

Wallace Hall Academy

NEWSLETTER



June 2012

Working Together to Achieve More

A Creative New Curriculum

Earlier this term all S1 and S2 pupils and some S4 pupils took part in a variety of inter-disciplinary activities. There was a different theme for each of the five days with activities organised to engage all pupils, offering breadth and depth through active learning.

As the school moves towards a Curriculum for Excellence teachers at Wallace Hall are developing new projects that cut across subjects to focus on broad areas of study, recognising that each individual has a unique blend of abilities and needs while encompassing the breadth, depth, pace and challenge associated with a Curriculum for Excellence.

Head Teacher Barry Graham said: "As a school we are keen to embrace new and innovative approaches to learning and teaching. Staff and pupils have enjoyed a variety of creative and imaginative activities this week which they will remember for a long time to come.



Teachers feel that planning for the interdisciplinary week has given them the opportunity to make full use of their abilities and have enjoyed the opportunity to work col-

laboratively with other subject specialists."

See inside for more pictures and a full report on the week's activities.

Also In this Issue:

- Activities Week
- School Trips
- Interdisciplinary Activities
- Awards Ceremony
- BBC School News
- Charity Ceilidh
- Easter Concert
- QI News
- Pupil Achievement
- Sports News

Maili is Nithsdale Sports Council Sports Personality of the Year

Just days after leaving Wallace Hall Academy, our outgoing Depute Head Girl Maili Mackenzie was crowned the Nithsdale Sports Council Female Sports Personality of the Year. Maili was presented with her award at a dinner held at the Crichton Golf Club on Friday 8th June. Maili was nominated for her achievements in the sport of Modern Pentathlon. Three other Wallace Hall Academy pupils received nominations in the various award categories: Abbie Houston for her achievements with Dumfries Amateur Swimming Club, Jason Vernon for his achievements in motor cycling and Laura Brown for her success with the Solway Synchronised Skating Team. Full details and more pictures inside.



Working Together to Achieve More

In the annual Dumfries and District Music Festival this year two of our Wallace Hall Academy pupils achieved success in the piano duet section. Abbie Houston and Emma Kennedy impressed the adjudicator with their stylish and accurate performance of "Boogie for Two" to win the Dumfries Music Club Shield.

Abbie and Emma have only recently started playing together and were coached for the competition by local piano teacher, Jill Riley. Emma said: "We were really delighted to win the duet section and thoroughly enjoyed preparing our piece. We were also thrilled to be asked to perform at the school's Senior Awards Ceremony in front of parents, staff and friends of the school."

Mr Graham said: "We are very proud of all of our students' successes at the annual Dumfries and District Music Festival and believe it is an excellent platform for building confidence and developing performance skills."

Duetting Harmony



Continued Success for Japanese Class

report by Euan McIntosh

One year ago I started my Japanese class at Wallace Hall Academy. On the 1st of May, Kai Ferguson and I awarded certificates to S1 members of the class for their particular dedication and exceptionally hard work. They have achieved so much with a notoriously difficult language. I have awarded Bryony Martin, Elle Findlater, Luke Springgay and Ted Boyd with certificates celebrating their achievements in learning Japanese. Japanese is being taught by Kai and me most lunchtimes in Room A1015.



Our final project of S1 with Mrs Robinson was titled Gift of the Gab! The purpose of this topic was to challenge us all into becoming more comfortable and confident with public speaking. We were broken in gently by being asked to speak in front of small groups within our class. However, the final presentation was in front of the whole class and two judges, Mrs Robinson and Mr Harrison. We were told we had to keep good eye contact and speak clearly, this was more to think about while presenting.

The topics covered were : "What to say and what not to say on a first date", "Why are Dads so weird ?", "World's best excuses for not doing homework", "World's best chat up lines" and "How to survive school". In the end the winning group was "How to survive school" which was presented by Cameron Wood, Lorna Rideout and me.

Although this was very challenging for members of 1N2 and totally taking us out of their comfort zone everyone preformed excellently. It turned out to be great fun and in the end a huge success with everyone feeling much more confident with their presenting skills.

S1 have the Gift of the Gab!

report by Lucy Doig



Happy Puzzling

report by Mia Osborne & Charlotte Thwaite
Wallace Hall Primary School P7

On the morning of the 29th of March all P7 pupils went along to the Bailey Hall at Wallace Hall Academy to experience a problem-solving, brain-busting, mind-boggling cluster numeracy event. There were three separate sessions held during the day and all of the cluster Primary 7s and S1 classes had the chance to attend one of these. My class attended the middle session and were joined by P7s from Penpont Primary, Closeburn Primary and one of the S1 classes from Wallace Hall Academy and we split into mixed groups so we were able to meet new people.



The event was hosted by Laura from a company called The Happy Puzzle Company. The first activity that we did was a spinning circle eye illusion. We had to stare at a black and white spinning circle for about 30 seconds and then when you looked at the person opposite you they looked like their skin was bubbling and their eyes goggling - that was our favourite activity as it was so strange!

Next each group was given a very wobbly iceberg and a bag of 21 adorable little penguins. What we had to do was try and balance all 21 penguins on the iceberg and if any dropped we had to pick them up as fast as we could. Then when we had finished we had to put our hands on our heads so we didn't fiddle with it anymore!

The next activity was even trickier. We had a road jigsaw in lots of different pieces and we had to move the pieces around so the road was never-ending. It was tricky because there were lots of T junctions, straight roads and roundabouts to complicate things, but we got through it in the end with a little help!

Our fourth activity involved fixing pipes together. We had to (like the last one) put the pipes together and make it never-ending. We had two stoppers, a few corners and some straight pieces. Most groups end results turned out just like a butterfly.

For the activity after that we were given a variety of felt shapes. We had one square, one smaller square shape, one triangle and two small triangles. We had to



put the small square, triangle and the two small triangles on top of the large square to make that shape. That was fairly easy, but we still thoroughly enjoyed it.

The final activity was a coloured jigsaw, which was challenging because only certain coloured pieces went together according to the colour and shape that they were. We didn't have a picture of the finished jigsaw either, so that made it even harder!

When our session was up we were disappointed to have to stop! The activities were all fantastic fun and really made you think. The aims of the event were for



us to develop our skills in problem solving, collaboration and communication, to raise confidence in our abilities and our skills and to allow us to meet new people - some boys and girls who might be in our classes next year! The session did this and more! It was a brilliant day and we all thoroughly enjoyed it.



Interdisciplinary Activities Week



Throughout the week beginning on the 14th of May, pupils from S1, S2 and S4 (not on exam leave) participated in a vast variety of educational and entertaining activities as part of the inter-disciplinary week.

Each day was hosted by a different faculty, with teachers deciding on a certain theme for their given day. Ordinary subjects and lessons were to be put aside for five fun-filled days, and it was all kicked off with a day from the dark ages...



Medieval Monday

English was swapped for Latin and the Canterbury Tales. History was taken back to medieval war time. The modern timetable was transported back centuries, and pupils had the chance to try their hand at calligraphy, take part in traditional medieval games, prepare for battle and make their very own medieval jewellery. A falconry display was put on in the playing field and all there would agree it was quite a spectacle. The general opinion of students was that the day offered lessons in areas that would not normally be covered in an ordinary school day and they were able to take away many important insights into life hundreds of years ago.



Tidal Tuesday

On the Tuesday, S1s and S2s were taken to Drumlanrig Castle grounds, whilst the S4s headed off to Dumfries and to the Crichton grounds. S1s and S2s got to take part in different workshops and activities incorporating different subject areas, such as science and geography. Pupils also got to take part in a clue-following trail through the forest, as set up by the Queensberry Initiative. S4s took part in a very different variety of creative workshops, hosted by the creators of The Time Machine. The workshops included music composition, story writing and costume making and, at the end, everything was brought together as the pupils performed their very own version of The Tide Machine. A good day was had by all.



Kinmont Willie Wednesday

Through various interactive experiences pupils recreated the local story of Kinmont Willie Armstrong, the Border Reiver and outlaw, who in 1596 was apprehended and locked up in Carlisle Castle. He was ultimately released by a gang in an audacious raid led by Bold Buccleuch – the first Duke of Buccleuch. Buccleuch and Queensberry Estate is interlinked in our progressive partnership - the Queensberry Initiative.

The object of the day was to take a local tale and explode it into life. At the start of the day, setting the scene, there was a horseman in medieval costume challenging the pupils with cries for the day to begin as he rode round the school. Other community members contributing to the occasion included well-known local poet and raconteur Rab Wilson taking centre stage as the story teller. Our local police force were also in on the act, coming along to apprehend the outlaw Kinmont Willie. They dragged him off to a castle which was constructed for the occasion on the playing/battle fields. Activities included painting a shield, making a sword and learning battle cries in a variety of languages. In the afternoon a bugler heralded the start of our medieval games and the win-

ning team lead the charge on the castle to release Kinmont Willie. The whole day was visually spectacular with pupils thoroughly enjoying taking part in this tableau of local history.



Olympic Thursday

Thursday's theme was the London 2012 Olympics and this day's activities included interactive computer games from the Official London 2012 Olympics website and an Olympic themed Wii game. Quizzes about the Olympics, past and present, took place in maths throughout the day and various Olympic related puzzles and games were held in the PE building. A Maths lecture was also put on by lecturers from Edinburgh University for any 4th year students currently studying Higher Maths, which was a unique and beneficial experience. The competitive spirit beamed out of almost everyone throughout the day and the activities got both staff and pupils into the Olympic spirit in the lead up to the 2012 games!



Friday's Jubilee Celebrations

With the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on the horizon, Friday was all about celebrating her 60 great years on the throne. The main event of the day was a

lunchtime street party. However, unfortunately due to poor weather conditions it turned out to be a games hall dinner party! But the rain couldn't dampen the great spirit of the day and all pupils got involved in the preparations. Pupils made bunting, posters, and a selection of food fit for a queen. Though the skies were grey, the food table remained vibrant and many people went back for seconds!

Everyone would agree that the week was an astounding success. Some even admitted to not wanting to return to ordinary timetables in the following week! The week provided valuable skills and knowledge to pupils, but the teachers must be praised for putting so much time and effort into making each day perfect. Merits all round!

report written by Lauren Dalglish.



Interdisciplinary Activities Week



Interdisciplinary Activities Week



BBC News School Report

report by Robert Guthrie

I walked through the school gates last Thursday, only to be awestruck by one of the BBC News live broadcasting satellite vans. Of course, this could only mean one thing – it was Thursday 15 March and BBC News School Report News Day had arrived. Wallace Hall Academy journalists were in for a right treat...



BBC News School Report is the BBC's youth journalism initiative which each year encourages Britain's secondary school children to become part of a giant news project reaching far corners of the globe – even to places like India. Students have to work under pressure, to a deadline, shooting videos and writing news stories in a temporary, bustling news room.

When I look back to October last year, I'd never have thought then that a ten-member BBC News crew and Reporting Scotland presenter Graham Stewart would be visiting Wallace Hall Academy. I'd seen on the School Report website how four lucky schools across the UK would get the chance to work with 'News at 10' anchor-man, Huw Edwards, and other regional news reporters – I really, really didn't see Wallace Hall Academy ever on that list. But what do you know? We actually were one of those four lucky schools in Britain selected to work with the BBC on News Day for several big live broadcasts throughout the day.

That morning, the Sat Van looked really profes-



sional, with two satellites parked on top and a door leading into a small office type area with so many buttons and screens it looked like an aeroplane cockpit. A big trail of wires led me up to the library where we got our briefing from the producers and directors about working alongside students from Dumfries Academy for the first hour of the morning (they would be working on BBC Radio Scotland for the day). We looked through that morning's newspapers; then all of a sudden we were on computers and ready for our first live broadcast. It was extremely exciting but seriously nerve wracking until you got used to going live throughout the day. It was pretty daunting knowing that inevitably over a million people at least would watch us going live. The camera was ready on the tripod and we could hear through a walkie-talkie what was being said to Graham Stewart. All of a sudden, the producers would shout, 'everyone, standing by to go on air.' There'd be a short wait of about a minute until you could hear the countdown until we would go live on air – it gave you the feeling that you might be in a NASA spaceship about to take off – and then all of a sudden you were on. It was a thrilling experience to go on air and present the news to so many people but this was just the start.



We continued to go on TV doing short bursts of live action throughout the day. We had several tasks going on throughout the day, making the library,



which had turned into our bustling newsroom, very fast-paced indeed. The BBC went out and did a video broadcast on the Queensberry Initiative which is Wallace Hall Academy's award winning community partnership and a group reported on Thornhill's Mr Renwick's World Scotch Pie Championship Winning Scotch

pies. We also wrote reports on whether we should be able to vote from 16 and whether we should have one or two year Higher subjects, and then we were live on camera, telling the world about what the day was like.

The project was led by two of our teachers, Miss Stuart and Miss Flint, and our BBC School Reporter Mentor Giancarlo Rinaldi was on hand to help. They did a brilliant job and encouraged us to develop our reporting skills to make the articles and reports informative and interesting.

Hopefully those who took part in this amazing, once in a lifetime experience will go away from this project with their heads held high, pleased with what they've achieved. BBC News School Report is the perfect project for people who want to find more out about news making, writing, and fantastic if you want to consider a career in journalism. I'd really encourage anyone to take part.

On behalf of the people who took part and the school as a whole, I'd like to say a big thank you to all from the BBC production team and BBC Reporting Scotland reporter Graham Stewart for such a fantastic experience. It was a day I'll never forget.



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.

Belgium Bound

report by Bethany Ransom

On Sunday the 4th March, 7.30am prompt, some of the seven Wallace Hall Academy Comenius pupils arrived at school. Others, well, timekeeping wasn't their strong point! Nevertheless, Mr Harley and the seven pupils eventually arrived at Edinburgh airport raring to go. Our journey consisted of eye-spy and naming 51 of the 50 states of America! At 2pm we arrived in the hill-less country we were told to call BELGIUM! (Caps lock intended). The Sunday night was spent with our host families.

On the Monday morning, we woke to snow. This didn't surprise us as Mr Harley had predicted sun. We toured the school under the guidance of our Belgian hosts, played some social games and then picked our project work groups. There was a widespread variety



to choose from, all with different outcomes. Some were PowerPoints of the results of our research into identity, language and stereo types; some included videos and dramas illustrating the common heritage, or the research and amalgamation of each country's traditional folklore and fairy tales. There was the opportunity to create posters depicting Social Security, and then present a further presentation on benefits and the Disabled Charter. We briefly discussed the outcomes we would be aiming for as a team, and then went home. That night, we were treated to a trip to the cinema.



The first off-site trip was to Bruges. Before setting off, we were given an insight into the history surrounding the city and some of its famous traits. Upon arrival, we took a leisurely tour on the canals and admired the architecture of the houses and bridges. We were then given a quiz to complete as we wandered around the beautiful city. We returned to our temporary homes quite tired and exhausted with the thought of Project Work to look forward to the next day, which was to start early. We settled into our groups and began producing the required results. There was a distinct buzz of activity surrounding the whole day, so the constant supply of both solid and liquid refreshments in the form of biscuits and milkshakes was a welcome kindness. The foreign students worked well together and progress was swift. It was put on hold for the following day as we journeyed to Leuven, the biggest University town in Belgium. We were given a brief summary of the history of the student life back in the day then set off on a tour of the City Library looking at several of the colleges and houses that were dotted around the city. We were also given time to explore the city centre, taking some time to try a Belgian delicacy - waffles - and were honoured to hear the bells being played for us.

On the final day, we prepared our final outcomes and presented them in their full glory. Our fellow foreigners acted as an audience. The presentations went well, and you could tell how much hard work had gone into refining their results. We then took a trip down the town to the Council Hall, where the Mayor of Waregem congratulated us all on our efforts throughout the past Comenius year. We toasted friendship and happiness, and signed the International Visitors book under our country's heading. To end a productive week, we put on an exhibition for parents and fellow teachers consisting of photos taken of our local area. This was followed by the opportunity to spend the last night with our host families and new friends.



On Saturday the 10th of March, some Scottish students arrived at Brussels Airport. Others, one of whom had misplaced his passport and got caught in the morning rush hour, arrived several hours later and consequently had to take a slight detour to London. All in all, everyone arrived home safely, eventually.

Recitation Honours



The Robert Burns World Federation's National Burns Competition was held this year at Cults Academy in Aberdeen on Saturday 21st April 2012. Two Wallace Hall Academy pupils, Catherine Anderson and Mhairi Dalgliesh, travelled north to represent Dumfries and Galloway in this competition. There were secondary pupils from all over Scotland performing Burns pieces that they had rehearsed all through the year for this prestigious event. The disciplines included piping, recitation, instrumental and singing and competition was fierce.

Catherine recited an extract from "Tam O' Shanter" to take top spot in her section and was presented with the Friendship Quaich. Following this performance, Catherine received the best score of the day in the recitation section and was awarded the certificate for the best overall verse speaker of the day. The top performer from each of the four disciplines then competed against each other for the title of Burnsian of the Year. Although Catherine gave a brilliant performance the young fiddler from Banff took the judges' eye and the title.

In a very strong class, Mhairi recited "The Rights Of Woman" and delivered a very accomplished and mature performance but on this occasion was not placed.

This was a fantastic achievement for both girls to be part of such a highly regarded competition in the world of Burns. Head Teacher Barry Graham said: "Catherine and Mhairi are great ambassadors for Burns within the region and I am proud that they are both pupils of Wallace Hall Academy."

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations



Staff at Wallace Hall Academy celebrated the Diamond Jubilee in style by holding a bring and share tea party in the library. Organised by the Social Committee, staff enjoyed a delicious selection of baking (on the theme of red, white and blue) with the centre piece a fabulous Union Jack cake baked and decorated by Miss Wilson.

University Experience

Report by Chloe Davidson, Emma Greenlees and Eugene Fung

The highlight of Higher Physics this year was our trip to Heriot Watt University on the 3rd and 4th of May. Pupils in both Higher Physics classes from Wallace Hall Academy set off on Thursday morning looking forward to what promised to be an exciting few days. Dr Fulton, a Heriot Watt alumnus, gave us a tour of the University campus. Then the more athletic of the group went off to play football whilst the hungry ones settled for a long lunch.

Appetites satisfied, we headed to the Physics Department. Half of the group used the first year undergraduate Physics equipment not usually available to us at Wallace Hall. We did experiments of our own choice including measuring the speed of sound, measuring half value thickness of a radioactive sample and magnetic forces on a wire. The other half of the group made their own cameras using a box and a lens and took photos of toy cars, some more successful than others. They also had a demonstration with liquid nitrogen and used it to make ice cream in a matter of seconds.



After this we hopped back on the bus into Edinburgh for a walk up the Royal Mile before we

had the ghost tour. Our creepy guide escorted us around the streets telling us about gruesome deaths from the past. Eugene Fung and Siôn Davies were chosen to demonstrate the whippings and made some very 'manly' screams. Then he took us down to the underground vaults where he freaked us out with convincing spooky tales about the ghosts who live there.



Once back at the campus we all settled for a good night's sleep, or at least that's what we thought. At half past four in the morning a university student successfully set off the fire alarm by cooking at such an absurd hour. The next morning when we met for breakfast everyone was in a bleary-eyed state. After many coffees and energy drinks we headed back to the labs where we undertook more experiments. Once we had all finished our tasks, it was time to say goodbye to the campus and we headed back to the city centre.

A rather delightful lunch at Pizza Hut left most of us rather queasy due to the unlimited pizza that they were serving. We all trudged (with the exception of some who skipped) to Dynamic Earth where we did an 'Energy of the Future' workshop. Afterwards we had a tour around Dynamic Earth then watched a 3D film in the big dome about natural selection, before the bus ride home.

A huge thank you to Dr Fulton and Mrs Dalgliesh for organising and taking us on this wonderful trip, giving us the opportunity to experience university life.

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.wallacehallacademy.com for the latest news and information.

For the last 6 weeks our class, 1.S2, has been taking part in a "Young Apprentice" competition. We were set the task of selling a product or providing a service. The group who made the most money won and all the profits would go to the charity of their choice.

Much to our delight we were announced the winners. We chose to do a bake sale and it was very successful! We made a profit of £85.80, which was by far the most made from the groups who took part.

The overall profit from the class was £190.00.

The charity Lauren and I chose to donate all the money to: "Yorkhill Children's Hospital."

It was a fun and interesting topic that we all learned a great deal from.

Young Apprentice

report by Jazmin Malley and Lauren Johnstone



Raku Firing at Spring Fling

Class 5E, Monica Barbour, Molly Cronie, Jasmine Thomas, Morgan Davies, Jessica Martin, Cameron McNamara, Dylan Mundell, Shona Rhodes, Sebastian Summers and Millie Thomas, along with their teacher, Mrs Black, visited local artist Anthea Summers' studio as part of SPRING FLING.

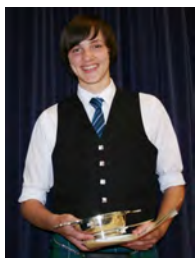
Anthea had a lovely marquee with pots, jugs and vases for sale. She showed the class some examples of her own work and encouraged them to do some Raku pottery firing.

Raku ware 楽焼, *raku-yaki* is a type of Japanese pottery that is traditionally used in the Japanese tea

ceremony, most often in the form of tea bowls. It is customarily characterised by being hand shaped rather than thrown and by the removal of pieces from the kiln while still glowing hot. In the traditional Japanese process, the fired raku piece is removed from the hot kiln and is allowed to cool in the open air or in a container filled with combustible material. Raku techniques have been modified by contemporary potters worldwide.

The class took along some pinch pots they had already made to be glazed with special raku glaze. They enjoyed the fire and smoke used in the glazing process and were delighted with the results!





Wallace Hall Senior Awards Ceremony

The Senior Awards Ceremony is always an eagerly anticipated event on the Wallace Hall Academy calendar. It is an opportunity to celebrate the success of our pupils and recognise their achievements whether this is through academic success, sporting success or through citizenship. This year the awards ceremony experienced one or two changes with the most significant of these being that, due to the numbers of pupils in the senior school, separate ceremonies to acknowledge the pupils leaving Wallace Hall Academy were arranged. These changes were implemented following consultation with parents, pupils and staff and all who attended on Wednesday night agreed that these changes were a resounding success.

However, many other well loved and traditional features remained, beginning with the customary piping in of the award winners, this year by S4 piper Tom Kehoe, winner of the Bill Clement Quaich for piping. Following the opening remarks by Kerry Fraser, PT Pupil Support and our compere for the event, Head Teacher Barry Graham delivered his annual report which focused on the very positive report the school received following the visit from Education Scotland earlier this year. The capacity audience were then treated to a first class musical performance from Emma Kennedy and Abbie Houston, both in S5, who performed "Boogie for Two", a piece that they played to win the duet class at the recent Dumfries and District Music Festival.

his keynote speech, highlighting his close links with Dumfries and Galloway, the work currently being undertaken to ensure that the Dumfries Campus of the University of Glasgow provides a world class university experience in a rural location and the shared aims between Wallace Hall Academy and the University of Glasgow.



It was then the turn of our S5 pupils to collect their awards and this was followed by a spellbinding performance of Adele's "Someone Like You" by S4 pupil, Elizabeth Smithard. Every year the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) supports local schools by presenting an outstanding achievement award and a cheque. This is to be presented to a senior pupil who the school decides is outstanding whether through exceptional academic results or significant personal success. Catherine Bonn, S6, was chosen to be the recipient this year having achieved five Highers at A band 1 and a conditional offer of a place at Cambridge University. Mrs Fraser introduced Shirley Burns, Campus Director at the UWS, who presented this award to Catherine.

Our S6 pupils were then invited on stage to collect their awards with the final accolades of the evening, the overall house shields, being presented to S6 Nith representatives Laura Kennedy and Christopher Ponton for the most house points in both the academic and sporting categories.

A highlight of the evening is always the annual speech from the outgoing Head Boy and Girl. This year was no exception with Cara Halliday and Blair McMenemy delivering a well thought out, comprehensive and amusing look back at their six years at Wallace Hall Academy, accompanied by a hilarious PowerPoint presentation showing a selection of photographs of the S6 pupils, documenting some of their highlights over the past six years.

The evening was closed with Mrs Fraser giving a warm vote of thanks to all involved in the success of the event.



Then we were down to the business of the evening with Phil Cubbon, DHT for S4, S5 and S6, announcing the first batch of awards to be presented to our S4 pupils. Professor David Clark, Director (Interdisciplinary Studies) University of Glasgow, was invited on stage to present these awards and he followed this by delivering

Easter Concert



Photographs by Bethany Ransom



A World of Books at thomas tosh tt

report by Elspeth Nicholson

On the 23rd of April the world celebrated World Book Night. All over the UK different events were taking place to celebrate books and reading and free special World Book Night books were being given away.

Organised by poet JoAnne McKay a number of readings were taking place at Thomas Tosh. There were four different readers: JoAnne, fellow poets Hugh MacMillan and Rab Wilson, and me. JoAnne had asked me to read an extract from a spooky book which I'd read, enjoyed and thought other people should read. She'd turned World Book Night into something rather different from other events. She turned it into a atmospheric, candlelit night and as the light got dimmer outside things became all the more spooky.

JoAnne started the evening by reading some poems she had collected specifically for World Book Night from various different poets she was friends with. Then it was my turn.

After a lot of deliberating and frustration at things "just not being scary" I had eventually chose to read an extract from *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman. *Coraline* is about a girl who wishes her life was more interesting then when it suddenly gets a whole lot more exciting she has to use all her wits and bravery to get it back to the way it was. It is a brilliant story and recently it was made into an animated film by Tim Burton. I was a bit nervous about reading because I had to live up to three experienced poets.

Rab Wilson had flown back from New York to



read *Tam O Shanter* by Robert Burns. Burns was apparently inspired to write the poem by an old abbey in Dumfries. Rab made it really dramatic, though in some parts I was struggling to understand what the Scots words meant! The next to read was Hugh MacMillan who read a story he'd written about a poet who wishes he could be great and who devises a plan to become great. His old friend who is helping him complete the plan cons him and ends up becoming famous himself. It was a hilarious story and really lightened the mood. Then JoAnne brought it tumbling back down again with her reading from *Let the Right One In* by John Ajvide Lindqvist, a Swedish novel about vampires. It sounded like an amazing book and I can't wait to read it.

At the end of the night everyone was dying to get their hands on the World Book Night books – free copies of *Let the Right One In*. Over a million books are given away on World Book Night each year and looking at what happened at Thomas Tosh it's easy to see why.

Cake and Bake for Charity



In first year the Geography class spends some time studying Kenya's culture and development. As part of this topic the class looks at how funds can be raised to support a relevant charity.

1.C1 decided that a cake stall always goes down well with pupils and staff. They spent an afternoon baking with Miss Wilson in Home Economics and then sold the fruits of their labour, chocolate brownies, fairy cakes and shortbread, at interval and lunchtime.

The money raised, £89.68, has been donated to two charities: Riders for Health which delivers health care to Kenya and Maggie's Cancer Care Centres. Ross Bell, an S1 pupil, said: "The important thing about the sale was to work together to raise money for two good causes. I really enjoy charity work and helping out Maggie's Cancer Care and Riders for Health was very satisfying."

Forestry Module

report by Ryan Gibson

As part of our S4 curriculum we need to pick from a selection of modules. Some of the modules offered include Enterprise, Eco Module, Creative Writing, Icing on the Cake, Fitness, Wallace Hall TV, Safe Road User and Read All About It - there is something on the list to interest everyone.



I chose Forestry and really enjoyed this module. I got involved in brashing and restocking trees. Brashing is when you have cut back the branches to allow access for foresters and machinery and restocking is when you plant the trees after a site has been harvested. These tasks help keep the forestry business going.

I really enjoyed the trip our module class made to James Jones and Sons' sawmill at Lockerbie where we saw the process of converting the raw materials into timber.

Land Based Learning

report by Samantha Haining



You'd be forgiven for thinking we had a career in farming for years but no, we are in fact representing Wallace Hall Academy for Intermediate 2 Rural skills.

Our class of ten head out every Friday afternoon to gain knowledge, skills and experience in land based activities on a variety of farms. Such activities include pairing sheep hooves, vaccinating and dosing lambs, milking cows, taking soil samples, planting trees, fencing, tagging calves, weighing pigs and even having a

go at finding the cervix of a cow! These are just a few examples of the array of activities we experience on the farms on a weekly basis.

We all would like to say a big thank you to the farmers who give up their time and patience to educate us and give us the chance to expand our skills. Rural Skills has without a doubt helped us improve our practical skills but also our own personal qualities. We have all gained confidence working with livestock, working as part of a team and being organised and it has given us an opportunity for a pathway into a land based career.

With some pupils going on to agricultural college, some going off to do apprenticeships or some furthering their education at school we can all say Rural Skills has definitely helped us on our path to a career in the rural sector.



An Enterprising Event

Wallace Hall Academy's Social Enterprise Shadow Board (whapples) is delighted to announce that on Tuesday 19th June 2012 they broke the ground for their new community orchard. This event marked the culmination of six months of hard work by a Shadow Board comprised of eleven pupils, ranging from S1 to S5, three community business advisers and three teaching staff, supported by the staff of the Queensberry Initiative.

The board has been working through three sub-groups to prepare for the big day. One of the groups, the Land Negotiation Committee, was successful in sourcing a long term lease of an acre of prime orchard land on Buccleuch Estates' property directly adjacent to the new Wallace Hall Academy and Primary schools. This is a very generous community gesture, in line with all the support received by Wallace Hall Academy and its cluster primaries through the community partnership charity, the Queensberry Initiative.

On Tuesday 19th June the whole Shadow Board, pupils and adults, convened for the launch ceremony and the turning of the

first sod. Several senior Buccleuch Estates managers were in attendance along with the Queensberry Initiative Strategic Group. The board is also pleased that Jools Cox, project co-ordinator of the South West Orchard and Wild Harvest Project, who has advised the board about how to take their proposals forward, took a leading role in the ceremony.

Mark Turner, Depute Head Teacher and Shadow Board Member, said: "This is an innovative project which has been led and developed by our pupils. They are keen to involve the communi-

ty and pupils from local primary schools as well as their classmates at Wallace Hall Academy. It is hoped that the orchard will function effectively as a social enterprise – paying its own way through the sale of fruit and products such as apple juice and chutneys, improving the local environment as well as giving something back to the community."

The Queensberry Initiative is funded by the Dumfries and Galloway LEADER programme, the Holyrood Trust, DGHP and several local community councils.

Photograph below shows whapples co-chair Caitlin Murray turning the first sod in the land set aside for the new community orchard.



Going for Gold



Encouraging pupils to read for pleasure is a key priority at Wallace Hall Academy. Research suggests that reading for pleasure has a positive impact on academic achievement while raising literacy standards in reading attainment, writing ability and breadth of vocabulary.

All of our S1 pupils are timetabled to spend one period of English in the Library working on our Reading Awards Scheme. The Bronze Award is completed during the induction days with the Silver

Award introduced in August, after the summer holidays. Most First Year pupils complete their Silver Award during S1 with a significant number progressing on to Gold and finally Platinum.

To achieve Gold level pupils must read eight to ten books from a list of recommended authors. Pupils may also choose to read one volume of poetry and/or one non-fiction book among their choices.

The photograph on the left shows Becky Walker proudly displaying her Gold Award certificate.

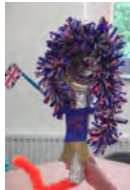
ACTIVITIES WEEK

Thinking Out Of The Box!

Thirteen pupils, mainly S1 and S4, took part in this activity. We started with 'Call My Bluff' which was won by the S4 group. This was followed by an interesting round, entitled 'What am I?'. Pupils were shown a variety of objects and had to identify them and suggest a use for each. The S1 boys group were brilliant!

We finished off with 'Jubilee Time'. Each group had to construct an item to celebrate this event from a

given selection of card, tinsel and other materials. The S1 girls made an innovative mascot for the day, but were narrowly beaten by the skills of the S4 girls who crafted their crown and accessories so well that Mrs Cannon was delighted to take it home to be worn by her son at his school's street party!



Chocolate medals were awarded to the overall victors, the S4 girls, and an enjoyable time was had by all.



Carlisle's Rugby Academy

report by Lewis Morrison and Siôn Davies



On a bright, sunny morning during Activities Week a mixture of S1, S2 and S4 boys and girls were looking forward to participating in John Carlisle's rugby school. The morning involved various rugby related warm up games and some passing drills. Next John demonstrated the physical side of the game. This involved tackling, rucking and a good old game of British Bulldog.

After a quick break the pupils were split into four teams and competed in a tournament. This was a great success as it was clear that the pupils transferred what they had learned earlier into the game situation. The overall feedback from the pupils was very positive and it was clearly evident that everyone had enjoyed themselves, despite a few bumps and bruises! Thank you to John Carlisle for giving up his time to help the younger pupils.

Cycle Crew

A group of pupils took part in a Basic Cycle Maintenance morning with Mr Munro, Miss Carson and Mr Bruce.

The pupils were shown how to lubricate a bicycle and basic safety features were discussed. They were also shown how to remove a wheel and

take off the tyre and check for punctures. The pupils were then able to replace the inner tube and tyre using tyre levers. After morning break, the pupils designed their own poster using images from cycle magazines.

A prize was awarded for the best design. Staff and pupils had an enjoyable experience.



ACTIVITIES WEEK



Clay Pigeon Shooting

On Friday of Activities Week a mix of 20 S1 and S4 pupils were on the Queensberry Estate in the sunshine to try their hand at some shooting.

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation travelled down for the day to talk our young people through the safety issues and laws involved with using firearms. Pupils all got the chance to shoot clays and also to have a go with some air raffles.

The pupils really enjoyed this opportunity and respected the equipment they were allowed to use with many of our young people showing huge potential and a natural skill.

Create a cushion

The challenge was to design and make a cushion. Butterflies, hearts, flowers and initials all proved popular and we even saw a dinghy sailing on the sea!

Pupils were able to choose from a wide range of colours and pattern and many added buttons, ribbons, beads and pompoms as finishing touches. A very creative, enjoyable morning!



Crazy Cupcakes

Crazy cupcakes were aplenty during Activities Week with pupils creating individual, tasty cupcakes. This activity was much enjoyed by all, particularly the decorating stage. There were some imaginative ideas and lots of sticky fingers into the bargain!

Novice Mountain Biking

The day began when we were introduced to the outdoor mountain bike instructors, Ian and Dave, and we were all given helmets to fit our size of head: some bigger than others (cough! Mr Fulton).

We then travelled up to Drumlanrig where we were given bikes and a full safety brief before being taught the basics of mountain biking in the car park in preparation for the trails. After a quick snack of Jaffa Cakes to keep us going we headed into the woods to go on the trails. They were challenging at first but if you took the experts' advice it was a breeze and everyone found they really enjoyed themselves. Thank you to Ian, Dave and Dr Fulton for a great morning.



ACTIVITIES WEEK



Pupils on Par!

Nine pupils of varying ability took part in the golfing experience on Friday. The "rookies"

were assisted by the senior pupils who provided lots of help and encouragement. Nearly all pupils managed to get round the 18 holes of the golf course throughout the day

and although no scores were added up all seemed to enjoy the experience.

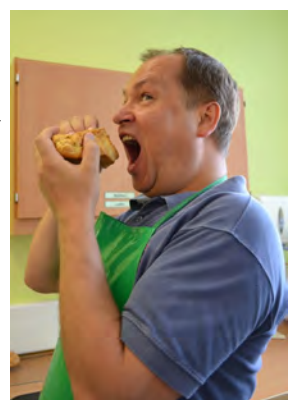
Thanks to Thornhill Golf course and Mrs Weir for assisting during the day.



French Cookery

Les choux à la crème et les crêpes – c'étaient délicieux! On s'est bien amusés.

La grande bouche !!



Wallace Hall Academy Pupils On Safari!

The trip to Blair Drummond Safari Park was fantastic and all involved had a great day. We had plenty of time to see all the animals and make the most of the adventure playground too!

The day started with a visit to the sea lion show and ended with a tour through the Safari enclosure where our bus was under the careful watch of the lions. Thankfully we were all well behaved too and the teachers didn't feed any of us to the big cats!



ACTIVITIES WEEK

QI Woodland Adventure



On Wednesday 30 May, a hardy band of First and Second Years set off for the Queensberry Estate to undertake a series of challenges in the great outdoors.

The group was divided into two sub-groups who then either had a session of outdoor Laserquest or worked with Fraser Clark, a past pupil who is a keen dog trainer/handler. Fraser is winning lots of awards for his skills with hunting dogs of a variety of breeds.

Laserquest in the trees of the Queensberry Estate was quite exciting. In fact, the group working with the dogs had to try hard to ignore the screams

(especially from the staff) when they lost their last life.

The dogs were amazingly controlled, responding to really subtle hand and voice commands. But the stars of this part of the day were the puppies. Everyone got a good cuddle and even the 'hardest' boys were clearly enjoying the pups.

Lunch took place in the open air, to be followed by the participants being formed into three teams with two adults per team, for a very competitive game of photo scavenger hunting. This required teams to climb up and down the Estate's policies and precincts and in one case commandeer the bus! (We still call that cheating, Mr Corrigan!)

Astonishingly, all three teams ended up with the exact same score, 29/30. After group photos it was back on the bus. It was a good day out.



Hunting for Treasure

First year pupils took part in a mind boggling, problem solving treasure hunt around Thornhill.

Although the weather was far from perfect, pupils' spirits were not dampened.

In teams of three they set off at five minute intervals in a race against the clock to find their way round Thornhill solving different clues with the help of some cleverly

placed staff helpers! All pupils thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon in the drizzly rain, with Deri Ronan, Justine Crosbie and Hannah Brown proving victorious. They completed the hunt in a very impressive 46 minutes... Well Done Girls!

Loch Ken Multi-Activity Experience

Excitement was high when Wallace Hall Academy pupils visited the Galloway Multi-Activity Centre.

The fresh non-tidal waters of Loch Ken provided a fun and safe environment for our pupils to try out a range of water sports. For those who preferred to stay on dry land there was the chance to try the climbing wall, the flying fox and the leap of faith!

All on this trip had a fantastic day, heading home tired but happy.



ACTIVITIES WEEK

Pony Perfection

report by Lorna McCafferty



During activities week two groups of Wallace Hall Academy pupils had the opportunity to go horse riding at the Barony College. We were the second group to get this opportunity with another group visiting earlier in the week on the Wednesday.

When our group first arrived some of the college students introduced us to three different ponies. We were then split into teams and we had some pony races. These races varied from riding in and out of cones, trotting and leading the horses. We even had a few pony-related sack races! After these games we stopped for lunch.

Forty-five minutes later our groups were back in the stables helping to prepare the horses for a short trek. In turn, we were shown how to put the reins and bridle on each horse. The trek was to a nearby stream, which was great fun; we even had two people on one horse at one point! We paddled in the stream riding the horses and we had a super time! When we had returned to the stables, everybody had a shot of grooming the ponies and cleaning the hooves. I learnt a lot at the end, putting oil on the horses feet and brushing their hair.

My friends and I had a super time at the Barony College last Friday. Becky Walker said: "The Pony Day was great fun and a good experience. We took part in lots of pony related activities such as mucking out, grooming and pony club games. I had a great day and I hope to be able to go to the Barony College to ride their ponies again very soon."

Thanks to Mr Riley who organised the Activities Week. Also, thanks to all the teachers who came with us. We had a great day!



What a Catch!

Pupils had the opportunity to spend a day fly fishing at one of our local beauty spots. All had a great day with hot competition for who landed the catch of the day!



More Activities Week Antics



Construction



M & D's



Wii Dance



Bowling

ACTIVITIES WEEK



S2 pupils enjoyed a trip to Liverpool for their Activities Week. Photographs above give a flavour of the fun they had.

ACTIVITIES WEEK



ACTIVITIES WEEK



Ardèche/Aosta trip 2012

report by Judi Park



The 2012 Ardèche trip was an unforgettable, once in a lifetime experience. There were so many highlights and, from start to finish, good teamwork was required, from having to suffer each other for almost 30 hours in a coach to paddling 2-man kayaks through the rapids to getting rid of slugs inside our tents.

Thirty-six excited pupils and

four teachers set off at 11.30am on Friday 8th June and although our journey was much longer than expected, due mainly to a 4 hour delay to our ferry crossing caused by stormy weather in the English Channel, this was not a problem as there was plenty of banter and many sing-a-longs ("We love you Burnley, we do!") to keep us entertained. However, when we did arrive at our French campsite it

was great to get the chance to chill out and play games in the pool.

The next 2 days were full of laughs and challenges as we paddled 32km through the wonderful Ardèche gorge, spent a night under the stars and had the opportunity to do a few rock jumps.

We then moved on through the Mont Blanc tunnel to Italy where our activities included white water rafting, gorge walking in glacial water (brrr...), rock climbing and high ropes. The most challenging but hilarious experience was squeezing through tiny spaces in rocks. As well as the planned activities we entertained Acorn staff with the "Miss Villeneuve" and "Bob the Builder" pageant and congratulations to the winners, Harvey Stroud and Beth Muirhead.

I think there is no doubt everyone enjoyed the trip - it certainly brought our group of new S6 pupils closer together. We had a fabulous time and the memories will remain with us for a very long time to come.

A big thank you to all the teachers who joined us on this trip, especially Mr McEwen who we hope enjoyed his last trip with Wallace Hall Academy.





French Trip

report by Josie Fairley Keast with input from other S1 pupils

By about 8:45pm on Sunday the 27th of May 2012, all of the 30 S1 students and three teachers (Mrs Gall, Miss Smith and Mr Harrison) had gathered in the car park to go to Normandy, France. The journey was overnight, hence the pillows and blankets. Once everybody was aboard, the 'Parks of Hamilton' coach set off. We went down to Dover and caught a ferry in the early morning over to Calais. We then drove along to the district of Mayenne, arriving at "La Château du Tertre" at about 4pm. It was a long and sometimes boring journey.

Things improved immediately when we met our activities leader Kate, who showed us to our accommodation. We had some time to get organised before dinner. After dinner we did 'Passport to the World', where we ran about answering questions about different countries and performing forfeits in groups. Quite a lot of people enjoyed the forfeits, while others weren't so sure.

One of the important things we had to get used to in France was the time difference. It was an hour ahead in France, which meant when the fire alarm went off (twice) on Tuesday morning we were all shivering outside and it seemed rather early. After breakfast we had some more free time before we met Kate for our first activity. We went to the market at *Ernée*. We went around the market in groups of five, trying to buy the ingredients to make our lunch. It was very interesting trying to speak French and we're sure the stallholders thought much the same. When we got back to the Château we made our own lunch using the ingredients we'd bought. It was very messy but everyone enjoyed it, possibly because we got to eat our creations which were '*délicieux*'.

After lunch we did team challenge and climbing, both of which were done in groups of ten. They were very enjoyable and there were lots of memorable incidents. After dinner we played some 'Wide Games'. These were basically games which could be played in wide-open spaces. Brendan who took us for that activity was very funny and put up with quite a lot, including his new nickname "Soggy", courtesy of Chelsea.

On Wednesday we went to Fougères and went on a town trail, answering questions and following directions in French. We learnt a lot about France there. We also had a picnic before getting back on the bus. Then we went to Mont Saint Michel and climbed up a bit (once it stopped raining). The view from the top was very nice and afterwards we went to look round the shops. Our evening activity was a campfire and everyone helped pile twigs and branches onto the fire and toasted (or cremated) marshmallows. Soggy/Brendan put up with us yet again for this activity.

In the morning on Thursday we walked into Ambrières where we went to a French bakery. We saw a video about making French bread and got to make and eat some *croissants* and *pain au chocolat*. They were very nice and it was really interesting. On the way back to the château we went to a hypermarket- a really big supermarket. After lunch we did raft building, where everyone got very wet as they dragged rope, barrels and poles back to shore. Afterwards there were lots of games which some people loved but others hated. One of the highlights was 'Soggy' living up to his nickname as 'Ru', another of the activity leaders, chucked him in the river. On Thursday night there was a disco and lots of us played pool in the recreation area.

On Friday we all packed and tidied up the dormitories. We then had some free time so we played some games with Kate before saying our final 'au revoir' and setting off for Calais. We left France with lots of new memories and experiences (including eating snails/*escargots*, which were met with mixed reactions). We had our dinner on the ferry and eventually reached Thornhill just after 5am on Saturday morning.





Hands On Careers Event with a Difference : Rural Opportunities

Remember 18th June - 2010's ROD



Following a very successful hands on careers event two years ago, The Queensberry Initiative is in the final stages of preparation for their bi-ennial Rural Opportunities Day to be held on Friday 29th June in and around Wallace Hall Academy. (By the time this newsletter is published ROD 2012 will have taken place. Photographs and information will feature in next term's newsletter.)

In 2010 eighty eight providers from a variety of local businesses, education and training establishments, Third Sector agencies and other professionals interacted with pupils from the six cluster primaries in Mid-Nithsdale and all the pupils at Wallace Hall Academy. The day was a resounding success. Both providers and pupils made it clear that such a worthwhile



numbering over ninety five and still rising. They have shown very willing to give up their time to enable over seven hundred children and young people to experience, interact and become better informed about the career pathways, educational opportunities and entrepreneurial possibilities all around them in their locale. The purpose of the day is for pupils to expand their horizons and open their eyes to what Dumfries and Galloway has to offer them.

Queensberry Initiative Development Officer Pat Kirby said: "This year's event is already shaping up to be bigger and better than the very successful inaugural Rural Opportunities Day of 2010. Tree surgeons will be tied tightly to branches, artists will be arranging their work, agricultural engineers will be "dancing" with diggers, doctors will be diagnosing disorders and chefs will be cooking up a storm. We are confident that all the children and young people who attend will come away buzzing with ideas about their own futures."

The Queensberry Initiative is funded by the Dumfries and Galloway LEADER programme, the Hollywood Trust, DGHP, Awards for All and several local community councils.



opportunity needed to be offered on a regular basis.

Queensberry Initiative staff started contacting potential exhibitors early this year and have been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the volunteers, already



Olympic Flame enlightens Stranraer

report by Robert Guthrie



Having already performed in the presence of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester in May at a Diamond Jubilee concert at the Easterbrook Hall, the National Youth Choir of Scotland's Dumfries Area Choir fulfilled another prestigious engagement on June 7th travelling to Cairnryan near Stranraer to welcome the London 2012 Olympic Torch onto Scottish soil.

The Choir had been invited to sing a special NYCoS commissioned piece of music, appropriately called 'Going for Gold', composed by Tom Cunningham and Derek Roberts, as the Olympic Flame arrived for the very first time into Scotland.

Four pupils from Wallace Hall Academy, Lucy Doig, Sarah Kenny, Alex Southall and I, were chosen to sing with NYCoS at this prestigious event. When we and the rest of the choir members stepped onto the bus which would take us to Stranraer, we knew a long and exciting day was in store, with a once in a lifetime opportunity to see the Olympic flame and to capture the unique spirit of the Games. After the seemingly never ending journey from Dumfries to Stranraer, we had a much needed meal before the last leg to Cairnryan to prepare for the event, which was being televised.

When it came to 5:00pm, we had just an hour and a half until we would be live on air. Typically, the heavens decided they would

open as soon as we were about to walk on, but it did not dampen the Choir's spirits. After words of encouragement from staff and a message from NYCoS Founder and Artistic Director, Christopher Bell, we headed on stage. As we walked out, we were exposed to the many press representatives who had set up – around 40 of them. Reporters from the ITV and BBC were there,



plus journalists from national newspapers, with their long distance cameras and notepads. It was really exciting!

The cameras followed us as we walked from the bus into the rain and what seemed like a hurricane. On the specially constructed stage at the dockside, we could see that the ferry, named the European Highlander, was fast approaching. It had been fitted with extra fuel and engines to ensure it reached Cairnryan's ferry port on time with its important cargo.

At last, the ferry docked and a

door opened. The walkway was raised and all went quiet. Cameras were on us the whole time, photos were taken, and people were watching from all corners of the globe. We kept smiling for a very long time.

Suddenly, a line of journalists formed around the foot of the staircase of the walkway, making a colourful display with their network branded umbrellas. Three Sat Vans were also parked in the car park to relay images to broadcasters from all over the world.

At last, the much anticipated moment had arrived. Doreen Bowie, a Scottish dancing teacher who lives in Stranraer, stepped out of the ferry with one of the 'mother flame' canisters that had the Olympic Flame inside. These are taken from the original flame which was lit in Athens at the official Olympic Handover ceremony.

As she reached the end of the walkway, everyone was given full view of this momentous display, and the assembled media representatives swarmed round getting interviews and photos with Doreen Bowie which would appear on TV news channels and the next morning's newspapers. It was really thrilling to be there, live, seeing the flame, something that most people would only see on television. It was fantastic to be part of something this big, and it is certainly a moment that I will remember for the rest of my life and I'm sure the others would agree.

From Stranraer, the torch relay continued to travel round Scotland, including another visit to our region on 21st June when it will be taken to Dumfries, Annan and Gretna, and back through England to arrive at the Olympic Park in London on 27th July.

It was a special privilege to be a part of something so unforgettable.

Geobus Visits Wallace Hall

The Geobus visited Wallace Hall Academy on Friday 25th May to teach Higher and Standard Grade Geographers about methods used to monitor volcanic activity. The Geobus is an outreach programme from St Andrew's University travelling round the country to promote Earth Sciences amongst young people.



Connor Barnes said: "The demonstration using the infra-red thermal imaging camera was interesting because it showed how technology is used to predict how volcanic eruptions happen. I learned lots from the Geobus visit and would certainly take part again."



The hands on, practical demonstrations were interesting and informative, focusing on using a jigsaw to highlight continental drift, nuts and bolts to emphasise the difficulty and importance of predicting volcanic eruptions and a Smart Board live connection to an infra-red camera showing hot and cold areas not visible to the naked eye.

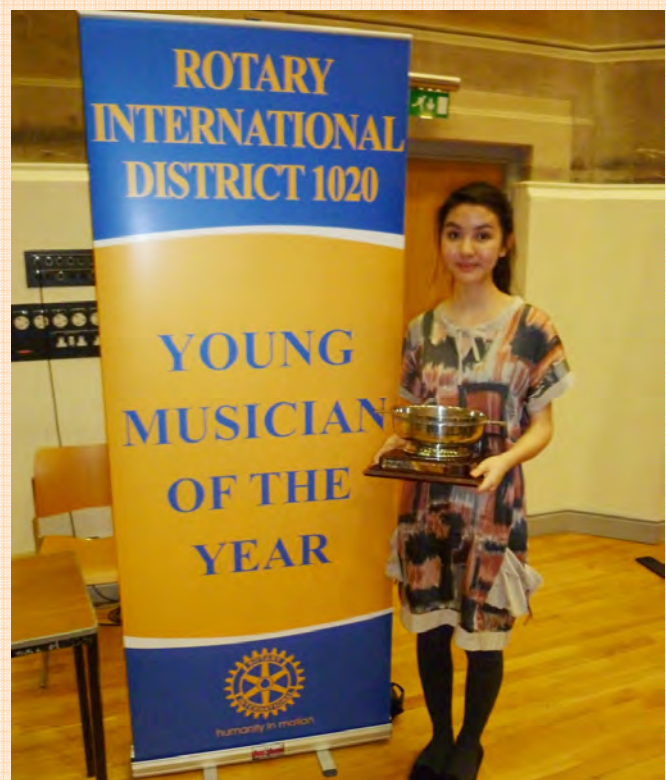


Virtuoso Performance

In last term's newsletter Wallace Hall Academy pupil Martha Ferguson, 15, was featured for winning the Rotary Dumfries and Galloway Area "Young Musician of the Year" competition. Shortly after this win Martha travelled to Edinburgh to take part in the South of Scotland final where she again tasted success and won a beautiful Quaich for her performance.

Unfortunately although Martha did not win the next stage of the competition, the Scottish Final, she played extremely well and was ably accompanied by her elder sister, Hannah, who stepped in at very short notice to play for her. Martha demonstrated her exceptional musicianship by performing a beautiful rendition of Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata - 3rd movement at our Easter Concert. Martha also performed at our Senior Awards Ceremony, playing the piano to welcome guests as they arrived at the Bailey Hall.

Martha is an extremely talented young lady and we are very proud of her musical success.



Lewis Hamilton and the Boogie Brothers



On the final day of last term Wallace Hall Academy pupils and staff enjoyed a visit from Lewis Hamilton and the Boogie Brothers. Lewis is making quite a name for himself in the music scene at the minute as a prodigious young talent who is making his mark in the Scottish Blues circuit. Lewis and his band, a family affair with father on bass and cousin on drums, rocked the music department with pupils captivated by Lewis's phenomenal skill on the guitar. This was a musical treat that will be remembered at Wallace Hall for many years to come.

The Working in the Community Module Group embraced the spirit of Easter by choosing to organise an Easter Egg hunt for the local playgroup.

On the 21st March the module team designed a course, hid the treasure and worked with the young "hunters" to find the eggs. There were lots of happy faces and chocolate smiles all round! Parents and playgroup staff were very complimentary about the module team and were impressed by the way they interacted with the children. Playgroup staff backed up this praise by writing to Mr Gilius and Mr Pape to thank them and the pupils for all their efforts.

The Working in the Community Module will be running again in the coming session. Pupils will be responsible for selecting, planning and implementing a range of projects during which they will actively engage with our local community.

Easter Eggstravaganza!





No fewer than four Wallace Hall Academy pupils received nominations for the Nithsdale Sports Personality Awards held at the Crichton Golf Club on Friday 8th June 2012. The Awards are an opportunity to celebrate the successes of our local athletes, teams, coaches and volunteers over the past year.

Former S6 pupil Maili Mackenzie was awarded the trophy for the Female Sports Personality of the Year for modern pentathlon, a sport that requires five disciplines: shooting, running, swimming, riding and fencing. She first competed at national level in this sport when she was eight and her interest began when she started to ride ponies at the age of 3.

Over the years Maili has continued to improve and is now training with the GB World Class Talent Programme for modern pentathlon. In 2011, she competed at Youth level in the European Championships. Also that year Maili travelled to Poland to compete in the Olympic Hopefuls competition where she was the second British athlete home and was sixth overall.

Maili has been offered a place at Millfield school which specialises in the Modern Pentathlon. This is a fantastic opportunity for Maili and one we are sure she will grasp with both hands. We wish Maili every success with her future.

S4 pupil Jason Vernon was nominated in the Junior Male Sports Personality category for his achievements in motor cycling. Over the past season Jason has competed in the Aprilia RS 125 category of his sport and has either won or been narrowly beaten in all of his races. Jason plans to move up to the 600cc category when he turns 16 and hopes he will continue to

Sporting Stars

be a force to be reckoned with in his sport. Jason was delighted to be nominated for the Junior Male Sports Personality Award and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Abbie Houston, S6, was nominated for the Junior Female Sports Personality of the Year. Her nomination follows a year of success for Abbie with the Dumfries Amateur Swimming Club. Last year Abbie competed at the Welsh National Championships where she broke 3 records and won 4 gold medals and a silver medal. In February Abbie became the Dumfries Amateur Swimming Club Champion in the 15 to 16 year category, winning the highest number of points in her section.

At the West District Championships this year Abbie won 3 gold medals and a silver medal and at the Scottish Schools' won 4 golds. More recently she competed at the Scottish national Age Group Championships where she won two gold medals and was the champion in her age group.

Abbie has swam within the required times to allow her to compete at the British National Championships in July. Following her recent form I'm sure Abbie will give her competitors something to think about!

Laura Brown, S4, was nominated as part of the Solway Synchronised Stars and Breeze Skating Teams. With the Solway Stars team Laura competed in the Trophy D'Ecosse winning their category and the title of Scottish Champions. Laura is very committed to her sport and practices before and after school, three mornings and two evenings a week at the local ice rink. A high standard is required from all the skaters and this is reflected in the outstanding success they have achieved over the past year. Laura really enjoys her skating and has made some great friends through her sport.

It is a fantastic achievement for these four young people to be recognised at the Nithsdale Sports Council Awards. Head Teacher Barry Graham said: "To achieve in sport at such a high level takes dedication, commitment and talent, all qualities these four young people possess in abundance. I am proud that they are all pupils at Wallace Hall Academy and wish them every success in their future competitions."



Scottish Rowing Championships

report by Chloe Davidson



Wallace Hall pupils recently represented the school at the Scottish rowing championships at Strathclyde Park in Glasgow. Rowing on the 2km loch, there was tough competition from all over Scotland at the event.

Beth Johnstone, Rebecca Smith, Ewan Davidson, Lauren Johnstone and Chloe Davidson all competed in different events throughout the two day regatta. All the crews did very well, winning five silver medals overall. These pupils are all members of the local rowing club, Nithsdale Amateur Rowing Club, which has training four times a week on the River Nith in Dumfries. We row in singles, doubles, quads and

sometimes eights with other pupils from Wallace Hall: Angus Bruce, James Donnelly and Harvey Buchanan and people from Dumfries, Castle Douglas and other places from the region.

Throughout the racing season, from April to June, we compete at other regattas around Glasgow and the north of England. Nithsdale regatta is hosted by the club at the boathouse, near the old swimming pool in Dumfries, on the 23rd of June and anyone is welcome to attend this fun event.

"Rowing is a unique sport which can be both physically and mentally challenging, but the elegance of just gliding on the river really makes it special for me." says Beth Johnstone who has rowed for 4 years. Nithsdale always welcomes new members – no experience required! Just come down and give it a try on Tuesday or Wednesday nights from 5:30pm to 7:30pm or Saturday mornings from 10:30am until 12 noon or for more information visit the clubs website: www.nithsdalearc.com.



Parliamentary Recognition



In our last newsletter S5 pupil Kellie Carmichael was featured for winning an award for the RYA volunteer of the year. As

a result of winning this award, a parliamentary motion was passed on the 12th of March to recognise her achievement.

The motion states that: "Parliament wishes to congratulate Kellie on her achievement in winning the Royal Yachting Association Scotland's young volunteers of the year award; believes that Kellie should be commended for her six years of volunteering and recognises the role of all of Scotland's young sailing volunteers in their work in supporting members of their local communities and encouraging them to get involved in the

sport."

Kellie said: "I feel really honoured that my volunteering has been recognised by the Scottish Parliament. I would like to thank Elaine Murray for passing this motion and all those who have supported it. I really enjoy working with all the young sailors at Wallace Hall Academy and would encourage new members to come along and give the sport a try. Please speak to one of the teaching members of staff who run the club, Mr Bell, Mrs Black or Mr Miller, if you are interested in joining us."

A variety of extra curricular activities take place at lunchtime and after school in the P.E. Department. These activities include Badminton, Basketball, Dance, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Rugby and Table Tennis. If you would like to take part in any of these activities please speak to a member of the PE staff for further details.

Selected for Scotland



Chris Ponton, one of our senior pupils last session, was recently selected to represent Scotland twice in successive months. After winning the school and the regional schools' cross-country races, Chris travelled to Irvine to compete in the Scottish Schools' National Championships.

He finished 4th and was selected to represent the Scottish Schools in the Home Countries International match on 18th March. Chris ran in the under 20s race and was one of the youngest in a strong UK field. He finished a very credible 24th and was the second Scottish School boy to finish. As a result of this series of races, Chris was selected to represent Scotland in the London Mini-Marathon on 22nd April. Chris unfortunately sustained a stress fracture on his tibia and therefore did not perform at this event as he had hoped. However, he thoroughly enjoyed the visit to London, soaking up the atmosphere of the crowds along the route.

Chris trains up to 6 times per week and is coached locally by David Hood. He is a member of Edinburgh Athletic Club and Nithsdale Athletic Club.

This year Chris is taking a Gap Year and then plans to study Law at Aberdeen University. He hopes to continue his running focusing on middle to long distance events.

Hockey Heroes

report by Kathryn Park

On Tuesday 6th of March, the Wallace Hall Academy third year girls' hockey team – Fleur Robinson (C), Philippa Weir (VC), Beth Johnstone, Alex Radley, Emma Holden, Rebecca Smith, Kate Lethardy, Kathryn Park, Emily Morton (2nd Year) and Zara Duncan (2nd Year) all loaded into the school minibus to King George V for the annual Dr Turner's hockey tournament.

Our first game was against Lockerbie which ended the same way as our second game against Dalbeattie firsts: both 2-0 to us. Our third game we won with ease as the result was 5-0. We then battled our way through the semi-finals against Dumfries High School to triumph 2-0. That led us nervously to the final game

against Annan firsts. Throughout the match we managed to score two goals which was enough to be crowned the champions!

The total goals scored during the day was six from Philippa and seven from Fleur but credit goes to the defence of the team who

had a clear round in every match. A great team effort with victory well deserved.

Thanks to Mrs and Miss Miller for all their support with the Hockey Club throughout the season.





HOCKEY NEWS



The S1 and S2 Hockey teams took part in the Regional Dr Turner's Hockey Tournament 2012 on March 21st. The S1 girls were unfortunate to receive a number of injuries on the day however managed to record a 2-0 win against Lockerbie Academy during the Round Robin stages. Goal scorers in that match were Caitlin Harley and Lorna Rideout.

The S2 girls faced 10 teams in their competition and finished Runner Up in Pool B. In the semi final they faced a strong Moffat Academy side who were undefeated in Pool A. A determined performance saw Wallace Hall win 3-0 with goals from Emily Morton and Kirsty Higgins (2). In the final the girls drew with Lock-

erbie and were unlucky not to score a goal as they had all of the possession! Well done to all the girls who attended! The squads are as follows:

S1: Georgia Clark (c), Lorna Rideout (v-c), Lauren Johnstone, Justine Crosbie, Imogen Gordon, Caitlin Harley, Meagan Wood.

S2: Zara Duncan (c), Emily Morton (v-c), Sophie Lee, Georgia Gordon, Niamh Snailham, Kirsty Higgins, Mollie Hoddinott.

Coaches Miss Miller and Erin McGinley would like to congratulate all the S1 and S2 boys and girls who have attended Hockey Club throughout the year and wish them luck in future competitions.

Sports Champions 2012



S1 Girls' Champion: Sarah Maxwell
S2 Girls' Champion: Heather O'Connor
S3 Girls' Champion: Kathryn Park
Senior Girls' Champion: Not awarded

S1 Boys' Champion: Fraser Hogg
S2 Boys' Champion: Ben Wicks
S3 Boys' Champion: Declan Hill
Senior Boys' Champion: Craig Neill

WALLACE HALL ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL NEWS



We are almost at the end of another school year. We recently had our final meeting as a Parent Council for the 2011/12 session. As well as looking back over the year, we have started planning our meetings for the year ahead.

On Tuesday 11th September we will hear about careers advice given to pupils at school. This is

an area where it is important that both parents and pupils understand what is available and also what is expected of them. Moving on from school is an important time and it is key that teachers, advisors, parents and pupils all work together to ensure that the correct and best advice and information is made available.

We plan to hold our A.G.M. on Tuesday 9th October and on that evening we hope to have an address from a representative from Dumfries & Galloway Constabulary on the misuse of drugs. Looking ahead to the November meeting which is still to be finalised, we are hoping to have a presentation on the successful Duke of Edinburgh Project held within the school.

I am pleased that all of our meetings this year have been well attended, we have covered a range of issues and projects from

eco matters (by Kirsten Van Dyke at our May meeting), the Queensberry Initiative, Learning in Numeracy, to name a few.

We were actively involved in assisting and supporting the school in the helpful and excellent Education Scotland Inspection.

The Parent Council provides a sounding board and advice to the school management team and others when required. It also provides an excellent opportunity for parents and others associated with the school to become involved. The level of interest and support over the past session has been high and this is much appreciated. There is always room for more people to join in and I would be delighted to hear from anyone who has an interest in Wallace Hall Academy.

Brian Johnstone,
Chairman

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



Drumlanrig Castle Grounds

Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, Scotland DG3 4AQ

Sunday 4th November 2012

Information and entry forms available at:
www.whahalfmarathon.com
 Race Administrator: Diane Jarvie
 Tel: 01848 332120
 Email: wmaratho264@ea.dumgal.sch.uk



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

Marathon gets set to Go!

This year's Queensberry Half Marathon, Demon 10k and the Castle Fun Run will be held on Sunday 4th November in the beautiful surroundings of Drumlanrig Castle by kind permission of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch.

We are keen to build upon the success of last year's event and would like to encourage as many people as possible to get involved whether by running the race or by helping out with some of the many jobs on the day.

Information and entry forms are now available on the dedicated race website at www.whahalfmarathon.com or via the link from our school website on www.wallacehallacademy.com. There will be reduced entry fees for parent/pupil entry combinations and a special prize for this category in the 10k.

If you are available to volunteer to help out on the day please contact Mrs Diane Jarvie, Race Administrator by telephone on 01848332120 or by email at wmarathon264@ea.dumgal.sch.uk.

Please come along and support this event.