

DECEMBER
2005



NEWSLETTER



YSGOL RHIWABON CHRISTMAS 2005



View From the Bridge...

Dear Parents

As the festive season looms large on the horizon, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the students and staff for their hard work and commitment since September. We have started our new reporting system & we hope that parents appreciate its new design. At the same time we have interviewed the whole of Year 11 with regard to their GCSE targets & we expect them to do very well this summer. This is always a very busy term and we appear to have crammed even more into it this time than ever before. My thanks go out to all concerned.

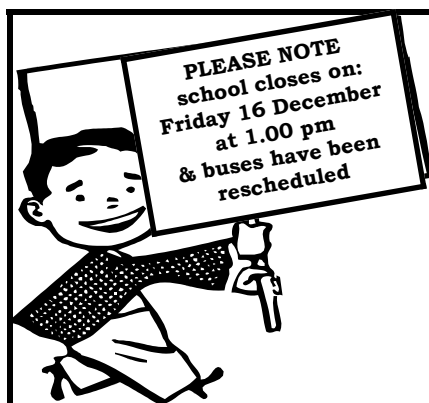
Now is also the right time for me to inform you that, for personal reasons, I will be leaving Ysgol Rhiwabon on February 10th to take up the Headship of a school on the Isle of Wight. Mr Thompson will act as Headteacher until September when my successor will start. With your support we have achieved much in the last three and a bit years and I am sure the school will continue to grow and improve in years to come.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas.

Peter Shaw
Headteacher

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**Start of Term for
January 2006**

**School Re-opens on
Wednesday 4 January 2006**



Looking Forward to Next Term

The Spring Term, which starts on Wednesday 4 January will prove to be another busy period in the life of the school.



Our first major event is on Thursday 12 January, when Sky Sports TV presenter, **Bryn Law**, will be the Guest of Honour at our Awards Evening. Mr Law will

speak about his experiences in radio & TV journalism before presenting awards to prize winners for the academic year 2004-2005. Unfortunately, the capacity of our hall means that admission to this event has to be by ticket only. Letters inviting parents of prize-winners were sent out late in the Autumn Term and tickets are now being allocated.

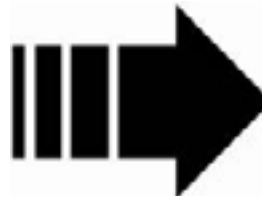


An **information evening** giving details of our Sixth Form courses for next year is being planned the following week on Thursday 19 January, whilst the following Monday, 23 January, is the date of the Year 11 Parents' Evening commencing at 4.30 pm.

School photographs will be taken on Thursday 26 January.



Years 12 & 13 will begin their **examinations** on Monday 30 January. Staff will be carrying out the second screening of all students in Years 7-11 during early February, with the reports due for issue before the end of March.



Still Looking Forward ...



Wednesday, 8 February sees our second **Neighbourhood Coffee Morning** of the year. Student activities planned before half term include the **United Kingdom Intermediate Mathematical Challenge** on Thursday, 2 February, a Year 10 visit to **Glanllyn** will also take place in February whilst Years 11, 12 and 13 will leave for **France** shortly before half term.

The second half of the term sees our second **screening interviews** when Year 11 discuss their progress with senior members of staff, whilst Thursday 2 March is the date for the **Year 8 Parents' Evening** which commences at 4.30 pm.



Year 9 Test Week will start on Monday 6 March, whilst Year 10 will sit their **GCSE Science Module Examinations** on Monday 13, Tuesday 14 & Wednesday 15 March.

Our Annual Party organised by the **Talking Newspaper** Association for residents of the area will take place on Thursday 16 March.



Parents of Year 9 Students will have an opportunity to discuss their children's progress with staff on Wednesday 29 March, whilst the term finishes with **house matches** during the last week of term.



Open Evening 13 October 2005

Our Open Evening for Parents of students joining the school in Year 7 next September proved a great success with children from twelve different primary schools showing an interest in Ysgol Rhiwabon.

With such large numbers it was necessary to restrict the time allocated for each tour but we are pleased that it was possible to accommodate the 250 or so visitors who came that night.

RS YEAR 7 ADVENT CALENDAR COMPETITION

Yet again Year 7 have provided a beautiful display of their talent for art & craft. Our library looks really festive! There were so many high quality entries that Mrs Nia Richards had a difficult task in choosing the winners & runners up. Our thanks go to her for judging. I must also thank all students in Year 7 for their hard work.



Winners ▶ Rebecca Williams ▶ Karoline Brzozowska ▶ Naim Arsan ▶ Lucy Thomas ▶ Luke Roberts ▶ Ben Price

Runners up ▶ Niall Taylor ▶ Dean Balaam ▶ Thomas Francis ▶ Jack Baten ▶ Laura Edwards ▶ Hannah Madsen ▶ Bethan Linden ▶ Josh Roberts ▶ Kyle Roberts ▶ Will Thomas ▶ Tom Miles ▶ Chantelle Higgins ▶ Jessica Leighton ▶ Amy Jones ▶ Jessica Evans ▶ Ashley Wright ▶ Reece Morris ▶ Lowri Brooke ▶ Lorna Price ▶ Ben Evans

Self Defence Classes

The course has been running over a period of 6 weeks as a partnership of Ysgol Rhiwabon, Youth Work in Education and Wrexham Sports Development. It was specifically for young women from the school to learn the basic art of Jujitsu. This course not only gave them confidence in using techniques to help them stay safe, but also provided laughter and enjoyment for all involved - especially the 'scaredy cats' watching (Craig & Donna). Young people involved were :
 Year 7 - Laura Partington, Sophie Roberts, Lucy Thomas, Joanne Roberts and Danielle Miles.
 Year 10 - Kizzi Hodgson, Jade Buffey, Charlotte Jones, Natalie Jones, Elisha Roberts, Bobbi Jones and Amie Byrne.



Laura Getting to grips with the Instructor!!




Defensive 'High 5' from Lucy



Stricly Come Dancing—Kizzi & Bobbi Style




Doing it the Instructor's Way!



Strictly Come Dance Club! Dance Club has increased in numbers this year. The group has been working towards a production in conjunction with other dance groups in North East Wales. The show will be held next May in the Stiwt Theatre, Rhos. The club is held every Wednesday afternoon after school in the Upper School Gym and will re-start on 18 January 2006.




Christmas Charity Fair Students showed organisational skills & were responsible for money collected when they organised their stalls for the Christmas Charity Fair. This was held during an extended lunchtime on Thursday 15 December. Planned activities included a charity football match, a 'keepie uppie' competition, cake & biscuit stalls & 'guess the number' competition. As usual we will send the proceeds to one international, one national & one local charity.




Book Treasure Hunt A Book Treasure Hunt was held in the school library during September for our Year 7 students, as part of the library induction.

 * Matthew Jones of 7PW *
 * was the lucky winner of *
 * a BBC Radio Wales *
 * Goodie Bag! *
 * *



Let us now take you ... Back to the 80s...

Congratulations to all the cast & crew for a fantastic school Production. 1,000 people watched the performance and the feedback has been tremendous, comments such as 'wonderful night', 'great entertainment' and 'what an achievement' have frequently been used. The Expressive Arts Department was soon back in action working away on the next epic—the Christmas Concert!

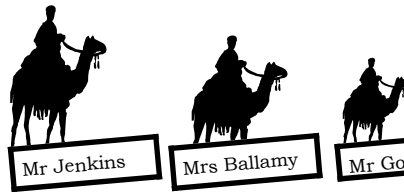


Apology The school wishes to apologise to those who attended the Friday night's performance for the rather abrupt curtailment of the show shortly after the interval. We are pleased to report that the young lady who collapsed on stage was released from hospital during the early hours of the following morning with a few stitches & some bruises. After a few days recuperation at home she is now back in school & busy rehearsing for the school Carol Service. We would like to thank the audience for their understanding & co-operation in dealing with the incident.



£160 for Macmillan Nurses

This year, the school combined its Autumn Neighbourhood Coffee Morning with its coffee morning for the Macmillan Charity. Students from the Year 10 Catering Group baked cakes and helped prepare the coffee and as a result, over £160 was donated to Macmillan Cancer Care. A generous donation of £50.00 was received from the Llangollen Rotary Club.



Morocco Here We Come!!!...

Our current Years 9 & 10 will be visiting the Atlas Mountains & Marrakech in Morocco in July 2007 for two weeks of trekking up the tallest mountain in North Africa. Students will be camping & using Berber tents, cooking meals over camp fires, washing clothes in streams etc. Places are still available—see Mr Jenkins. The group will be supervised by three members of staff, Mr Jenkins, Mrs Ballamy and Mr Gordon. To try to fund the expedition we will be organising fundraising events and looking for sponsorship from local & national companies. Any parties/companies interested in supporting the expedition please contact Mr Jenkins at school.

Celebration Assembly



Our Celebration Assembly will be held on Friday 16 December. All aspects of school life are rewarded:

behaviour, attendance, good work. Taking part in sporting & performing arts activities will all be rewarded & celebrated along with many other aspects of school life.

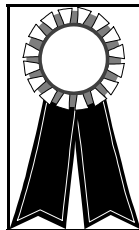
Mr. Jones' 'wheel of destiny' will select the names of winning students in the prize draw. There are separate draws for those with House Points & those with very high attendance. Prizes include, vouchers up to the value of £30 for major shops.

During the assembly, there will be entertainment from some students—a celebration in itself. No doubt there will be extracts from 'Back to the 80s', and the Carol Service.

A good time is had by all, but students must remember that if they are not at the assembly they will not receive a prize in the draw.

Used Stamps please

As you will know from our previous newsletter the school is collecting used stamps and surplus foreign coins for Marie Curie Cancer Care. Can we appeal to parents & students to spend a little extra time saving the stamps this Christmas when opening Christmas cards & packages. Boxes to accept these stamps have been prepared by Year 10 students & are located in the school's reception area.



Tip Top Tom

Year 13 student, Tom Partridge, again won the 'Best in School' award in the recent United Kingdom Senior Mathematical Challenge.

Tom gained a Silver Award, closely followed by David Bell from

Year 12 and Philip Hughes from Year 13, who gained Bronze Awards. There were 75,200 entries to this Challenge from across the United Kingdom



The Intermediate Challenge will take place on Thursday, 2nd February when students from Years 9, 10 and 11 will be able to test their mathematical skills against a similar number of students from...



An account of the Year 13 Sociology Visit to HMP Altcourse by Daniel Griffiths & Jessica Jones—both Year 13 students

Recently, we visited HMP Altcourse for our A level Sociology course. Our visit was for research, trying to find out about social factors and the inmates through group interviews.

Upon arrival, we were all very nervous, with the massive walls and hundreds of CCTV cameras making it all the more daunting. After a quick search we were given visitor badges and allowed to enter. With Mrs Cooper's father as our guide, we were ready for anything.

We were shown around the prison, and then taken to interview some inmates. We all grilled the inmates and received extremely honest and detailed answers. Next we joined a group of younger, short-term prisoners who appeared to have a different outlook on life. After some lunch, we had a chat with two inmates who gave even more depth into some of the reasons why they were in prison. Then we were taken to another class where young offenders were building a 'kit-car'. This group appeared to provide yet another different outlook on all experiences.

With all our notes made, we were more than happy to leave and continue our work in school. We all felt the trip was invaluable and a unique experience.





Numeracy Coaches

Mr Nigel Davies, Mathematics Adviser for Wrexham and Mrs

Griffiths (Head of Mathematics) have been training Year 11 & 12 students to act as Numeracy Coaches for Year 7 students.

From January a small number of Year 7 students will work one-to-one with a Numeracy Coach for half an hour each week. Their aim is to help students improve their basic number work.

REMINDER



Year 11 Module 1 Mathematics External Examination is on Monday 16 January 2006

General Knowledge Quiz

On 10 November Ysgol Rhiwabon competed in a General Knowledge Quiz against other schools ► Rhosnesni ► Dinas Bran ► Bryn Alyn ► Ysgol Y Grango. Ysgol Rhiwabon were triumphant with a clear victory! Congratulations & well done to everyone who took part.

Readathon

Following on from our non-uniform day a 'readathon' was held during November half term. Proceeds raised were divided between the 'Sunshine Project' (Library's adopted charity) & the purchase of new books/games for the library.

Christmas Craft Sessions

Craft sessions & storytelling took place in the Ruabon Public Library. Students from our Sixth Form & Mrs Richards (School Librarian) worked with local primary school children for two mornings early in December. Thanks go to Mr Roberts (Expressive Arts Dept) for his wonderful Santas!

Library Visit for Year 7

During October our Year 7 students visited the Ruabon Public Library. This was a great opportunity to find out what the Library had to offer. Everybody enjoyed themselves & I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at Ruabon Library for their help.

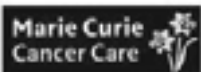


Year 11 trial examinations

For the first time the school employed external invigilators for school examinations. We were extremely

fortunate that our examinations officer, Mrs Denise Money Penny was able to recruit a well qualified, experienced & efficient team to assist her throughout the examination period.

The school would like to record its thanks to the invigilators & congratulate the Year 11 students on their excellent behaviour. Teachers are now busy marking papers & using them to prepare further advice & guidance for Year 11 as they progress through their GCSE courses.



'Grumpy Old Women' Win Quiz

The school's Quiz Night organised in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care proved a great success, with over £311 being raised for this Charity. Competition was very close, with two teams taking first place and three teams taking third place. A play-off enabled 'Grumpy Old Women' to just pip 'Blankety Blank' for the top prize. The school would like to express its thanks to local businesses and friends of the school who, together with the staff, ensured that all prizes were donated. Thanks were also due to the vice-chairman of governors, Mr Mervyn Dean, and his colleague, Mr Martin Evans, who devised and delivered the Quiz. Marie Curie Cancer Care has already written to the school thanking everyone involved and, in particular, the stewards from Years 9 and 11. They will be presented with Marie Curie certificates at the celebration assembly to be held on the last day of term.



Sixth Formers Visit The Big City!

Some Year 13 students had the opportunity to visit London on 30th No-

vember. As some had not been before, they spent the day sight-seeing, visiting the theatre and generally admiring the Christmas decorations which were spectacular this year. The National Gallery and St Paul's Cathedral were popular attractions and we all had a really good day.



Farewells



Three staff who have worked in the school this Autumn leave with our best wishes at the end of term.

Mr Jonathan Owen, a former Student President has spent this term as a Learning Support Assistant. He has proved extremely adaptable and effective both in the classroom and at many venues out-of-school as part of his work with the Alternative Curriculum. We would like to thank Jonathan for his sterling work and wish him every success with his future studies.

The school has maintained its links with Bangor University by welcoming trainee teachers, **Mr Kieran Maye & Miss Sharon Rennie**.

Mr Maye has worked in the Mathematics Department & shown great commitment to the school in many areas including using his technical skills supporting the school production.

Miss Rennie has been of great assistance in her work with classes in the PE Department. We thank them for their work & wish them every success in their future careers.



Football News ...
 School teams participating in two area leagues had mixed fortunes during the Autumn Term. Years 7 & 8 both only lost one game whilst Year 9 have struggled to repeat the success of last year. Several boys have been chosen to represent the County during the Autumn Term.

Badminton News ...
 The school badminton club meets on a regular basis. Numbers have grown considerably during the Autumn term.
 Any students who would like to play badminton outside of lessons should go to the Sports Hall during Thursday lunchtimes.


Cross Country News
 The school held its annual Cross Country event on 5 December. All students in Years 7, 8 & 9 took part, whilst the event was optional for Years 10,11,12 & 13. The day proved to be very successful—if a bit wet & muddy!

List of Winners:
 Taylor Jasper (Y7)
 Lowri Brook (Y7) ***
 Liam Sklenar (Y8)
 Chloe Ithell (Y8) ***
 Gareth Partridge (Y9)
 Molly Downes (Y9) ***
 Nicky Bride (Y10)
 Natalie Jones (Y10) ***
 Daniel Lovell (Y11)
 Sarah Jayne Pritchard (Y11)

Going Ballamy on Bala Lake!!
 Years 10 & 11 Alternative Curriculum Group students spent two days at Nantyr Outdoor Centre early in December. On day one they travelled to Bala Lake where they enjoyed themselves canoeing followed by a navigation/orienteering exercise. Day two took them to the new mountain bike centre at Llandegla. Despite the torrential rain when setting off from Rhiwabon, the weather brightened up & was better than expected for early December! They are now looking forward to taking part in canoeing sessions at Plas Madoc Leisure Centre during their outdoor activities lessons in the New Year.



GYMNASTICS **PSS DC News** ► With the Development Centre in its final year of funding, our focus is now on sustainable resources & training. We aim to train the remaining primary teachers in Gymnastics. We have produced Schemes of Work for Key Stages 1 & 2 & are at present developing the same for Gymnastics. Hopefully this will leave all primary staff fully equipped to teach Dance & Gymnastics confidently!



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Headteacher /Pennaeth - Peter Shaw BA -Headteacher

*“Ysgol Rhiwabon provides good opportunities for pupils’ academic, personal and social development”
 Estyn Report May 2003*

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