for pupils to read some newly published fiction, share their views on it and work to a deadline. The pupils worked well as a team and the individual reviews were of an impressive standard. Lucy's fluent, thoughtful and enthusiastic review was a very deserving winner."



Expressive Arts Month at WHA

Following last year's successful events, November has once again been designated as Expressive Arts Month! Here are some dates for your diary:

Thursday 14th November: Higher Drama class performance night. This is a unique opportunity to see 12 new and original plays, written, directed and performed by the Higher Drama class. Tickets are free and will be available from Ms Beynon in the Drama department after the October break. The event will be in The Bailey Hall and will start at 7.00pm.

Thursday 21st November: School Concert. This event is always full of talent and energy and sells out quickly so get your tickets from the library: £5.00 adult, £3.00 concession and a family ticket (2 adults/3 children) £15.00. The event will be in The Bailey Hall and will start at 7.30pm.

And just sneaking into December...

Thursday 5th December: Art Excursion to Edinburgh. The Art department is planning a '3 Gallery' visit to Edinburgh for all S4-6 students currently studying Art & Design - see poster on the right. Further/full details to follow from the Art & Design department.

ART TRIP EDINBURGH

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

THE NATION // LIVE / WORK, UNION, CIVIL WAR, FAITH, ROOTS 5 OCT 13 - 6 MAY 14 **FREE**

VIVIANE SASSEN IN AND OUT OF FASHION 19 OCT 13 - 9 FEB 14 **FREE**

MAKING HISTORY ALEXANDER STODDART 12 OCT 13 - 28 SEPT 14 **FREE**

SCOTTISH GALLERY NATIONAL

PICTURE HOOKS ILLUSTRATORS 1 NOV 13 - 16 FEB 14 **FREE**

NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART

NEW ACQUISITIONS 12 OCT 13 - 1 MAR 14 **FREE**

QI Mini-Conference



Queensberry Initiative (QI) held their first Outdoor Learning Conference on Thursday 13th June. They welcomed delegates from schools and colleges across the region as well as from further afield. The purpose of the Conference was to focus on how partnership working can increase pupils' skills for learning, life and work. QI wanted to look at the issues associated with taking the wider rural agenda forward.

The Conference was a key opportunity for the Initiative to share good practice, to learn about the progress other schools and organisations are making in this area and to ensure that the findings of the Queensberry Initiative and its transferability were shared.

The conference was opened by Ian Menzies, Senior Education Officer, Sciences for Education Scotland, who has a key responsibility for promoting Outdoor Learning and Sustainability. He pointed out to the delegates that the Queensberry Initiative has provided an excellent model of partnership working with the support of Buccleuch Estates and other local farmers, businesses and volunteers. Leanne Peoples and Anne Marie Wood, Project Officers for the Queensberry Initiative, then provided a presentation about QI's work. Delegates then toured round eight stations in a carousel, looking at topics including subject use of the Outdoor Classroom, P7 and Senior

Transitions, Career Mentoring, Work Placements and vocational courses.

Delegates then travelled to Andrew Hamilton's Marr Farm to observe a Rural Skills class in action and were impressed by the skills of

pupils who were working with sheep. After this visit, QI hosted lunch at the Queensberry Estate for delegates and visitors, who were then taken for a hands-on bushcraft lesson at Druid Loch.

Feedback from this inaugural conference was very positive. One delegate commented: "It has given me inspiration about planning any contact with children, young people and their families." Another comment received was: "It was a fantastic day with a huge number of ideas to be taken away. Most importantly for me were the contacts made with other teachers/groups which will assist me in planning future projects."

The success of this mini-conference has encouraged QI staff to take their project once again to a seminar at the Scottish Learning Festival in September.



A Secure Future for QI

QI

photograph courtesy of Colin Tennant



Barry Graham, Wallace Hall Academy Head Teacher and chairperson of the Queensberry Initiative (QI), is delighted to announce that the funding drive to secure the future of the Queensberry Initiative has been successful. QI has gained enough funding support to secure its

continuation for at least two more years and possibly beyond.

Mr Graham said: "I am really grateful for the support the community has given to the Initiative. Donations have been received from a variety of sources and have all been most welcome. I would particularly like to thank



the members of the QI Funding Leadership Group who worked tirelessly to achieve this goal in a difficult financial climate. Without our supporters the QI could not continue its good work on a local and national level."

From the beginning of October, Queensberry Initiative is also gaining a new Development Officer, Jamie Pape, who will continue his English teaching role part time while taking up this new post. Jamie has been spending time working with Pat Kirby, the retiring Development Officer, over the summer and is looking forward to the challenges of his new post. Mr Graham concluded: "I am so grateful for the energy and enthusiasm which Pat Kirby has brought to the post of QI Development Officer. We wish her well in her richly deserved retirement and I am sure that Jamie will rise to the challenge of this very demanding position."



The Holywood Trust

Centenary
Trust
NFUScotland



Grant funders are as follows: The Holywood Trust, NFU Scotland and The Robertson Trust



James Jones
& SONS LIMITED

JOHN MILLER
LIMITED

BSW Timber Group



Donor funders are as follows: James Jones & Sons Ltd, John Miller Ltd, BSW Timber Group, 101 Boutique, South West Seeds Ltd, Kilnford Barns, Thornhill Community Centre and Robert Gladstone.

QI also received a number of other donations from individuals, groups, organisations and businesses who wish to remain anonymous.

An Introduction to the Outdoor Classroom

As part of this year's P7 Induction programme each new class spent two periods working in the Outdoor Classroom in the Kirk Plantation which is situated a short walk from the school. The Queensberry Initiative (QI) staff were very impressed by the preparation that the P7s made for this activity in terms of appropriate equipment and timekeeping.

Each class was divided into two groups and given the opportunity to learn bushcraft skills as part of their response to a narrative recounted by QI staff about a survival scenario. One team learnt about fire-building



while the other devised shelters. Then the teams swapped and experienced the other activity.

QI staff were delighted with the P7 pupils' positive attitude to teamwork and problem solving. One of the key purposes of this activity was for the pupils to get to know each other in a more informal environment and this seemed to work well. Resilience was demonstrated in weather conditions that were not always kind and pupils clearly enjoyed the chance to get their hands dirty.



Visit to the Highland Show

report by Rachel Shnapp

Each year, Wallace Hall Academy students and their teachers visit the Royal Highland Show which is held at Ingleston on the outskirts of Edinburgh. This year Mr Miller took a group of his Geography pupils to see the many varied exhibits on display and the vast array of livestock on show.

On arrival at the showfield the pupils split into groups where they spent (a lot of) time at the ice cream tasting stall. Once they had their fill of ice cream the groups went round the show where they bumped into parents, friends and even some off duty teachers - Mr Graham himself was spotted enjoying the event. Cameron Wood said he particularly enjoyed the "Massey Fergusson stall, where we saw different machinery



and I got a free hat!" This stand seemed to attract many other Wallace Hallers for the "accessoires gratuit".

The class took part in a diverse range of activities at the various stalls, learning about a broad range of topics from bee keeping to fudge-tasting which was of course a necessity for most. The group was told about the environmentally sustainable choices they could make: for example, eating fair trade food and sourcing local products. Lauren Johnstone thought it was "a fantastic experience" and wisely felt they gained a good understanding of "the work that is put into putting food on the table, which we often take for granted."

The group gathered at the end of the day and headed back to school in the bus. Everyone had huge grins on their faces agreeing that a visit to the Royal Highland Show was definitely a day well spent.



Celebration of Scottish Farming

report by Josie Fairley Keast



On the Geography trip to the Highland Show there were lots of interesting things for us to do and see including learning about plants, saving bees and how food gets onto our tables. We saw many huge pieces of farm machinery which seemed to be everywhere. Not to mention the ridiculous variety

of fudge on sale – Jammy Dodger flavour anyone? A number of interesting people were at the show and a few of the WHA pupils got the chance to meet Ainsley Harriot, the well-known TV chef.

There were some funny moments on the trip such as when everyone turned up ten minutes

late to the first meeting point after taking some time to sample the ice cream on offer at the next door stall.

There were some interesting workshops on offer ranging from seed collecting to lettuce planting. In the seed collecting workshop you could choose a variety of wildflower seeds to plant in your garden to attract bees and butterflies. I found that one particularly interesting especially as a friend of mine has been trying to attract bees to her garden recently.

Everyone learnt lots at the show but the thing I was most interested in was finding out why it is called the Royal Highland Show and why it is based in Edinburgh. It would seem that this is because the show enjoys the patronage of many of Scotland's dukes and earls, landowners, agricultural pioneers and the Royal family. It is also a celebration of Scottish farming, food and the beautiful countryside, promoting enterprises from all over Scotland and in particular the Highlands.



Scottish Mining Museum Trip

report by Leah Byar and Rebecca Renton

On the 27th of September Mr Harley's history classes went to Edinburgh to visit The Scottish Mining Museum. We went hoping to learn more about the lives of the miners in the 19th century. We got an inside look at what their working environment was like and the conditions they had to work in day to day. After arriving and having our lunch we had a look around the museum...



The exhibitions, which we had the chance to freely look round, taught us about the different types of coal that could be found and the items/machines they used. There were also clothes that we could try on and see what we would have looked like if we worked in the mines. There were



short films about the lives of the workers and games to test our knowledge. There were also birds in the building which we were rather confused about until we learnt about why the miners used birds down the mines to see if there were any dangerous gases. After having a short look around we met our tour guides to go on the tour.

Our tour guide was called Alex Watson and he knew probably everything about the mines as he was an ex-coal miner himself. He started by telling us about the discomfort of the miners as they got very wet and had to walk home soaked. He told us about how the museum used to be a working mine and the times they had to work. Then he took us to see an engine called 'The Lady Victoria'. She was the wife of the fifth monarch who owned the mine. He showed us how it worked using Rebecca as an operator; she demonstrated how they worked using bells and levers (she was terrified). He told us how the people who usually worked there had some kind of injury on their legs due to an accident down the mine. He then took us to the 'Pit Head' where workers at the age of 4/5 would begin work. He explained how the workers would get very muddy and the family would all have to share the same water to bathe in.

Lastly he took us through the Coal Face. He told us that it was haunted and that paranormal investigators would come every two years to investigate the ghostly happenings. Then he shouted "BOO!" (Rebecca screamed.)

The tour guide then showed us a large machine which would cut through the walls of the mines and reveal more coal. He showed us a video clip of the work the



miners had to do back in the 19th century (which was not very pleasant). Then we all headed back outside.



Alex gave a really interesting and funny tour. We all got an inside look at lives of the miners. This trip has helped us all understand the real life circumstances of being a miner. I recommend this trip to everyone and I hope we will be going back soon!



THORNHILL TIMES

1.N2

Local History Edition

October 2013

As part of their First Year History course, 1.N2 were asked to investigate local history. They enjoyed researching this topic so much that they decided to compile their own four page newsletter featuring some of the information they found out about famous local people, landmarks and tales. We hope you enjoy reading their articles and learning more about our local area.

Jane Haining

report by Gemma McLeod and Morven Dobie



Jane Haining, born on June 6th 1897, is famous because she was the only British woman who went to the gas chambers in World War Two.

Jane was educated at one of Dumfries's local schools, Dumfries Academy. She lived in the local village of Dunscore and was a Church of Scotland missionary. Jane worked in Budapest as a teacher and it was here she was arrested by the Nazis in 1944.

Jane later died in one of the concentration camps in Auschwitz after she had refused to leave her post and the children she was teaching.

Jane Haining will live in our memories as the only woman from Britain who died in the Nazi extermination camps. She is Dunscore's local hero.



The History of Wallace Hall Academy

report by Daniel Emmerson and William Bolton



The original Wallace Hall was founded by John Wallace, a merchant in Glasgow and a resident of Closeburn, who left £1,600 for the purpose of building the Academy in 1723.

Until the early nineteen seventies there were two

secondary schools in the local area. In 1972 the two schools joined together and the new school at Thornhill became known as Wallace Hall Academy.



The school continued to flourish on this site until, as part of Dumfries and Galloway Council's



£100 million project to build nine new schools within the region, a new Wallace Hall Academy was built across the road beside the original school playing fields. The construction of the building started on 16 January 2008 and the new school opened in January 2010.

The old school is currently being demolished.

Joseph Thomson

report by Jade McWhirter
and Emily Saunders

Joseph Thomson was an explorer. There is a statue of him situated in Thornhill.

Joseph was born in a little house in Penpont which is now a museum. Fund-raisers have been trying to make it into a museum for 14 years now. Finally it has been done. Penpont was Joseph's home village. Joseph's father was from Keir and his mother was from Penpont.

After Joseph's family died, another family moved into the Thomson family home. The owner was called Mrs Carson. She used the privy at the bottom of the garden for 17 years before she paid a plumber to fit in an inside toilet. There was a pig sty outside next to the privy which contained one pig.



The kitchen sometimes was used as a bedroom. If you visit the museum you will see a little cupboard and inside you will find a chamber pot. Joseph's family



would have used this instead of going out to the privy.

In the room (which we would call the living room) there is a little gap in the wall containing a cot-like bed in which Joseph would have been born.

Joseph's father was a builder. He built 2 extra rooms in the attic reached by a spiral staircase which he also made. He and his wife had 5 boys and 5 girls.

At night if it was cold the kids would have to use a water bottle, but the water bottles then were not like ours today. They were made of china and were very heavy. When you filled them up you had to be careful not to make them too hot otherwise you would burn yourself quite badly.

If you go upstairs in the museum you will find 2 bedrooms. The one on the right was where Joseph slept. There is a window which he would open at night to let in some fresh air. In the museum the window is the original one that Joseph Thompson would have used personally.

Outside, if you look to your left

you will find a big bowl with a little fireplace underneath. Joseph's mother would have used this to wash their clothes. She would light the fire under the wash basin and would wait till the water was hot and then wash the clothes. When she was finished she would take the clothes to a cool room at the side of the wash basin and there she would find a trundle. She would flatten the clothes out and wring them through the trundle. The trundle would squeeze the water out of the clothes as well as straightening them so they didn't have to be ironed.

Outside, just above the wash basin, there is a room which was used to store guns, bombs and other weapons. This was for easy access in case of attack. This room would only have been known to the people in Penpont.

If you are ever in Penpont then take some time to visit the Joseph Thomson museum. It is a very interesting experience.

Thank you to Mrs Sophia Harkness for helping us with this report.

Tynron Kirk Whisky

report by Eva Flanagan

The sleepy parish of Tynron used to be famous for brewing its own whisky.

Tynron Kirk Whisky was

made for the local shop in the second half of the nineteenth century by Laurie, a shopkeeper in Tynron. It was blended in the churchyard and used water from the well behind Kirkland farmhouse. This well is still open today.

It is believed that Laurie had the contract to supply

Tynron Kirk whisky to the Houses of Parliament.

Nowadays nobody knows what secret recipe was used to make this whisky as, when the last member of the Lawrie family died, he took with him to the grave the secret recipe of Tynron Kirk whisky.



Local Famous People

report by Joshua Earley and Jack Denholm

Dumfries and Galloway has lots of well known/famous people but not all of them get the credit they deserve...



Joseph Thomson - Born 1856. Died 1940. Scottish explorer.

Studied geology at Edinburgh

University. First European to reach Lake Nyasa (Malawi) from the north. Travelled to Lake Tanganyika. Expedition across the Nijiri Desert through the Great Rift Valley. Discovery of Lake Baringo and Mount Elgon. Exploration of northwest Nigeria, Upper Congo and Morocco.

Jane Haining - Born in Dunscore, Scotland - June 6, 1897. Died

July 17, 1944 - Scottish Hero

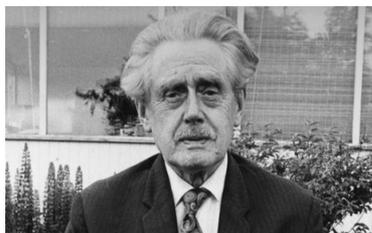


Educated at Dumfries Academy where she became Dux of the Modern School

during the First World War, the year after the actor John Laurie had come runner-up.

Worked for ten years in a threadmaker's in Paisley. At a meeting in Glasgow about the Jewish Mission she turned to a friend and said, prophetically: "I have found my life-work." Jane was in charge of the Girls' Home of the mission in Budapest. Nazis forced her to sew the Star of David on the youngsters in her care.

Hugh MacDiarmid - Born 1892. Died 1978. Scottish poet. Born in Langholm



Pseudonym of Christopher Murray Grieve. Served with Medical Corps in WWI and munitions officer in WWII. Founder member of National Party of Scotland. Stood as Communist candidate in 1964. Dedicated his life to regeneration of Scots as a literary language. Best known for poem "A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle" (1926). Also wrote essays and autobiographies.

Ghost sighting

Report by Eva Telfer and Eva Flanagan

Scotland is claimed to be one of the most haunted countries in the world. A favourite local tale features "The Headless Horseman".



Round Tynron Doon memories linger of a spectre in the form of a headless horseman restlessly riding a black horse.

The local tradition is that the ghost was that of a young gentleman, McMilligan Dalgarnock, who had gone to offer his addresses to the daughter of the laird of Tynron castle.

The daughter and he were courting when her brother interrupted. McMilligan went off in a rage. Carelessly riding over a steep crag his head was detached from his body and it rolled down into St Bride's Well. It is said that his spirit is still seen in Penpont searching for his head which is needed for him to enter heaven.

Kirkpatrick Macmillan The Proud Maker of the Bike

report by Bethany Wade



Kirkpatrick Macmillan was born on the 2nd of September 1812 in Keir, Dumfriesshire. Being the youngest of the family, Kirkpatrick did not receive the education that his brothers did.

In 1824 he started working as a blacksmith. At around the same time he saw someone riding a hobby horse and decided to make one. After he had completed it he thought he would try to improve it by making it propel him with no feet on the ground.

He completed his first creation in 1839. He had never thought of making money out of selling it but others saw its potential and soon copies were for sale.

Gavin Dalzell of Lesmahagow copied his machine in 1846 and for



about fifty years he was regarded as the inventor of the bicycle.

Kirkpatrick was unconcerned about the fuss his invention was receiving and preferred to stay at home in the countryside.

He married at forty two, although his wife was only half his age. He had three daughters and one son. He died in 1878 at the age of 66.

Drumlanrig Castle

report by Logan Paterson,
Aidan Montgomery and Cathan Little



The first Duke of Queensberry, William Douglas, commissioned Drumlanrig Castle to be built on the site of an ancient Douglas stronghold overlooking Nith Valley. The castle has 120 rooms, 17 turrets and 4 towers.

An earlier, more defensive castle had been built in the middle

of the 14th century by the Douglases. Sir James Douglas (known also as "The Good" or "Black Douglas") was a right-hand man of Robert the Bruce. Indeed, he was entrusted with carrying Bruce's heart to the Holy Land but was killed in a battle with the Moors in Spain while on the way. To this day, the coat of arms contains a winged heart surmounted by Bruce's crown.

However, the relationship was not without its stormy element. James Douglas was one of the lords involved in driving Mary Queen of Scots out of the country in 1567. Yet, in spite of this, matters were to improve: Mary's son, James VI and I, visited Drumlanrig in 1617. For generations the Douglas family was close to the monarchy. Their strong relationship withstood the

test of difficult times and benefited both monarchy and Douglas family alike. The Douglas family has been associated with Drumlanrig since the 14th Century when William, the son of James, 2nd Earl of Drumlanrig (who died at Otterburn in 1388), became 1st Laird of Drumlanrig.

Set in the 120,000 acre Queensberry Estate, complete with a country park and Victorian gardens, this 17th century castle is one of the most important Renaissance buildings in the country. The Dumfriesshire home of the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, Drumlanrig Castle with its magnificent rooms and spectacular collections of silver, porcelain, French furniture and art is perhaps one of the most rewarding and romantic of Scotland's great houses.

The Pink Palace

report by Jemma Gordon, Mairead Haugh and Emily McVicar

The excellent 'Pink Palace' of Drumlanrig is one of the superior examples of the late 17th century restoration architecture in Scotland. Built from exclusive pink sandstone, the first Duke of Queensberry, William Douglas, had the Castle built on the site of an ancient Douglas stronghold overlooking the breath-taking Nith Valley.

The Douglas family has been associated with Drumlanrig since the 14th Century when William, the son of James, 2nd Earl of



Drumlanrig (who died at Otterburn in 1388) became 1st Laird of Drumlanrig.

James Douglas was one of the lords involved in driving Mary Queen of Scots out of the country in 1567. Mary's sons, James I and VI, visited Drumlanrig in 1617.

William, 3rd Earl of Queensberry, was a loyal and reliable servant of Charles II and his heirs. Crowned 1st Duke of Queensberry in 1684, William decided to build a home to match his status. In the end it was named Drumlanrig Castle.

The house of Peter Pan

report by Mary Colley and Rhian Martin



When J.M. Barrie created the enchanted world of *Peter Pan*, he touched the lives of millions of children.

J. M. Barrie spent a number of years living in Dumfries. He was educated at Dumfries Academy and the house and gardens of

Moat Brae, situated adjacent to Dumfries Academy, are acknowledged as being inspirational to J. M. Barrie when he was writing the much loved tale of *Peter Pan*.

A Trust, launched by Joanna Lumley, was established in 2011 to save the house and the garden with the intention of housing Scotland's first Centre for Children's Literature.



Comenius Report

Wallace Hall Academy was pleased to welcome fourteen visiting teachers in September, from our partner schools in Iceland, Norway, Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Poland, Hungary and England. The teachers, along with Mr Harley and Miss Smith, were reviewing progress on our current project 'Dwindling Resources, Growing Challenges' and planning for the visit of 48 foreign pupils to Wallace Hall Academy in November.

As part of their research, the teachers were lucky enough to visit the lead mines and the library at Wanlockhead (and find some gold!), and visit the Falkirk Wheel. In Dumfries, they visited the museum and Camera Obscura which they found fascinating. Unfortunately due to the weather our visit to a local farm had to be cancelled. However, the teachers really enjoyed seeing what Scotland and the local area has to offer and they thoroughly enjoyed their stay in Thornhill.

The teachers were impressed by the school and everything that it offers our pupils, from our

resources to our extra-curricular opportunities. They liked our classrooms and our curriculum, taking ideas back to their countries to try out with their own pupils! All of our visitors commented upon

the politeness of our pupils and how well presented they are in their school uniforms.

Comenius looks forward to our exchange pupils visiting early next month and hopes that all pupils will take the opportunity to welcome them and find out what school is like in different countries.



Your School Show Needs You

Building on the success of last year's school show, *Macbeth*, rehearsals are already underway for next year's event.

2014 is going to be an incredibly important year across the country as we mark the centenary of the start of WW1 in 1914. As such, we will be presenting **Oh, What a Lovely War!** (by Joan Littlewood), a musical satire on World War I and by extension against war in general.

There is already a new production planned for the London theatre it premiered in 50 years ago, for next summer, so it good

to know that we are thinking along the same lines as the London Stage!

Oh, What a Lovely War! has a large number of meaty parts for both girls and boys. It offers a fantastic opportunity for you all to be involved, whether you are a budding actor, musician, singer, dancer or a stand-up comedian – there is a role for everyone. Please speak to Ms Beynon or Miss Stuart if you would like more information as to how you can take part in this exciting production.

So come on lassies and particularly lads – get involved – your school show needs you!



New Staff

Six new members of staff have recently joined Wallace Hall Academy. Two pupils in our S6 newsletter group, Craig Howat and Ryan Gibson, asked them a few questions to help us get to know them better.

Andrew Davolls - Art Teacher



Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: A painting/piece of artwork from my favourite artist.

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: Indie music but I enjoy lots of different genres.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Reading, cycling, cooking, football, films, art and documentaries.

Q: Where were you born?

A: London (Croydon).

Q: What is your favourite aspect of being a teacher?

A: Working with young people and seeing students develop into artists.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: A self-cleaning house!

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: To be able to fly and get from A to B quickly.

Gillian Watret - Modern Apprentice

Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: An island with a private yacht.

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: Pop.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Young Farmers, walking and cycling.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Dumfries.

Q: What is your favourite aspect of working in a school?

A: Working with the pupils and helping them when they need support.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: An underwater hotel.

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: To be able to fly would be easier and more direct as I would not have the traffic to hold me up!



John Blair - Depute Head Teacher



Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: Dundee United Football Club.

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: Pop.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Golf, watching football and being a taxi driver for my children.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Mauchline.

Q: What is your favourite aspect of being a teacher?

A: Getting to know the pupils.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: A teleport – so I could spend my drive time in bed.

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: To be able to fly. I did a skydive once which was awesome but it would have been better if I hadn't needed to worry about the parachute opening!

Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: A really big house because I enjoy looking at big houses and dream of having one.

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: I like all kinds of music and don't have a specific favourite.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I like to draw, write short stories and play the guitar.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Glasgow but have lived locally since a very young age.

Q: What is your favourite aspect of working in a school?

A: I just love working with the pupils and helping them achieve the best in their work.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: I would invent a robot to help me with my spelling and my maths.

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: I would like to be able to stop time so I can take more time to do things.

James Caldwell - Modern Apprentice



Paul Spracklen - Design and Technology Teacher



Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: A housing estate – then I could let out all of the houses and have a really great income for the rest of my life. I could then leave them to my children/grandchildren when I die.

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: P!nk, The Wanted, Scouting for Girls, Snow Patrol and of course Queen – the best band ever. I'm not sure what genre that adds up to!

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Renovating houses, long distance cycling (check out my website www.chasingthesun.org.uk) and travel.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Bridgewater in Somerset.

Q: What is your favourite aspect of being a teacher?

A: Feeling that I'm hopefully making a difference to pupils' lives.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: A spring-loaded bed attached to an alarm clock to get pupils up in the morning.

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: I would like to have the ability to enable people to see the world through each other's eyes so that hopefully people living in different countries would be able to understand each other's point of view.

Q: If you had all the money in the world and only allowed to buy one thing what would you buy?

A: I would buy Stark Industries so I could have an Iron Man suit!

Q: What is your favourite music genre?

A: I like a variety of music.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Downhill mountain biking, moto x and skiing.

Q: Where were you born?

A: Cresswell, Dumfries.

Q: What is your favourite aspect of working in a school?

A: Every day is different and the holidays are awesome.

Q: If you were an inventor what would you make?

A: An environmentally friendly, renewable and affordable power source.

Q: What superpower would you have and why?

A: I don't need one – I have an Iron Man suit!

Shaun Woods - Technician



Wallace Hall won't forget

report by Robert Guthrie and Lauren Dalglish
photographs by Gary Stewart and Alex McEwen

THE GUNS of the First World War are now silent, but a lasting legacy of those who fought and the devastation of conflict still remains, as Wallace Hall Academy pupils found out during a recent trip to the battlefields of the Western Front.



Thirty-one historians from across the year-groups, including five members of staff, spent four days in France and Belgium gaining a unique insight into the tragic events of WWI that took place nearly a century ago, during 'the war that would end all wars.'

For many, it was an emotional experience which will stay with them for a long time, as we visited some of the most significant trenches, cemeteries, memorials and museums in remembrance of people from all backgrounds, nationalities and age-groups.

The Great War broke out in 1914, and many people believed it would have been won by Christmas of the same year. However, WWI would not end until four years later on 11 November 1918, with an armistice between the Allied Forces

(the British Empire and its allies) and Axis forces (Germany and its allies). During this sombre period, 16 million soldiers lost their lives and a further 20 million were badly injured whilst fighting in horrific conditions.

After a long and tiring journey from Wallace Hall, commencing at midnight of Tuesday morning, our Park's of Hamilton coach arrived at Dover Ferry Port for the short sailing to Calais.

Arriving in 25-degree sunshine, we travelled to our first location, Vimy Ridge. Here we saw the trenches in which Canadian troops fought, just a few metres away from the German soldiers. A beautiful limestone memorial honours the 11,000 men whose remains were never found on this now crater-pierced battle site.

The next day was a packed itinerary. Lijssenthoek Cemetery in Belgium was our first stop, the second largest cemetery in the world, which honours soldiers from all over the Commonwealth.

We stopped at some particularly significant gravestones, one being that of Nellie Spindler who was a nurse treating soldiers of many nationalities during the War, and one of only two women buried at



Lijssenthoek.

We next stopped in the centre of Poperinge, not far from Ypres, where we visited Talbot House. Soldiers could come here during time off from fighting for much needed respite, and it was poignant to appreciate that the War was not about fighting 24/7. There were long periods of calm. We saw an old harmonium which soldiers would play during their leisure time, and we went upstairs to a virtually hand-crafted chapel where they could worship.

In the afternoon we also went into Ypres to the high-tech In Flanders Fields Museum in which the whole experience is personalised wirelessly via a wristband. We found out how exactly WWI took place, why it started and how many people with our surname fought.



On Thursday we went in to France to witness the legacy of the Battle Of The Somme.

One of the most memorable visits we made was to Lochnagar Crater, a massive 90ft crater that was, almost incredibly, caused by just one artillery shell, resulting in many thousands of casualties.

Shortly after, we continued on to Contalmaison where there is a memorial to the players of Hearts Football Club, whose players were among the first to bravely sign up as an incentive for the rest of the Lothian area to fight for their country. Ashley MacGregor, Jack



Pybus and James Wright all laid football scarves of the Scottish national football team, Heart of Midlothian FC and Newcastle FC.

One of the most eye-opening places students and staff had the chance to visit was Thiepval memorial, where over 72,000 names of those soldiers who died during the Battle Of The Somme are engraved.

Later, having learnt about many moving and momentous events, we returned to our accommodation at Chateau d'Eblinghem, and to unwind we went bowling in the nearby town of Saint Omer.

On Friday, our last full day in the area, we firstly went to Sanctuary Wood where trenches are virtually how they were a century ago. We also witnessed how muddy the trenches could become with several large puddles to literally wade through. It was fascinating to see what the trenches would have been like to live and fight in for days, and possibly weeks, on end.

We were also taken to Langemarck Cemetery, one of the few German cemeteries in Belgium. It was noticeably different to other Commonwealth cemeteries we had visited. Whilst the soldiers were still commemorated with all due respect, tall trees created a shady, sombre canopy overhead and flat gravestones were laid in the ground alongside a mass grave of over 25,000 soldiers.

The afternoon was as momentous as the morning, when we visited Tyne Cot British Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world with nearly 12,000 buried and the names of thousands more carved onto the walls.

Lauren Dagleish played her guitar and sang the war song 'Willie McBride' at the cemetery, which proved an emotional

experience for everyone at such a notable commemoration site.

The evening was also moving for all pupils and staff on the trip as we visited the historic Menin Gate in the centre of Ypres where, since 1927, a remembrance ceremony has been held every evening commemorating those who fought in WWI.



Four uniformed Wallace Hall pupils – Lizzie Smithard, Alex Radley, Lauren Dagleish and Robert Guthrie – laid wreaths from the Battlefields Trip Group, Wallace Hall Academy and the wider community. It is certainly not an overstatement to say that Friday was one of the most thought-provoking days of the trip.

After paying our respects to so many of the fallen, including relatives of pupils on the trip, we left with experiences of a visit that will resonate within us forever.





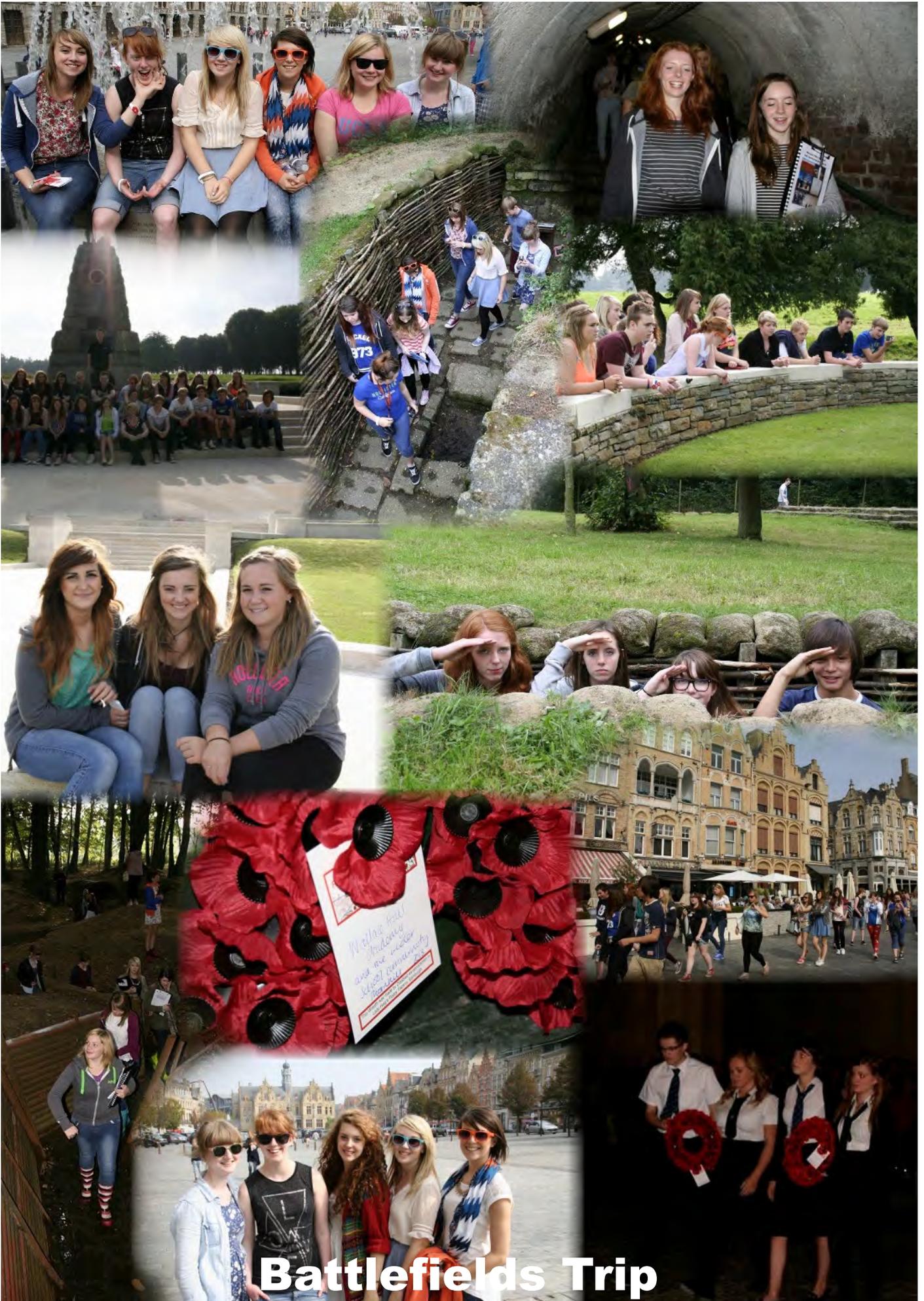
Battlefields Trip



Battlefields Trip



Battlefields Trip



Battlefields Trip

Physics Trip to Alton Towers

report by Kyle Thomson and Owen Ross

On Friday the 4th of October forty six S3 and S6 Physics pupils from Wallace Hall Academy travelled to Alton Towers in England. The bus journey was a long and tiring 5 hours which meant we had to get up at around 3:30am.

When we arrived we were so glad. We got put into groups of four with prefects and teachers and they gave us our tickets to get in. We went on a wide variety of rides such as Sonic Spinball, 'The Smiler',

Nemesis, Oblivion, Inferno, Rita and Air. We also got to go to an interesting lecture on the physics of the theme park rides.

After this we went for lunch but lots of us ate too much as we felt ill on the rollercoasters in the afternoon. Overall it was a great trip and I would really like to go again. It was well worth the cost and the long wait.

Thank you to Dr Fulton and Mr Jack for organising the trip.



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.

Our Day Out at Drumlanrig

report by Josh Notman and Sarah Wilson with photographs courtesy of Colin Tennant



little samples of squirrel fur. The third had a camera attached. We learned about populations and competition.

At the pitfall traps various traps had been set out for two days and marked with sticks. We went out to discover what had been caught, using pooters to suck the insects into small, clear tubs. We used a magnifying glass and labelled illustrations to identify the creatures.

Overall, the trip was enjoyable and educational and everyone had a good time. We would thoroughly recommend this trip. Thanks to our Biology teachers, Queensberry Initiative staff and everyone who helped make this day such a fun learning experience.



Our 3rd year National 4/5 Biology class recently went on a trip to the Queensberry Estate to learn about sampling techniques and data collection. This trip was arranged by the Biology Department and the Queensberry Initiative.

There were six activities for us to take part in, spread throughout the day, focusing on quadrats, owl pellets, transect lines, pond-dipping, squirrels and pitfall traps.

At the quadrat station, which was in a meadow, we were asked to throw the quadrat ten times to get a reliable result. At the owl pellet station we had to dissect owl pellets. To do this we had to soak the pellets in water to soften them.

Then we had to find the bones of the owls' dinner (the prey).

At the transect lines station we had to go along the line of string and at regular intervals measure the pH, moisture and light of the soil using various meters and devices.

At the pond-dipping session we used white trays to hold the pond creatures, which we had carefully caught using nets, and identified them using ID charts. One group found fifteen newts and Josh Notman fell in!

Heinz Troat, Red Squirrel Officer for South-West Scotland, gave a talk on squirrels and took us round the forest to three different feeder stations. Two of the feeders had sticky pads on their lids to collect



Pupil Work

report by Chloe Williams

My piece of artwork on the right portrays a range of mountains with their reflection in the water below. It is made up of lots of different materials and textures put together to form a collage.

Each of Mrs Black's First Year classes was asked to create a landscape and a variety of techniques were used to produce the final pieces. Examples below are by Ruaraidh Higgins, Dean Wallace and Luke Moore.



Chloe Williams



111 Ruaraidh Higgins



151 Dean Wallace



151 Luke Moore

“How to Pass” evening

report by Lucy McGill

On Tuesday 10th of September, the school held a “How to Pass” evening for senior pupils and their parents. It began with us congregating in the Bailey Hall for a quick introduction before we went to our first session.

Each session with the individual subject teachers was 20 minutes long and featured a summary of the course to show the parents what their children are learning in class. Each teacher gave out sheets with the basics on them to help us ensure that we do well.

The evening was well organised. We filled out a form before the night to pick which sessions we wanted to go to and when. If, for example, you are sitting 5 Highers, your

sessions would be in the same order that you picked them in on the original options form we got at the end of 3rd year. This made it easier to know which classroom we had to go to and at what time.

There was a tannoy announcement at the end of each session to tell us to go to our next one, which helped as it meant we didn't run out of time.

I think the “How to Pass” evening was very worth while and well put together. It helped to tie up any loose ends of the course that you weren't very sure about. It also gave parents a chance to find out how best to support their child to help them succeed.

Eva's EcoCode



Eco Group has a winner. Eva Flanagan (pictured above) from 1.N2 produced an excellent poem called “The Eco Earth Code” which will now be Wallace Hall Academy's Eco Code.

Eva's poem will be put on display for everyone to see on the notice board outside Miss Livingstone's room.

Come and join the renga...

Water-themed creativity engulfed Wallace Hall Academy on National Poetry Day as we all took part in writing a whole-school renga, a long poem made up of lines written by many contributors.

Pupils and staff penned lines on water-related topics ranging from waterfalls to icebergs to create a single scroll of poetry some 20 yards in length. Teams of S3 English pupils directed this endeavour by leading creative

writing house assemblies and then collating our lines into a final renga which traced the structure of the water cycle: ocean, clouds, rain, snow, hail, ponds, lochs, burns, rivers, and finally back to the sea. This epic creation will be on display in the school later in the term.



Robbie's time in Scotland

by Josie Fairley-Keast

Last year Robbie Lopez Smith spent some time living with my family and attending Wallace Hall Academy. Robbie has now returned to his home in Spain but wanted to share a few of his thoughts of Scotland with his friends and the teachers at Wallace Hall Academy.

Robbie said: "I really enjoyed staying at Sarah and Roddy's house. I was wakened up every morning by the sound of the saxophone or piano played by Josie. It was nice to be part of such a musical family and I enjoyed learning to play the harp, drums and the piano. At school my favourite classes were music and art and all my teachers were very helpful to me - more so than they are in Spain I think. The studies at Wallace Hall are more practical than Spain and I was

awarded eighteen merits which made me feel really good. I liked wearing the Wallace Hall uniform, especially the tie.

"Every morning I travelled from Josie's house by mini bus and I remember some very dark, rainy mornings waiting on it to pick me up. In my new school my mum will need to take me there every morning.

"I made some really good friends at Wallace Hall including Louis, Jeremy, Kian, Alexandru, Hayden and Bruce and I hope to be able to keep in touch with them.

"At Wallace Hall Academy I loved PE and enjoyed playing football for the school team. I was really proud when I came first in the school cross country for my age group. I took photos of the big silver cup and sent the images to my parents. It is



great to know that my name is engraved on that trophy for ever.

"I am now back home in Spain living with my five brothers and sisters. I am happy to be home and got a big welcome from my family on my return. We live in a small, farming village called Castrillo del Porma. My mum is very pleased with my much improved English - even with a Scottish accent.

"I miss everyone, from Sarah, Roddy and family to my teachers and my friends. Thank you for treating me so well and giving me an unforgettable experience."

Lourdes 2013

report by Rhianna Lawson

Pushing wheelchairs in 40 degree heat between 7am and 9pm may not sound like a fun way to spend the start of your summer holiday but my experience as a youth helper in Lourdes proved to be the opposite.

It all started in August 2012 when I volunteered to go to Lourdes as part of the "Galloway Youth for Lourdes" group along with 37 other youth volunteers from Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway. Once accepted as a volunteer, I attended a number of meetings on Sunday afternoons. The meetings covered things such as keeping safe while in Lourdes, completion of Vulnerable Groups certification and learning how to push a wheelchair safely. As well as this, every young person had to fundraise £599 to pay the cost of their transport and accommodation. There were group fundraising events such as a race night, a reindeer stampede and bag packing at Marks and Spencer but we were also expected to fundraise individually. I did this by having a



bake sale at school and making and selling soup after church every Sunday in winter.

Having collected the volunteers from Saltcoats, Kilmarnock and Ayr, the coach arrived in Dumfries at 8am on Sunday 7th July. We then had a 27 hour bus journey, arriving in Lourdes around lunch time the next day.

After unpacking we had a tour of the main areas of Lourdes before meeting the sick pilgrims who had travelled by plane.

During our 7 days in Lourdes we got up at 6am to start our duties at 7am. We got a break for lunch and dinner and finished our duties at 9pm. We were responsible for

servicing the pilgrims breakfast, cleaning their rooms, assisting them to and from church services, shopping and taking them to cafes. This often involved pushing wheelchairs in 40 degree heat.

On Thursday the 11th of July we all had a trip to the Lac de Lourdes. The youths took the opportunity to go in swimming while the less able armed themselves with water pistols to drench anyone who hadn't gone in the lake.

When we weren't on duty the volunteers stayed together as a group socialising and getting to know one another. One memorable evening we met youth groups from France and Ireland and spent the evening having singing competitions: "Flower of Scotland" seemed to be sung quite often that night!

On the Monday morning we had a final service together in the Rosary Basilica before waving off the pilgrims on their way to the airport. That evening was our last evening in Lourdes, and was quite an emotional time for all of us.

The trip was the best experience of my life so far. All the volunteers became close friends. We all keep in touch and have already met up. The pilgrims were lovely. Many of them had serious illnesses or disabilities but were cheerful and a pleasure to be with. I hope to volunteer again for the next pilgrimage in 2015 and plan to start fundraising soon.



Fuelling Imagination

One of our S2 English classes has been reading *The Thief* by Megan Whalen Turner, a play which is set in underground caves. As there are no deep caves close enough for a class trip their teacher, Miss Carson, approached the Queensberry Initiative (QI) Project Officers and asked if QI could arrange a visit which would allow the pupils to have an underground experience. This would help pupils develop their descriptive writing skills.



A visit was organised to Lochnell Mine at Wanlockhead where the pupils were given the chance to go underground and fully experience the sights, sounds and smells of a lead mine. You can imagine



that with the drip of water, the smell of dampness, the dark, cold atmosphere and the sounds of a bygone time the pupils' compositions painted vivid pictures in the mind of the reader and were filled with descriptive detail. Mrs Wood, QI Project Officer, said: "This was a really interesting visit where the pupils certainly got a feel for what it was like to work underground in the mines as a child".



Examples of the pupils' work can be seen in the English corridor. It makes an impressive display as the pupils tea-stained their work in order to age the appearance of their Miners' Diaries. Miss Carson said: "Being able to get out and experience the real world fuels the pupils' imaginations. The work produced from this trip is excellent. What a great trip."



When I got down I picked up my axe and chipped away at the rock. I felt like I was getting nowhere but I always do feel that way. My arms began to ache and the stench of the sweat was unreal. It was so warm in there. I felt like going to sleep and never waking up. The person next to me had fallen off his platform and had to be carried out. I really needed a drink but I couldn't stop. When my candle changed colour I was so relieved. Didn't think I could bare another second in here.

Extract from Oliver Adkin's Diary

Wallace Hall Academy

Extra-curricular Clubs & Activities 2013-14

Club/Activity	Who is responsible	Where it takes place	When it takes place
Japanese Society	Miss Clark	Room 2005	Friday lunchtime 1.30pm
Badminton Club	Mr Arrowsmith	PE Dept.	Monday lunchtime 1.30pm
Friendship Bracelet Making Club	Mrs Simpson	Room 2006	Thursday lunchtime 1.30pm
Craft Club	Miss Wilson	Room 0017	Monday lunchtime 1.30pm
Sugarcraft	Miss Wilson	Room 0014	Wednesday lunchtime 1.30pm
Drama Club	Ms Beynon Miss Stuart	Drama Studio	Wednesday 4-6pm
Girls 5 a side Football Club	Miss Carnochan	PE Dept.	Tuesday lunchtime 1.30pm
Sailing Club	Mr Miller / Mrs Black	Annandale Sailing Club Lochmaben (Meet at Minibus)	Wednesday 3.50-8pm Summer Term + Aug – October Half Term
Boys 5 a side Football Club	Mr Docherty	PE Dept.	Thursday lunchtime 1.30pm
Rugby: S1-6	Mr Graham, Mr Mack, Dr Fulton	PE Dept.	S1-6 Thursday 4-5pm Easter - October
Golf	Mr Frew	Thornhill Golf Club	Summer Term
Hockey Club	Mrs Miller	PE Dept.	Thursday 4-5pm
Chess Club	Mr Docherty	Library	Wednesday lunchtime 1.30pm
Computer Games	Prefects	Room 2023	Every lunchtime
Homework Club	Prefects	Room 2025	Tuesday & Thursday lunchtime 1.30pm
Up-cycling Club	Mr MacKellar	Room 0024	Thursday lunchtime 1.30pm
Netball Club	Mr Rae	PE Dept.	Tuesday lunchtime 1.30pm
Basketball Club	Mr Mack	PE Dept.	Thursday 1.30pm S1-S3 Thursday 4-5pm S4-S6 October - Easter
Football 13-14 & 16-18	Mr Dillon; Mr Rae; Mr Mack; Mr Frew	PE Dept.	Monday 4-5pm
Warhammer Club	Mrs Menzies / Gordon Walker (S6 pupil)	Library	Wednesday 4-5.30pm
D of E	Miss Carnochan	Room 2013	Wednesday 4-5 pm
S1 Haven	Mr Arrowsmith / Prefects	Room 2024	Every Lunchtime (Aug – Dec)
Photography	Mr Harrison / Oishin O'Hara (S2 pupil)	Library/Art	Thursday 4-5pm



Golf News

Regional Golf

On Thursday 20th June, WHA competed in the Regional School Golf Championship.

The team comprised of Sam Solley, Ross Whyte, Andrew Kennedy and Emma Greenlees. All players competed really well under very difficult conditions, and with some very sneaky pin positions.

The team eventually finished in 3rd place with a total score of 222. Well done!



School Golf

On Wednesday 26th June, Thornhill Golf Club very generously gave Wallace Hall Academy permission to host the Annual School Golf Championship.

Pupils were treated to a day of clear skies, and a course which was in fantastic condition. There were 5 prizes on offer for pupils, and they were awarded as follows: Scratch Winner: Ross Whyte (76), Net Winner: Robbie Logan (55), Stableford Winner: Lewis Morrison (31pts), Closest to Pin Winner: Ben Murphy (9ft) and Longest Drive Winner: Cameron Taylor (296yds).

A special thanks also to our Head Boy Lewis Morrison, and his helper Tom Kehoe, for thanking the club and presenting the prizes at the end. Pupils' behaviour and course etiquette was exemplary throughout the day. Pupils will now look forward to battles against the teachers and Sanquhar Academy in matchplay events which will take place after the holidays. Well done to everyone who took part in the event!



Wallace Hall links up with local radio station

Wallace Hall Academy pupils will be working with the local community radio station on a number of projects. Our pupils will be submitting a variety of programme items which will be broadcast on Alive Radio in the near future. Tune in on 107.3fm and listen out for our budding broadcasters.

Sailing Club

report by Fergus Hiddleston

On Wednesdays after school we have sailing club at Lochmaben Loch. This is a great activity and one that we all enjoy very much.

Last week we got on the bus and drove to the club and, to everyone's disappointment, there was no wind what so ever when we arrived. Undeterred, Mr Miller decided that the best thing to do would be to get 8 toppers into the water with no rigging and organise 2 fully rigged up on land.

We all paired up and I was paired with Roscoe. While we were sitting in our boat waiting to set off we had some fun



splashing everyone with our paddles. Then we got down to the serious business of learning how to manoeuvre the boats and get our confidence in the water. We learned about jibbing and getting under the bar quickly. One of the exercises we did was to tie our boats together, side by side, and walk along one side and

then the other. This was a real test of balance.

All too soon it was time to pack the boats away again and come home. Sailing Club is great fun. Please speak to Mr Miller, Mrs Black, Mr MacKellar or Mr Bell if you would like to come along or if you would like more information.



Paddle Power

As part of their senior core PE lessons this term a number of senior students have participated in kayaking. This block of work was delivered by members of the Outdoor Education team and the lessons took place at various points on the river Nith.

The students learned the basics of kayaking including getting out of the kayak quickly and safely should it capsize. This was a lesson which was to be used by one or two of our students who turned a kayaking lesson into a swimming lesson!!

All of the students worked extremely hard over the block of work and by the end had progressed from nervous novices



to paddlers who successfully navigated more than their fair share of white water. All of the students are to be congratulated on their efforts and a big thanks

to Alex, Ian and Mike who delivered an excellent programme.

If you wish to see our students in action in the kayaks then a video clip has been placed on our website at www.wallacehall.co.uk.

The sun shines for WHA Sports Day

report by Gillian Watret



Our annual school sports day was held at the end of June in glorious sunshine. Everyone in the school was out on the field to watch the afternoon's races and field events.

House rivalry was evident with a sea of pupils and staff dressed in yellow, red and green supporting and cheering at the side of the track. A most enjoyable afternoon was had by all and Mr Hall, who retired at the end of the summer term, was invited to present the prizes. Competition was fierce and the overall winners were as follows:

S1 Girls – Erin Dobie

S2 Girls – Sarah Maxwell

S3 Girls – Emily Morton

Senior Girls – Kathryn Park

S1 Boys – Gavin Wilson

S2 Boys – Niall Holden

S3 Boys – Liam Watson

Senior Boys – Sam Hall and Declan Hill

Stepping up to the start line next were the competitors for the mile race. Finishing at the front of the pack were: Boys - Cameron Scott and Girls – Kathryn Park.

The annual house tug of war competition for the Vina Mess Trophy was the final event of the day. The tug of war was, as always, a hotly contested competition between the three houses - Cairn, Nith and Scaur. Mrs Mess came along to support and encourage all competitors, particularly her beloved Cairn pupils. Mrs Mess's encouragement seemed to do the trick as, much to her delight, Cairn were victorious.







A Champion Cyclist

Report by Rachel Shnapp

Cycling is advantageous in many ways: it's less expensive than keeping a car; it's a great source of exercise; it's environmentally friendly; you don't need to follow the road; there are no age limits... There are so many good things about cycling, but the most notable is the pure joy that it brings.

William McCartney is a great example to show how enjoyable

cycling can be. A keen cyclist himself, he has been on a bike non-stop since the age of three after he began cycling with his mother. For him though, cycling is as rewarding as it is pleasing. At the age of seven he was asked to join the Dumfries 'Stepping Stanes' cycling group, even though he was two years younger than most of the members. Around a year after he joined the club, he began to race, his first being at Drumlanrig. This was William's first taste of competition, which has not weakened since. William now trains on Thursdays and Sundays at the Annan Youth Cycling Club.

William's first serious win was in the Kelso MTB Race (to us non-bikers that means mountain bike race) in which he was 1st. His next proud win was the Scottish Championships in Glasgow, when he was around 10 years old, where



he came first in the under 14s category. It is truly inspiring to realise that a Wallace Hall pupil was a Scottish Champion, and more notably that this was only his second race. When William began cycling, he was very much centred on mountain biking, but advanced onto road biking, and has recently taken up track cycling. The time and determination put into this hobby is refreshingly inspirational.



Hockey Success



Kathryn Park, one of our current S5 pupils, has recently been selected for the South West Scotland Hockey Squad made up of players from Dumfries and Galloway,

Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. Following her consistent performances with Dumfries Ladies Hockey Team, Kathryn was picked to go forward to the South West Hockey Squad trials held at St Columbia's School in Kilmacolm.

Kathryn was one of only two players from the Dumfries Ladies Under 18 hockey team to be put forward for selection and she was the only player chosen for the squad. Technically this selection has come a year early for Kathryn as she has only just turned 16.

Since joining the squad Kathryn has attended three training sessions which focus on the skills required to play hockey at national level. Following the training sessions Kathryn was picked for the final squad of 18 and played for them at a 2 day tournament held on the

Commonwealth pitch at Glasgow Green, scoring a goal in the process. Kathryn is now training weekly at Glasgow Green with the national performance squad, led by the Scotland coaches.

Kathryn said: "It has been a real honour to join the South West Scotland Hockey Squad and train with some of the best hockey players in Scotland. The squad is a great way to meet and make friends with like-minded sportswomen while developing my hockey skills. I hope I will get the chance to play again with the team and perhaps eventually represent Scotland in my sport. Mrs Miller and Miss Miller have both been great at coaching and encouraging me. Hockey is a great sport to be involved with and I would really encourage others to join in at school level. Mrs Miller takes a hockey club for an hour after school on a Thursday night - come along and give it a try."

WHA Half Marathon Approaching Fast

It's only a matter of days till our event takes place. We're sure you wouldn't want to miss our races at Drumlanrig Castle and Country Estate on Sunday 10th of November with something for everyone.

The Queensberry Half Marathon provides a testing run for the fittest of people, those who like a challenge but not quite that length of race could take part in the Drumlanrig Demon 10k (not as bad as the name suggests!) whilst those of you who may just have taken up running again or who have young children could take part in the Castle View Fun Run – a 3 km race which is the loop in front of the castle. You may even want to walk this one, with or without pushchair or dog. The races have been fairly well supported over the last three years featuring local runners as well as many from further afield. However, we would like to build on our entry again this year and in future years, hoping that it will develop into a very popular fixture on the athletics calendar.

Dumfries Running Club added our event to their

Grand Prix calendar this year which means that we should get more runners from their club taking part.

As this is a weekend event and because it is not

primarily for pupils it may not have occurred to you that the purpose of it is to raise funds for the school. Although it is only in its fourth year this event is steadily making money. This money, along with that raised through other fundraising events, is used to support school clubs and to buy or replace equipment which is too costly to buy from the school budget. In the past we have purchased disco lights for the Bailey Hall to enhance school dances, kindles and other IT equipment and have also supported extra curricular clubs. The event simply couldn't take place without a band of willing volunteers. Can we please ask you to support us by volunteering yourselves

and by encouraging your children to volunteer? We really do appreciate all the support you and our pupils give to our events. Please contact Diane Jarvie at the school if you can help us in any way on the day.

Queensberry Half Marathon
Drumlanrig Demon 10K
and Castle View Fun Run

Drumlanrig Castle Grounds
 Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, Scotland DG3 4AQ

Sunday 10th November 2013
 Information and entry forms available at:
www.whahalfmarathon.com
 Race Administrator: Diane Jarvie
 Tel: 01848 332120 / 07986744992
 Email: wmaratho264@ea.dumgal.sch.uk

Organised by Wallace Hall Academy in aid of Wallace Hall Academy Fundraising Account
 Under UK Athletics Rules Permit Event

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.

WALLACE HALL ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL NEWS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AGM – THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2013

The year has been busy, active and interesting. Once again the level of interest and support for the Parent Council has been very high. All meetings have been well attended and at each we have enjoyed some lively input from staff in the school, pupils and outside presenters.

Our experience has been that the staff in the school, the local authority and, where appropriate, national governments are genuinely keen to engage with parents. This makes the role of the Parent Council more busy but also much more satisfying. None of us would wish to be involved in an organisation which does not take active involvement.

We have met monthly and the topics covered at these meetings have been separately recorded. In addition to normal meetings, we have attempted to hold or organise events covering a range of topics relevant to the school and to parents. These have included:

- A presentation on First Aid

skills in December 2012.

- An Information Evening for parents and pupils in S1 and S2 on Curriculum for Excellence in March 2013.
- A presentation on Careers Advice. At this meeting we formed a subgroup to produce a one page information sheet on careers and in particular highlighting the roles and responsibilities of pupils, parents and advisors. This went to print and was issued in June of this year.

In addition we have been actively involved in the discussions with parents and with the local authority on cluster primary school groups and on the discussions for an "all through" primary/secondary school at Wallace Hall.

We were also involved in the recruitment and selection of the new Depute Head, John Blair and again I was encouraged by the input which was expected and requested by the local authority.

The Parent Council provides an ideal opportunity for parents



and other interested members of the community to take part in the organisation and strategy of the school.

I believe that the Senior Management Team and all staff in the school have found our input constructive and I hope helpful. There have been many changes in education both locally and nationally over the past year and with these changes communication can make the job of educators easier.

We are privileged to have a great school in Wallace Hall Academy. This has been proved in recent inspections, in exam results and not least in the fact that a significant number of parents choose to send their children to Wallace Hall Academy from far afield. The success is in a large part due to the hard work and professionalism of the staff but also to the fact that everyone works together resulting in pupils working hard in the right environment.

I would like to record my thanks to all colleagues on the Parent Council, to the staff at the School and most of all to the pupils for making this a great place and fun to be involved.

Brian Johnstone,
Chairman

