

JULY
2006



NEWSLETTER



YSGOL RHITHWABON SUMMER 2006



View From the Bridge...

Dear Parents

We approach the end of another very busy year for the school. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the staff, both teaching and non-teaching for all the hard work they have put in, not only in their daily roles but also in giving up their own time in holidays and after school hours to provide activities and events which enrich school life for many of our students.

I will be completing my period as Headteacher at the end of term and I wish to thank my Senior Team for ably supporting me along the way. We are all looking forward to working with the new Headteacher, Mrs Angela Williams, in September. Mrs Williams has already visited the school on a number of occasions to familiarise herself with the way that we work as a school and to become involved with the planning for the new school year. Students will have an opportunity to meet her at the Year Assemblies which we have organised during the first few days of the new term.

The end of the Summer term is traditionally a time for farewells to staff who are leaving us for various reasons and this year we say goodbye and thanks to a number of staff and wish them well in their future. We have appointed a number of new staff in the last few months, partly to replace staff who are leaving but also our expanding numbers and popularity as a school have necessitated the appointment of a number of additional staff. We are very pleased with our appointments and each new member of staff will bring something different to school life.

During the Summer holidays building work will be going on in school to create additional teaching space for next term and we are pleased to report that additional classrooms will be fitted out with interactive whiteboards which will greatly enhance teaching and learning.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all an enjoyable summer break. We all look forward to working closely with you again in September.

David Thompson
Headteacher

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PLEASE NOTE
school closes on:
Friday 21 July
at 1.15 pm
& buses have been
rescheduled



Start of Term for September

IMPORTANT

► Tuesday 5 September 2006
► **Years 7, 11 & 12**
only to attend
Y7 should not wear school uniform

► Wednesday 6 September 2006
► **All students**
to attend
Y7-11 should all be in full school uniform

Arwel Lording It

The school offers its congratulations and best wishes to Year 11 student, Arwel Carter, who was recently selected as one of six finalists from the Granada region to attend the National Voluntary Community Awards Ceremony to be held at Lords Cricket Ground in October. Arwel has already won a trophy and £500 which he has shared between the Renal Unit at Wrexham Maelor Hospital and the Shooting Star Appeal. At Lords he will be competing for a £2,500 prize for the charity of his choice, together with a trophy and £500 in gift vouchers.



Arwel was nominated by the school for this National Award and qualified for the finals by impressing judges at a ceremony at Cophthorn Hall in Manchester.

It has been a busy time recently for Arwel as alongside working for his GCSEs he was also nominated by his form tutor for the Wrexham and District Sports Junior Volunteer of the Year and was shortlisted to attend a ceremony recently at Brymbo Sports and Social Club.

We wish Arwel every success at Lords!

Funding Boost for the Talking Newspaper for the Blind

The Talking Newspaper for the Blind is a valuable part of Ysgol Rhiwabon's Community life. Co-ordinated by Mrs Ros Dean, the Newspaper has been running for almost 25 years. Each week pupils and friends of the school read articles from the local news; these are taped and circulated both locally and further afield.

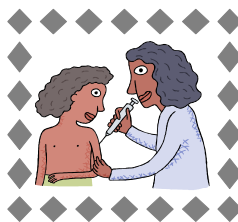
This year the Newspaper has been supported by HSBC who, after a visit to the school, were so impressed with the service that they donated £7,000 towards a new recording studio.

On 30th June the Newspaper received a further boost from a Charity Concert led by the Froncysyllte Male Voice Choir. The musical event organised by Mrs Wengar Cox and Mrs Ros Dean was a great success and a large audience enjoyed songs from the Choir, musical and drama presentations from students in the school and a rousing performance from the folk group, Madoc. The Concert raised a total of £832. The school wishes to thank Froncysyllte Choir and Madoc for their support. As a result of prolonged fundraising and the support above, an order has now been placed for the new studio.

MMR (Mumps, Measles and Rubella)

Catch-up Campaign

- If your son/daughter has missed
- the MMR catch-up sessions
- recently held in school and has
- not already had two doses of
- MMR vaccine, please contact your
- GP surgery for an appointment
- for immunisation.



Year 9 go Truly International (with a little bit of Latin)

Year 9 have extended their range of language skills in a recent special programme. For four weeks, their Welsh and French lessons were replaced by an introduction to German, Spanish and Latin. Despite the oral emphasis of this work, there were quiet periods as the students also learnt some elements of sign language.



Year 10 at their Peak

The following young people from the Year 10 Focus Group – Fahim Hossain, Jake Jones, Jamie Purslow, Michael Ellis, Stephen Waring, Linda Evans, Sarah Coleman and Sarah Jones, recently took part in an outdoor activities residential course at Edale Youth Hostel in the Peak District. This involved six activities: abseiling, archery, rock climbing, raft building, orienteering and high ropes confidence course.

Through excellent teamwork and determination they overcame various obstacles such as torrential rain, fear of heights, new activities and some very strange equipment. After the event, the group said, "even though we got wet, a little cold, bitten by midgies and were scared at times, we had an absolute scream."

They stayed for three days and two nights and their exemplary behaviour was a credit to themselves, their families and the school.

NEW YEAR SEVEN INDUCTION PROGRAMME

UNIFORM

Students joining the school in Year 7 in September will be involved in a two-day induction programme.

For their first day at school (Tuesday 5th September) they should wear casual clothing, including trainers, and not school uniform.

Full uniform must be worn on Wednesday, 6th September.



LUNCHTIMES

At the start of term, Year 7 will be admitted for lunch 20 minutes before the rest of the school. This period of time will be gradually reduced as the students settle in.

BUS TIMES

Year 7 students will be escorted to the bus queues 10 minutes before the end of the school day for at least the first week of the new term. Again, this period will be reduced gradually.



Where Are They Now?

Several former sixth form students have recently called into school after receiving the results of their University final examinations.

Former Student President Joanne Griffiths has graduated in History from Liverpool University. Also graduating from Liverpool is Matthew Orchard, who gained a First in Geography. Matthew is about to embark on a Post Graduate Teaching course.

Another first class honours student is Salim Shaikh who graduated in biomedical science from Keele. Salim will now study medicine at the same University.

Dawn Williams is following a nursing degree at Bangor which she is due to finish in March, but will progress to a midwifery course next year.

Robert Chalk was another recent visitor. After studying mechanical engineering for two years at Cardiff, Robert has accepted an offer to join the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm as an aircraft engineer. He will shortly be commencing his training at Plymouth.

Ian Cole has qualified as a Doctor at Imperial College, London and will soon take up a post as a House Officer at the Royal Cornwall Hospital.

Congratulations to all former Ysgol Rhiwabon students who qualified this Summer. If this Newsletter reaches any other former students we would be delighted to hear from you and include details in our next Newsletter.

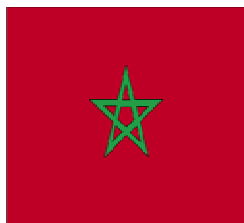
Morocco 2007 - Fundraising

The group has been hard at work trying to raise money. So far, the students have raised £500 since Christmas.

The group's target is to raise £6,000, so we still have a long way to go! Anyone interested in supporting our expedition through sponsorship, please contact Mr Jenkins.

Places Still Available

We still have a few places available for pupils in Years 9 or 10. If you fancy going on a trip of a lifetime, go and see Mr Jenkins for information.



STOP PRESS!!!!

GOWER HOMES

The school is delighted to announce that GOWER HOMES have again agreed to sponsor our student planners for 2006/2007. The planners, which are due from the printers in September, have been revised and, for the first time include a bilingual element in the diary section.

We wish to record our thanks to GOWER HOMES for their continued support of our school.

Year 10 Numeracy Coaches

Members of Year 10 have already made a good start as Student Leaders by taking over from Year 11 in volunteering to help younger pupils with their number work. The Year 10 students have been trained as 'Numeracy Coaches' and provide extra lessons for Year 7 every Monday morning during extended registration.

They use materials provided by the Basic Skills Agency aimed at improving numeracy in Year 7. It is hoped that this good work will continue into next year.



Year 10 Join the Army

Stephanie Harrison recounts what it was like to join the Army for a day.

On Tuesday, 23rd May, Year 10 went on a fun-packed day to Chirk Airfield to spend the day with the Army. The whole of Year 10 had a fantastic time and met lots of people whom they will never forget.

There were different activities to test our ability and confidence. A particular highlight of the day was Mrs Cooper's victory in the Lazer Quest challenge, where she beat Daniel Cooper, Joe Evans, Gabriel Correia, Nicholas Jones and Matthew Masters. Well done, Mrs Cooper!

"Even I was tested to the limits as I braved the inflatable assault course with some of the soldiers yelling at me from the sidelines. I have to admit they terrified me, but made me laugh with a huge hug at the end."

All in all, everyone had a great day with plenty of laughs and smiles and all I can say is..... "Sir, Yes Sir!"



International Drama Workshop - Shakespeare, Welsh Folk Songs and Japanese Drumming

This July, ten Ysgol Rhiwabon students from Years 10, 11 and 12 participated in a two-day International Drama Workshop at Chester University. Working alongside Japanese Performing Arts Students, they explored issues and exchanged cultural ideas through the dramatic framework of Japanese legends and Shakespearean texts. Skills were also exchanged including Taiko drumming and stage sword fighting, with Ysgol Rhiwabon students making their own contribution teaching Welsh folk songs.

This is the second year students have participated in this unique event and again all agreed it exceeded every student's expectations.



Expressive Arts Musical Drama

Sam Erlandson, Stephanie Harrison and Howard Jones competed in the Urdd Eisteddfod and reached the semi-final. Well done to them!



The Cerdd Dant group achieved third place in the final at Ruthin during the half term holiday in May – a fantastic achievement! They performed on stage and appeared on S4C.

Congratulations to Charles Hughes on passing his Grade 5 cornet exam with the Trinity Examining Board. His progress over the last year has been outstanding!



Art Update

Year 7 have completed their studies on a Welsh Artist – Shani Rhys James. Year 8 students have constructed 3D heads using card. Year 9 have had a ‘smashing’ time creating mosaics and also print-making.

Year 10 GCSE Art students have been working with an Artist for the day, completing a practical workshop for coursework and a competition – Young Brits at Art. The Commission for Racial Equality is paying for the Artist to work with the pupils and we wish them luck with their competition entries.

Enterprise/Art Development

Year 8 students have been involved in the refurbishment of Ebenezer Chapel in Cefn Mawr – they have designed parts of three stained glass windows which will form a major part of the Arts Centre when completed.

Year 8 Art Club has been painting cut-out characters, which will be placed at St Mary’s Primary School playground.

“Creative Learning in Humanities”

Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail Interpretation Project

A group of fifteen students worked with the Cefn Mawr Heritage group – and researched information for interpretation boards to enhance the Heritage Trail in the local community. This is what Tom Hughes (9GM) wrote about it:

“In May and June a group of Year 9 pupils took part in sessions during and after school. We visited Ty Mawr Country Park and did work on the Cefn Heritage Trail. On our first trip we travelled around the Newbridge and Cefn area and collected information on the different sites there, such as Plas Kynaston Hall, J C Edwards, the Viaduct and Monsanto.

On our subsequent visits, we researched information, wrote up the information and drew pictures of the sites. We also undertook other activities such as printing pictures on cloth. After we had finished that, we organised the layout of our boards, because our pictures and information will be displayed on information sign-posts that will go up in different areas for the public to see.”

Overall, our involvement in the project has been an interesting and enjoyable experience for us all.

A group of six pupils was involved in maintaining the trail to ensure community use.

This is what Danny Evans (9GM) wrote:

“On our first Tuesday visit we went on the Heritage Trail. We cut down the overhanging trees and nettles on the park opposite Somerfield. On our second visit we went down to Ty Mawr and cut the overhanging branches along the path to the Aquaduct and did a general tidy-up of the footpath along the River Dee.



“Creative Learning in Humanities”

History/Art Project

As part of the Year 9 History course we have been studying the First World War, not just the causes and battles, but the art and poetry as well. My class, in small groups of eight, have been researching various artists from the First World War. We drew our selected artist's picture on A3 sized paper. Some students also worked on background detail. After all our art work was completed we joined them together to create a wall frieze displaying different artists' interpretations of the war, against a background of barbed wire, sandbags and other features of the trenches. The work done will be displayed in classroom G2.

Robert Hughes (9GM)

Come on You Reds!!!!!!!

Ysgol Rhiwabon was delighted to welcome Lee McEilly and Michael Ingham, players from Wrexham Football Club on Thursday, 27th April. Our Year 8 students took part in a question-and-answer session which was held in the Library.

The students had a fantastic time, asking the players challenging questions on all sorts of subjects. We would love them to come back to see us again—perhaps after promotion next season??

“Creative Learning in Humanities”

Religious Studies

Year 7 Christian Symbol Competition June 2006

Year 7 displayed their full range of craft skills this term in a tightly-fought competition. Their task was to fashion any Christian symbol. The result was a fantasy of crosses, fishes, chi-rhos and other symbols. Crosses produced ranged from the “old rugged cross” with wood and nails to metal spiked and sequined crosses. The fish and chi-rhos were also produced from a wide variety of materials—plastic, glass, metal and wood. Many are now displayed in the library. My thanks go to the judges, Mrs R Dean and Miss Katie Thomas.

Prize-winners:- 7A (AM) – Laura Evans,

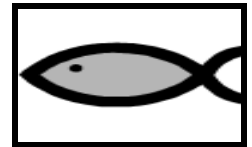
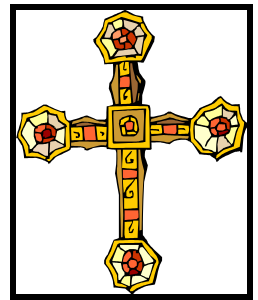
Rebecca Williams, Phillipa Lancaster-Moore.

7B (AR) – Loren Parry, Laura Edwards, Thomas Francis.

7C (RD) Gemma Jones, James Edwards, Callum Yates.

7D (BMc) Jessica Evans, Lucy Thomas, Taum Darnbrough.

7E (PW) Lowri Brooke, Ashley Wright, Tara Roberts.



“Hwyl Fawr” in the Jambori

The Welsh and Expressive Arts Departments combined to host a Jambori on 14th July. Year 6 students and some of our Year 7 students enjoyed a rousing programme of Welsh songs, ably led by Year 9 students, Andrea Dodd, Lauren Mates and Rebekah Butler. Backing them were Laura Ayling, Luke Laker, Zac Morris, Chris Edwards and Josh Hughes with the band.

Our students were successful in encouraging everyone to participate in the successful event which, we hope, will now become a regular item on the Ysgol Rhiwabon calendar.

Fair Trade Tea/Coffee anybody?????

On Thursday 4th May we held a Fair Trade Tea and Coffee hour in the sixth form area of the Library to raise Fair Trade awareness amongst the students and staff. They had the opportunity to try Fair Trade coffee, tea, chocolate and biscuits. Everybody agreed how nice it all tasted and said that they would buy it in the future.



Wrexham FC Legend starts Sponsored Walk Record

As most parents already know the heavy rain in May forced the postponement of our Sponsored Walk until the last Friday before Half Term. However, our disappointment went when we were able to recruit Wrexham FC 'legend' Dixie McNeil to assist Mr Thompson as starter.

Despite the mud there were many smiling faces at the end of the nine mile walk. A record total of over £3,200 was promised. Most sponsor money has now been banked but a few students are still to bring theirs. The proceeds are being shared between a new school charity fund and school improvements for pupils. Recent improvements for pupils have been parasols for the tables on the front patio and for the new table and seats outside the Science entrance.



Lee Holman meets his hero Dixie McNeil



Dixie McNeil helps Headteacher, David Thompson, start off a Year 10 group.

Wimbledon Visit Inspires Tennis Teams

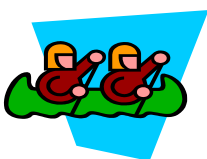
There have been regular tennis fixtures during the Summer term. Our teams have entered the county leagues and have performed extremely well to date against very testing opposition.



Pupils from Years 9 and 10 visited Wimbledon on Tuesday, 27th June. They were rewarded for a long and tiring journey with tickets to Centre and No 1 Courts. They were able to watch Henman, Agassi and Federer, amongst others. It should be noted that our school teams recorded their biggest win the day after returning from Wimbledon!

Year 8 Champs in Rounders

Year 8 girls participated in the Wrexham Area Rounders tournament held at Clywedog on Wednesday 28th June. Six teams entered and our girls won four games and lost one, leaving them in first place. Congratulations to the following pupils:- Rosie Byrne, Chloe Ithell, Samantha Mayers, Sarah Lloyd-Williams, Charlotte Langford, Jade Adams, Jessica Evans, Jade Hughes, Kesah Hughes, Gemma Jones and Claire Mellor.



Outdoor Education

A full programme of Outdoor and Adventurous Activities has taken place this term. Pupils from Year 7 have visited Plas Madoc Leisure Centre for Climbing lessons. Year 8 have enjoyed a series of activities including Mountain Biking, Canoeing and Gorge Walking. Year 9 pupils had a residential trip to Nantyr Outdoor Education Centre. While they were there they went canoeing, mountain biking and orienteering. They also went for a night walk which included navigations in the dark! All activities proved to be an enjoyable and valuable learning experience.



Cricket

A Cricket Club has been meeting on Monday and Friday lunchtimes and after school on Wednesdays. Our Under-14 team is preparing for matches against Bryn Alyn, Rhosnesni and Darland. Large numbers have attended the club with cricket becoming more and more popular in school.



International Cricket Honours

Year 9 student, Nicola Deane, has been extremely active in recent weeks representing both Cheshire and Wales in cricket. Nicola, a wicket keeper, plays for Marchwiel and Wrexham which has enabled her to play for the Wales under-15 side, whilst her membership of the Chester/Broughton Ladies' Team has led to her playing for Cheshire. Nicola is a good all-round sportswoman and also plays football for the Wrexham Academy Girls' Under-14 team. Our congratulations go to Nicola on these achievements.

Billy's Sporting Successes Continue

Year 8 student Billy Swarbrick has continued his successes in hockey. He has been chosen for a squad from which players will be selected to represent the UK Lions in Canada. Those in the squad but not selected will not be disappointed as they will participate in a tour of Ireland. Once again the school congratulates Billy and wishes him every success.

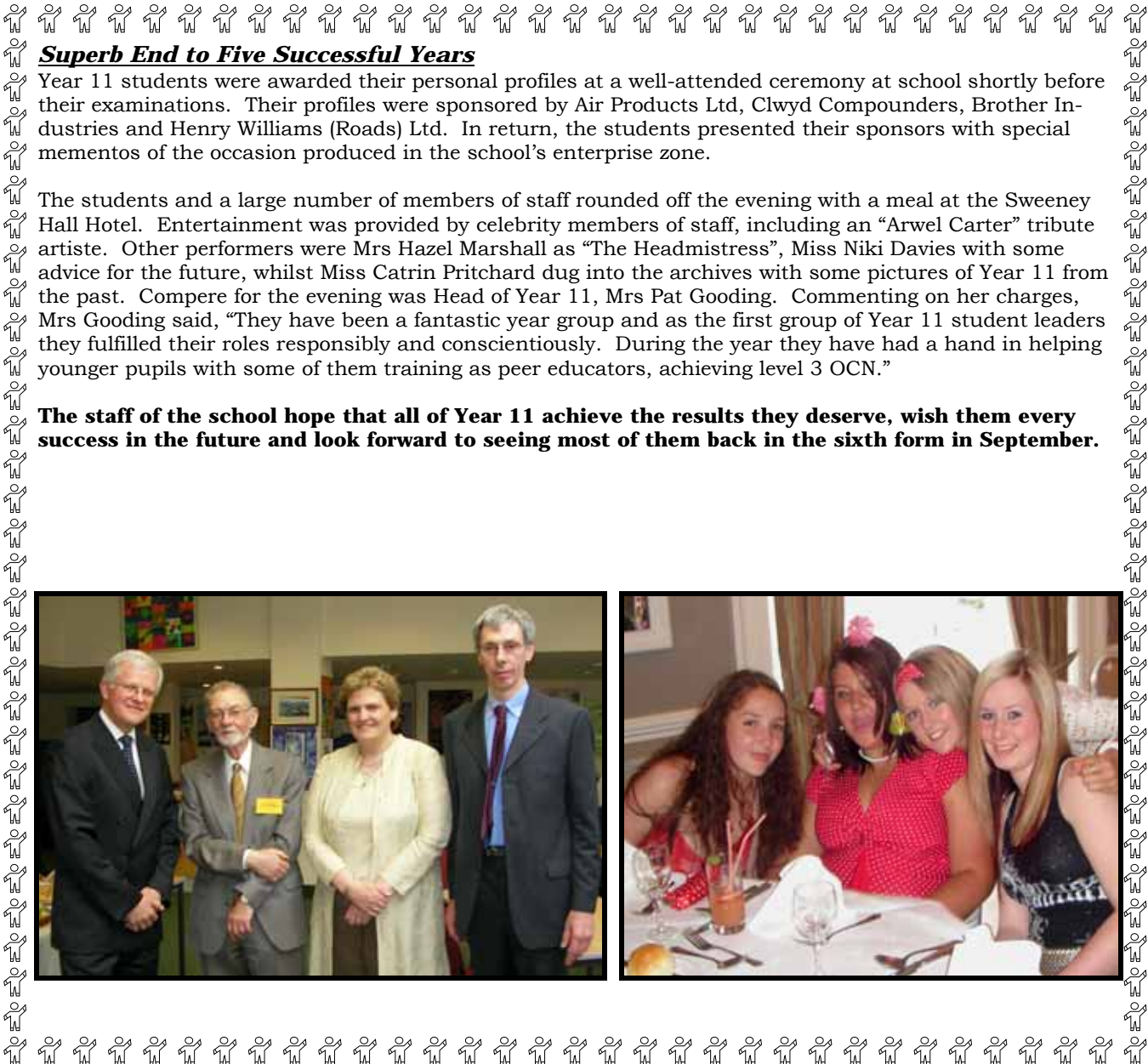


Athletics

Students from school have been busy practising for school Sports Day and the County Sports. Teams from school participated in the County Sports on Wednesday 5th July, whilst School Sports Day is scheduled for Wednesday 19th July.

Sixth Formers Lead Year 7

Throughout the Summer Term, the Year 12 Sports Leaders have been organising rugby and football extra-curricular activities for Year 7 students during the lunch hour. Particular thanks to Sam Erlandson, Michael Evans-Jones and Darren Russell for their commitment.



Superb End to Five Successful Years

Year 11 students were awarded their personal profiles at a well-attended ceremony at school shortly before their examinations. Their profiles were sponsored by Air Products Ltd, Clwyd Compounders, Brother Industries and Henry Williams (Roads) Ltd. In return, the students presented their sponsors with special mementos of the occasion produced in the school’s enterprise zone.

The students and a large number of members of staff rounded off the evening with a meal at the Sweeney Hall Hotel. Entertainment was provided by celebrity members of staff, including an “Arwel Carter” tribute artiste. Other performers were Mrs Hazel Marshall as “The Headmistress”, Miss Niki Davies with some advice for the future, whilst Miss Catrin Pritchard dug into the archives with some pictures of Year 11 from the past. Comperre for the evening was Head of Year 11, Mrs Pat Gooding. Commenting on her charges, Mrs Gooding said, “They have been a fantastic year group and as the first group of Year 11 student leaders they fulfilled their roles responsibly and conscientiously. During the year they have had a hand in helping younger pupils with some of them training as peer educators, achieving level 3 OCN.”

The staff of the school hope that all of Year 11 achieve the results they deserve, wish them every success in the future and look forward to seeing most of them back in the sixth form in September.



**Ysgol Rhiwabon
Ruabon
Wrexham
LL14 6BT**



**Tel: Wrexham (01978) 822392
Fax: (01978) 810230**

Headteacher /Pennaeth - David Thompson, Headteacher

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

**E-mail: mailbox@rhiwabon-high.wrexham.sch.uk
Website: www.ysgolrhiwabon.co.uk**