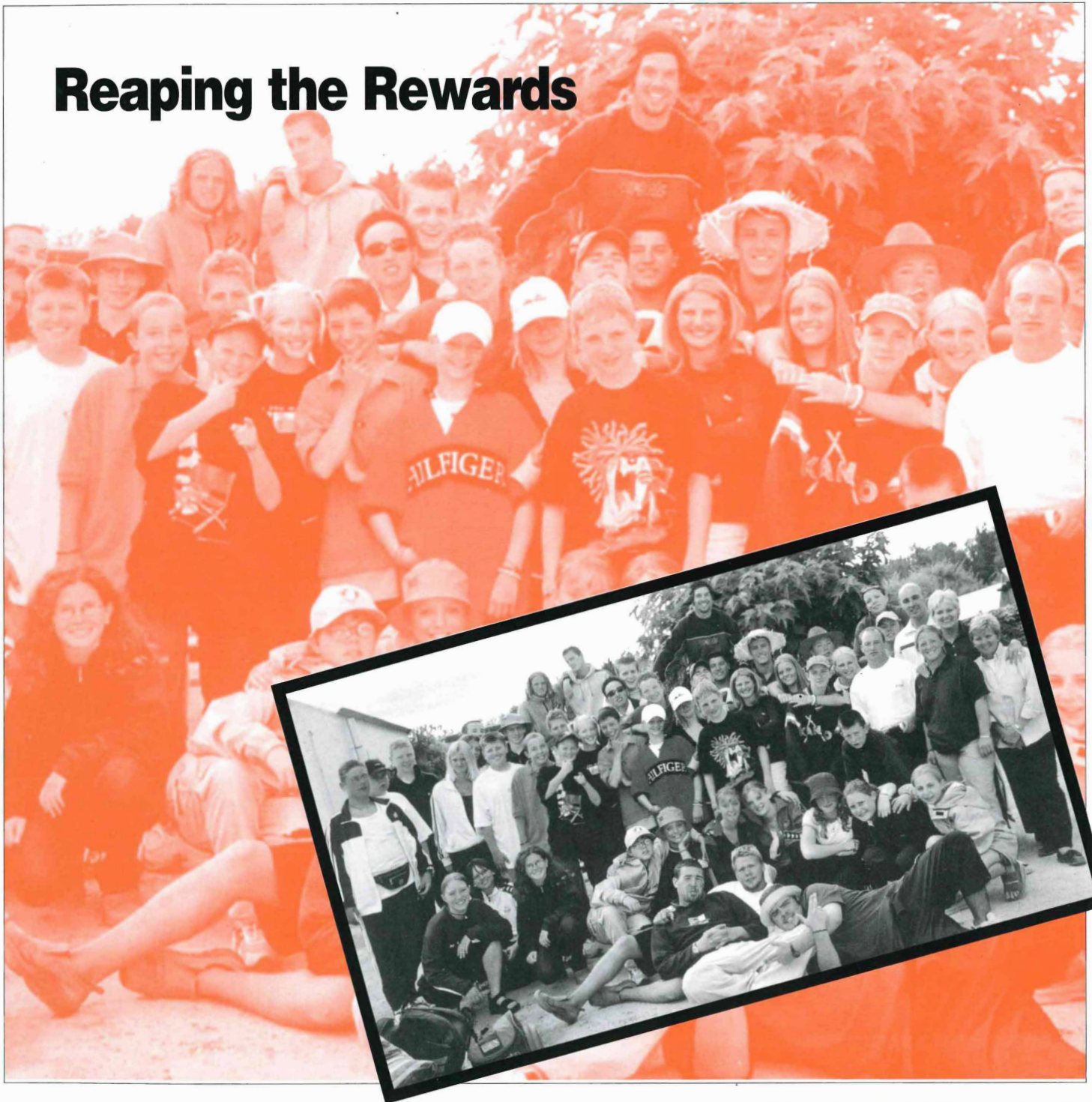


CONNECTIONS

6

Reaping the Rewards



Welcome to the new edition of Connexions, the magazine that links home and school, keeping you up to date with the achievements and successes of students at Wath Comprehensive School. Our cover photograph from the Watersports trip, reflects the school's support for social and cultural events. Find out more about these events, the school's fund raising for charities and more - all inside your new edition of Connexions!

DIARY DATES

Autumn/Winter 2001/02

- 06.9.01 School begins for all students
- 17.9.01 Y13 Biology Field Course (all week)
- 21.9.01 Y12 Study Trip to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- 28.9.01 French Exchange (all week)
- 01.10.01 Study trip to the Somme
- 08.10.01 Y7 and Y12 photographs
- 09.10.01 GCSE Study trip to Spain
- 15.10.01 AS/A Drama performance
- 06.11.01 Y13 Parents' Evening
- 04.12.01 New Sixth Evening
- 13.12.01 Christmas Concert
- 17.12.01 Carol Service
- 20.12.01 Speech Night
- 29.1.02 Y8 Parents' Evening
- 01.02.02 AS/A Spanish Exchange to Madrid
- 05.02.02 Y11 Parents' Evening

Success by Degrees!

We offer our congratulations to the following former students of the school. They have now obtained their degrees and we wish them every success in their future careers.

First Class Degrees:

Clare Bacon - French and Spanish - Sheffield

2.1 Degrees:

Neena Agrawal - Psychology - Leicester
Jennifer Barlow - Spanish and Portuguese - Nottingham
Sarah Copley - Podiatry - Huddersfield
Rachel Kelly - Criminology and Criminal Justice - Bangor
Paul Limb - Geography - University College - Northampton
Sarah Linstead - Molecular Cell Biology - York
Catherine Nessworthy - History - Durham
Simon Fallis - Physiological Science (Medicine) - St Catherine's College, Oxford

3rd Class Degrees:

John Gibbs - Mathematical Sciences - Birmingham



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Wath Chronicle Wins Again!

The Wath Chronicle is a success - and that's official! The school entered the TES Newspaper Day Competition once again and has been awarded 'Distinction' for the fourth time in succession - a fantastic achievement. The editorial team, led by Mrs Mitchell, produced the newspaper in one day and sold it around the school that

afternoon. It carried news about the school, as well as local and national news. It certainly is hard work producing a successful newspaper, working to tight deadlines and altering content and layout as news emerges during the day. The hard work was all worth it though, as can be seen by the award. The editorial team were helped

along the way by an earlier visit to the newspaper group that prints the various Yorkshire editions of the 'Evening News', and our photograph shows the team during this visit.

The newspaper team will travel to London in July to collect their award. Congratulations on all your hard work. It has certainly paid off.



The Road to Mandalay

'The Road to Mandalay' was a powerful production of a play, specially written for a small group of schools by John McGrath. The play explored the issues of human rights through the ages and across the world. The play, performed in a documentary style with unusual staging, looked closely at issues such as slavery, employment rights, trades union rights, education and the role of

women and politics. The characters were representatives of these issues. There were some humorous moments in the play, but these were undercut by the serious nature of the message of the play — you were laughing then felt guilty for doing so as you realised the seriousness of the situation being examined.

The cast worked extremely hard. They had rehearsed and rehearsed to get the play right

and all this came to fruition on the public performance evenings. The cast also performed the play to the whole school in a series of performances during the human rights week — not an easy task. The hard work paid off. The play was a success and the school offers its thanks to all those who took part and performed in the production.
Vicky Sheppard. Y13

Oxbridge Offers

We offer our congratulations to the following students, who have been offered places at colleges at Oxford or Cambridge Universities:

Siu Kee Tsang - to read Law at St. John's College, Cambridge
Duncan Saunders - to read Engineering at Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge
Eve Sanders - to read Law at Keble College, Oxford

We wish them every success in their 'A' level exams.

The Write Stuff!

A number of you in Y7, 8 and 9 took part in a creative writing competition organised by the stationery company 'Staples'. You were asked to write a science fiction story using exactly one hundred words - not an easy task to accomplish. We are delighted to say that two of our pupils were winners: Tanya Neligan in 9ME and Elisabeth Jackson in 8BW.

They have since had their stories published and have received their own personal copies of the book. Congratulations to the both of you and keep writing!

Our photograph shows the proud winners: Tanya is on the left and Elisabeth on the right.



The Battlefields Trip to the Somme

Alison Stone Y10

Here we are in 2001 and in a few months from now another group of pupils from Y9 to Y13 will experience being transported back in time to the war torn battlefields of 1916 in northern France and Belgium.

These pupils, just like the very first British army recruits, are about to embark on an incredible journey that will change their lives forever.

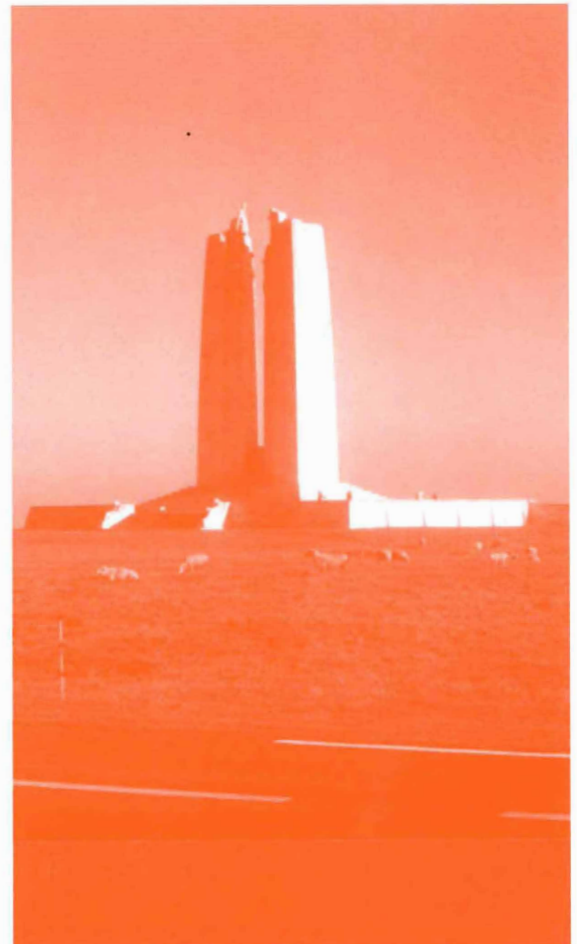
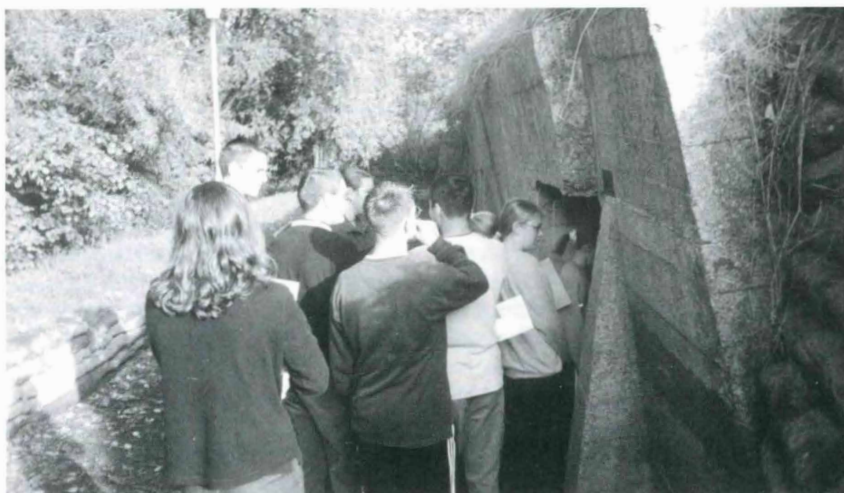
I have first hand experience of the school's Battlefields trip. I was so touched and moved by the whole experience that it inspired me to enter the annual competition, and, to my amazement, I gained the chance to relive my experiences and return to the Somme for a second time.

The five October days spent travelling around this unique part of Belgium and France really does leave a lasting impression on you. To me, the trip could hardly be improved, as the audio and visual materials given to you, along with the autumnal weather,

altogether make the perfect combination for a truly memorable trip. The visits to Tyne Cot, Thieval, Dellville Wood, Hill 60 and the Menin Gate, along with all the other places, help establish a firm understanding of what happened in those four horrific years of warfare. As the trip develops, emotions begin to increase in intensity and are brought to a dramatic climax at the Menin Gate memorial. This is when the true brutality of war becomes an earth shattering reality.

All aspects of war are studied on this trip, including the crusades of our international allies and the plight of some men executed for desertion when their willpower broke under the unbearable conditions of the trenches.

This trip is truly amazing. Not only do you get hands-on experience in the original surviving trenches, I guarantee that a part of history will return with you. Everyone is touched by the intensity of emotions the trip provokes. The annual Battlefields trip really does bring the classroom and textbook history to life.



A Celebration of Human Rights

In November, the school amended its curriculum to undertake a month long celebration of human rights, culminating in performances of a play specially written for the school by John McGrath, "The Road to Mandalay" (see further article on the play itself). Various subject departments took different aspects of human rights and explored these in different and interesting ways. The aspects covered ranged from studying employment rights in Business Studies; creating mosaics using human rights symbols and motifs in Art; visiting the Beth Shalom Holocaust Museum in R.E.; studies of the environment, gender issues and equal rights in English; visiting human rights web sites in I.C.T. through to a Sixth Form Conference with the Bishop of Sheffield and the setting up of an Amnesty International group in school. All pupils in all years will have participated in aspects of this celebration and have hopefully learned from the experience.



Sean Townsend, presently studying Computer Studies, Geography and English Literature in Y13, has been recalling his hectic schedule since November. This has involved not only serious study for 'A' levels, but a two week tailored and abridged flying course with Ormond Beach Aviation of Florida. 'A fabulous fortnight of fantastic flying — the most memorable flying experiences so far!' is how he describes his days as a student pilot in sunny Florida. In a typical day, he would be up by 5.30a.m. and following a packed schedule until 10.30p.m., which included solo flights from Ormond Beach to St. Augustin. He describes the views of the coastline as phenomenal, and the flights as, 'The best I have ever completed.'

The course culminated in Sean's completion of his GFT — General Flying Test — and involved flights in a different type of aircraft than usual, a PA28 (Piper 28 4 seater) which relates more closely to an airliner in terms of cockpit and handling.

The Sky's the Limit!

Since returning to England, Sean has completed his mock exams and made another memorable flight. He has made a night flight over the Humber Bridge, thus enabling him to act as captain on an aircraft at night as well as daytime.

Sean enjoyed the Humber flight because he was able to fly in very favourable weather conditions and he explained that the ability to interpret land formations as well as runway markings are all attributes to performing successful night-time operations.

Sean intends to make flying his career. He will take training after 'A' levels at one of Britain's leading air colleges, Cranfield, where after completion of a 13 month course — a short duration due to the qualifications and experience he has already gained — he hopes to join a company such as Air UK as a commercial pilot. Sean's passion for flying is his 'ultimate driving force'. We wish him well for the future.



Save the Children

As always, Mr Goodman and a team of helpers sold items from the 'Save the Children' catalogue this Christmas. Mrs Farrar also raised money at Y7 wing. This was followed by a sponsored swim at Wath Swimming Baths. 8GD, Mr Goodman's tutor group, and some Y9, 10, 11 and Y12 pupils took part in the event and raised over £500 through their efforts. Well done to all those pupils and staff who gave up their time to raise money for such a good cause. On February 7th, Lady Scarborough, President of the regional branch of Save the Children, was invited into school and at a Y7 and Y8 assembly, was presented with a cheque for just over £948, the total amount raised so far this academic year.

Wath Observes National Holocaust Memorial Day

Saturday, 27th January, was the first ever National Holocaust Memorial Day and Wath observed the occasion on Friday, 26th January. Organised by Mrs Whiting and Miss Newton, every tutor group took part. A very moving thought for the day was read out, followed by the lighting of a candle and a minute's silence. The candles were then sent to the Learning Support Centre, to a specially prepared display area, relit and left to burn, in memory of all of those millions of people whose lives were taken from them in those terrible acts of genocide.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

'What a superb evening!' 'Marvellous!' 'A brilliant evening. I really enjoyed it.' were just a few of the many comments about the Gym, Dance and Movement Evenings on the 13th and 14th of February. The P.E. department and all the students worked very hard to make sure that the evening was full of thrills and wonderful action, enough to make the stomach somersault and the heart double flip!

There were magnificent performances of gymnastics, demonstrating physical prowess, and wonderful and mesmerising dance routines revealing tight choreography and creativity at work. The junior and infant schools which also took part made the evenings very special indeed with pupils enjoying their performances and showing stamina, creativity and imagination. For many of these pupils, it was the first time that they had performed in public and in front of such a large audience. Many, many congratulations to all of those who took part on these wonderful evenings, not forgetting those who worked unobtrusively in the background, making the evenings the success that they were. Well done!

Y10 Technology visit to Disneyland Paris.



On the 17-19th of January (2001) a group of Y10 students went on a study visit to Disneyland Paris. The visit consisted of two seminars and one full day in the Disneyland complex.

The study experience began as soon as we stepped into our rooms, where even the lampshades were specially designed in the shape of a cowboy boot to help capture the cowboy theme of the hotel we were staying in.

Our first seminar was on the morning of the 18th which lasted an hour. This concentrated on the food and design part of Disneyland. After the seminar we walked around a very cold Disneyland, went on the rides and in shops and restaurants

and observed the food menus, designs of rides and even the costumes of the characters, especially at the spectacular electric parade.

The final seminar in the evening taught us about how Disneyland Paris' greatest ride, Space Mountain, was designed and made and also how the costumes of the Disneyland "cast" were made.

Although Paris was extremely cold, I enjoyed my stay and learnt a lot about how Disneyland was designed and the effort produced by engineers and designers alike to make Disneyland Paris, even now, one of the most successful places to visit in the world.

Johanna Hirst, Y10.

German Exchange 2000

by Jonathan Welch



In mid-2000, a group of around 20 German 14 and 15 year olds visited Wath from Trave-Gymnasium Lubeck in northern Germany, during which time they were treated to a number of interesting trips, such as a visit to York and the National Coal Mining Museum, not to mention the few days during which they had the pleasure of coming into school (!). Then, in October, we were able to make the 25 hour trip by ferry to Lubeck. Personally, having never been to Germany before, let alone stayed with a German family, I was somewhat apprehensive. Of course, this was quickly overcome. As I was one of the few Y13 students on the trip, I also made many new acquaintances from lower down school.

We set off from Wath on a rainy October morning, and headed for Harwich. We boarded the ferry, our home for the next day, and headed for Hamburg. After a smooth crossing, we sailed majestically up the River Elbe into the centre of Hamburg. After a short coach trip, the moment everyone's been waiting for. Waiting outside school are the families who will take us into their homes for the next ten days.

On our first night, a Saturday, a party had been organised for us, to welcome us. The following day, most of the English and

German students visited 'HansaPark', a theme park a short way up the coast, where everyone had a good time. On the Monday, we were privileged to visit the Town Hall and meet civil dignitaries, who were obviously very proud of their town, and rightly so. This being a school trip, we didn't get off lightly, and spent the following day in school... but they aren't all that cruel really, and to prove it, on Wednesday, we were treated to a journey along the river on a very fancy boat, and allowed time for ourselves for the all-important shopping!! We were also privileged (although some disagreed!) to spend a morning being shown around one of the many local shipyards, seeing how a ship is built, from the pieces of metal through to the finished product.

By this stage, everyone was much more confident at being in Germany and speaking German. Everyone seemed to get along very well with their exchange partners, and by the time we had to come home, there were more than a few tears as our coach left school on our last afternoon. Overall, the trip went down well (that's *trip*, not *ship*!), and a good time was had by all...

... I won't mention, though, that the girls were upset at the party, because a certain German hadn't danced with them or about the 'incident' with the clock...



Wath Students Helping those in Namibia

In the summer of 2001, a group of twelve pupils, will be setting off for Namibia to spend a month in this very poor nation, helping underprivileged children in schools around the country.

Research is being carried out at the moment by Monica Nashandi, the High Commissioner of Namibia, to find schools in Namibia who are looking for sports facilities and some expertise, so that

the problems of alcohol and drug abuse among the young there, can be tackled and reduced. Providing recreational equipment and facilities is seen as a positive way for young Namibians to occupy their time.

Training ...

Along with two other schools from Yorkshire and Kent, Wath pupils will attend a 3 to 4 day expedition training course in Buxton, Derbyshire, in order to prepare the team for Namibia. All members of the team must maintain a regular fitness programme in order to meet the needs and demands of the

expedition. They must also have a knowledge of first aid and this will include a two day assessment approved by St John's Ambulance. There will also be a three day first aid training course organised by World Challenge.

The Project ...

The twelve students from Wath have opted to carry out basic construction tasks, improve sports facilities and teach in schools. This will include repairing school buildings and introducing new sports to the children of Namibia. The sports to be included are table tennis,

badminton, cricket, football, rugby, hockey and tennis. Hopefully, this will raise spirits and morale and provide a leisure resource to help combat the rising problems in Namibia. The twelve students will also be teaching basic English to Namibian school pupils. They will also be taking with them work from all kinds of subjects from a range of school years, to show the kind of work being undertaken in English schools.

Wath Comprehensive School is one of the first schools in South Yorkshire to undertake this kind of project. It will be a

'trailblazer' school, one of the first schools to begin a long term project of development. The project is run by World Challenge Expeditions in conjunction with the Secondary Heads Association.

The final week of the project will be spent around Etosha National Park and the Great Barmen Hot Springs. Treks around the National Park will be undertaken and there will be time for a little relaxation at the hot springs.

Glen Bott, Y12
and Peter Moran, Y13.

Duke of Edinburgh - A Tough Personal Challenge

Twelve brave and strong Y12 students undertook the personal challenge element of their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, by planning and taking part in a canoeing expedition along the Caledonian Canal and Loch Ness. The canal, which is in Scotland, runs for 60 miles and links such famous places as Fort Augustus and Loch Ness. The students canoed the length of the canal over a period of a week from Gairloch Bridge to Loch Ness. They had targets to meet as to how many miles to canoe every day and overnight they camped in local campsites. On some of the days the weather was absolutely perfect, but on other days, the mist and rain descended and the intrepid students had to contend with this. All twelve students completed the 60 miles and are to be congratulated.

Mr Price and Miss Ackerley accompanied the students. Miss Ackerley said, "The students were amazing. They did not complain, much; got on with the task and showed great determination. They were a pleasure to be with and a great credit to themselves and to the school." This was a very challenging feat and well done to all those who took part. Part of the training included 3 * Canoe Award, bag-packing, camp craft and map reading.



Speech Night

On 19 December 2000, the school held its annual Speech Night which is a celebration of the achievements of the school and its students. Students who sat public examinations at GCSE and 'A' level were invited, along with guests, to receive their certificates. The highly enjoyable evening was opened by Mrs Hartley the Chair of Governors, and was followed by Mr Godber and the guest speaker for the evening, Di Billups, Director of Education, Culture and Leisure in Rotherham, who also presented the certificates.

There were also musical items from Siu Kee Tsang and Pak Chun Tsang and the school band. There was a buffet reception afterwards in the Learning Support Centre.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

On Friday September 29th the staff of the school took part in the nationwide Macmillan Coffee Morning. During morning break, staff bought coffee, cakes and raffle tickets in order to raise money for the cancer charity. In just fifteen minutes, a grand total of £175 was raised. A magnificent effort!

Musical Evening at Darfield

On Friday 11th November 2000, musicians from Y7 through to Y13 took part in a musical evening to help raise funds for Valley Methodist Church in Darfield. The young musicians played a wide variety of music, with something there to appeal to everyone's taste. There were strong individual performances, as well as duets and group performances. For six of the pupils, it was the first time that they had performed in public and they did themselves proud!

The seasoned performers were also were in fine form. Everyone contributed to an enjoyable and entertaining evening. Many thanks to all the pupils who took part and to Mrs Lowrie and Mrs Hole for organising the event.

In June 2000, five staff, Mrs Bowes, Mrs Farrar, Miss Hague, Mr Potts and Mr Smith and 37 pupils travelled to the south of France for an action packed Watersports trip lasting eight days. The adventure began with a trip on le Shuttle. The group travelled to Cap d'Agde and stayed at the activity centre of Les Tamaris which was right on the beach.

Pupils (and staff) took part in a range of challenging and exhilarating activities. Despite the windy weather that they encountered, they were taught some of the basic skills involved in a range of watersports activities. The group tried sailing, kayaking, banana boating and even sailed on a catamaran. They visited the local Aqualand, a waterpark, which they all thoroughly enjoyed. In the summer evenings they played crazy golf, rounders, had singalongs and invented their own beach Olympics in which everyone finished up in the water! Mrs Bowes paid tribute to the pupils: "They were a wonderful bunch of pupils. They were enthusiastic and keen to take part in everything. Behaviour was excellent. We all had a wonderful time."

Look out for notices later in the year if you want to take part in Watersports 2002.

EAU LA LA!



Help with Reading

On Monday 13 November 2000, 30 students from Y12, accompanied by Mr Harrison, Miss Stewart and Mr Naylor, with the help of Rotherham Learning Support Services, spent the day at Rockingham Teachers' Centre. The students were involved in training to become Reading Tutors for those Y7 pupils who find reading challenging and difficult. The training was very intensive and very demanding of the Y12 students. The students were trained in the skills necessary to support pupils in their reading in a positive way. The students were taught, amongst other things, how to praise pupils, how to help them overcome difficulties, how to reinforce words that had been learned, how pupils can make sense of what they read and how to monitor progress of pupils over a period of time.

Certificates were presented to the Y12 students at the end of the day as a mark of recognition of the intense training that they had undertaken. The students were then subsequently paired with a Y7 pupil each and arrangements undertaken to see these pupils every week, read with them and monitor their progress.

Well done to the students who took part and many thanks for giving up your free time to help others to achieve.

A Life on the Ocean Waves

Y13 student Joanne Fieldsend will take to the ocean later this year after having been chosen to work on a tallship in what is a fantastic voyage of a lifetime.

Joanne was selected by the South Yorkshire Branch of the Sail Training Association to work as part of a crew as the tallship sails from port to port on a 10 to 14 day voyage. Working as part of a crew will not be easy. Her tasks will include hoisting the sails, helping out in the galley, cleaning the decks, steering the boat, navigating and acting as lookout throughout the night.

Joanne says that the experience will be incredibly character building. 'I will be assessed throughout the voyage and will receive a report from the captain on my progress.' Her determination and discipline will be fully tested during the two weeks. It will be a tremendous experience for her. Good luck, Joanne!



Hitting the Right Note

We offer our congratulations to the following pupils on their music exam successes:

Victoria Mower

Grade 5 Guitar
Grade 7 Piano
Grade 8 Theory

ABRSM Autumn 2000 session exam results:

David Elston

Grade 5 Theory

Jane Thomas

Grade 5 Theory

Charlotte Plews

Grade 4 Piano

Chloe Jones

Grade 3 Clarinet Grade 2 Theory

Cordelia Wilde

Grade 3 with Distinction Piano

Lucy Setterfield

Grade 3 Piano

Rachel Leasley

Grade 3 Clarinet

Rebecca Hearne

Grade 2 with Distinction Guitar

Fiona Bell

Grade 3 Flute

Harry Gregory

Grade 4 with Merit Guitar

Nicholas Moss

Grade 1 with Merit Jazz Piano

Matthew Williams

Grade 5 Clarinet

Jennifer Collinson

Grade 5 Clarinet

Gemma Dawson

Grade 3 Piano

Victoria College:

Simon Walker

Silver Medal

Trinity College:

Matthew Williams

Grade 3 Piano

Jennifer Collinson

Grade 6 Piano

Honours Board

Sam Williams

U14 Rotherham Schools Netball Centre of Excellence

Rebecca France

Selected for South Yorkshire

Charlotte Ellis

U16 South Yorkshire hockey

Catherine Guy

U18 South Yorkshire hockey

Alex Steadman

North of England Rugby

Cheryl Doherty

Qualified referee

Ryan Doherty Y7

Rotherham Schools Cross Country Champion

David Wheeler

Archery Champion

Neil Bell

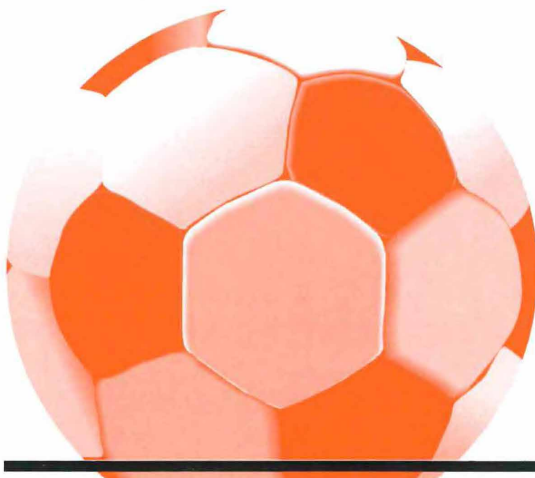
South Yorkshire Junior Boys Cross Country Champion



Athletics

Congratulations to those pupils who took part in the English Schools Athletics, representing our school and South Yorkshire. The results are:

Y7/8 Girls - 3rd
Y7/8 Boys - 4th
Y9/10 Girls - 2nd
Y9/10 Boys - 1st



WOMAN IN BLACK! (Becoming a Referee!)

Cheryl Doherty writes: 'I was interested in becoming a referee after seeing some of the referees at Barnsley Football Club. I decided to find out about how to become a referee by looking, first of all, for information on the internet. There I found more than enough information but I also found a local course that I could attend. I attended a course at Kirk Balk School in Hoyland, run by Mick Bales. The course lasted for eight weeks in total. During that time I learnt all the rules of the game. In the seventh week I had to take a written exam, and in the final week had to undergo an oral exam. You need to get more than 75% to pass and I managed that. I am now a fully qualified referee.'

Cheryl Doherty Y11.

Sports Day

Records were smashed on this year's Sports Day by Kyle Hargreaves and Hayley Lunn. Kyle broke the boys' high jump record, jumping 1m 71cm, and Hayley broke the girls' javelin record, to throw a magnificent 29m 55cm, beating the previous record of 28m 10cm from 1986. In addition, these two athletes also won trophies: Kyle won the Len Eyre Trophy and Hayley the Deborah Whittingham Trophy. Winners of the Victor Ludorum and Victrix Ludorum for each year were:

Year 7 Julius Wilson-Wolfe, Yvette Bell
Year 8 Scott Bembridge, Joanne Duggan
Year 9 Craig Spencer, Becky Davis
Year 10 Shane Brown, Lucy Sheldon

Congratulations to all those who took part.

South Yorkshire Athletics Championships

We offer our congratulations to those students who participated for Rotherham in the South Yorkshire Championships. They were:

Craig Spencer Y9	Long Jump - 2nd, Hurdles 3rd
Kyle Hargreaves Y9	High Jump - 1st
Gary Hellewell Y9 -	Triple Jump - 4th
Julius Wilson-Wolfe Y7	100m - 4th
Ryan Doherty Y7	800m - 1st
Shane Brown Y10	200m - 3rd
Ben Lacey Y10 -	Discus - 3rd
Karl Pettinger Y11	Javelin - 2nd
Kim Elvin Y9	100m - 5th
Becky Davis Y9	1500m - 4th
Charlotte Chapman Y9	Long Jump - 4th
Yvette Brown Y7	100m - 4th
Hayley Lunn Y10	Shot - 2nd, Discus - 2nd
Katie Burgon Y11	Javelin - 2nd
Lucy Kerr Y13	Triple Jump - 1st, Long Jump - 2nd

Congratulations also to Kyle Hargreaves who jumped 1m 75cm in the High Jump. This is high enough to compete in the English Schools Athletics Finals in Exeter in July. Our very best wishes to him.