



WALLACE HALL ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER: JUNE 2010



Activities Week and Ardeche/Aosta Valley Trip

Wallace Hall Academy pupils have had a variety of opportunities available over recent weeks. Senior pupils travelled to the Ardeche/Aosta Valley for a week of water sports and outdoor activities and younger pupils took part in Activities Week. Reports and photographs inside this issue.



BBC Prize win for S2 pupils

Wallace Hall pupils will soon be starring in a BBC TV programme - produced by themselves. A group of talented S2 English pupils successfully pitched their programme idea about the Queensberry Initiative to BBC staff in the recent "Your Landscape - Our Crew" competition. Working alongside TV professionals the pupils will make their film about our school's unique outdoor classroom at Drumlanrig. Producer Neil Scott said: "Wallace Hall's entry was the most visual of the programme ideas we received." BBC staff will visit the school to train pupils before the end of term, and the film crew will be here shortly after the summer holidays.



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Doors Open at Wallace Hall Academy

Over 500 people flocked to Wallace Hall Academy on Sunday 18th April as the new building opened its doors to welcome the local community. The day was organised to offer everyone the chance to view the fantastic new building and facilities that pupils and staff at Wallace Hall Academy now enjoy. Guests were welcomed into the Bailey Hall by Head Teacher, Barry Graham, who said he considers it a privilege to have been involved in the planning and the move into the new building and creating a new academy of distinction. Mr Graham introduced Head Boy Hagen Patterson who proceeded to declare the new school open. The assembled audience were then treated to the voice of Head Girl Kaye Dalglish who gave a beautiful rendition of the Eva Cassidy classic



"Songbird" followed by a haunting version of the ever popular "Highland Cathedral". Kaye was followed by Depute Head Girl Kirsty Bryson who performed beautifully two songs from the shows, "Memory" from the musical "Cats" and "I'm Not That Girl" from the new musical "Wicked". To conclude the performance part of the proceedings, Mr Graham invited a group of musicians who were all friends of the late Kevin Bailey onto the stage to perform a set of tunes in his honour. Kevin was a much loved and highly respected Physics teacher at Wallace Hall Academy for 26 years until he sadly passed away in August 2007. He also was heavily involved in the traditional music scene and encouraged and supported many of the school's budding traditional musicians through the school

ceilidh band "Celtic Caboodle". To acknowledge Kevin's contribution to the school the Assembly Hall in the new building has been named the Bailey Hall in his memory. Throughout the afternoon visitors were able to have guided tours round the school and see the new, state-of-the-art equipment and facilities available. Presentations on Recognising Achievement, Curriculum for Excellence, Queensberry Initiative and Glow were offered as an option by the school's senior management team. Refreshments were available and a silent auction took place with a number of excellent auction items donated by local businesses. Local artist Kathleen Woods gifted a stunning original oil painting titled "Towards Kirkcudbright" and this was the prize for the winner of the hotly contested numbers board. Head Teacher Barry Graham said "This open day has been organised very much with the community in mind as we are keen to build relationships and work together with local people. I am delighted so many people have chosen to take up the opportunity to visit the new school and that the feedback on our new facilities has been very positive from visitors, staff and pupils."



Head Girl/Boy Election

The Head Girl and Boy Election took place recently. Lisa Murphy was elected as Head Girl with Adele Queen as Depute Head Girl. Stephen Morrison was elected as Head Boy with Robert Peacock as Depute Head Boy. Congratulations to all four pupils. We wish them well in their year of office. Photographs show L to R Lisa, Stephen, Adele and Robert.



Physics trip to Heriot Watt University

by Christopher Wilson, Ally Taylor and Nathan Moore

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On Thursday the 6th of May the two Higher Physics classes from Wallace Hall Academy embarked on a overnight excursion to Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh. Once we arrived on campus we used the spectacular catering facilities of the university. After we had eaten we enjoyed a quick game of football in the fantastically modern sports facilities. We then used the amazing Physics laboratories and did real experiments under the supervision of university Professors. After having our first glimpses of university life we travelled into the city of Edinburgh. We went on the spooky ghost tour of the South Bridge Vaults which not only terrified us but also educated us on some of Edinburgh's dark history. Afterwards we went back to the actual dorms first year students would stay in and this gave us a realistic taste of university life.

We then woke the following day and enjoyed our complementary breakfast before enjoying a Physics demonstration in which we made and ate ice cream using liquid nitrogen! We then went for a very filling lunch at Pizza Hut. Afterwards we went to Our Dynamic Earth which taught us about natural disasters and also taught us about the amazing world we live in. All the pupils felt this was a very interesting and educational experience.

On this trip we learnt all about student life and this will be essential for later life. Finally we would like to thank Dr Fulton, Mr Jack and Mrs Dalglish for their hard work in organising and running the trip. We would also like to thank the staff at Heriot Watt University.



DNA Molecule Models by James Donnelly

Near the end of S1 we were given a homework assignment for Science where we had to construct a 3D model of a DNA molecule. We were told we could create it using anything as long as the teacher could pick it up in their hands. We had two weeks to make the models and then we were to take them into class for judging. The end results were amazing as they were each different. Some were made of paper, pipe cleaners and even food! The winner, as chosen by the judges, was Rebecca Connor. Her model was made out of sweets and was huge! Well done Rebecca!



June 2010

Senior Awards Ceremony

Wallace Hall Academy held this year's annual Senior Awards Ceremony on Wednesday 28th April. The ceremony is held to recognise the achievements of S4, S5 and S6 pupils and to give best wishes for their future plans to all pupils leaving Wallace Hall. This was the first award ceremony to be held in the new building and the magnificent surroundings of the Bailey Hall along with the beautiful flowers arranged by Mrs Nancy Sloan added to the sense of occasion. Once all parents and assembled guests were seated the pupils were piped in by senior pupils David Sloan and Nathan Chalmers.



Head Teacher Barry Graham opened the proceedings by welcoming all present and presented his annual report highlighting the successes of the past year. Mr Graham said: "The pupils in Wallace Hall Academy are talented in so many ways. We see outstanding achievement in sport, drama, dance, music and academic studies. This is something we wish to nurture and encourage for every pupil in the school."

Presenting the awards this year was Mr Mark Coombs, who is heavily involved with Wallace Hall Academy and is a founding member of the Queensberry Initiative. Through this strategic group he is supporting the outdoor classroom and the expansion of vocational opportunities and work related learning. In his address Mr Coombs highlighted the significance of being committed, working hard and trying your best in life and acknowledged the importance of these qualities.

The S4 and S5 awards were announced by Mr Cubbon, Depute Head Teacher, and Mrs Fraser, PT Pupil Support, announced the S6 awards. Mrs Fraser said: "It has been a real privilege to work with this current S6 and I will be sorry to see them go. I would like to wish them well for the future and I am sure they will all be successful in their chosen career path."

During the evening the audience were treated to musical performances by Kelvin Riley, Kirsty Bryson, Kaye Dalgliesh, Andrew Gordon, Kyle McLellan and Ronan McLellan. The dance group concluded the entertainment with a very enthusiastic routine which they had choreographed themselves.

Head Boy Hagen Patterson and Head Girl Kaye Dalgliesh reflected on their time at Wallace Hall Academy and acknowledged the support they have received from both pupils and staff during their year in office. A highlight of the evening was the photographic presentations to the leavers and S6. This was a chance to see the variety of career opportunities and education courses chosen by the pupils who are leaving and to remember all the trips, activities and social events S6 have enjoyed during their time at Wallace Hall Academy. The evening closed with Mr Graham thanking all who helped in any way to plan and facilitate the ceremony. The photograph above shows Kyle McLellan receiving the UWS prize awarded annually to the Dux of Wallace Hall Academy.

Geology Day

As part of the recent Dumfries and Galloway Wild Science Festival, volunteers from the GeoDiversity group came to Wallace Hall to work with the S2 Geography pupils. Pupils had the opportunity to look at fossils and rock specimens, discuss the theory of plate tectonics and also got to make 'edible Earths' from marshmallows and chocolate. It was a very interesting morning and the pupils were able to experience another Geography-related subject first hand, and were introduced to the many career prospects in Geology.



Wallace Hall Academy Mock Elections *by Stephanie Wells*

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All the classes that have Modern Studies this year were asked to take part in a mock election. They picked their parties (between Labour, SNP, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Green Party and U.K.I.P.) and had to represent that party.

My group (SNP) consisted of Ben Murphy, Cameron Maxwell, Beth Johnstone (Group leader), Paudy Ronan, Ben Hyslop, Todd Hay (candidate), Hannah Paterson and myself. We all voted on who we wanted to be group leader and candidate. Once we decided who was who we cracked on making posters, speeches and other advertising.

Conservatives won in the end with 35 votes. Labour, a close second with 34 votes. Then SNP with 28 votes, Green Party with 23 votes and a tie for 6th place was UKIP and Lib Dems.

I think the Conservatives won because their speech at the Hustings was almost flawless. Also I think some of the policies were really good and very tactful. I don't think the other groups won because they seemed to lack a wee bit of confidence. Perhaps they were a bit reluctant to really stick their neck out and canvas for the votes.

I learned that politics is quite interesting and that it can be fun (but stressful at times!) when it is done with your friends. Politics brings out everyone's competitive streak and I think that does make it more realistic and interesting.

I think the only way to make this better is maybe by putting it on a bigger scale and really making something of it.



S1 Wild Science Festival *Reporters: Brenna Aston and Lisa Murphy*



On Wednesday 5th of March all S1 pupils were treated to a fantastic day of Science which was thoroughly enjoyed. On a rotational basis, all the pupils had the opportunity to take part in two activities, "My Great Adventure" and "The Colour Show" organised as part of the "Wild Science Festival". "My Great Adventure" was a hands on insight into the migration of barnacle geese from the Arctic Svalbard to the Solway and their return journey. The experience was put on by Caerlaverock Wildlife and Wetlands Trust and the fun activities included pupils taking on the role of geese and being caught and ringed. This was described by the pupils as a highlight saying: "It was really fun! Especially the running around!"

Pupils also got the opportunity to try some of the more technical aspects of the Trust i.e. taking biometrics and fitting GPS satellite tags.

The second activity, "The Colour Show" was described as a demonstration of colour phenomena where pupils got the chance to see how our vision of colour really works. One pupil described this as "amazing, but really weird!" This activity was part of the Glasgow University Science Festival which is currently taking place across the country. The pupils got to see where the colours come from through a range of great demonstrations.



June 2010

“Ready Steady Cook”

Following a year of developing their food preparation, cooking and presentation skills, the final task for Miss Wilson's Hospitality class was to apply these skills when presented a collection of ingredients, "Ready Steady Cook" style. The resulting dishes included chicken with couscous, stir fries, salads, pasta bakes and mozzarella & ham parcels. The clear winner was Rory Crawford's chicken stuffed with cheese and herbs wrapped in bacon with a beetroot and mozzarella salad which was awarded full marks for taste, appearance and originality. Well done to all - a very tasty end to a successful year.



“Come Dine With Me” *by Kaye Dalglish*



For our final week in Intermediate 2 Hospitality it was agreed that we would compete in a ‘Come Dine With Me’ competition. All the pupils were very determined and really put their all into their dishes as well as the ambiance created, and for some, their fancy dress! All the dishes were highly successful and included: a variety of curries, lasagne, shepherd’s pie and a lot of chocolate!!! The class, without doubt, took great enjoyment in tasting them.

The winning team consisted of Robyn Moffat, Kyle McLellan, Adele Armstrong and Kaye Dalglish who added a variety of cultures to their dishes and this clinched them the title. The competition was a great success and was a brilliant end to a fantastic year in Hospitality!



Lisa strikes the right chord



Our new Head Girl, Lisa Murphy, has recently picked up a top prize at the Cheltenham Jazz Festival. Along with seven other musicians from the Dumfries Youth Jazz Group, Lisa travelled to Cheltenham to take part in the Cheltenham Jazz Festival. Lisa and the band battled it out against another two groups shortlisted into the final three out of over 150 entries from all across Britain. The category they took first place in was the Yamaha Jazz Experience's Jazz Ensemble Improvisation Competition which is an important part of the Cheltenham Jazz Festival. The band practise at Dumfries Academy as part of the main Dumfries Jazz Band which is made up of over 150 young musicians from throughout the Region aged between 8 and 18.

Lisa, who plays bass guitar, said: "I was very nervous and excited on the way to Cheltenham and on arrival was amazed to see how big the festival actually is. Once on stage we played our best and the crowd was really enthusiastic, cheering at our performance. We then had a horrible 40 minutes waiting for the results. After we were told we had won it was fantastic; all our hard work had paid off. We won a trip to London to play at a famous jazz club and £3000 of Yamaha

vouchers for the whole of the Dumfries Youth Jazz Band." Head Teacher Barry Graham said: "I was delighted to learn of Lisa's success with the Jazz Group and I look forward to hearing the group perform locally in the near future. A number of our Wallace Hall Academy students are involved with the Dumfries Youth Jazz Band and they all have gained valuable skills and experience through being part of this group. I am always very keen to support musical initiatives that involve our young people. Christine Barbour and her team working with the Youth Jazz Group offer a wonderful opportunity to pupils from all our local schools and this recent prize is another endorsement of the high standard achieved by local musicians at a national level".

Mr Riley and Mr Wilson Sky Dive for Rokpa

by Amy Fergusson



Mr Wilson and Mr Riley raised £600 for the charity Rokpa International when they skydived on the 6th of May 2010. On the 9th of June Shaun Graham, Mr Docherty, Mr Wilson and I travelled to the Buddhist temple Samye Ling to deliver the money to Dr Akong Tulku Rinpoche. Rinpoche gratefully accepted the money on behalf of the charity and gave us some insight into the charity itself. We requested if the money raised could be used for educational purposes in Tibet and he told us that money given to the charity is used to educate not only children but adults too. Rokpa is very interested in Higher education where representatives teach adults in things like the arts and also teach adults how to teach children. Money also goes towards translating books into different languages. Rokpa is based in Tibet, Zimbabwe and Nepal and all the money put into the charity helps the people of these countries to survive and become educated. Mr Wilson and Mr Riley both agreed that skydiving was a fantastic experience and they were pleased they could put the money towards Rokpa International.



Scottish Book Trust Reviews

Two of our current S3 pupils, Lauren Dalgleish and Mhairi Rodden, and one S2 pupil, Lily Gonlag, have recently been invited to write book reviews for the Scottish Book Trust. The girls became involved following communication between Wallace Hall Academy's Library Assistant, Caroline Menzies, and Heather Collins from the Scottish Book Trust. The books they are reviewing are 'White Crow' by Marcus Sedgwick, 'Prisoner of the Inquisition' by Teresa Breslin and "The London Eye Mystery" by Siobhan Dowd. Lauren and Mhairi's books are still at proof copy stage so the girls are stealing on a march on the general public. We look forward to seeing their reviews in print.

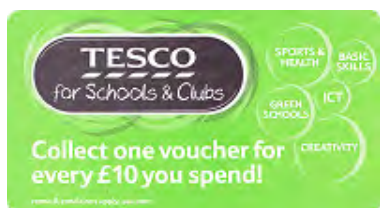


WHA Library

Our new Library is a bright, welcoming space which is well used by pupils and staff alike. As in previous years, all new S1 pupils will be timetabled for a weekly reading period with the aim of encouraging reading for pleasure. With the implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence and the promotion of cross cutting project work alongside the multi disciplinary strands of the curriculum, the Library will be even more of a central point in the school and vital to teaching and learning. In the past the Library has been well supported by the parents and the local community and we would like to build upon this by asking for your help once again by donating books that your household has finished with. In particular we would be delighted to receive any fiction material that your child has used to complete their personal study for English, any text books that you have purchased to support your child's learning that they no longer require and any revision books or past papers that your family is finished with. All of these resources could be put to very good use in the Library and would be of benefit to many young people in the school. I hope you will agree that this is preferable to such resources being stored in the back of your cupboards! However, it isn't only the books detailed above that we would be pleased to accept. Any books that are in good condition, fiction or non-fiction, will be gratefully received. Junior fiction, teenage fiction, senior fiction, non-fiction, sheet music and reference material all have a valuable place in our Library and would be welcomed. Thank you in anticipation.



Tesco Vouchers for Schools



Once again the Library has been collecting Tesco Vouchers for Schools. This year over 12,000 vouchers have been counted, packaged up and dispatched to Tesco. We have purchased a wide variety of equipment supporting many areas across the curriculum including PE, Home Economics, Additional Support for Learning, Queensberry Initiative and some whole school equipment. Thank you to all parents, pupils and members of the community who sent in vouchers.

There is now a stationery shop operating in the Library. Items available to purchase are pencils, pens, erasers, sharpeners, highlighters, protractors, rulers and 2GB USB pens. Any profits made will be ploughed back into the Library budget and used to buy books and resources.

Young Enterprise Group “Embrace” Success

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At the recent final of the Local Area Board Young Enterprise competition the Wallace Hall Academy group “Embrace” achieved success winning the Report and Interview category. The entry from the highly ambitious team focused on organising a concert in Wallace Hall Academy for S4 - S6 pupils. The concert was headlined by up and coming band “Jakil” with support from our own local superstars “Room 16”. At the awards final the members of Embrace acquitted themselves very well. The standard of entries from all the schools was very high with a wide variety of different product ideas, presentations and displays on view all delivered to an exceptionally high standard. Feedback from judges and various individuals

on the night about Wallace Hall’s entry was very positive with their concept described as “fabulous”. Wallace Hall Academy Head Teacher Barry Graham said: “The Wallace Hall Academy group developed an excellent idea which is probably the most enterprising of all the projects that I have encountered over the years. I would like to thank all the participants and the link teachers (Mr David Gilus and Miss Rebecca Fulton) for their team work and resilience”.

English Department Events and Competitions

15/6/10 - Adv. Higher and Higher English and Art trip to The National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.
23/6/10 - Higher Trip to see "A Midsummer Night's Dream" - Globe Touring, Crichton Campus, Dumfries.
25/6/10 - BBC Training Workshop - film making.
30/6/10 - Scottish Book Trust - Book Review Competition.
31/7/10 - Foyle Young Poets Competition.
30/9/10 - Higher trip to see "Romeo and Juliet", Newcastle.
Date t.b.c. - BBC Film- making project about Queensberry Initiative/outdoor classroom.

The Guardian Young Critics Competition and its deadline, Friday 16 July:

Anyone under 16 can submit a 200 word review on one of the titles from the long list of books for the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize.

S6 Peer Mentoring Conference

All of our new S6 pupils took part in a whole day session of Peer Mentoring activities on Wednesday 16th June in the Bailey Hall. These activities were led by Mike McKean who is currently seconded to the Scottish Government’s Positive Behaviour Team. Depute Head Teacher Yvonne Gall said: “I am delighted with how the S6 have participated in this event. They have shown maturity by engaging fully with all the activities on offer. I am confident they will work well with our younger students and be excellent “Peer Mentors. The skills acquired will be of enormous benefit to our young people in the future”.



June 2010

Pupil Work



Advanced Higher English student Darcy Carson (left) recently won first prize in the National Galleries poetry competition with her poem *Have You Been Crying?* inspired by Edvard Munch's *The Sick Girl* printed below, left. As part of her prize Darcy won an all expenses paid trip for a group of senior students to the National Galleries in Edinburgh including a creative writing workshop and a tour of the Gallery of Modern Art.

Have You Been Crying? By Darcy Carson

Ribena stained sheets
Is she thinking?
Her eyelids let in no light
Is she looking?

Watching her fall
Like ringlets and curls
Watching her fall.

Ears are cold and blue
Is she listening?
I tell her about the Frisbee,
and the time the bees stung our legs,
and hot dinners in the half light,
and the sea
and

can she hear?
Watching her fall

Like ringlets and curls
Watching her fall.

Long eyelashes shimmering
Is she breathing?
Hands holding each other
Have you been crying?

Watching her fall
Like ringlets and curls
Watching her fall.

Watching her fall
Like ringlets and curls
Watching her fall.



As part of Mrs McMillan's S2 English class, who also took part in the National Galleries poetry competition, Mollie Cronie wrote the poem below titled *A Young Sad Face*. Her inspiration was the painting *A Hind's Daughter* by Sir Robert Guthrie shown above, right.

A Young Sad Face by Mollie Cronie

On this lovely morning	To match her expression
I sit and paint	I'll paint the sky grey
This small cottage garden	And show she is sad
That young sad face	I paint the small house
For a small girl	With the dull red roof
Stands in the grass	And the cabbages
Fixed still	Down by her feet
Not moving	As she runs to me
Staring at me	And peers at my work
In her right hand	She gives a slight smile
For cutting the crops	Then leaves me to paint
She holds a knife	This small cottage garden
And tightens her grip	That young sad face
On this fine day	

Rural Opportunities Day

The Rural Opportunities Day held on Friday 18th June was a resounding success. Over 80 different organisations and businesses came along on the day and shared their expertise with our cluster primary senior pupils and all the pupils at Wallace Hall Academy. More photographs on the Queensberry Initiative section of the school website will be available shortly. Queensberry Initiative Development Officer, Pat Kirby, said: We are so pleased that so many businesses and other organisations gave their time so willingly to allow our pupils an insight into the skills and qualities needed to make a success of their transition to life beyond school."



The Queensberry Initiative

What is the Queensberry Initiative?

- Working with the community and businesses to support and challenge all the students
- Ensuring that all students are ready for work
- Providing vocational opportunities
- Making students more aware of rural opportunities.
- Getting pupils out of school to make use of the outdoor classroom



The Queensberry Initiative

The Queensberry Initiative: Supporting the Education of All our Students

The Queensberry Initiative Strategic Group was formed in September 2008 to address concerns about getting children and young people out of the classroom to build their connection to their community and to economic life in Dumfries and Galloway, while improving their health and well-being. The Group is also concerned about the need to develop skills for work and an enterprising, entrepreneurial approach in children and young people. This year Wallace Hall Academy has Rural Skills and Construction Skills courses running along with other courses undertaken with the support of Queensberry Estate, Dumfries and Galloway College and Barony College. Other areas in this Initiative include updating work experience, improving transition support for identified pupils in P7, S2 and S4, building enterprise activities more fully into the core curriculum and expanding our links with the local community. We particularly value the partnership working which is at the heart of our Strategic Group and our relationships within the cluster and with the community and other business associates.

With some funding support, the Initiative appointed two part time members of staff to help expand this project. These staff help to ensure that all pupils are getting the chance to participate, including all the pupils in the area primary schools, and they manage the essential links between the school and the community, particularly Queensberry Estate and all the outdoor possibilities that its generous 'open door' invitation to schools in Mid-Nithsdale has presented to us.

We have been successful in involving a large number of placement providers in our community to help to expand our work-related learning initiatives. We are working with local businesses to make placements more meaningful for both businesses and pupils, involving them in the process before pupils are matched and ensuring that appropriate feedback is gathered at the end of placements. We have also begun a business mentor programme this year for certain pupils in our P7 transition cohort, some S2s and S4 potential leavers. This initiative is designed to give pupils an opportunity to make relationships with role models from the 'real world' and to help them to make more informed career choices. On 18 June we are organising a Rural Opportunities Day, to let our primary pupils and all the pupils here at Wallace Hall see the wealth of careers, jobs and enterprises which take place in their home area. It looks like a very varied day, with stands being manned by artists, artisans, musicians, plumbers, colleges, dog handlers and chefs, among many others. We hope to make this a biannual event.

We are now looking for ways to sustain our project. We are particularly interested in piloting new approaches to enriching the life experiences of the young people who live in this rural area and in sharing what we are learning through a rigorous programme of evaluation with other groups, schools and relevant bodies. We have attracted attention from Mike Russell, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, who paid a visit to the Initiative at the end of March this year. We are also having a visit shortly from outdoor education and enterprise advisers in this area from Learning Teaching Scotland (LTS). We believe that what we are working on here is both ground-breaking and important to the children and young people in this area.



Activities Week

Activities Week – Sailing Day *by Josh Mcleod*

As part of our recent Activities Week at Wallace Hall Academy, a number of pupils got the opportunity to try out sailing with Annandale Sailing Club on Castle Loch at Lochmaben which was a great treat for all who attended. For some it was a completely new experience but the day turned out to be a great success. The teachers that were on hand throughout the whole activity to guide us in the right direction (literally) were Mr Miller, Mrs Black and Mr Chapman who were more than happy to teach us the “lying to” and “going about” drills.

During the morning the weather was great and the wind was light which was perfect for beginners to learn how to steer and control the speed of the boat without crashing too many times or even capsizing! There were a few showers and stormy parts of the day which made sailing a little uncomfortable but they didn't disrupt us too much.

On the whole everyone learnt a lot during this one day of sailing. We had the ideal balance of perfect weather for sailing and unbelievable fun, getting the boats under control and tied up back at the jetty in challenging circumstances.



Activities Week Photographs



Activities Week

S2 Journey to Liverpool by *Mhairi Rodden*

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At seven thirty in the morning on the 26th of May, a Wednesday, most teenagers, or at least the more sane ones, were still clutching to the few minutes of blissful sleep that they had left before their parents bawled at them, in a tone resembling the cries of a woman being prodded with red hot pokers in volume, to waken up in the immediate future or else their blankets would be snatched cruelly from them and they'd find out a little bit about the life of an Eskimo who isn't too fond of jackets. However, all but the most prepared, or most careless, students or Wallace Hall Academy's second years were fully conscious. Some were making last minute additions to their baggage whilst others were pretending to listen to the concerned ramblings of their parents with gritted teeth, "What about a cagoule? And dental floss too!" These teens were going on a three day trip to the faraway land of Liverpool. I happened to be among them.

With ninety six oversized suitcases divided between two buses, though maybe a few more with the amount of 'necessary' things that girls demand to have accompanying them at all trips more than three hours long, we were off, somehow pumped full of enthusiasm despite the four or more hour journey ahead of us. Admittedly at least half of us fell asleep at some point but we did acquire quite a nice collection of embarrassing photos to show to boyfriends or girlfriends to come.

The first of several activities we arrived at was the White Scar Caves. We walked underground through a seemingly slimy corridor, although this feature was only relevant to the eyes as the walls didn't feel as it suggested. There were various strangely shaped rocks such as a few dripping from the roof called, 'The Witch's Fingers', another named, 'The Devil's Tongue', and another which looked a little like a Judge from the side. There were also a few pictures in the wall of the large cavern-type part of the caves that we came to last. However trying to look for them was pretty much the same experience as when someone points to a cloud and says, "Look it's a dragon!" and then you try to find it in vain for the next twenty minutes. Not before making sure that no one had spontaneously combusted, fallen to their death or been kidnapped, we hit the road again.

We all arrived at a prison lookalike youth hostel and the vast majority of us discovered that we hadn't packed something. Personally I was confused as to why a room needed six hair dryers and straighteners but perhaps that's just me.

On our first night of arrival, the whole lot of us went ten pin bowling. I myself did a little worse than terrible but I considered myself lucky since I managed not to injure myself by not letting go of the ball after throwing it or something. After successfully coming last in all three games and thanking the earth that I wasn't too sour a loser we left to the youth hostel again. Unfortunately I wasn't allowed to keep the shoes.

On the Thursday morning most of us were woken earlier than our liking to head off to our optional part of the trip. The choices were a ride on the Mersey Ferries and shopping or a trip to Anfield Football Stadium. Thankfully the weather decided to allow us a few hours of cloudless joy for the day so we all had a fantastic time, although some of us did attempt to relive the Titanic scenes at the front of the ferry.

After grabbing a bite to eat, we headed off again to Knowsley Safari Park where most of us had a wonderful time. However, I was, as always, the odd one out and got a bit grumpy on the car tour through the safari and grumbled things about animal rights but continued to rant in my mind only after getting a few disapproving Jim Carrey eyebrow raises in my direction.

That night we drove off to see the newly released movie 'Street Dance 3D'. The dancing was fantastic I'll admit but it was a bit irritating when the actors would continuously throw objects like hats and jackets at the camera to remind you what you'd paid for. The story line itself was appallingly unoriginal. Even I, a big musical fan who's into detective animes can name at least three other movies with identical plot lines to that one.

On the final day, we bid farewell to the hostel and set off for Scotland again. This time however, we made a long stop at Blackpool Pleasure Beach. The Pepsi Max, or as I referred to it, the big scary long one, was utterly fantastic although on my third run the friend accompanying me gave me a running commentary of

our height which was a shot more than unnerving. Another ride named Infusion, or the twisty blue one to me, was definitely my favourite. There were parts of it when the only indication of whether I was up or down was the blinding sun. Unfortunately being the shorty that I am my shoulders got quite a boxing. Sadly all things must come to an end and we had to sit around for another couple of hours in our bus before arriving at the school again. We all walked to our homes with our parents, trying to explain the sunburn and saying, "Yeah, I'll unpack later," every-day for the next week.



June 2010

The Ardeche/Aosta Valley Trip

Report by Adele Queen and Maimie Sloan

On the 4th of June, thirty eight eager Wallace Hall Academy pupils and four teachers set off on a once in a life time adventure trip to the Ardeche Region in France and then later moving onto Villeneuve in the Aosta Valley, Italy. The trip was organised by Mr McEwen and Miss Wilson who accompanied us alongside Mr Frew and Miss Fulton for the duration of the trip.

Our adventure started early on the outward journey when our new bus ran out of steam just outside the French city of Lyon. Miserable and running dry of water, a few brave Wallace Hall soldiers set off on a trek to scrounge water from nearby houses while the rest sulked in the sun. On the upside however, this was valuable tanning time!

Eventually we arrived in Ardeche. Our first activity was a two day canoeing descent of the Ardeche River. Singing and chants kept our excitement buzzing. Arriving at our over night Bivouac (some more prepared than others) we spent a luxurious, and may we add pillow less, night on a wooden floor. After our comfortable night (!) we continued our descent, stopping along the way to boat wrestle and to do a 7 metre cliff jump into the river (some hitting the water more gracefully than others). Finally reaching our end point we enjoyed a relaxing night at the campsite.

On arriving at the scenic Villeneuve we enjoyed some chill-out time, playing volley ball and later making a visit to the town. Contrary to the river in Ardeche the river in Italy was a ferocious and freezing experience. We had a very memorable and wonderful time white water rafting, a few brave enough to jump in! This was definitely one of the most enjoyable activities of the week. Other activities in Italy included rock climbing, high ropes and squeezing, each presenting a chance to conquer personal fears whilst enjoy yourself immensely.

Throughout the week the weather was extremely varied ranging from scorching heat to over cast and rainy, the latter making some activities easier.

A definite highlight of the trip was the last night when we enjoyed dressing up as the opposite sex in a Bob the Builder and Miss Villeneuve competition. There were certainly some unforgettable competitors!

We would like to say a massive thank you to all staff involved and instructors at the camps. Without them the trip would never have happened. A special thank you also goes to Mr Frew who kindly embarked on the trip at short notice and commiserations to Dr Fulton who sadly could not make the trip.



The Ardeche/Aosta Valley Trip

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June 2010

Spanish Motorcycle Trip 2010 *by Jason Vernon*



We set off in our friend's motor home on the Thursday afternoon having managed to squeeze in 7 minimotos and 3 metrakit motorbikes! We headed down to get the Dover to Calais ferry. Once we reached Calais we parked up for the night and the following morning we headed off for the long journey through France to Spain. Late Friday night, still in France, we parked up for the night. Saturday morning we headed off again and by 4 o'clock we parked up at the beach in Spain where we enjoyed a swim. Sunday morning we set off to do the last 200 miles to the track in Benidorm. By this stage we had covered 1700 miles!

The real action started on Monday morning at 10 o'clock when we started racing. Unfortunately after 3 test sessions the crankshaft snapped on my newly re-built metrakit, so it was parked up for the week. Luckily I got a loan of a metrakit from my friend Lewis. I had more success on my production minimoto which was faultless all week. I covered 500 miles on this bike and I was never out of the top three out of 32 riders. I was racing against riders from the UK, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Holland and Finland.

Whilst in Benidorm we stayed in the tallest Hotel in Europe, the Grand Bali. This hotel has 43 floors and we were on the 29th floor. After a really enjoyable week of racing we packed all the bikes back into the motor home for the long journey home, setting off on Saturday at lunchtime and finally reaching home on Monday afternoon tired but happy. Hopefully the week in Spain has given me a good start for the coming season which I finished 2nd in the Scottish Championship in 2009.

Greig drives for success



Wallace Hall Academy pupil Greig Marchbank has returned to top form after a whole season out from golf due to hip surgery in 2008. Amongst his many recent achievements Greig has won the Thornhill Junior Championship, come second in the gents' competition and won the S.G.U. winter series held over four courses. In recognition of his success Greig was picked to play for Scotland last month in the Netherlands. Greig had a fantastic time and played some excellent golf. Greig said: "I really enjoyed the opportunity to play on the second most challenging course in the Netherlands along with golfers from Ireland, Wales and Holland and feel this trip has given me some valuable experience for future competitions."

Greig aims to work hard on his game this year and see where it takes him. Wallace Hall Academy Head Teacher Barry Graham said: "I am delighted to learn of Greig's recent successes in golf. I look forward to following his sporting development with interest and am sure he will go on to make his dream of a career in golf a reality."



Badminton victory for Amanda and Robert



Several WHA pupils took part in the Regional Schools' Badminton Championships, played at DG1 earlier this year. Two of the group were very successful. Amanda Wood became the under 16 girls' singles champion and she and Robert Lenza paired up to win the under 16 mixed doubles event.

S1 - S3 Athletics Finals



The Wallace Hall Academy S1 – S3 Athletics Finals took place on Wednesday 2nd June with a total of 88 pupils taking part across the year groups. Luckily sunscreen and water were required rather than water-proofs! Competition was fierce with Kathryn Park achieving a new school record of 52.38 seconds for the 300m. The pupils' behaviour was excellent with a number of senior students doing extremely well by assisting with finish judging and recording. They were: Stephanie Barnes, Vivienne Clark, Vince Coleman, Callum Park, Blythe Aitken, Finlay Scott, Maimie Sloan and Shaun Graham (photographer). Congratulations to all who participated on the day. The results of the Sports Championships were as follows:

S1 Boys' Champion: Scott Campbell (Scaur) 20 points, 2nd Euan Murgatroyd (Cairn) 12 points, 3rd Declan Hill (Scaur) 11 points.

S1 Girls' Joint Champions: Philippa Weir (Scaur) and Kathryn Park (Cairn) 23 points, 3rd= Hannah Pater-son (Cairn) and Lilly Gonlag (Nith) 8 points.

S2 Boys' Champion Siôn Davies (Scaur) 23.5 points, 2nd Jack McQueen (Nith) 21 points, 3rd Tom Kehoe (Nith) 16 points.

S2 Girls' Champion Abbie Clark (Nith) 17 points, 2nd Claire Manson (Scaur) 15 points, 3rd Katrina Taylor (Cairn) 14 points.

S3 Boys' Champion Ally Barnes (Nith) 26 points, 2nd John Carlisle (Cairn) 21 points, 3rd Connor Manson (Nith) 11 points.

S3 Girls' Champion Corrie Gracie (Nith) 32 points, Ailie Bryson (Scaur) 17 points, Amy Hollingsworth (Scaur) 12 points.

Overall Sports House Points Awarded Cairn 236.5, Nith 253, Scaur 284.5



Award honours for Euan

Reporter: Stephen Morrison

At a recent award ceremony held at the Crichton Golf Club, one of our pupils, Euan Murgatroyd was awarded junior sports personality 2010 for his achievements in swimming. Euan trains with Dumfries Dolphins 18 hours per week in their highest level squad at DG One. He has won National champions for 1500m and also 3rd in the 400m. Euan will be taking part in the British National Championships later this summer in Sheffield.

Euan gets up at 4.45am, 5 days a week to start training at 5.30am. This is a massive commitment and he has to keep careful control of his diet by eating a well balanced diet to ensure his energy and fitness levels are high. His coach is a former Olympic backstroke swimmer, Richard Gheel. Euan hopes to continue competing at a high level and achieve one of the top three places in the 1500m event at the British National. We wish him every success in the Nationals.



Your Parent Council – an Update and Invitation

It has been a busy year for all at Wallace Hall and the Parent Council has been no exception. We started the session with a talk by Mr Pape and a discussion about updating the school website – the “shop window” for the school. We hope you find our section helpful in keeping you informed on who we are, when we meet and what we are doing.

In brief, we have been involved in encouraging new Business Mentors to support the school and recruiting the three new Deputy Head teachers. We supported the successful Open Day at the old school in December and organised the “Final Burns Supper in the Old School” which raised welcome funds for the rapidly expanding school Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. We have discussed issues raised by parent and pupil focus groups and are considering topics such as wifi and new licensing arrangements in the new school, school uniform reforms, S1 subject choices and S3 study leave. Regular contact with the Head Boy and Head Girl has been a great way of keeping in touch with pupil opinion and achievement and we are really grateful to Kaye and Hagen for their cheery attendance and contributions at our meetings. We look forward to getting to know Lisa and Stephen next term!

Various members are involved more directly with Business Mentoring, Queensberry Initiative and Half Marathon plans (entry forms on the school website!) as well as regional working parties. Our Guest Speakers come from inside and outside the school – next term we plan to learn more about GLOW, the school’s Curriculum for Excellence Action Plan and a possible Health and Wellbeing Project to be run in conjunction with Public Health.

All this in one hour, once a month – with a free cup of tea or coffee! We are keen to welcome new members and visitors to our meetings so please, don’t hold back – bring a friend and try us out. Our next meeting will be Tuesday September 14th at 7.30pm (agenda will be posted on school website) – and you never know, there might even be biscuits!!!

Wallace Hall Academy Sailing Club

The Wallace Hall Academy Sailing Club takes place every Wednesday evening on the Castle Loch, Lochmaben, in conjunction with Annan Sailing Club. If you would like to take part in this club please speak to Mr Miller, Mr Bell or Mrs Black. A team is entered for the “5 Castles” Sailing Regatta at Loch Ken on Friday 24th June. Keep an eye out in your local paper for results.



Cycling Skills Club

A new cycling skills club is now taking place every Thursday night in the playground at Wallace Hall Academy. Supported by Active Schools Co-ordinator, Jason Ward, pupils from S1 - S3 are enjoying an hour of fun and exercise on their bikes. Pupils who cannot bring their own bikes into school are very kindly being provided with a bike from local supplier, Ross Anderson at Anderson’s Bikes. Ross, a former pupil of Wallace Hall Academy, is delivering the bikes to the school for the pupils to use and we are very grateful to him for this service. Please see Mrs Gall if you would like to “get on your bike” and join in the fun!

