

JULY  
2005



# NEWSLETTER

# YSGOL RHIWABON SUMMER 2005



## View From the Bridge...

### Dear Parents

As we approach the end of what has been a very busy year, we are already looking forward. July 22nd, our last day of term, will see us holding our traditional Celebration Assembly where we recognise the achievements of our students. If you would like to join us for this memorable event, please telephone the office to reserve your seat.

When September comes I am pleased to say that nearly 150 students will join us from primary schools. This means that we will be full in Years 7, 8 & 9 with places only being available on appeal. We are a very popular, successful school & I thank you all for the part you have played in this.

Our success is down to the home-school partnership you can read about in our student planners & your support is much appreciated by all the staff here in school.

Local industry has also played it's part. We appreciate recent sponsorship from **Air Products, Brother Industries, Clwyd Compounders & Gower Homes**. We are also grateful to long-term supporters **Hafod & Dee Lions**.

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

**Peter Shaw**  
*Headteacher*

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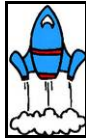


Start of Term for September



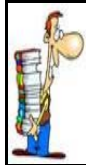
▶ Monday 5 September 2005  
▶ **Years 7, 11 & 12 only to attend**

▶ Tuesday 6 September 2005  
▶ **All students to attend**



The Ruabon Rockets Year 9 Quiz team took part in a friendly general knowledge quiz at Bryn Alyn school on 23rd of June. Well done to everybody who took part.

**The result: Ruabon 16—Bryn Alyn 14**



All the Tutor groups in school took part in an *Overdue Book* competition. The tutor group with the smallest number of overdue books won a big box of chocolates.

**Well done to the winning tutor group—7PB**

## Progress Files

The revised format of our Progress File Presentation Ceremony proved a great success recently. With government funding for these documents, formerly known as Profiles or Records of Achievement, being withdrawn, the school sought the sponsorship of local companies to ensure that students continued to receive high quality documents. **Clwyd Compounders Ltd, Brother Industries** and **Air Products** all combined to enable students to receive a high-quality folder which not only included details of their achievements in school, but also photographs of themselves & their fellow students. Guest speakers at the evening ceremony were Mr Carl Bruce of Brother, Mrs Sarah Hayward of Clwyd Compounders & Mr Nick Lodge of Air Products. They delivered a few well-chosen words of advice to the students & presented the awards before photographs & informal discussion over refreshments.

## Our congratulations to.....

Congratulations to the following for successfully passing their Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music Instrumental exams.



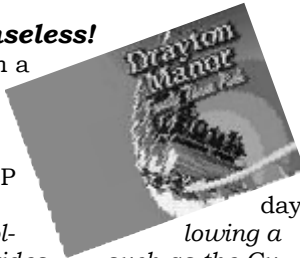
**YEAR 7**  
**RACHEL PRIMO**  
**JACK KNIGHT**  
**SALLY MORRIS**



**YEAR 8**  
**CHARLIE HUGHES**  
**SALLY BOTTOMLEY**  
**REBEKAH BUTLER**

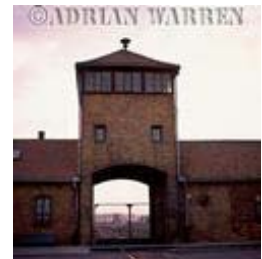
## Sixth Formers Scared Senseless!

A group of twelve students from a Health & Social class went to Drayton Manor Theme Park on 29 June. Jessica Jones & Jade Davies both in tutor group 12EP wrote the following about their out, "After reaching the park following a long drive we went on thrilling rides such as the Cyclone, Pandemonium, Apocalypse & Shockwave, which is Europe's only 'stand-up' roller coaster. After five hours in the Theme Park we set off home after having an excellent day out with gifts, upset stomachs from the scary rides & wet clothes of course! The class voted & out of 10 we gave the Theme Park 9 & we are looking forward to going again!"



## Auschwitz Award

Sixth Formers Christie Gerrard & Sarah Jones have won an Impetus Award for promoting Human Rights through their visit to & assemblies on Auschwitz. Their project was commended & short-listed to represent Wales in the UK finals.



## Sponsored Walk— Record Total

A record total of approximately £3,300 was promised by parents, friends & relatives of students when they undertook their recent sponsored walk. Year 7 topped the pile with £1,600 promised.



With Years 11, 12 & 13 on exams, the remainder of the school were all involved. Some staff left the school early with a group of volunteer marshalls who were placed at strategic points around the route. The remainder of the school undertook one lesson before they themselves walked around the route. The walkers were blessed with fine weather & there were no injuries, other than the odd blister. The walk was a success, not only in raising much-needed funds for the school's Talking Newspaper for the Blind, but also in enabling students to be led through their local environment under the supervision of staff. Thanks are due to all of the walkers, stewards, etc & to those who have sponsored them. Virtually all of the sponsorship is now in. Staff will be following up any outstanding monies in the next few days.



**Thank you to all sponsors,  
your support is greatly appreciated.**



## The Duke Drops In

The entire school was assembled on the field shortly after the Easter holidays to welcome a royal visitor. The Duke of York, Prince Andrew, arrived in a helicopter of the Queen's Flight on his way to other engagements in the Wrexham area. However, he found time to talk to students and has since written to the school twice. The first was a 'thank you' for the welcome he received during his visit, whilst his second letter, written in early June, focused on the school's award-winning Talking Newspaper for the Blind. The Duke described the students' commitment as "admirable" and stressed the importance of ensuring that blind and partially-sighted people have access to local information. He felt this was particularly important in rural communities such as ours. He described the school's nomination as North Wales Charity of the Year as "thoroughly deserved". Somehow, word had filtered through to the Palace that we were raising funds for a new recording studio for the Talking Newspaper through our Sponsored Walk. This impressed His Royal Highness and he wished the school "all the very best in its endeavours to raise these funds". He concluded by promising to regularly update himself on our progress by visiting the school's website. When our new studio is complete, we intend to ask him to contribute on tape to one of our regular editions.



Awaiting the arrival in anticipation



Full steam ahead for the Duke of York on his way to meet students & staff



Mrs Hughes & students chatting to the Prince

## GOWER HOMES

### Gower Homes Come Up Trumps!

Parents of students of the school cannot fail to have been impressed by the student planners introduced this year through sponsorship from a variety of companies, including local building contractors, **Gower Homes**. Next year **Gower Homes** have gone one better providing full sponsorship of all of our planners. The school would like to thank their proprietor, Mr Michael Forgrave, & his staff for this generous gesture.

We have received numerous positive comments about the tasteful way **Gower Homes** have restored the older part of the Boys' Grammar School building across the road. We look forward to continuing our association with this company.



Mrs Sue Randles of **Gower Homes** & Headteacher, Peter Shaw with Tyler Ellis, Brett Jones, Michael Grant & Abigail Parker, displaying their student planners.

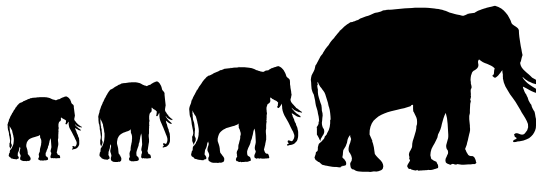


### Pupils Get a Taste of Life in the Trenches

Ysgol Rhiwabon students got a true feel for life in the trenches during a school trip to France. Forty two students & six staff went on a five-day trip to the Somme battlefields where students learned about the sites of historical interest from WW1. Students later produced poetry & letters from the trenches. The group then moved on to Paris where they toured the City, visited the Eiffel Tower & spent a day in Disneyland. Group Leader, Mrs Pat Gooding said "The visit linked in with KS3 work in History, English, French & Geography. The trip was a great success. The students' behaviour is always excellent & that continued for this trip. The students are real characters & everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

*'War to end all wars' was what they said,  
Little did they know so many would be dead.  
Unnecessary deaths for so little gain.  
Lots of young men suffering such pain.*

Natalie M. Jones (91B)



### Zoo Trip as a reward for SATs results

9 Set 3 & their Science teacher, Mr Jenkins are heading for Chester Zoo as a reward for achieving the best SATs results for Set 3 in six years. Congratulations to all members of this class & to Mr Jenkins.

### Extended Reg Extends Students

A novel use of Extended Registration time has been instigated by some Year 7 tutors. Here Natalie Wright of 7GM gives her views of the activity.....

In extended registration for the last few weeks we have been swapping forms every other week. We would split up into JGS & 7GM girls or boys. We would then see Mr Gordon to do commando tasks. He would set up exercises similar to those in the army & we would figure them out in our teams. Our team had to work together & listen to each others' ideas if we were to figure it out but they were quite difficult tasks to do.



One of the tasks was—we were on the concrete & on the other side of the field there was a rope & we had to get across it without touching the grass & the only help we had were 2 small crates & since there were 13 of us in a team we had to find a way to do it in stages. Around 3 of us could fit in a crate & got across. We then threw a rope at the other end of the field to the rest of the team after tying one end of the rope to a crate—they pulled it over to them & 3 people sat in it & we pulled them over & carried on until we finished. Although when we had finished no-one would talk to Mr Gordon. He cheated & helped the other team!

### Reading Buddies

A group of Year 10 student volunteers have recently received training on supporting Year 7 students with their reading. The 'Reading Buddies' Group meet three or four times a week during registration, giving Year 7 students an opportunity to read aloud 'one-to-one' from their chosen story books. Mrs Richards, School Librarian, attends the group on Wednesdays to introduce a variety of alternative reading activities. Miss McKay would like to take this opportunity to thank this year's Year 11 & Year 12 reading buddies for their good attendance & support over the last school year. Well done!!

### Sainsbury's 'Active Kids' Vouchers

Ysgol Rhiwabon would like to thank all students, parents & friends of the school for the excellent response to its request for Sainsbury's vouchers included in their recent school newsletter. Boxes to collect vouchers have been placed around the school & students have been involved in the counting & packaging of the vouchers before appropriate gifts are claimed from Sainsbury's.

### Exam Warm-Up

Ysgol Rhiwabon has introduced a new venture in an effort to help students improve their examination results. Pre-examination warm-up sessions were organised, with students being given last-minute tips & advice before they enter their examination rooms. This initiative will continue next year.

### Phoenix Project

Ysgol Rhiwabon students took part in the Phoenix Project run by the Fire Service on 20—24 June. The young people who took part worked really hard—they practised fire drills, put out fires, learnt how to abseil from the tower, used the hoses, visited Mold Fire Station to undertake a rescue activity in an underground bunker & much more. The group are to be congratulated on their commitment & achievement.

### Transco

Ysgol Rhiwabon Talking Newspaper has been nominated by staff at Transco's Flint/Mold/Wrexham depots to receive £2,000. This is part of the Safety Charity Challenge launched by the company some 6 years ago in a bid to reduce accidents amongst its employees. Each year, money is donated to a charity for each hazard & potential accident spotted & removed from the workplace.



### Ysgol Rhiwabon Students share a 'Place in the Sun' with Japanese Drummers

Year 10 & 12 students have been sharing skills with Performing Art Students from NEC, Tokyo, Japan as part of an International Drama Project. Students from Ysgol Rhiwabon participated in a two-day workshop at University College, Chester this month. Despite differences in language and culture everyone worked closely together exploring common issues and concerns through the medium of ancient Japanese tales featuring Ogres and Samurai warriors. The workshop culminated in a sharing of work between both Japanese & British students at Chester Town Hall. Alongside Taiko Drummers and Kabuki performers Lucy Dean & Laura Tudor represented Ysgol Rhiwabon with a short extract from their AS Drama devised piece. Chester Town Hall was indeed a 'place in the sun' that evening, as students showed the excellence which can be achieved through teamwork, a central idea to Japanese culture.



Regular supporters of the Talking Newspaper, the Hafod & Dee Valley Lions donated a generous cheque to help raise funds for a new Talking Newspaper Studio. With this cheque & donations from our other sponsors the school is almost in a position to make a lottery bid for the remaining funding needed. In this picture Mr Wyn Tunnah presents another cheque to Lucy Dean (Year 12 student).



## On YR Bike!

### It's on YR Bike for Leukaemia Research



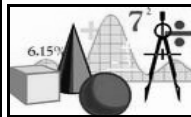
Although students of the school have been actively raising money for their own Talking Newspaper for the Blind, charities outside of the school have not been forgotten. Staff of the school have regularly supported the Lake Vyrnwy Bikeathon organised to raise money for Leukaemia Research. Last year, staff were joined by students and £500 was raised for this national charity, whose patron is football personality, Gary Lineker. This year, students and staff again cycled together but surpassed last year's total of £500 significantly with more than £600 promised. Speaking about the school, event organiser Mr Tony Dart, thanked everyone for their efforts and congratulated the school on its wonderful fund-raising skills.

### Mr Leather Knocking on Mr Blair's Door

Like most teachers, Assistant Headteacher, Mr Mark Leather will be taking up part of his holidays on tasks relating to his work in school. However, one day of his summer holidays this year will be a particular pleasure and honour as he has been invited to meet the Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street.



Mr Leather has been a member of the Board of Plas Madoc Communities First for several years, the last eighteen months as its Chair. The reception is to recognise community work. Look out for details of how the visit went in the next Newsletter ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶



### Junior Maths Challenge Successes 2005

In April 50 students from Years 7 & 8 along with future students from Year 6 of Ysgol Maes Y Llan took part in the prestigious UK Junior Mathematical Challenge. The University of Leeds set the questions for over 240,000 students throughout the UK. We were delighted with the results with 13 students gaining awards. Congratulations to all who took part.



### English Department—Poetry Workshop

On July 5th six Year 10 students—*Rebecca Davies, Daniel Jarvis, Sian Williams, Matthew Taylor, Chris Edwards & Jenna Bithell* visited Erlas Education Centre to work with the Poet Leon Charles. Poetry written during this session was presented by students from Ysgol Rhiwabon as part of the Wrexham Literature Festival celebrations on Monday 11 July.

**Year 10 Project at Hafod Country Park** .....Here *Louis Massingham & Phillip Walker* (Year 10 students) tell about their time on Picnic Mountain ..... 'At the country park there is a hill known locally as *Picnic Mountain* with a viewpoint at the top. On our first visit we used OS maps to identify features which can be seen from the top & calculated distance & direction eg *Wrexham Church, Erddig, Chirk Castle, Beeston Castle*. Some students then drew sketches of these features for a stonemason from Derbyshire. He then drew these sketches onto large blocks of sandstone. On our second visit we carved out these sketches. It was a hot day & we worked hard in the sunshine. Mr Phillips came to our rescue with a drink for each of us. The project was enjoyable & we are looking forward to seeing the finished sundial at the end of July.'



>>Global Goodwill Message.. *Zoe Davies (9PJS)* read the Gospel text from Matthew at the launch of the Global Goodwill Message to children of the world at the Guildhall in Wrexham on 18 May.

## REAL Events

>>>Christian Badge Competition..There were 10 winners of the Year 7 Christian Badge Competition. They will receive their awards in a celebration assembly at the end of the term.



>>>Bid Success..The Religious Studies Department has been successful with a bid to buy new artefacts & clean, brand-new bibles. These will soon be in use in classrooms.

**Youth Work in Education...**Wednesday 18 May saw the Youth Work in Education Award Ceremony. The Years 10 & 11 focus group received their awards for outstanding achievement & participation. The Mayor & Mayoress congratulated them on their commitment.

**6,000 MILES TO GET TO LLANDUDNO! .....Mrs Ferron-Evans explains how her visit to Kwamfundo Secondary School in South Africa ended up with her travelling 6,000 miles and finding herself in Llandudno....**

Following on from Mr Leather's successful visit to South Africa in Spring 2004 and Mr Ngubelanga's return trip to Ruabon in February this year, links between Ysgol Rhiwabon and Kwamfundo Secondary School continue to grow. In June I was lucky enough to travel to Cape Town, for a fortnight, to work with staff and students in the school on a writing project based on poetry, letters and accounts of life in the black township Khayelitsha.



Armed with 60 penfriend letters and numerous gifts and messages of goodwill from students and staff in Rhiwabon, I arrived in Cape Town, South Africa on June 6<sup>th</sup> on a bright, sunny winter's day. Any tourist arriving in Cape Town cannot help but notice the 'two faces' of South Africa; on the one hand the stunning scenery, the city, the splendour and wealth; in contrast the sprawling shacks which tumble together along the motorway, close to the airport, which serve as 'homes' to over two million black people. Here many of them live in direst poverty, subject to issues which threaten daily survival – AIDs, crime, drugs, teenage pregnancy.

This contrast cannot be ignored and the sprawling townships remain as a stark reminder of how the blacks were removed from their homes in Cape Town during the rule of Apartheid and forced to make their homes on the mudflats outside Khayelitsha.



*"Families who live in shacks with no running water, sanitation and electricity are a reminder that the past continues to haunt the present".  
Nelson Mandela..*



However, despite these hardships, what was apparent in Kwamfundo School and in the township generally was a belief in education as a way to improve and in the spirit of UBUNTO. This word does not easily translate but it is the idea that the people in the township look after each other as brother and sister and this was evident wherever I travelled in Khayelitsha. There were signs of hope too in the newer homes built as part of the Government's Re-development Programme.

The school itself has 1600 students ranging from Grade 8 to Grade 12. Resources are sparse but the school does now have a good Science Lab, Home Economics Room and Computer Suite. Every morning the students gather for assembly led by the school choir and one of the highlights of the trip was listening to the students singing at the start of each day. Each student is expected to pay 200 rand a year for his or her education and for some students this has to be paid in instalments or not at all due to extreme poverty at home. Many students I spoke to had lost at least one member of their family to AIDs. Students spoke honestly about the hardships they face each day but they somehow managed to remain cheerful and optimistic. Their school uniform and smiling faces were a credit to them and the school.



As well as working in Kwamfundo I managed to visit two local primary schools in the township and a richer school called Muizenburg High. I was taken into people's homes in the township and was invited to a 'worship tent' at the weekend with a group of teachers. This was a chance to experience a culture different from our own. Away from work, I experienced the beauty of Cape Town, from Table Mountain to the smaller beaches along False Bay. I also visited Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was kept prisoner for most of the 27 years he was imprisoned. This was a sobering visit which reminds us of South Africa's past and the dramatic changes which have taken place over the last decade. The whole trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience which I hope to share with staff and students in Rhiwabon, now I am back home again. During the next term we will be compiling the poetry and writing from students in Rhiwabon and Kwamfundo as a tribute to the students' achievements and aspirations in both schools and we will continue to develop the links between Ysgol Rhiwabon & Kwamfundo High School.

**..... as for Llandudno, it is the name of a town 10 miles from Cape Town!**





Marie Curie  
Cancer Care



Devoted to Life

**Used Stamps & Foreign Currency for Cancer Care.** The school is continuing to support *Marie Curie Cancer Care* with the new Year 10 co-ordinating the collection of used stamps from September. Parents & friends of the school are asked for their support by simply tearing used stamps from envelopes & sending them to the school office. There is no need to remove stamps from their backing, Year 10 will trim around the stamps before packaging & sending to the charity. Readers of previous newsletters will be aware that *Marie Curie Cancer Care* provides nursing care for terminally ill cancer patients & their families mainly in their own homes.. Any funds raised in this region go to support their work in this area.

*Marie Curie Cancer Care* are also collecting surplus foreign currency. If you have any coins left after your holidays which you cannot change back to English currency, then again the new Year 10 will be collecting these before passing to this charity.



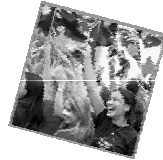
80s

80's

Auditions for parts in our next musical will start on our return to school next September. Further details available from Miss Ann Roberts or Miss Nikki Davies.

## International Youth Day

On Thursday 7 July Years 7, 8 & 9 visited the Llangollen International Eisteddfod. Everyone enjoyed the fine weather & fantastic atmosphere. Having spent all their pocket money the students moved on to enjoy the Bollywood dancing, hip-hop & Welsh rapping. Everyone is looking forward to visiting the Eisteddfod again next year.



## Dai the Chef

As part of *'The Tapestry of Life & Faith'* week students & Staff had a rare dietary treat on Monday 11 July. National celebrity, *'Dai the Chef'* brought his team of professionals who would bring tears to the eyes of Jamie Oliver to school. They set up in T4 to educate & entertain both students & staff.

He showed us the importance of healthy eating & gave truth to the maxim *'you are what you eat'*. Dai took understanding of our diet to a higher level. He not only told us about the value of fruit & vegetables in our daily intake but created exotic mixed cocktails – these were 'smoothies' with a difference! They acted as a tonic as we saw with one student guinea pig! Everyone agreed it was a great success!



Making the perfect 'smoothie'....



Thinking about your diet...



The perfect pear pick me up...