



WALLACE HALL ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER: OCTOBER 2010



Showcasing our school: Queensberry Initiative at the Scottish Learning Festival



Aki, Callum and Owen talk about their QI experiences

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On Thursday 23rd September ten students and five members of staff travelled to Glasgow to present the Queensberry Initiative to the Scottish Learning Festival. For a full report and pictures please turn to page 9.

Walking for fun

by Caitlin Palmer and Caitrin Stirling

For the second year in a row, Wallace Hall Academy held a very successful charity sports day. June 23rd was a fun-filled day with many events and activities that everyone could take part in.

The whole school took part in a sponsored walk with water for the event provided by Tesco. Morrisons, Dumfries and Spar and Co-op in Thornhill donated a variety of fruit which was presented as fruit salads and available throughout the afternoon. Competitive events included the mile race, a long-standing tradition of the school, relay races and the tug-of-war. House points were at stake in the races so the competition was intense and well-supported, with Scaur eventually triumphing over Nith and Cairn, though Cairn emerged victorious from the tug-of-war. The day's events also offered a



break from the heat of the competition with some fun activities including a six-a-side football tournament and Splat-the-Teacher.

Bruce McKenzie of South West Sound kept the crowd entertained with music throughout the day. Dress code was on a football World Cup theme, with pupils decked out in national colours of their choice. The day was definitely a success and was enjoyed by all. For more pictures please turn to page 14.

WHA Support Charity by Mhairi Parker

The Charities Committee is made up of 6th year pupils at Wallace Hall Academy and it is our goal to fundraise for a variety of charities – local, national and international.

Our first fundraising event will be in October, for the Teenage Cancer Trust. This is a national charity which affects people of our age every day:

"Every day in the UK, six young people aged 13 to 24 are told they have cancer. That's about 2,100 young people a year."

The week before the October Holidays (4th – 8th) will be our fundraising week. There will be an assortment of different things going on including bake sales (4th and 5th of October)

"Guess how many sweets are in the jar?", a tombola and a non-school uniform day (8th of October).

On Thursday 7th of October we have booked and confirmed that Mr Graham and Head Boy-Stephen Morrison will be having both their legs waxed while answering general knowledge questions. Admission will be 50p and it's guaranteed to be a good laugh.

For the non-school uniform day we are hoping for something a bit more interesting. We have researched the campaign and found "Get Wiggy with it". So we are hoping everyone will wear a wig (of any kind). This will cost pupils and staff £1.



On Friday 8th of October we are planning for a big event, a sumo wrestling event at lunchtime. Entry will cost 50p.

We hope that everyone will have a fun week and enjoy all the events that will be taking place.

All money raised will be donated directly to Teenage Cancer Trust.

Haiti Concert

Following the success of previous fundraising events, Wallace Hall Academy's 'Haiti Team' has decided to continue their effort and arrange a charity concert.

The concert, the next step in the fundraising, is scheduled for Thursday the 30th of September and Friday the 1st of October, and it contains a variety of acts from within the school. There will also be a special performance of Oliver, with a Twist performed by the Meningitis Trust group from the hugely popular Strictly Cabaret. All money raised will go to SOS Children's Villages. Full report and pictures in the next school newsletter.

Show Success

by Caitrin Stirling and Caitlin Palmer

Sam and Ally Haining's sheep swept the boards at Moffat Show this year after 10 years of never winning a championship. The Haining family who live in Dunscore breed pedigree Suffolks and Texels as well as commercial sheep. After being placed first in the pen of three and the tup lamb class, they went on to win male Suffolk champion and female Suffolk champion, the overall Suffolk champion and also the interbreed champion with their homebred ewe lamb whose only previous distinction was achieving 4th place at Dumfries show.

Although their dad showed the sheep, Sam and Ally's hard work at dressing and feeding the sheep was indispensable, meaning the sheep were looking their best and were in top condition, key to their amazing success in the show. Photograph on the right shows Ally with the family's prizewinning Suffolk sheep.



WHA Chemists visit Strathclyde University

by Ashka Desai

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Fraser and John in full scientist mode!

It was an early start for the chemists going to Strathclyde University on 13th September. We left at half eight enjoying a pleasant journey up trying to decipher Mrs Davidson's cryptic chocolate and sweet quiz.

We arrived and put our white coats and safety glasses on in their first year laboratories. After being given a brief safety talk we were straight to work. The Advanced Higher pupils were sent off to do really hard experiments while the Higher pupils set off to make slime and stalactites. The slime took a while to make but it was worth it when we ended up with something that looked like strawberry jelly. Luckily no one tried to eat it! Some things were unsuccessful but the students helping tried hard to make them work. We

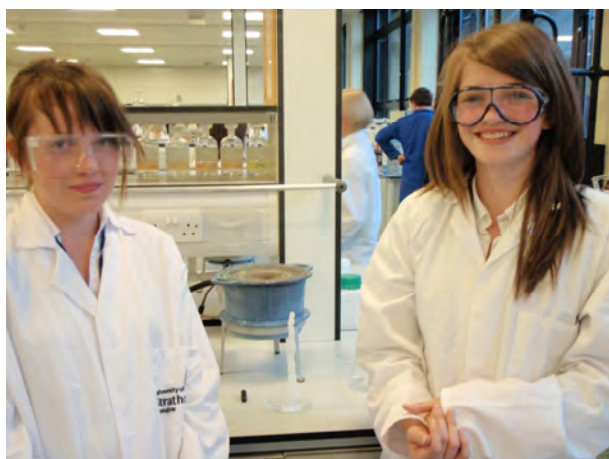


Stuart gets mixed up!

also made a bubbling potion with dry ice that changed colour!

After our experiments we were given a tour of the campus by some of the students. We saw the labs that the PhD students worked in, an NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance) machine that could work out what is in a substance by how it decays, and a machine that x-rays tiny crystals that balance on a hair-sized wire so you know their structure. We also passed by a forensics lab that we weren't allowed in because we might cause contamination.

After our tour we had lunch and then headed to the Buchanan Galleries for a browse around the shops where we enjoyed milkshakes, cookies and ice creams. We arrived home in time for the buses glad to be home after a valuable and educational fun day out.



Isla and Maili model the latest fashion in specs!



S1 Interview by Caitlin Palmer

Niamh Tait, 1C2, and Natalie Hutchinson, 1N1, are both new S1 pupils. Both of them are enjoying the step up from primary school. They said it was "quite scary" but it's also "been nice making new friends". Niamh's favourite subjects so far are Music, Technical and Drama and Natalie's are Home Economics and Art although she says: "I've had loads of homework even though I've only been here for 4 days!" Picture above shows L - R Niamh and Natalie.

Film Review: Welcome

by Angus Blair

Welcome, a recently released French movie, takes us on a special journey with 17 year old Bilal, a Kurd living in Northern France, awaiting the unlikely chance to illegally get to England and search for his beloved girlfriend. Bilal is caught up in this homeless atmosphere, paying hundreds to attempt to hide in lorries and vans through the Channel Tunnel, in just one of the desperate ways tried to get to the glorified Britain.

On meeting a swimming coach, Bilal seizes an opportunity to learn to swim and take on the Channel. From this moment on, we are attached to this gripping tale of real life and its downfalls. The inequities of our modern society are highlighted throughout while the simple humanity of individuals, such as Bilal's swimming coach, are shown vividly.

This swimming coach becomes a life coach for a vulnerable Bilal who is taken in and nurtured as if he were his child, coaching swimming, coaching life.

We are shown the areas where these homeless live. Disturbing yet beautiful cinema shows the brutalities of the police, while a



return to violent Nazism sits in the back of each and every captured viewer's mind.

This great film explores this young man's life, who is in the same position as thousands of other hopeful asylum seekers. The film's potency addresses the humanity in us all.

Wallace Hall Goes Green

Pupils have been taking steps to help the school become more 'green' and 'sustainable'. They have been carrying out a number of projects since Christmas.

Pupils in the Eco-Module have started work on a biodiversity garden in the small wooded area at the front of the school. They plan to create new habitats for birds and insects, a wild flower area,



WHA Eco-Module Group

a short nature walk and a small outdoor classroom that can be used by the nursery and primary pupils. Their work, so far, has been supported by a £250 Biodiversity Grant from Scottish Natural Heritage.

Other module projects include calculating out the school's Global Footprint; gathering information on electricity and water use; and thinking of ways to reduce the school's waste. Waste reduction and recycling have also been targeted in a poster competition. Tilda Borrows (S2) won the competition and her poster is visible around the school.

The new polytunnel and allotment have been set-up and pupils have been out preparing the soil for some winter vegetables. It is hoped that the Biology pupils, Rural Skills and Duke of Edinburgh groups will grow plenty of vegetables that can be used by classes in Home Economics. This will help to reduce our food miles and promote organic gardening.

The garden bulb fundraiser has been very successful and pupils have raised over £200 towards equipment for the outdoor classroom (tools, seed trays and compost). We are also collecting Morrison's Let's Grow vouchers for further equipment and these can be handed in to the library for collection.

It is hoped that an environment group for junior pupils (S1 – S3) will start up after the October holidays. Information will be issued during registration and assemblies. Anyone interested should see Mrs VanDyke for details.

First Impressions by Jack Taylor

Avez Naqvi, Lewis Tait, and Josh Paterson, below, have all started S1 this year and are all greatly enjoying the change from primary to secondary school. They are particularly enjoying the variety of subjects.



Contacting the school

Please be aware that the school telephone number has now changed to **01848 332120**. The fax number is now 01848 332564 with the email address: woffice358@ea.dumgal.sch.uk.

Our Office Staff are your first point of contact. They will be pleased to deal with any enquiry you wish to make regarding your child and to put you in touch with the relevant member of staff. Outside office hours you may leave a message on our answering machine. Please contact us if you have any problems. We are here to help.

Visit the school website: www.wallacehallacademy.com for the latest news and information.

S1 Active Expressions 'B Ball Beat'

This event was organised for S1 pupils to encourage participation and promote health and wellbeing. We would like to thank 'Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland' for leading these activities.

S1 pupil, Olivia Mess, said: "Different but really, really fun!" Blair Ross agreed and said: "The basketball activity was exciting and everyone joined in the fun." Connor Barnes remarked: "It was a great way to get active and everyone had a good laugh."



Wallace Hall Academy House Captains 2010/2011

Cairn



Cairn L - R

Connor Holland (S3), Rachel Shnapp (S3), Grant Marchbank (S2), Sophie Whytock (S5), Jeanna Davies (S6), Daniel Manson (S6), Jack Gordon (S5), Emily Morton (S1), Emma Sloan (S4), Adam Dalgleish (S1) and Matthew Holden (S4). Missing from the photograph is Kayla Kerr (S2).

Nith



Nith L - R

Amelia Snape (S2), Connor Manson (S4), Ellis McLachlan (S2), Vince Coleman (S6), Laura Kennedy (S5), Maimie Sloan (S6), Agostina Pombo (S1), Adam Swift (S5), Andrew Kennedy (S1) and Beth Muirhead (S4). Missing from the photograph are Martha Ferguson (S3) and Ryan Sims (S3).

Scaur



Scaur L - R

Duncan Muir (S4), Philippa Weir (S2), Jack Pybus (S2), Amy Hollingsworth (S4), Nathan Moore (S5), Macauley Burns (S3), Michael McAleavey (S6), Olivia Mess (S1), Charlotte Morris (S6), Sam Solley (S1) and Gillian Young (S5). Missing from the photograph is Chloe Davidson (S3).

S2 and S3 Health and Wellbeing Day

As part of the development of our pupils' Health and Wellbeing, all S2 and S3 pupils followed an alternative timetable on Wednesday 15th September.

This included: Sporting Activities led by our Active Schools Co-ordinator; 'Hop Hop Your Heart' led by Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland; Promoting Good Mental Health, raising self-esteem and dealing with stress. This session was led by our school Educational Psychologist Wilma Stoker and Fiona Findlay from CAMHS. Also on offer was Information from the local Youth Enquiry Service which runs in tandem with the Youth Health Service and a session on Drug & Alcohol Awareness, Internet and Texting Safety and Anti-social Behaviour led by our Local Community Police Officer. Healthy Eating was featured with S3 pupils involved in short interactive



activities based on Junk Foods, led by Laura Fairbairn of NHS Scotland. S2 pupils also had the chance to watch and help local chef Douglas Lisi prepare healthy dishes and were given the opportunity to sample some of the food.

We would like to thank all the agencies and individuals who supported us on this day.

WHA Musicians Hit the Right Note

by Robert Guthrie



The hills around Wallace Hall were filled with the sound of music recently as saxophonist Ben Bryden and his continental band, made up of double bass, guitar and drums, gave a great musical performance for S1-S6 music pupils.

Ben is a young talented musician who recently entered the BBC Radio Scotland Jazz Musician of the Year. He came to Wallace Hall to give us a demonstration of his work.

Ben showed us how, with our suggestions, he could turn a piece of music like "When the

Saints Go Marching In", into a great jazzy tune. He also played some of his own compositions which he had been playing on tour.

There was a special highlight for musical Wallace Hall students. We were invited to take our instruments along, take part in a music workshop and learn various pieces of music in just one hour. We then had to battle it out to see who had the best song. However, Mr Riley, who judged the event called it a draw - so we all had done exceedingly well.

Other students thought so too. "The music sounded great and I thought Ben and the band were excellent. I can't wait to see them in the future, if the opportunity comes about" said Luke Ball, S2.

Aiden Halliday, also S2 added, "It was really wonderful working with such fantastic people and to make music with them. It was very enjoyable."

Thanks go to Mr Riley and Mrs Davies for organising this fantastic event and of course to Ben and his band for coming to spend time with us.



Wallace Hall Academy Peer Mediation Project

All S1 and S6 pupils have been involved in peer mediation training sessions with Mike McKean from the Scottish Government's Positive Behaviour Team. These have been excellent opportunities for everyone to build their self-confidence and improve their communication skills.

From this training we now have a very encouraging 30 S6 and 12 S1 volunteers. Our volunteers are currently meeting on a weekly basis to prepare to begin peer mediation at Wallace Hall shortly after the October holiday. Peer mediators will listen to other pupils and deal with minor problems and disagreements. More information for pupils and parents will follow shortly.

Business Mentors – Would you like to join our innovative scheme?

For the past year, Wallace Hall Academy and its cluster primaries have been trialling an innovative method of expanding work-related learning experiences for pupils from P7 upwards. We have called this the Business Mentor scheme.

To date, 12 local business men and women, from young entrepreneurs to retired members of the community, have been matched with small groups of children and young people. Once a month, the mentors come into one of the schools in Mid-Nithsdale and work with their group on an individual basis. The aims of the scheme are to help these pupils gain an insight into the world of work, to assist them in developing and working towards their individual ca-

reer ideas and to give them positive role models.

The scheme is now in its second year and going well – but we would like to be able to expand it to include other pupils. Any one who is interested in getting involved should get in touch with Pat Kirby, Development Officer for the Queensberry Initiative.



A Business Mentors Open Evening

British Championship opportunity for Fraser by Jack Taylor and Thomas Wall



Fraser with his gun dogs

Fraser Clark in S4 has been training gun dogs since he was 9 years old. He started off with one cocker spaniel called Bruce and now has three Labradors and three cocker spaniels. He also started breeding these dogs and has a litter of Labrador pups at present.

At the age of 11 years old he began compet-

ing in field trials and has been winning rosettes at the Galloway Gundog Club ever since with his trusty dog Bess, a black Labrador. He has also won a novice field trial at Logiealmond, Perthshire against experienced handlers. Berry, his younger dog, won the novice competition at the Galloway Gundog Club.

Fraser is currently a member of most Scottish gundog clubs and has competed in trials from the North of Scotland to the North of England. The next trial that he will be competing in is at Glamis Castle in October. If he does well at this event then he will have the opportunity to compete at the British Championships. Pictured right are Bess and Berry with this year's trophies.



Queensberry Initiative Award Nomination

The Queensberry Initiative (QI) has been shortlisted for the prestigious Rural Awards being run by Dumfries and Galloway Leader Programme. This is a fantastic achievement for this project which has just completed its first full year of operation. QI Development officer Pat Kirby said: "We are so pleased that the achievements of our pupils, teaching staff and QI workers have been acknowledged in the category of Smarter Scotland. We are looking forward to the award ceremony in November." Any parents or members of staff who are interested in attending this event should contact Mrs Kirby as soon as possible.

Queensberry Initiative takes to the stage at the Scottish Learning Festival



Wallace Hall Academy's innovative Queensberry Initiative took to the Showcase stage at the Scottish Learning Festival held in Glasgow at the SECC on Thursday 23 September. The Initiative had been invited to present information about its work to teachers and educationalists from all over Scotland at this annual event. QI were asked to present their unique slant on the outdoor classroom and partnership working with the community, at the invitation of the Outdoor Learning Team from Learning Teaching Scotland.

On the day, 10 pupils, selected from all year groups from S1-S6, travelled in the wee hours from Thornhill to get to Glasgow to deliver their presentation in the Learning Teaching Scotland village, right in the heart of the vast Festival. Pupils and staff were nervously scanning their notes as the minibus sped up the motorway. We got through the rush hour traffic just in time to set up the ICT part of the presentation in the central stage of the event. The half hour showcase began with a general introduction about the different aspects of the Initiative from the Queensberry Initiative staff team. Then our pupils were invited on the stage to talk about parts of the Initiative which they had been participating in, ranging from subject visits to Rural Skills and from targeted groups to our recent Rural Opportunities Day. All the pupils' presentations were well-received and the audience was particularly interested in the extensive photo montage which accompanied their talks,

which appeared on big screens all around the stage.

After our presentation, Festival participants from as far away as Denmark and as near as Dalbeattie came to talk to pupils and staff about the Initiative. Teachers were particularly interested in learning about the pupils' take on how the project was progressing and what benefits it held for them. As Finlay Scott stated in his presentation,



Ailie promotes QI Work Placements

"Participation in the Initiative has helped me build my confidence so that I can stand up here today and talk." This was a theme echoed by many of our pupil participants, who did themselves and their school proud, demonstrating great communication skills and real resilience.

When the Showcase was over, staff and pupils had the opportunity to view the vast range of exhibits at the Learning Festival. Pupils also fielded questions from teachers and other pupils in attendance at the Festival throughout the day. All in all, it was a great experience for the pupils who represented the school at this major event and a wonderful opportunity to share with other schools the good work which is going on in Wallace Hall.



Speaking out for QI: Owen, Lily, Charlie, Sarah-Jane, Lauren, Project Worker Leanne Peoples, QI Development Officer Pat Kirby and Cluster Support Worker Anne-Marie Wood

Wallace Hall Academy - Working Together to Achieve More

Liverpool Trip

Wallace Hall Academy has been successfully running a S2 Residential for a number of years to Liverpool. We have managed to retain the format of previous years.

The broad aim of the trip is to allow our youngsters to progress socially and educationally in a safe environment at an important time in their development. The mix of activities at Liverpool will allow this to happen.

Activities include: Merseyside Ferry and Museums; Shopping; Anfield Tour; Safari Park; Ten-pin bowling; Cinema visit; White Scar Caves; Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

We are staying at Liverpool YHA hostel for board and lodging. The hostel has a long record in safely accommodating school groups and over the years has proved ideal for our purposes.



Some pupils from last year enjoying the Liverpool experience

The provisional cost of the trip is £140 and we will be setting up a scheme whereby £20 a month can be paid towards this.

S2 parents will shortly be receiving information home about the trip.

Roald Dahl Day

To celebrate Roald Dahl Day on Monday 13th September 2010, Mrs Whyte from the English Department organised a period of fun activities for her S1 class in the LRC.

The activities, all designed to link with Roald Dahl stories, included making *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* sweets, Roly Poly Birds, extending enormous crocodiles and Mrs Twit's eyeball cakes. Mrs Whyte was helped out by three S6 pupils Parris Denman, Johanna Gristwood and Stephen Morrison. The S1 pupils had a "fantabulous" afternoon. Celebrations finished with a crazy game of balloon popping.



Mrs Whyte's class and S6 helpers enjoying Roald Dahl Day in the Library

Local Artist inspires MER Pupils

Managing Environmental Resources is a study shared with three disciplines: **Biology, Geography and Art.** During the Art lessons pupils have been inspired by painters, designers and

sculptors whom in their individual artistic style make environmental statements linked to the topics covered in Geography and Biology.

On a windy Monday afternoon the MER pupils went out

to make Land Art sculptures like local artist, Andy Goldsworthy. They collected leaves and stones, arranged them to size and colour into a meandering shape, a spiral and a circle.



Above and right: The MER class was looking at Andy Goldsworthy's Art.

Then they had a go at using stones and colourful leaves to create some art themselves.



Library News

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

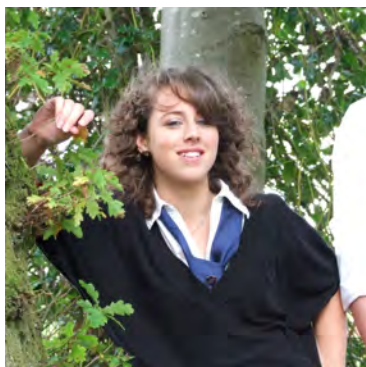
Operation Wallacea Honduras 2011



In June 2011, a group of S6 students will jet off to discover the wonders of Central America.

Through the expedition organisers, Operation Wallacea, the group will travel out to Honduras and carry out biological research in order to analyse the effectiveness of the country's current management methods and look into what species currently inhabit both the land and the sea amongst other topics. The expedition will see them trekking through the rainforests and diving in the surrounding reefs. It will be a once in a

lifetime experience and the team will be working hard to raise the funds over the coming months. If, in any way possible, you could help with fundraising please contact Mr Alex McEwen at Wallace Hall Academy to discuss this further. The whole group are very excited about this opportunity. Below and on the next page is a quote from each team member about what they hope to gain from the expedition. Missing from the photographs is Evie Osborne who will also be going on the trip.



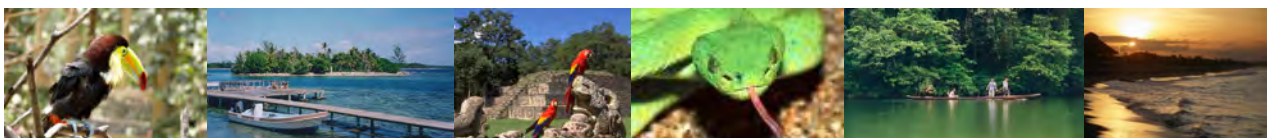
Vivienne Clark – “I am really looking forward to the expedition. From it I hope to bring back skills that I can carry on into my future and also amazing memories I'll never forget.”



Robert Peacock – “It is my ambition to travel and see different civilisations. I think this trip is a once in a lifetime opportunity and taking part will develop skills for life beyond school.”



Elliot Willetts – “This trip offers a once in a lifetime opportunity. I cannot wait to go and learn new life skills and develop my knowledge of scientific and conservation research.”





Muir Coulter – “I have always been enthusiastic about outdoor activities and this is one of the most exciting ones on offer.”



Thomas Higgins – “ I am really looking forward to Honduras because I enjoy travelling to other countries as well as working on my tan!”



Jack Kehoe – “The trip to Honduras looks really cool. It isn't only an awesome experience but it also allows me to gain accreditation for UCAS points.”

Twining Project by Jack Taylor and Thomas Wall

Mr Harley has recently been given a grant from the Comenius project after posting a near perfect application.

The project is funded by the EU and British Council for a series of pupil exchanges with schools in Northern Europe which have been twinned with Wallace Hall. These schools are from countries such as: Germany, Hungary, Belgium, Norway, Iceland and Bulgaria. Some S4 and S5 pupils will be able to travel with the school to these countries for as little as £30 for

around 4-5 days at a time. Some of these pupils will have the opportunity to take part in a live debate in front of the European Union in Brussels.

Hopefully this opportunity will be eventually open to the whole school. As well as our pupils travelling to other schools, pupils from there will be travelling to us, to get a taste of our country. Exchange projects such as these have been deemed a national priority as it gives our pupils a chance to experience other cultures.

S6 Publicity Group

As part of their S6 PDP programme six S6 pupils - Caitrin Stirling, Caitlin Palmer, Laura Sloan, Tom McCubbin, Jack Taylor and Thomas Wall - chose to join the publicity group. This is a new group led by Mrs Menzies in the Library with the tasks including sourcing news, interviewing pupils, writing articles and taking photographs.

The group has been very busy this term with many of the reports in this newsletter attributed to the S6 pupils in the publicity group. Caitlin Palmer said: “Taking part in this activity has been a real eye-opener as we have had to work to very tight deadlines. I am sure the skills we have had to demonstrate will be very useful to us in the future as we move on to life beyond school.” Tom McCubbin added: “I am really enjoying the reporting aspect of the



newsletter. It has been really interesting interviewing pupils on their achievements and creating an article from this information. Jack Taylor concluded: “I had no idea how much effort it took to put this type of publication together. It would be a good group to join for anyone interested in a career in journalism.”

Sponsored Walk Day



UWS Enterprise Challenge

On the 16th and 17th of September eight S5 pupils travelled to the Crichton Campus in Dumfries to take part in the University of West Scotland Schools Enterprise Challenge.

To prepare for the event the pupils had been asked to prepare a business concept based on the theme of 'Dumfries and Galloway on Wheels' for which they would then devise a marketing campaign. The pupils came up with the idea of a Dumfries-based tour bus to tap into the growing domestic tourist market. On the days pupils were allocated to different tasks with Harriet Meredith leading the group with Meyrick Harrison as second in command. Claire Nicolson and Patrick Farish produced a radio advert, Leanne Young and Erin McGinley staged press photographs and with help from the rest of the group Laura Roberts and Jamie Henderson wrote a press release. On Friday afternoon all of the participating schools were asked to present their idea and marketing campaign to a panel of judges. Although Wallace Hall missed out on winning the overall prize for the Challenge pupils were pleased to come away with a prize for the best radio advert. The group all agreed that they had two very productive days taking part in the Challenge and have gained many skills that they may not have otherwise had the chance to develop.



Erin plans the best route!



Leanne promotes Caerlaverock Castle as a tourist destination



L-R: Patrick, Leanne, Erin, Laura, Claire and Jamie.

Scottish Parliament Trip by Mhairi Dalgliesh

On Thursday 9th September, a group of higher pupils headed to Edinburgh to visit the Scottish parliament. After a quick lunch, we met our tour guide, Rhona, who informed us of the history of the Scottish Parliament. Here we got to use interactive keypads to share our ideas on what goes on in parliament.

Our next stop for the day was a question and answer session with our regional MSP Alasdair Morgan. Everybody had many different questions to ask on a variety of topics. A lesson learnt here was that politicians never answer any questions in a straight forward way. To complete the day we headed to the exiting and much anticipated debating chambers. Here we got to see for ourselves how a debate really works. We also realised that MSPs very rarely agree with each other. A good day was had by all. Thanks go to Mrs Wilson and Mr Harley for organising the trip.



Wallace Hall Academy

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Another busy expedition session is coming to a close for the many Bronze and Silver participants. They have experienced many new skills, extreme weather, built new friendships and had lots of laughs along the way. The new intake for the 2010-11 session has started and there has been a massive interest from S3-S6 which is wonderful.

Weekly training on a Tuesday after school for Bronze, Silver and the new Gold group has meant that new teaching materials and resources for all of the sections have had to be purchased. The Thornhill Community Council very kindly donated £300 to help towards the cost of buying these things and the school Parent Council also donated a large sum to assist in the purchase of sleeping bags for our new curriculum based group. Our curriculum group are busy helping out at Buccleuch Estates planting bulbs and tidying the gardens for winter, while also training themselves with first aid and life skills which they can take into future employment.

If anyone would be interesting in lending a helping hand with any of the groups, has a hobby or skill that they would like to share or would be interested in coming out walking with us then please get in contact with Mrs McNay at the school on 01848 332120.



Euan, Kieran and Patrick demonstrate their cooking skills



Daniel, Blair, Euan, John, Kieran and Patrick



Gillian, Judith, Amy and Iona ready for the off



Donald and Amy focus on their destination



The group plan their next trip

Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers

“Touring in Bosnia” by Kelly Shields

Wallace Hall Academy has strong links with the Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers with many of our pupils taking part in classes, demonstrations and trips. This is an association that the school is very proud of.

Earlier this year the dancers were invited to attend the Dozara Ethno festival in Bosnia. This report was written by Kelly Shields, a former pupil of Wallace Hall Academy.

Thornhill Scottish dancers were sent an invitation for some of its members to attend the Kozara Ethno festival 2010, in Bosnia. Attending these international folk festivals is a great experience for everybody involved as it is all about sharing cultures and the traditional songs and dances that have been passed through to our generation.

During our week in Bosnia we performed at various different venues in several different areas. They varied from a small stage in a little village to a stage set inside a castle in between two towers. All performances had several different dances in them and we also had to sing some traditional songs. The songs that our group had chosen to sing were “Scotland the Brave” and “Amazing Grace”. Both tunes were well known by all of the

organisers and audience. When they hummed along it gave us all a little boost of confidence.

The performances were well attended and seemed to be enjoyed by all, including all members of the group. We performed almost every night, even in the record breaking heat wave that Bosnia was suffering last summer.

Two representatives from all of the visiting groups performing in the festival were invited to go and meet the local mayors of the host venues and exchange gifts.

Overall our trip to Bosnia was a very memorable one and a great learning experience for us all. It meant something different to each one of us and we all very much appreciated the opportunity to see such an amazingly different country to the one that we are used to. We learned about their culture and history and that of the other visiting groups which included Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Belgium and several different groups from Bosnia.

It was yet another great trip to add to the archives of the Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers!

Dancing starts again on Wednesday 27th October in Wallace Hall Academy – new members welcome.



Thornhill Scottish Country Dancers on tour in Bosnia

Careers Advice at Wallace Hall Academy



Careers Scotland Adviser Maurice Gilligan visits the school every week. He is available to speak to S4, S5 and S6 pupils on an individual basis offering advice on College, University and Careers. Pupils may request an interview with Maurice either by asking their PT Pupil Support or a member of the SMT to arrange an interview or by contacting Mrs Menzies in the Library.

The Library hosts a comprehensive section of Careers materials including prospectuses and applying for work, training and year out opportunities. Careers Advice leaflets are also available for pupils to take home.

Stop Press: Two of our school catering assistants, Sheila Grierson and Wilma Marchbank would like to thank everyone who sponsored them on their recent cycle run from Glasgow to Edinburgh. They raised over £800 which is a fantastic sum of money. The money will be distributed between Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres and the local Alzheimer's Group.

Duncan's winning streak by Thomas Wall and Tom McCubbin

Duncan Muir, 15, has recently been very successful within the world of tennis. He has won several tournaments including the Dumfries and Galloway under 16s and under 18s and also the Carlisle Championships. Duncan was runner up in the under 16 and under 18 competition at the Maryport Open and also reached the semi finals at the East Lothian Open.

Due to this recent form he has found himself in the south of Scotland under 16s squad and is currently ranked number four. In addition, Duncan is ranked 10th in the Scottish National Rankings for 15 and under. This is a tremendous achievement considering Duncan started tennis only 2-3 years ago whilst on holiday in Spain. Last summer he embarked on the Nike junior tour which involved playing competitions all around Scotland. Recently Duncan visited Wimbledon to catch a glimpse of some of the professionals at work including Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. However, Duncan missed his tennis inspiration, Rafael Nadal, the current world number one.

Duncan also has many other talents other than tennis. Duncan plays in the well known Scottish band KODA, which are set to play at T in the Park this summer, with him playing the accordion. He also has had academic achievements this year, picking up awards in Biology and Maths.



Duncan with a selection of his trophies

We wish Duncan the best of luck with his tennis competitions in the future.

WHA Rugby News

Both the U14 and U16 rugby teams will be involved in a four team tournament with teams from Dumfries Academy, Dumfries High School and St Joseph's College during the period from August to October.

The U16 team were successful in their first match defeating a strong team from Dumfries High School 47-17 while the U14 team were also successful beating the same school by 7 tries to 3. After playing each team once, all of the teams will meet to decide the winners

of the leagues at Dumfries RFC in the week before the October holidays. Over 40 boys have regularly been attending training and we are hopeful that this commitment will lead to many more positive results.



The U16 Rugby team in action



Under 16 WHA Rugby Team



Under 14 WHA Rugby Team

WHA pupils on course for golfing success

by Caitlin Palmer and Tom McCubbin

Two WHA pupils, Emma Greenlees and Alexander Davidson, have been making a name for themselves in the world of golf.

Emma Greenlees, S3, has recently won the hotly contested Thornhill Golf Club Ladies' Championship. She plays for South Scotland and represents Wallace Hall Academy at many events as well as being part of the Scottish Golf Academy. Emma got into golf when she was seven at a friend's birthday party and found she really enjoyed it. She now practices five times a week and has a handicap of 10. Her favourite course is the Galloway Golf Course and her favourite club is the driver. Emma "enjoys the challenge of golf" and also likes wearing her pink clothes on the course. Her favourite partner is Alexander Davidson.

In August of this year, Alexander Davidson, or Aki as he is better known, won the Junior Championship in Thornhill. After getting through the quarter and semi finals ahead of 7 others he reached the final in which he played 36 holes against Daniel Gibson.

Aki first began playing golf at the age of eight,



Emma and Aki

and was inspired by Lee Westwood and Ernie Els, both famous professionals. Golf is now a large part of Aki's life. Playing roughly 5 times a week right through summer and even in the winter months, he is often to be found on the course. With his success in this year's competition, Aki has guaranteed himself a place in the competition next year. We wish Emma and Aki all the best in their future golf competitions.

Star Swimmer by Caitrin Stirling



Shannon with her medals

Throughout her 4 years of competing with Dumfries Dolphins, Shannon McClelland, pictured left, has racked up an impressive collection of individual medals, as well as club championship trophies. Her most recent success was at the British Age Group Championships.

The success is well deserved; Shannon trains around ten times a week at DG1 in Dumfries, before and after school, and swims all strokes. During the competitive season, she can be compet-

ing almost every weekend. She holds club records for 1500 and 800 metres, and has a Welsh record in the 400 metres individual. It was in the Welsh Summer Nationals that she recently collected an outstanding 4 medals. With these successes in mind it's unsurprising that Shannon is eager to continue competing, though sensibly she is mindful not to let her sporting career eclipse her school one and will continue to put her education first while continuing to train.

PE Clubs and Activities

The PE facilities in our new school are being very well used. There are opportunities to take part in rugby, football, hockey, badminton, and table tennis clubs on a weekly basis either at lunchtime or after school. If you would like further details about how to join in, please speak to a member of the PE staff.

Rotary Success for Daniel by Jack Taylor and Thomas Wall



Daniel with his trophies

On the 10th of August 2010, Daniel Gibson (S2), travelled up to Dunbar to represent Thornhill Golf Club in the Rotary District 1020 young golfer of the year competition after qualifying through his local rotary competition.

He competed against 50 other young golfers and hit a score of 90. Once his handicap of 28 was deducted his final score was 62, which turned out to be the winning score.

Five Castles Sailing Regatta by Kellie Carmichael

More than 100 secondary school pupils from across Dumfries and Galloway and the North of Cumbria gathered together at Loch Ken for the schools' sailing regatta recently. Nearly 50 racers, in teams of three, fought it out in the main event. This event consisted of short heats followed by a tense knock-out series of races.

In the final it was neck and neck between Lockerbie Academy and Wallace Hall Academy.

A photo finish meant the results were unclear to everyone apart from the race management team moored on the finishing line. The suspense continued right up to the prize giving when Wallace Hall's team of Ross and Kellie Carmichael and Guy Palmer were declared winners, taking the Castle Loch Shield. Meanwhile, approximately 54 sailors in the taster group tried out sailing, kayaking, raft building, and wobble boarding. They were competing for the Spirit Trophy which was



Ross, Guy and Kellie with the Castle Loch Shield

awarded to the best competitors. The overall winners were Dalry and Kells. Congratulations to all who took part in this event.



Wallace Hall pupils set sail at the Five Castles Sailing Regatta

Greetings from your Parent Council

by Chairperson Anne Stoddart

We recently had our first meeting of the new session and it was lovely to see every one after our long summer break and to meet our new Head Boy and Girl Stephen Morrison and Lisa Murphy. We look forward to their cheery contributions in the year ahead.

Once again we are keen to ensure that each year of the school is represented on the council. Fresh ideas and opinions are essential to an effective parent council and any parent/guardian/carer/teacher or member of the community is most welcome to come along to any of our meetings. Not everybody can or wants to commit to being "on another committee" but I hope, if you feel this way, that you will check out our forthcoming agendas on the school website and join us as and when you feel they are of interest to you. Our meetings are usually on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm and start with a cup of tea/coffee!

There will be no meeting in October due to the two week break so our next meeting will be our AGM on Tuesday 9th November. Those three letters usually strike horror into people –

we intend to be different! We will start with the option of a brief tour of the "up and running" new school at 7.30pm followed by a glass of wine, introductions and a short business meeting to cover election of committee members. You can meet the current members, hear a brief report on what we have been up to in the last year – find out where our £1900 donation to the school is being spent – and hear our intentions for the new session. Please come along and bring a friend – no need to hide your face at election time – new members from all years would of course be very welcome but we promise not to press-gang you into joining!!

Next January will see our first Burns Supper in the new school. A great fundraiser - £1000 last year – it offers a chance to socialise in the school with friends, meet other parents and staff and enjoy an evening of often surprising entertainment provided from within and out-with the school. The organisation is straightforward but it does depend on a few volunteers who meet at 7pm for half an hour prior to the December and January Parent Council meetings – it would be nice to see some new faces so why not give it a go? Please pass on your name to Mr Graham.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries either by email on annestoddart@aol.com or via the school office.