

LANGTON NEWS

October 2007

Issue No. 135

Editor: Susan Begg

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Plenty of pictures



PLUS

Rugby Report & Pictures, Student Success Stories, Information, Help and Advice and much, much more!

MOUNTAIN MEETING

WITH LANGTON STUDENTS



You may recall that in the February edition of Langton News we reported that a group of Year 9 students had bumped into Griff Rhys Jones half way up Mt Snowdon where he was filming for the BBC. Imagine the excitement when the programme 'Mountain' was shown on the BBC and the same students spotted themselves eating sandwiches in the background while Griff did his bit to camera. Unfortunately, the BBC was unable to supply Langton News with a still shot of the moment but they did let us have this rather fetching publicity shot of Mr Jones.

Frank on Television

Five former students of the school also appeared on the BBC recently - this time taking part in the Quiz show Eggheads. The team, calling themselves 'The Langton Lions' were captained by the Legend that is Frank Hardee and, although they failed to beat the resident Egg Heads they gave a very credible performance leading to a sudden death finale. Failing to name the purple dinosaur that appeared in a very old children's programme that you won't have heard of proved to be their undoing. It was 'Posh Paws' of course.

Bravo Grant!

Our congratulations to out to Grant Dowse who, having studied classical guitar with James D'alton Belas at the Langton for 8 years, achieved a much coveted place to continue his studies with virtuosi guitarist Graham Devine at Trinity College of Music in London.

Grant and Tom Hancox gave a full recital in July of this year to an enthusiastic and appreciative audience in the packed recital room of the music department. Members of the audience were later seen to be pressing a bemused Grant for his autograph on their programmes which he later admitted was an unprecedented first in his playing career. On the day



prior to his departure for London and Trinity College, Grant received notification that he had achieved a distinction for his Performance Diploma - something that is normally only taken after a years study at music conservatory - and thereupon became an Associate of the college - ATCL.

Eco-School Award



Members of the Environment Club show off the recently awarded Eco-School Flag, presented by Chairman of Kent County Council, Leyland Riding in September.



If you had a hammer...

You wouldn't be able to throw it as far as Year 13 Student Melissa Cooper.

In 2006 Melissa was the Kent Champion, South of England Champion, 2nd in the English School's Athletics Championship, 3rd in the Home Countries Schools' Match and

3rd in the UK School Games. At the end of the season she was ranked number 2 in the UK in the Hammer Event.

In 2007 Melissa duplicated her Kent and South of England Championships and was a finalist in the All England Championships and European Trials. She

has again achieved the number 2 ranking in the UK this season.

'It is necessary to involve the whole body to achieve a long range of throw' explains Melissa. It is essential to keep the centre of gravity in the correct position particularly when applying force. The feet must be in the correct position, and correct balance maintained to achieve maximum results'.

The goal of the thrower is to exert all the forces of the body over the greatest distance possible, for as long as possible. The thrower gains maximum distance by spinning the hammer (actually a steel ball weighing 4 kg, attached to the handle by a wire up to 4 feet long) above their head to set up the circular motion. Then they apply force and pick up speed by completing one to four turns in the circle. In competition, most throwers turn three or four times. The ball moves in a circular path, gradually increasing in velocity with each turn with the high point of the ball toward the sector and the low point at the back of the circle. The thrower releases the ball from the front of the circle.

'The two most important factors for a long throw are the angle of release and the speed of the ball' says Melissa who has her sights set firmly on the 2016 Olympic Games



Extra-Curricular Music

Monday	12.20	Cello Ensemble
	1.00	Year 9 Strings
	1.00	Wind Band (Yrs. 7, 9&10)
	3.45	String Orchestra / Orchestra
Tuesday	12.20	Brass Group
	1.00	Chamber Music (Wk. A)
	2.00	Year 8/11 Band
	3.45	Jazz Orchestra (Junior & Senior)
Wednesday	12.20	Flutes & recorders
	1.00	Year 7 Choir
	3.45	Percussion group
Thursday	12.20	Junior String Quartet
	1.00	Year 7 Strings
	1.40	Year 8 choir
	2.10	Year 8 strings
	3.45	Concert Band
Friday	3.45	Guitar Ensemble
		Band Night

Full Choir, Chamber Choir & Wind Quintet timetables to be published separately

Please...

...notify us when you take an instrumental exam. We are now obliged to report all music (and dance and speech and drama) exams taken in years 9, 10 and 11 to the Dfes at the end of year 11.

...email in to lbraddy@thelangton.kent.sch.uk or ring 825757 if you are going to miss your instrumental lesson due to illness or a trip (if you hadn't already informed your teacher)

...label all instrumental cases **on the outside** with your name .

New Uniform Shop Price List

The PA have, reluctantly, decided to raise the price of some articles of uniform. The new price list is as follows:

Blazer	28"	£50.00
	30"	£53.00
	32"	£55.00
	34"	£58.00
	36"	£60.00
	38"	£68.00
	40"	£70.00
	42"	£75.00
	44"	£75.00
	46"	£80.00

Football Shirt	30"/32"	£13.50
	34"/36"	£15.00
	38"/40"	£18.00
	42"/44"	£19.00
	46"/48"	£19.00

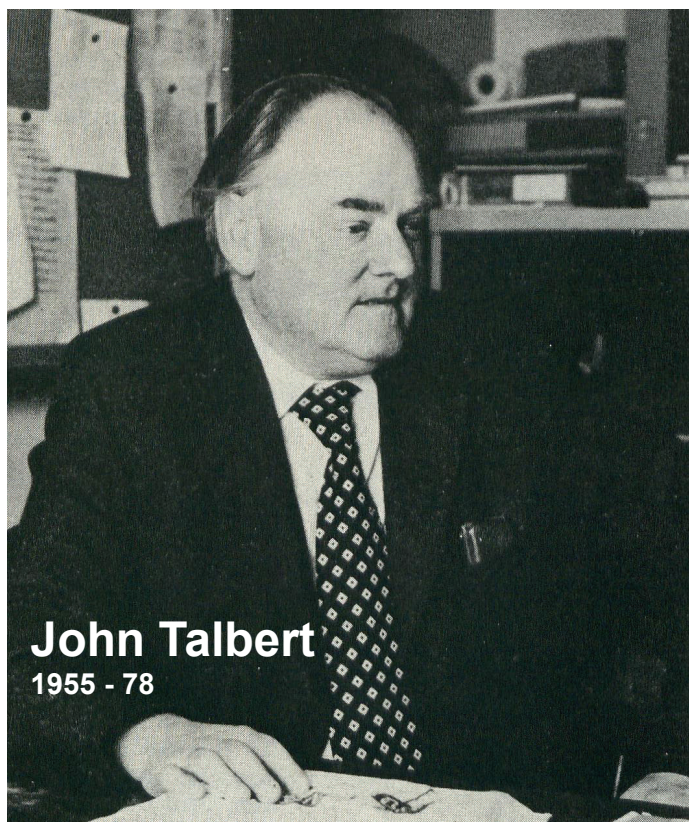
Football Socks	3/6	£3.50
	7/12	£4.00
	12+	£6.00

White Shorts	26"/28"	£5.00
	30"/32"	£5.00
	34"/36"	£6.00
	38"/40"	£6.00

Navy Shorts	26"/28"	£5.00
	30"/32"	£5.00
	34"/36"	£6.00
	38"/40"	£6.00

Rugby Shorts	S	£10.00
	M	£10.00
	L	£10.00
	XL	£10.00

The Uniform Shop is open every Tuesday between 12.45 pm and 2.15 pm



John Talbert

1955 - 78

Only a few days after the start of the term the school was given the sad news that John Talbert had died suddenly aged 89 on September 2nd. For many years until his retirement in 1978 he was Head of Mathematics, and then Deputy Headteacher, at the School. Former Bursar, Richard Armishaw, knew him well and writes below about his personal recollections of 'a true gentleman and a born teacher'.

I took over from John as Head of Mathematics in January 1972, following his promotion to Deputy Head (only one in those days!) in September 1971.

He was an outstanding teacher who had the knack of inspiring his pupils to succeed at the highest level. Taking over as a new HOD with the previous HOD still at the school is not always easy. John however was exemplary in his dealings with Department issues – always supportive, never interfering and a great role model.

Mathematics teaching in the 1960s had become very stodgy and elitist. A group of Mathematics teachers nationally, led by Bryan Thwaites, worked on the development of the "School Mathematics Project" (SMP), which was to have a huge impact on Mathematics teaching for many years to come. John was very much in the forefront locally of this curriculum development by introducing SMP throughout the main school at an early stage.

It is interesting to note that at the same time that SMP was being developed Science teaching was undergoing a similar shake-up with the Nuffield scheme. John's colleagues at Langton at the time (Dai Templar – Physics and Derek Bradford – Chemistry) were introducing Nuffield Science to the Langton at the same time, with notable success.

As well as being a superb teacher John was an administrator of legendary efficiency. As Deputy Head he did all the internal administration, viz. Timetabling, Daily cover, Internal exam arrangements and timetables, External Exam entries, External Exam day to day running, Special arrangements for the exam periods, as well as running the Pastoral system (through the Form Tutors only – no Year Heads or Assistant Heads.....). The administrative support at the time was "The School Secretary" who covered secretarial work for the Head, Deputy and 35 teachers. When I did some of those administrative jobs myself at a later stage I was amazed by the accuracy and attention to detail in his arrangements.

One did not have to be at the Langton for long to work out that John came from Glasgow. He had a robust approach to the workplace and the nearest he came to being "touchy-feely" was a squeeze of the biceps and a "request" for you to do lunchtime patrol duty because someone was off sick. And talking of "off sick" John was a subscriber to the philosophy of "The job of the Assistant Master is to turn up". Outside work, of course he enjoyed a malt whisky, but – more surprisingly until you got to know him – he was highly knowledgeable about music and Opera in particular and used to travel frequently to see the real thing in London.

Pupils and Staff alike did as they were asked by John. He was respected because what he asked you to do was what needed to be done, and he never messed you about. He was always out in the playground at Bus Time, always around at lunch, and always about in the Staff Room at break. Those colleagues who became temporarily deaf when the bell went at the end of break would be reminded by the cry from John of "Gentlemen, your classes are waiting".

The Langtonian Magazine for 1978 includes an article, written by John Talbert on his retirement. In it he says 'I count myself fortunate that one August day in 1955 I drove down from London for interview and found myself engaged to teach Maths at Simon Langton. For what followed, I am truly grateful.'

The school returns the gratitude ten fold.



Year 8 student Jamie Jenkins writes about his experience when he took part in the Times National Sudoku Championship in London last month September. Sudoku is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9, only ONE time each (that is, exclusively). The puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid. The general way to solve the problem is when you insert a new number it should be unique in that particular region (blocks) and also in that particular row and column

July. I am in my hotel room doing a qualifying Sudoku for the Times National Championship. I complete it in 24 minutes.

September. I am in the car on the way to the National Finals in London, wondering how my dad could possibly have got me into this. Little did I know that at the same time my dad was thinking how *I* could have got *him* into this.

3 hours later. I am in the hall busily doing Sudoku at speed. I have to do three puzzles in an hour. There are 19 people in my age group. Parents are allowed to sit in the hall but they weren't allowed to help. What a relief! I can hear pencils scratching busily around me. I can not see how my dad could have completed the three puzzles in the adult section earlier in the day; especially as he was suffering from the early stages of Sudoku agoraphobia, being used to doing Sudoku in a considerably smaller room.

When everyone has finished, one contestant asks the committee if they find marking boring. To his great surprise one of them says it is very exciting. That's all very good but personally I think they should get out more.

In the end my pencil finished in second place. Sadly though, I had lent it to another contestant. I finished in ninth place in the 12 and under age group, a better result than my dad who finished in 20th place in the adult section.



The New 'Evolution of Man'?



When the father of 6th Form student John Blisset reviewed his photographs of a recent Langton Rugby Match this shot reminded him of the famous Darwinian image 'From Monkey to Man'

This thought provoking article has been written by 6th Form student Alex Russell. He tells the story of a 17 year-old executed by the Germans in October 1941 along with many others as a reprisal for the killing of a senior military officer in Nantes.



Guy Moquet was part of the French Resistance during its occupation by the Germans. He was only seventeen-that is around the same age of most of us in the sixth form-yet he was willing to fight, even die, for his country. The following extracts are from a letter by Guy Moquet sent to his mother on the 22nd October 1942 the eve of his execution:

I am going to die!

Seventeen and a half years old, my life is to be short. I have no regrets, if only I didn't have to leave you.

My last thoughts: you all who remain, be worthy of us, the 27 that will die!

He was handed over to the Nazi occupation by the Vichy regime. After the assassination of a German officer, the Nazis demanded that twenty-seven Resistance prisoners be executed as a collective punishment- Guy Moquet was the youngest of those to be executed.

These are the worlds of a seventeen year old boy, about to die for his country. In France, today, there is a lot of controversy surrounding this letter. President Sarkozy heard this letter read out by a student at the Bois de Boulogne. He was so moved by the reading that he made it his first order of business to make the letter mandatory reading in all schools on the anniversary of Guy Moquet's death.

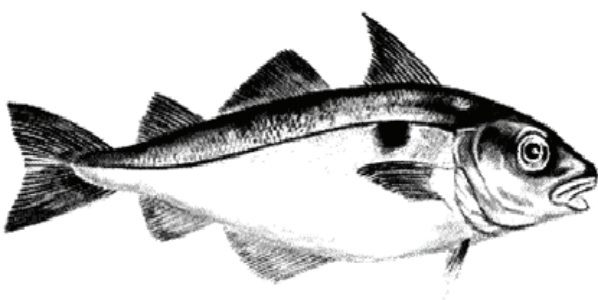
"A 17 year-old who gives his life to France is an example not of the past, but of the future."

Sarkozy is trying to restore pride and patriotism to the youth of the nation. Yet his proposals are being met with some opposition by teachers. Their argument is that the children will merely remember the boy as a symbol of the Resistance, not his significance to French history.

The simple truth is that this is a story which needs to be told so that his death was for a reason, and to remember all those men, women and children who fought and died for their chance to be free.

Should we consider this document being read at the Langton Remembrance Assembly every October? People need to be reminded of how to be proud of their nation, after all, how many of you would risk your life at seventeen for the greater good of your country?

Harry
the Haddock
says



***My recent philosophy test
was a piece of cake....
which was a bit of a surprise
actually because I was
expecting some questions
on a sheet of paper.***



From the Head

I would like to congratulate all those students who gained successful examination results this summer and particularly those Year 11 boys who ensured the school gained the finest GCSE results in the school's history. More students than ever before gained the top grades (about 65% of all entries gained an A or A* grade) and such impressive results are a real testament to the very disciplined and mature approach to study which became the hallmark of so many of our students last year. There were also many individual successes this summer. We often receive one or two letters from the exam boards, congratulating individual students for achieving one of the country's top five marks in their subject. This year we received nineteen such letters and I would particularly like to congratulate all who received one of these letters for such a wonderful personal achievement.

We were also very pleased to receive information from the Sutton Trust, identifying the school as one of the 100 most successful in the country. The Trust calculated the country's top performing schools based on the proportion of students moving on to one of the top thirteen universities in the UK.

The occasion of the Sutton Trust is not an opportunity for complacency. Rather, we have explored why university applicants from our school are regarded so highly by admissions tutors. Those who have responded have repeatedly told us that our students perform particularly well at university because their experiences at school so frequently take them outside and beyond the published syllabus. It is by doing so that students are encouraged to think more critically, to engage with academic

subjects of genuine interest in a much deeper way than is normally required at A level and to develop as independent and innovative thinkers. Teaching in this way is central to our educational values and seems to be the reason for our students' successes in gaining places at the better universities. A revised National Curriculum has recently been published by the government and we have begun a review of our curriculum in response to this. In our work we will ensure that we continue to offer the kind of academic enrichment opportunities which are central to our philosophy of education.

In revising our curriculum we have also taken seriously the need to promote the well being of our students and to pay close attention to the need to support the social, emotional and moral development of students. Many parents will be aware of the work we have recently established in this area and I would like to thank those of you who have attended recent lectures at the school on this subject and have offered constructive comments about how we can further improve the pastoral work of the school.

In the next few months we will be carrying out an extensive review of all aspects of our pastoral programme and the work we do to support the development and welfare of our students. I would very much welcome any contributions from parents and students to that debate.

Dr Baxter can be contacted at
headteacher@thelangton.kent.sch.uk

Langton **DOWN UNDER** *an Australian Adventure*



Last term a group of Langton 6th Form Students, accompanied by Mr Shaw, Ms Eley and Mr Carney experienced the trip of a lifetime in Australia. They divided their time between the wilderness that is the outback and the hustle and bustle of city life, taking in the sights, sounds and (in the case of Bush Tucker) the tastes of life on the other side of the world. They describe their experiences on the following pages.



After the initial excitement, 24 hours on an aeroplane certainly had taken its toll. We were greeted by a "cosy" room, several fights later Sanj and I claimed our bottom bunks. That night we were introduced to the infamous Devrim "Foghorn" Miles, who kept everyone awake at some point on the trip, even the Green Brothers (who can sleep anywhere as long as it's a diesel engine).

Without even a moment to recover from jet lag, Mr Shaw threw us in the deep end, literally, as he took us off to Lorne to learn how to surf. Driving past the birth place of Ripcurl and Billabong, I knew I was home. There were certainly degrees of success, and it was no surprise that Robert Green "rode the waves" straightaway. Unfortunately I was unable to surf with my newly operated on knee, so I became photographer for the group. Sanj was more successful as he grasped the basics of surfing and on many occasions looked like a pro! It was a great first day already experiencing the mixture of scenery and ever changing environments that Australia had to offer.

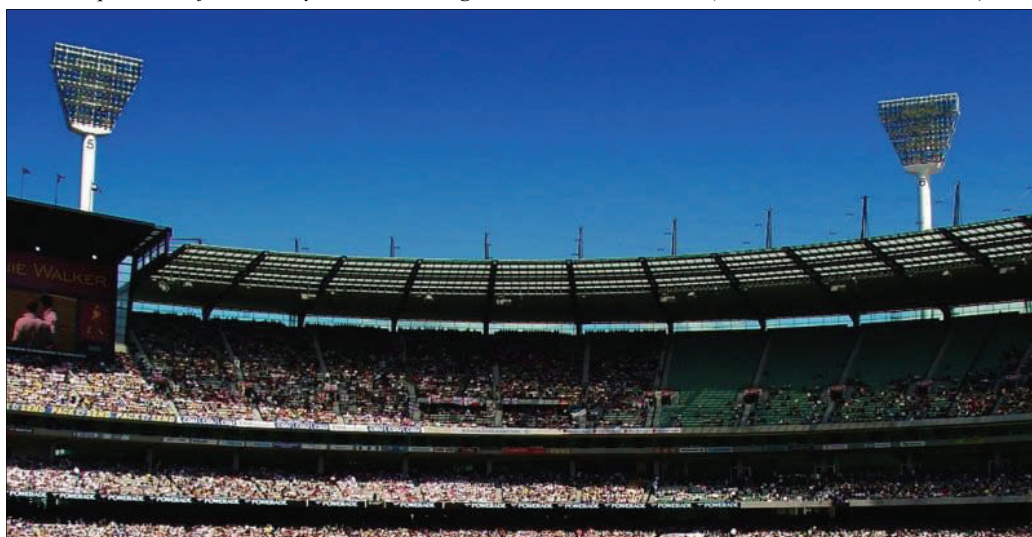
That night we were still trying to regain the feeling in our toes, but decided to venture into the heart of Melbourne. With a map in one hand and geographer Ollie at my side getting lost wasn't difficult (writes Sanj). The morning after we strolled to Queen Victoria market, full of souvenir purchasing

opportunities. In the afternoon we went to an AFL match, to see one of the most anticipated games of the season. Sanj, Sardeep and I decided to support Herne Bay's equivalent in the AFL (the team everyone hates) "COLLINGWOOD". The atmosphere around the MCG was awesome, with an attendance of close to 85,000. As Big D stated we were all "living a dream".

Our final day in Melbourne was spent at Healesville Sanctuary, an animal park representing some of Australia's spectacular wildlife. This experience will not be easily forgotten as Yetti (aka Ollie) had to risk life and limb to retrieve his newly bought dog tags from a wombat enclosure. Without any thought for his own safety he leapt the barrier to retrieve his mementos only to be confronted by a 40kg wombat, which was clearly startled by his new inmate. The furious wombat charged, to oust the Yetti from his territory. Luckily Ollie escaped unscathed with a new found respect for his wombat friend. We left for Melbourne Airport that evening wondering what amazing adventures were still to come.....

Below Left: Collingwood Football Club 'the Aussie equivalent of Herne Bay'

Below Right: The stands at MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground)



Alice Springs & Uluru

by Tom Rees-Davies

Alice Springs; talk to any citizen of Australia and they will tell you it is the last major city before the depths of the outback. However, talk to the 20 Langton Students who visited the town as the second major stop on their whirl-wind tour of Australia, and they will mention talking toilets, Harry Potter books and a Billy Connolly look-a-like who played the didgeridoo. The group arrived at Alice Springs airport, to be greeted by Adam, our fourth member of staff. The Australian decided to break the ice, by telling a few choice jokes (why are Pirates Pirates? 'Coz they Aaaaargh!)... We drove for 40 minutes to the central shopping mall where we bought supplies for the impending camping trip. The 'healthy' diet included nutella, peanut butter, many, many cereal bars and (square...oooh) tortilla wraps.

After settling in at the Youth Hostel, the group made their way to a didgeridoo concert in the centre of Alice Springs. This was fantastic, and we even had the opportunity to try our hands at a bit of 'didge'. Whoever thinks that toilet humour is above a group of mature grammar school students (not to mention Mr Carney) is seriously mistaken. The following day, a bitterly cold morning, the group visited a Desert Zoo, to sample some of Australia's most well known desert wildlife.

That evening, the group started to lose a bit of sanity. The main event was a hoedown. To the tune of Cotton-Eye Joe blaring out of Ingoldby's I-pod

speakers, half the group, with drawn on moustaches, went barn-storming into the teachers' room shouting and dancing. Oddly enough, Miss Eley was able to sleep through the onslaught.

Uluru, Yulara, Ayers Rock, whatever you want to call it, is impressive and that is an understatement. The gigantic rock was our next stop and the 3 hour walk around its perimeter was truly breathtaking and awe-inspiring. One can really see why the native Aboriginals see it as such a sacred place and you simply cannot help being affected by the stories told in the visitors information centre.

On then to the Wallace Rockhole Aboriginal Community. After digging up endless trees in search of grubs and viewing some amazing rock art we returned to the community and played a bit of Aussie football on the school pitch. For dinner, we were served kangaroo (cooked over the fire) and nearly cooked, deliciously eggy, witchetty grubs.

It was at that moment that the engineering team of Adam, Mr Shaw, Mr Carney, Tom Rees-Davies and Tom McElroy realised the trailer suspension was broken. This was to add a further four hours to our journey north as we had to return to Alice Springs to pick up a new trailer. However, this gave some of the anoraks on the trip (that's pretty much everyone except Ollie, myself, Becki and Mr Shaw) a chance to buy the new Harry Potter book.

Grub's Up! Infamous Witchetty grubs



Postcard Pose





The departure of our long drive north provided us with our earliest rise yet (4:30am) as we took a detour to replace a broken trailer. No trailer meant no room, and the Gill brothers were starting to think that their beloved suitcases were a bad idea. Everything and everyone was packed, ceiling high, into the bus; safety first of course... Once on the road the bush rolled on and the landscape slowly changed. The road kill flashed by, pages of Harry Potter turned, and much sleeping was done, interspersed with singing (the Pokémon theme tune) and a few of Adam's jokes; making the 2 day trip far more comfortable than expected.

Our first experience of the hot Northern Territory at the end of the long road trip was a fantastic plunge into Mataranka Hot Springs where the water was warmer than a bath and we swam under huge spiders hanging from the webs they had strung across the stream (to the horror of Ollie and Oscar...)

The following day brought the long-anticipated canoeing expedition up Katherine Gorge; and it was stunning, living up to all expectations and being the favourite bit of the holiday for many people in the group, despite a demanding period of boat carrying caused by the park ranger (the first grumpy Australian we'd met). The evening revived people's spirits and energy with a group BBQ courtesy of Big D, and the next day, following what was now a short drive for us (6 hours), we arrived at Kakadu National Park. The first evening was one of the most

beautiful so far as we watched the sunset across the plains at Jabiru from a rocky pinnacle. To our amusement, a group of Americans inquired if we were all related...!

The next couple of days consisted of swimming in large rocky waterholes and taking a wildlife tour on Alligator River (where there are lots of crocodiles but no alligators). For the duration of the boat tour Adam's idea of a practical joke meant that we were under the guise of an impoverished group of children from 'St Dickinson's Catholic school' (aka Langton) brought to Australia by 'Sir Simon Shaw'...

Then followed another 2 day expedition, this time on foot. We hiked along Koolpin Gorge with stops along the way to swim in the crystal clear water. We slept on the beach under the stars, and were treated to the 'Australia 2007 Awards Evening' by our host Ollie who presented prizes such as twigs and rocks.

A day later, back in civilisation, we visited the Mindil beach markets for another picturesque sunset viewing. A day at leisure involved attempted boomerang throwing, lots of ice-cream, and time spent on the beach, before departing for a night-time flight to our last destination, Sydney.





At 6:25 am the 'plane touched down in Sydney. Our first impressions were that it was freezing cold again and we desperately needed showers and sleep. After a half hour walk up the main shopping street we came to Circular Quay and, as if we'd stumbled into a postcard, found ourselves in front of the bridge, the boats and the opera house. We soon realised that spending the last two days in Sydney was going to be an amazing finish to the three week trip.

Over the next couple of days we tried to see as much as we could of the spectacular city. Somehow we managed to fit in: breakfast at a greasy café (Katy's favourite...), Frisbee in the Botanic Gardens (LUFT style), a walk round the iconic opera house, a visit to the massive Aquarium, an enormous meal in Chinatown (where's Tom Rees-Davies when you need him?) and a trip to Bondi Beach (to check out the surfers... and the waves of course).

On the last afternoon a small group of us caught the ferry to Manly, where there is a

fantastic beach. After getting ice-creams we played Frisbee on the sand and watched the sunset. We had to run to catch the return ferry to Circular Quay and on the way back across the harbour were treated to one of the most spectacular views of the trip: Sydney skyscrapers lit up against the darkness with the illuminated Opera house and Harbour Bridge on either side. We finished off the day with a meal on a roof terrace with panoramic views of the city and its famous sites. The group enjoyed brilliant food, live music (from a band down below) and shared stories of what they had managed to squeeze into the last two days.

Some twenty-four hours later, a mile high, we were left to contemplate the incredible time we'd had Down Under. I know I speak for everyone when I say, in the words of Adam (who so kindly reminded us every morning when we were packing up frozen tent poles before sunrise) that for the last three weeks, it had been a real 'Joy to be alive'.

Manly Beach



Bondi Beach

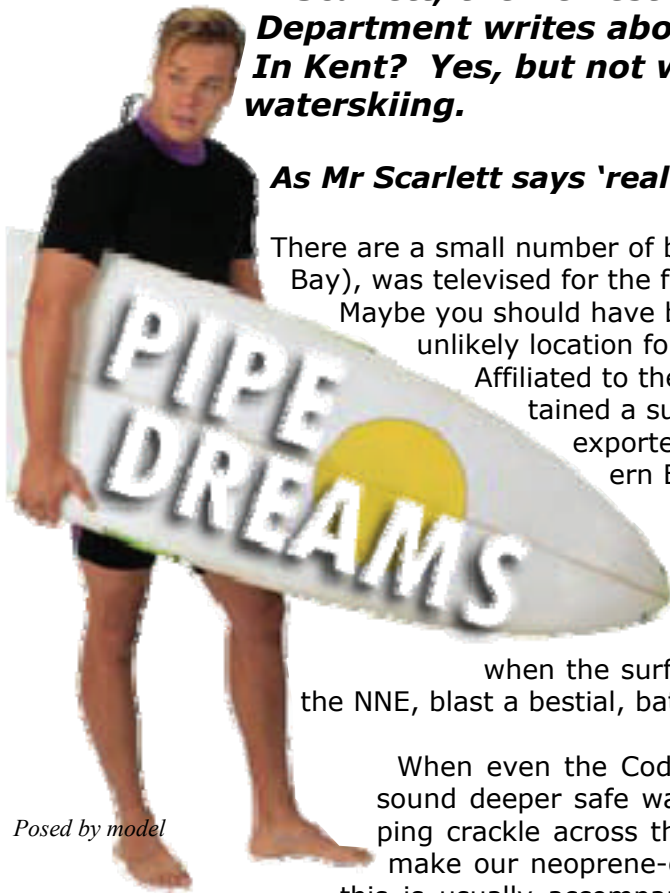


Sydney Harbour at Dusk



Mr Scarlett, the newest addition to the teaching staff in the Science Department writes about passion his passion for surfing. Surfing? In Kent? Yes, but not windsurfing, kite surfing, wakeboarding or waterskiing.

As Mr Scarlett says 'real surfers don't need to hold on to anything'.



Posed by model

There are a small number of breaks around our Kentish coastline, one of which, (Joss Bay), was televised for the first time as a surf location, last year. Not convinced?

Maybe you should have been here in 1969! South East Kent was perhaps an unlikely location for a growing Surfing scene, but it had it all the features.

Affiliated to the BSA with members winning national contests, it sustained a surfboard company producing cutting edge boards that were exported to Europe and epic surf trips to un-surfed areas of Western Europe including Portugal.

Surfing isn't like most other sports. Surf, (not just rough water), especially in Kent, is simply not there most of the time. It is not a plan-friendly pastime! However, a dedicated core of locals will sacrifice any other commitment when the surf's up, whether it be July or January, when the gales from the NNE, blast a bestial, battering, Baltic, brute fury on the North Kent coast.

When even the Codfish and Herring, with their vast intellect have decided to sound deeper safe water in the North Sea and the severe warnings to all shipping crackle across the Country, Joss is Boss once more, calling many of us to make our neoprene-clad pilgrimage to glory. Even with only the face exposed, this is usually accompanied by the world's worst ever 'ice cream headache', (so far), with every successive wave and 'wipeout'. Slightly more depressing is the knowledge that the unfinished work on the neighbouring sewage outfall is only two Kilometers away and reminds me of the old saying; 'Joss surfers never die, they only smell that way' Furthermore, if Joss is the church, Cornwall is the Cathedral!

An ever increasing number of us are searching for a finite resource. Whether the stylemaster, the small wave ariel wizard or the counter-culture soul master, waving a longboard, shortboard, minimalibu, fatboy or fish, becoming 'IT' educated is the best way to score more sessions in better waves with less crowds and longer rides.

Surf forecasting is a complicated science. From checking a webcam to interpreting swell data from admiralty buoys and long range pressure charts, everything a surfer needs to get to the right beach on the right day at the right stage of the tide is available now online if you know how to use it.

Kent may not have had the best waves in the UK but what it lacked in quality waves was more than made up for by the sheer enthusiasm and dedication of the surfers. Visit www.thebigchill.co.uk, to discover the story of this pioneering group of men and women!



A huge Get Well Soon to DT Technician Dan Pledger who injured his knee very badly in a recent game of staff football and will be away from school for quite some time.

EMA Payments

6th Form students who are in receipt of EMA payments must ensure that they attend registration every morning.

If this is not possible for any reason, they should see the Attendance Officer in the main office



Langton News in Colour

Don't forget - although we distribute the Langton News to all students & parents in black and white, the full colour version can be viewed (or downloaded) from the school's website www.thelangton.org.uk/langtonnews/current.php

Past editions are also available.

URGENT HELP REQUIRED

Thanks to all the parents who are helping Mrs Moore to make various items for the forthcoming production of Wind in the Willows.

BUT

There is still one important item that needs to be constructed.



A Coat of Arms for Mr Toad

Is there anyone out there who feels up to making a 'suit of armour' for Mr Toad out of the old colanders, saucepan lids and various kitchen utensils that Mrs Moore has been collecting?

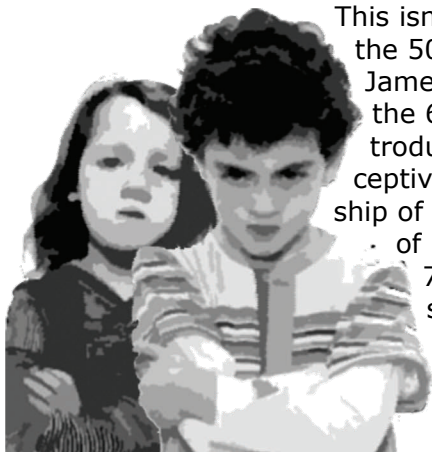
If you can help us get a Toad out of a hole please ring Mrs Moore (ext 774) or speak to Mrs Foster on reception

CHILDHOOD

The first Langton Lecture of this academic year was given by Sue Palmer, best selling author of 'Toxic Childhood'. Mr Nick Grey, Head of Year 10, gives his view on the subject of childhood today.

The very title 'Toxic Childhood' conjures up an image of a 'childhood' being held at arms length, tongs shaking as they are lowered into a sterilization vat, steam rising, i-pods melting. A serious question arises however: has the nature of childhood, and what it means to be a child, changed beyond recognition? Has the current school age generation plummeted head first into a nihilism the likes of which has never been seen before? Or are we experiencing the natural generational divide that seems to occur every 10 years or so since 'teenagers' first listened to Elvis, strapped themselves into Levis and retreated into a world of lank hair and grunting, somewhere in the post-war 1950s?

Acts of soft rebellion are, for the most part, an important factor in the formation of character and personal identity. In order to find out who you are, it is necessary to find out who you are not. Heaven forbid that at the age of 14 you are anything like those 'old people' who prefer a quiet night in and seem to think that everything is too loud.



This isn't new – we saw it in the 50s, epitomised by James Dean and Elvis, in the 60s with the introduction of the contraceptive pill adding ownership of ones body to the list of new freedoms. The 70s saw the explosion of Punk rockers – yet another way for the disenfranchised to be heard.

So, if the pattern repeats perhaps we should look at the new factors that impinge on the current generation. Any number of television programmes will tell us 'you are what you eat' and that we are in danger of breeding a generation susceptible to the twin dangers of a sedentary lifestyle and a terrible diet. But, whether you like salad in your sandwiches or not, too many fizzy drinks and e-numbers have an effect on mood and behaviour. Fact.

Drugs have always been tempting to a young person looking to rebel. However, with new and ever more potent, chemically enhanced drugs on the market, teenagers today are again exposed to dangers that they are not physically or emotionally equipped to deal with.

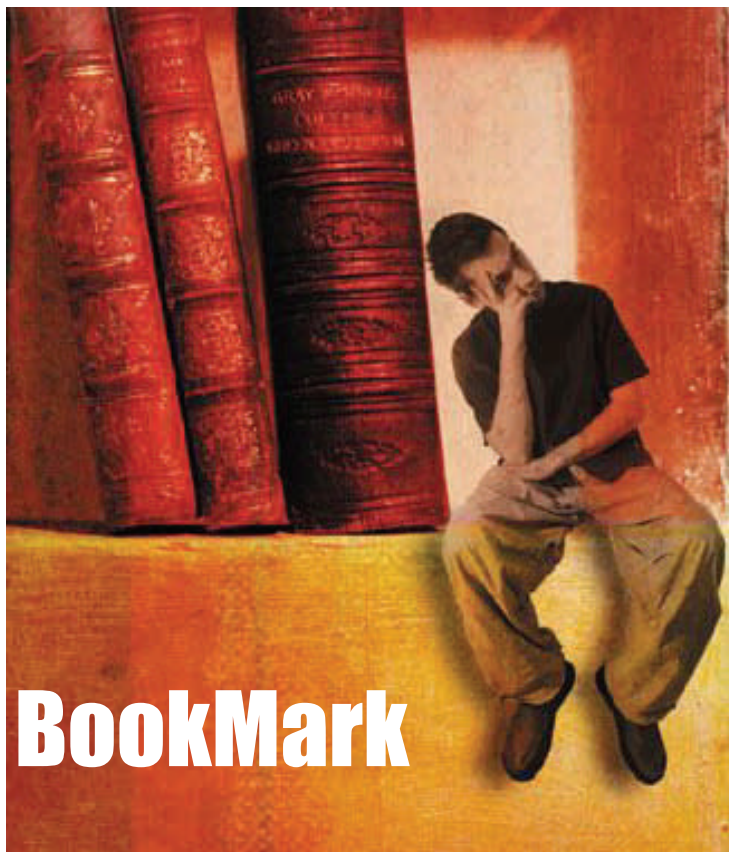
Perhaps, above all, it is the advancements in technology that is having the most profound effect on the current generation. For, with all the benefits of the world-wide web and the subsequent 'new renaissance' you have the counterpoint of the individualisation of experience; computers, i-pods, game boys, etc, all promote or allow the possibility of an alienated, individualised childhood. This, surely is the big difference in the way the current generation live their lives to the way their parents lived theirs.

'Toxic' suggests a disease running through the very fabric of childhood. Perhaps this is too alarmist. Nonetheless, we must pay heed to the very real difference in the way young people live in, and experience, the world around them. Perhaps there is a very real danger that what has hitherto been a 'normal phase' of creating the self will become one of alienation and the inability to communicate and it is this that will become the standard for future generations and how they experience the growing years.

If you have any views on this, or any other subject, that you would like to share with Langton students, parents and staff, please email susanbegg@thelangton.kent.sch.uk

The Hedgehogs are coming...on skateboards





***A look at what's new
in the Langton Library
By Mrs T Jones***

This term a new team of student librarians has been providing invaluable help during busy lunch-times and breaks and have also helped to process over 170 books.

Robert Muchamore's latest book in the Cherub Series, *Mad Dogs* is now in the library. The British underworld is controlled by gangs. When two of them start a turf war, violence explodes on to the streets. The Police need information fast, and James Adams has the contacts to infiltrate the most dangerous gang of all. He works for CHERUB.

Joe Craig also has the latest book in his Jimmy Coates series out. In *Sabotage*, Jimmy Coates, who is genetically engineered to grow into the perfect Government assassin embarks on his fourth mission to outwit NJ7.

Other new books this term include:-

Mark Haddon *A Spot of Bother*
New book by the author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*

Lian Hearn *Heaven's Net is Wide*
Set in the strange and beautiful world of the Otori

Charlie Higson *Hurricane Gold*
Latest adventure of the young James Bond

William Nicholson *Noman*
The epic climax of the Noble Warriors trilogy

Michelle Paver *Outcast*
The fourth adventure in Torak's quest

Beverley Naidoo *Burn My Heart*
Story set in Britain's colonial past

Garth Nix *Across the Wall*
Short Story collection

Terry Pratchett *Making Money*

J.K. Rowling
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows
The seventh and final book

Ali Sparkes *Shapeshifter* series

Guinness World Records 2008

Booked Up

In September every Year 7 pupil has been able to choose a free book from a selection of 12 titles under the Booked Up Scheme. A copy of each title has also been donated to the Library.

Box Tops for Books Scheme

This term the School has registered with the Box Tops for Books Scheme, which runs from September to March. Tokens can be collected from the tops of special packs of Nestle breakfast cereals and cereal bars and exchanged for educational books for the Library. So please start collecting now!. Tokens should be handed in to Mrs Foster at Reception.

...so are the Squirrels
(and they will be wearing
hats)



NEWS HELP

ADVICE

information



The Department for Children, Schools and Families has announced a campaign to tackle cyber-bullying. 'Laugh at it and You're Part of it' will be featuring on websites and social net-working sites for 6 weeks and will provide practical tips on the prevention of cyber-bullying.

Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, says 'Cyber-bullying is a particularly insidious type of bullying as it can follow young people wherever they go, and the anonymity that it seemingly affords to the perpetrator can make it even more stressful for the victim.'

A study by the DCSF revealed that 34% of 12-15 year olds had experienced some form of cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying can include posting upsetting remarks about an individual online and name-calling using mobile phones.

The £200,000 campaign is being run in conjunction with social networking sites such as Bebo and MySpace as well as mobile-phone companies.

Advice on how to tackle cyber-bullying can be found at:

www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Can't Sleep?

Believe it or not, sleep is a big deal. If you don't get enough it can affect your physical health, your emotional well-being and your mental abilities.

When you've been at school or work all day, done your homework, run around with your friends, your body and your brain needs a rest. No one is exactly sure what work the brain does when you're asleep, but some scientists think that sleep is the time when the brain sorts through and stores information, replaces chemicals, and solves problems. When your body doesn't have enough hours to rest, you may feel tired or cranky, or be unable to think clearly. Tasks that you usually find simple **may be a real** chore. So you see, sleep is important, not only to help your body recover from your daily activities.

Not everyone finds it easy to get a good night's sleep. There are 83 different types of sleep disorders including insomnia and in our fast paced world, more and more people suffer from them today than ever before. But what kinds of things can cause insomnia? The number one cause of insomnia for both adults and teens is stress. Worrying about work, family, money, or your health can all lead to a build up of stress which can, in turn cause insomnia.

So what can you do when you are having trouble sleeping? If you are having trouble nodding off you may be suffering from insomnia. If something is troubling you, talk to someone about it. If your mind is at rest then you'll have no problem falling asleep at night. Keep to a routine - try going to bed and getting up at the same time. Make sure your bedroom is a peaceful space, not somewhere to watch TV or use your computer - keep it just for sleeping. Avoid stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. If you keep waking during the night and counting sheep really isn't working for you then you could try deep breathing or meditation. A warm milky drink before bed often helps you feel drowsy and learning some muscle relaxation techniques could also be helpful.

If you're sleepy and sluggish it's tough to look and feel your best so it's important to maintain a healthy sleep routine and remember to get enough ZZZs. Try www.sleepcouncil.com for more advice

Boys Get Anorexia Too

Eating disorders are frequently assumed to be a 'girl thing' but experts are warning parents and teachers to watch out for anorexia in boys too.

Recent research says boys account for up to 25% of teenagers suffering eating disorders, with some as young as 10 being affected by anorexia and bulimia.

Jenny Langley was horrified when her son Joe developed anorexia at the tender age of 12. A bright, sporty boy, Joe almost starved himself to death in the process, but instead of going to pieces his mum turned her attention to finding out how best to combat his illness.

She has now written a book on how to cope with male eating disorders, detailing everything from the causes "often a desire for athletic prowess and physical perfection" to where to seek advice, treatment and support.

'Anorexia can affect anyone, of any age, from any walk of life', she says. 'The important message is that you're not alone and anorexia can be beaten'.

Growing boys can lose weight incredibly quickly, resulting in potentially long-term damage to organs. The key problem is diagnosis. It's very difficult for a GP to identify an eating disorder in boys - many very healthy boys are skinny.

Girls tend to lose their periods, which is how GPs diagnose girls. But eating disorders can quickly become a way of life and the earlier the diagnosis and treatment, the more likely there is to be a quicker and more successful recovery.

Joe lost a quarter of his bodyweight before being diagnosed with anorexia. He later told his mum that he'd only wanted to lose a few pounds to be better at football and cross-country but it had 'got out of hand'.

Thankfully he recovered and is now a normal 16-year-old with a healthy appetite. Jenny is determined to highlight the problem and hopes her book will help to raise awareness.

She has also set up a website at www.boyanorexia.com and her book, *Boys Get Anorexia Too*, is published by Lucky Duck, price £18.99.

Other useful info can be found at :<http://www.b-eat.co.uk>

A Grand Day Out by Danny Smith

On Wednesday 3rd October thirty-one year 12 students descended on the Houses of Parliament, whereupon they were given a guided tour of the Lords and Commons, a session with Karen Buck, MP for Regent's Park & Kensington North, plus a talk with a representative from the Canterbury constituency office and Nick Stace.

The dedication of the students to politics and justice was demonstrated in their compliance with the 8:15 meeting time at Canterbury East station; unfortunately the same could not be said for the teachers, who were ten minutes late.

Portcullis House was the first port of call for the group, who, once past the heavy security measures, proceeded to listen to the last section of a talk by Karen Buck. After the speech, everyone present (there were several other schools there) was invited to ask questions, which the Langton students did, making the most of their opportunity, with most questions related to topics recently discussed in class. The group then received a talk from a representative from the Canterbury constituency office, giving us an insight into the work done by our MP Julian Brazier.

Finally it was time for the tour of the Houses of Parliament, for which we had to enter via a 'secret passage' which went underground from Portcullis House to Parliament. The Lords was the first House we visited, which was a strange experience seeing the luxury and splendour that had previously only been seen on TV. The same can be said of the Commons, which was true to Mr Butler's word, in being much smaller than expected. The group saw (and in some cases touched) Churchill's foot, the chairs/benches in Parliament (which looked unbelievably comfy), the seat from which Blair was pelted with flour etc.

Mr Fox's mafia connections then came up trumps, in gaining us access to Nick Stace (the man who brought about the changes to school dinners) who spoke about consumer advice and the work of the Consumer Association as a fully function pressure group.

Overall, the trip was an enjoyable day out as well as a useful one with regards the AS course





More students undertake A Level Physics at the Langton than at any other school in the UK, with Physics having become the most popular subject choice for university study.

It is not surprising therefore, that Cern, the European Organization for Nuclear Research and the world's largest particle physics centre, is high on the list of 'Places to Visit' for the school. Cern, which sits astride the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva, is a laboratory where scientists unite to study the building blocks of matter and the forces that hold them together. It exists primarily to provide them with the necessary tools. These are accelerators, which accelerate particles to almost the speed of light and detectors to make the particles visible.

Founded in 1954, the laboratory was one of Europe's first joint ventures and includes now 20 Member States

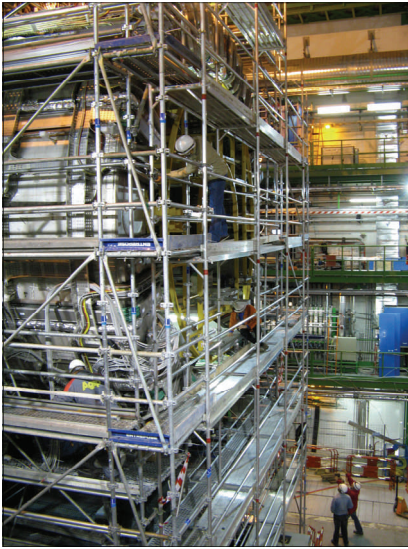
Cern employs just under 3000 people, representatives of a wide range of skills - physicists, engineers, technicians, craftsmen, administrators, secretaries, workmen... The scientific and technical staff designs and builds the laboratory's intricate machinery and ensures its smooth operation. It also helps prepare, run, analyse and interpret the complex scientific experiments. Some 6500 visiting scientists, half of the world's particle physicists, go to

there for their research, representing 500 universities and over 80 nationalities. Representing the Langton this year were 47 6th Form students, Dr Baxter, Mrs Parker, Mr Connolly and Mr Crick.

Photographs in this article were taken by Mr Connolly and Rowan Williams



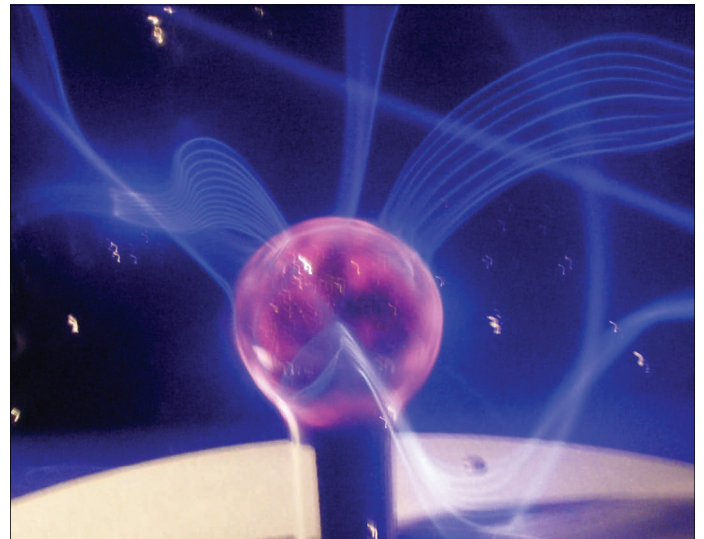
One minute you are on a coach....next you are ready to tackle the CMS (the Langton 9 doing an Ocean's 11)



Far left: 100 Metres underground the Compact Muon Solenoid magnet has the same amount of iron as the Eiffel Tower. *Centre:* The muon detectors are assembled on the surface and lowered into the detector cavern using a crane that can take 2000 tonnes. *Above:* The Large Hadron Collider Tunnel

Right: Coming up to his 18th birthday on the last day of the trip, Jacques found new strength to hold up the Globe of Science and Innovation. This building is made from the same amount of wood that grows in Swiss forests every three hours!

Far Right: The Hands on Science centre Micro-cosm has fantastic high energy experiments as well as the computer that Tim Berners Lee worked on at Cern to develop the World Wide Web



Far Left: In Geneva the students climbed to the top of the cathedral or went on a pedalo on the lake.

Left : With Mont Blanc behind, the group gathered at the top of Aiguille du Midi

Berlin Work Experience



It was with a mixture of excitement and apprehension that four Year 12 students (Tom Rees-Davies, George Cantwell, Tan Weston and Geoff Walters) met up at Stansted Airport to fly off to Berlin for a week's work experience. We had all been to Berlin before, but were more than a little daunted at the prospect of having to speak business level German for a week! We needn't have worried, however; we were all made very welcome by our German hosts and thoroughly enjoyed our work experience and the trip as a whole.

George and Tan worked together in our Berlin partner school, Tom worked in a primary school, and I worked in a publishing house. Whilst we were all given fairly mundane, manual tasks to do because of the language difficulty, we all agreed that the work experience was important life experience and something which gave us all a completely new social perspective.

It was also a fantastic chance to practise our German and meet new, interesting people. For example, one of the men I worked with was a Serbian who had been with the publishing company since fleeing the Communists in Serbia to start a new life in Germany 35 years ago.

Another great thing about the trip was being able to explore Berlin itself. As well as being able to look at some cultural highlights of Berlin, such as the *Fernsehturm* and the Sony Centre, we were also able to experience the nightlife and try some of the famous *Pilsener* beer. Tan's host even took him to a concert on the last day! Our hosts had organised something different for us to do every evening, and certainly kept us entertained. Particularly amusing was the constant habit of one of the Germans of throwing bits of paper at people. He will certainly enjoy being introduced to the Frisbee scene at the Langton on the return exchange!

All in all the trip was a really fantastic opportunity- culturally, linguistically and generally an awesome experience.

We are all very grateful to Mr. Fox for organising it and are looking forward to the return visit in September.

Geoff Walters, Year 12



Sam Dobin breaks Cambridge Great Court Run record

A former Langton student has set a new record for the race immortalised in the film *Chariots of Fire*.

Second-year economics undergraduate Sam Dobin finished the sprint in 42.77 seconds last week, inside the previous record of 43.1 seconds set by Olympic athlete Lord Burghley 80 years ago.

The race requires participants to run round the 367m perimeter of the Great Court's narrow flagstone path before all 24 chimes of the Cambridge college's clock have rung at midday.

In the film, the fictional Lord Lindsey, a character based on Burghley, sportingly finishes a few steps behind Harold Abrahams, who in real life won the 100m in the 1924 Paris Olympics, but did not run the Trinity race.

Double Olympic champion Sebastian Coe ran the race in 42.53 seconds in 1988 but failed to beat the chimes as the clock had been wound up the day before and chimed more quickly than usual. His time was therefore rejected. "It's really surreal, I don't know how it happened," Dobin told the *Times* newspaper "I've only been training for five weeks. It's why I applied to Trinity College. When I went round the colleges choosing which one to apply to, I stood on the lines in the Great Court and thought: Wow! It was an amazing feeling. I can't believe I've actually set the record for it. The only two people who have done it before are Olympics champions. It was just really, really weird."

Coe, chairman of London Organising Committee for the 2012 Olympics, praised Dobin for his "fantastic and very rare achievement". The Great Court Run is normally only open to first-year students, but Dobin was granted dispensation to race as he was ill last year.

Founded by Henry VIII in 1546, Trinity's past students include physicist Isaac Newton, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lolita* author Vladimir Nabokov, a number of poets and prime ministers as well as 32 Nobel Prize winners.



By Phil Day, Chairman

What is the Parents Association?

The Parents Association of Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys has a long tradition of fund raising for worthy projects whilst at the same time providing a social environment for all parents of Langton pupils to enjoy.

As Parents or Guardians, you are automatically members of the Parents Association. You are also welcome to become Committee Members, attend Committee Meetings and help to decide on events and shape the role of the PA. This role is changing, and although still retaining the fund raising element, it is increasing its involvement in the interaction between parents and the school, arranging events to discuss topical issues, and it is also involving parents in certain areas of school life that relate to their own skills or qualifications, such as provision of Clubs. Remember that any parent who only wishes to help out at events, and doesn't feel that they want to be involved on the committee can do just that, we are always looking for helpers!

New Parents' Welcome Event

September is always a busy time at school, and it can also be a major worry for parent's as their boys make that leap from Infants to 'big boys school'. But the overall feedback we had from those new parents who attended our Welcome Evening was "he's loving it!" We were also encouraged by the amount of people who expressed an interest in supporting our events and generally getting involved with the school. Some had concerns and ideas that they wanted to suggest, which is exactly what we wanted.

Hopefully neither your sons's nor your enthusiasm has waned because we'd like to see you at our next meeting on November 23rd.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events being planned at the moment are as follows:

Burns Night - Jan 25th, details to follow

Jazz Bonanza – lets try again!
March – details to follow

Drugs and Alcohol Awareness Event .
March.

Our next Committee meeting is on November 22nd in the Science Block (for a change). Everybody who expressed an interest in all things PA should come along as we try and firm up ideas for next years calendar and 'any other business'.

CAREER DATABASE NOW UP AND RUNNING

The Langton website www.thelangton.org.uk now features a new careers database which contains loads of useful information about different careers as well as providing links to over 100 university websites. Follow the link at the bottom of the home page.

Bullying Awareness Event

The latest in a series of Awareness Evenings was held on 17th October, and turned out to be quite a lively affair. Our thanks go to Dr MacKay, Deputy Head Pastoral, Mrs Scully and Mr Raines for what was a very informative evening. As you would expect the majority of the audience were new parents of Year 7 boys, and once we had seen Mr Raines's presentation which included a sample of the videos shown to new boys in PSHE, a few parents had questions for the team.

One of the main points to come out of the meeting, which not only majored on 'traditional' forms of bullying, but on the increasing problem of so-called Cyber Bullying – (mobile phones and computers), was that the new intake could benefit from earlier exposure to the section of the PSHE education that concentrates on bullying and how they should handle the problem if it arises.

The school was praised for its swift intervention in the few cases that presented, but the message was quite clear – the school is a 'telling' school, that there are ways around information being traced back to the victims (a major worry for the victim), and that the parents should be sensitive to changes in their children and when told of any problems, their first call might be to Susan Foster at Reception, and then on to the form teacher who would take it from there.

We hope to present a Drugs Awareness event early next year. Those who attended the last event will remember that we had outside agencies (including the Police, with a machine for sample testing). Any parents who are professionally involved in anything to do with drugs (or alcohol) and would like to help with content of this evening please contact me, Phil Day.

New Quiz Team

The new Langton Boys Quiz Team, headed up by Ben Abrams, made their debut on Oct 13th with a terrific 10 rounds of mind-stretching (and for some, mind-numbing!) questions, finishing up with a round entitled 'Know Thy Teacher'! Notwithstanding the high intellectual standing of all present, most teams played safe saving their 'joker' cards for the round on food and drink. There was a terrific round where we all had to guess the title of the book from the first line of its story.

The Quiz Team were very professional, and the audience enjoyed the evening, although towards the end some of them were a little distracted by their bleeping cell phones showing the England vs France score in the rugby world cup semi-final. Indeed, despite the competing attraction in Paris that evening we managed a good turn-out of about 80 parents. As usual the winning table were awarded with a selection of wine and chocolates, and a student team won music vouchers.

Both the PA and the boys hope to hold another Quiz early next year, and I'm told that there will be some easier questions next time! Thanks to all the PA members who helped out both before and after the event, and particularly to Carol Day for organising the food.

Contact and General Information

If you would like to contact us, here are some names and numbers:

Phil Day (Chairman) - 01227 709142
philipday.motif@btinternet.com

Guy Sharrock (Vice Chair) – 01303 262006
gsharroc@crs.org

Uniform Shop Contact

Carol Day – 01227 709364

STOP PRESS! Mrs Moore needs a Woggle!

and lots of other things 'Scout'.

If you have any scout uniform items (shirts, scarves and, yes, woggles) in 'smallish' sizes that you would be prepared to lend/give she would be delighted to hear from you.

Langton Rugby Reports by Tom Rees-Davies

Losing talented, experienced players is difficult for any team and for the Langton 1st XV it was no better. A large section of the pack was lost upon the start of the new academic year and several of the backs. However, out of the dust has rumbled a new, better, slicker team. The first training session of the season was a revelation, with in excess of thirty players attending, and unlike years gone past the commitment and attendance has remained phenomenally high. This was mainly thanks to a new crop of eager, fresh-faced year 11 boys, many of whom have secured starting 1st XV berths and boys in the sixth-form wanting to play rugby for the first time. As a result we are able to field two strong teams. The addition of Mr Melford to the role of coach has enhanced the standard of training and the sense of professionalism within the team. Of a strong group of year 13, Robbie Johnston was chosen as captain and has been inspirational in his actions off the field and inspirational in his play on the field.

The season started with a short trip to Nottingham, for a long-weekend of rugby and dodgy curry. The team used the opportunity to bond, especially with a large amount of new boys being played in the team. The tour was largely successful and was a good experience for all involved. The first match played was a fixture against Harvey in the Daily Mail Cup, which, with several players injured, least of all Fly-half Shaun Brown, the team lost, despite scoring two good team tries. However since then, kitted out with two new kits and Mr Watson's much anticipated post-protectors, the season has been nothing short of amazing.



Maidstone Grammar 7-10 Langton

The first win of the season came on the road against a strong Maidstone Grammar side, in absolutely appalling conditions, the last ten minutes being played in the middle of a hail-storm. Some gruesome, stalwart defence from Langton and persistent attacking saw the Langton home, to a somewhat unglamorous but nonetheless deserved win. Tries came from fit again fly-half Shaun Brown and outside-centre Jacques Pouget.

Oakwood Park 0-29 Langton (Daily Mail Vase Rnd. 1)

The second home game of the season saw a big crowd out to see the team put five tries past an unsuspecting Oakwood Park side in this Daily Mail Vase tie. Some superb tactical kicking and absolute dominance at the break-down and in the scrums, with young hooker Cameron Townley turning over several scrums, resulted in a whitewash in this encounter. Though Oakwood had very few attacks the Langton back-line held fast and conceded no points.

Kent College 0-8 Langton

The fixture had to be moved from Langton to KC as a result of a ruined pitch, but the travelling support gave the Langton a 'sixteenth man' and it showed in the first half. A disallowed try from new scrum-half George Collins, was followed by a fantastic try from Harry Dance off the back of a rolling maul. 10 minutes later, full-back Tom Rees-Davies slotted home a penalty from 22 metres out. The scores remained the same throughout the second-half, despite the KC captain's trip to the sin bin for the last ten minutes of the match. An amazing win for all those involved, gifting the bragging rights to the Langton for the first time in some years.

Langton 22-0 Bethany (Daily Mail Vase Rnd. 2)

The second round of the national tournament saw the visit of Bethany school. In their changed strip the Langton took to the field quietly confident on the back of their third straight win. The Langton started ferociously and a turn-over from the first kick-off saw centre Jacques Pouget break through the line to set up left wing Gareth Morris who scored under the posts. The conversion from Shaun Brown followed. Some quick phase-play shortly after, saw Pouget score a deserving try in the right-hand corner after good work from the pack at the break-down. In the second half, Langton tightened their hold on the game, with Shaun Brown scoring a try of his own taking his personal points tally to 20 points for the season. Pouget finished the match off with his second score, a looping run to finish again in the right-hand corner, his third of the season. This magnificent win sealed the team's place in the third round of the vase against Sir Roger Manwoods on the 7th of November. This is the furthest any Langton team has been in the National Competition and we urge anyone, pupils and staff alike, to come and watch the team when we play at home.





Old Enough to Vote?

That is the question that Mr Butler put to Year 11 students as part of their Citizenship studies. Sam Langley puts forward the case for dropping the voting age to 16.

I believe strongly that if people don't start voting young, they'll never be voters. It makes sense, after all – it is like many things—it is best to start early.

At 16, we can work, pay taxes, have legal sex and even be charged as an adult for criminal offences – so why can't we have a say on how all of this is run?

By the time we are 16, we have already formulated some quite strong opinions on many subjects – and although these opinions may not be backed up by as much experience as many older persons, they are still opinions – and every opinion counts.

We all live in this country together, and we are all affected by the government under which it is run, in almost everything that we do. Although, apparently, our ex-PM Tony Blair didn't trust us. "I am not sure that we would always want 16-year-olds to do all the things they can do. I am afraid that I do not agree with the hon. Gentlemen on the voting age. I think that it should remain as it is."

As young people, we are led to believe through the current political voting system that our opinions are worthless and invalid. This is, however, obviously not the case with many people of our age. Of course, there are people our age who have not developed political maturity yet – but then aren't there people of the same standing in every age group?

The arguments put forward for denying us the vote are the same as those put forward for previously denying women and the working class man from voting – that is, they were too innocent of the world and that the people who did have the right to vote knew what was best for them. These arguments are as wrong now as they were then.

Lowering the voting age would also improve the social awareness of us younger people – and there is good reason to believe that it would help minimize the bad things put to our names as teenagers – things like vandalism and shoplifting. I think that if we thought we had a greater place in society, we would be more inclined to become a part of it, and less prone to damaging it.

It seems odd to me that at school we are fed a Citizenship GCSE course, which educates us on various political issues, leading us to formulate our own views on politics, and even forcing the impression of importance in this matter on us. Meanwhile, we still have to wait at least another three years before we can even begin to make our own impact on these things. It is either deliberately patronising or designed to aggravate and lower the voting turnout for the younger age groups.

It is not untrue to say that teenagers of our generation are on the whole, the best educated, most informed and politically interested yet. The current age limit of 18 was set many years ago – it is surely out of date by now? After all, the world is changing all the time and a law as important as this one should be kept up to date. Today's 16-year-olds are at least as mature and educated as the 18 year olds of the past.

There are other sides to this argument but none pose significant opposition to it. Some of the reasons include the idea that we are uneducated on the subject, which is largely untrue, and that we are "unlikely to have gained the necessary political maturity to be able to express a considered political argument". This is the view held by many, and unfortunately they do not care to change their thought processes. Because of this, it is unlikely that we will be able to vote any time soon – and we'll have to wait until we are of the "proper" age.

What do you think? If you would like Langton News to publish your opinion on this, or any other subject, see Mrs Begg (office opposite the Headteacher's).