



Helping Others

This issue of the Twycross Times marks the 6th anniversary of the first edition in December 2005. Looking back I have been struck by the amount of effort put into charitable fund-raising by pupils of all ages and their teachers during that period.

The combined total sum raised at Twycross House and The Hollies was a staggering **£44,800.58**. The large number of charities which have benefited range from Cancer Research and Children in Need to the Air Ambulance Service and the Pakistan Flood Disaster Appeal, as well as smaller local charities. In addition, we have contributed shoes, CDs, Christmas gift boxes, text books and knitted blankets in response to specific appeals.

We never ask for money for school development but we do believe strongly that fund-raising for charities outside the school is a vital part of the children's broad education. As well as facing full-on the difficulties which confront other people and being encouraged to do something practical to help, the children learn a wide range of skills.

First they have to discuss which charity they would like to support and why, bearing in mind that as a school we need to spread our efforts widely. They then have to decide on the sort of event which they will best be able to organise and to consider how and when to launch it. Forward planning is very important. Posters have to be made and reminders issued; people have to be approached tactfully for their support and thanked afterwards; cash has to be accounted for and the final sum raised has to be published. In some cases pupils will visit the recipients of their fund-raising and learn a great deal from the experience. On other occasions representatives of charities will come into school to talk to us about their work. Finally the whole project is reviewed so that the children can learn how to make their next charitable effort even more effective.

Our staff work very hard to help pupils of all ages to participate in this important activity and to take more of the responsibility upon themselves as they go up through the school. We are immensely grateful, too, for the unflagging support of our parents at all stages. Thank you so much – and a very Happy New Year to you all!

N. Lilley





PERCY THE PARK KEEPER

We had an amazing adventure when we went on our Percy the Park Keeper treasure hunt.

Badger left us our first clue in the classroom. It told us to go to the sundial. The next clue led us to the windchimes near the cottage. We followed lots of clues which led us around the gardens at the Hollies until one clue took us to the water pump on the Green.

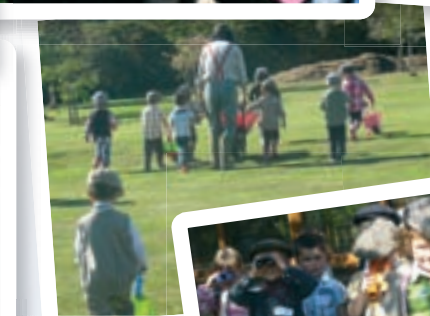
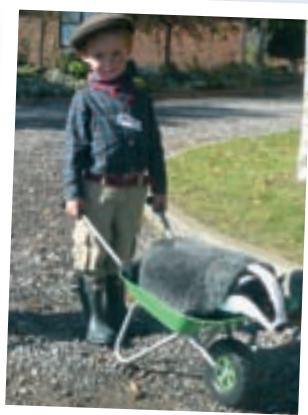
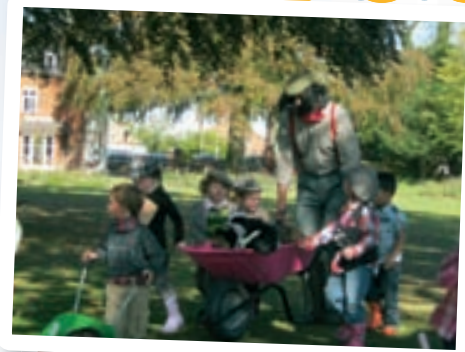
It was very exciting, as the next clue led across the road to Main School by the bridge. The clue suggested that Percy was very close and sure enough it took us to Percy's shed (a pink wheelbarrow gave the location away).

Unfortunately Percy was fast asleep and snoring very loudly. We shouted 'Wake up!' very loudly which made Percy jump – eventually!

With Percy to guide us we soon located the treasure – a golden box full of chocolate coins! It was Mrs Percy who was waiting patiently for us in the summerhouse with lots of woodland animals.

A great day was had by all!

Mrs Makin and Mrs Leake



AUTUMN TERM IN THE FIRST YEAR

We have had an exciting and fun packed first term in the First Year. All children have settled in extremely well and have enjoyed many activities. We discovered new talents when 'Frogs and Tadpoles' (our first musical extravaganza with Mrs Mead) was performed to a rapt audience.

The autumn sunshine allowed us to make the most of the garden: investigating the local environment, looking at mini-beast habitats and, one of the highlights, the treasure hunt with Percy the Park Keeper.

As winter approached we have been investigating melting ice and cold places. Many parents were delighted to receive an 'ice hand' made by their child! The children, however, thoroughly enjoyed making (and eating!) 'ice cold' fairy cakes which they decorated with icing, sprinkles and edible glitter.

Our trip to visit Baby Jesus at Polesworth Abbey was a real hit with both teachers and children. As usual the children behaved impeccably.

The end of term has seen the children and Mrs Mead working extremely hard to rehearse our Christmas Concert 'Children of the World'. The children's performance of the Nativity was entertaining and memorable (there wasn't a dry eye in the house!).

Frogs and Tadpoles



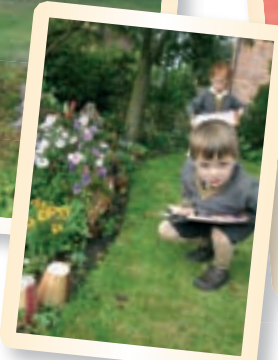
Cooking



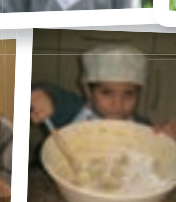
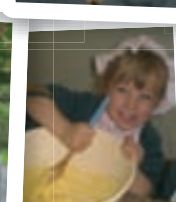
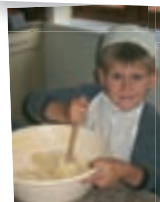
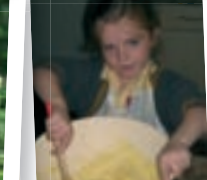
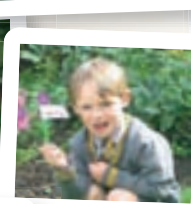
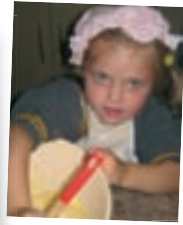
Polesworth Abbey



Mini-beasts



Fun In The First Year





BUSY TERM FOR THE SECOND YEARS

We started the term looking at toys and Teddy bears through the ages. As well as bringing our favourite toys into school, we were delighted to welcome a special visitor, Mrs Brownlow, with her collection of antique teddy bears.

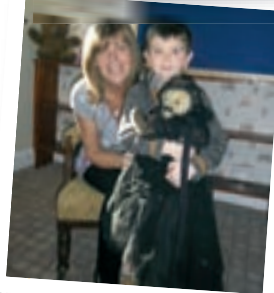
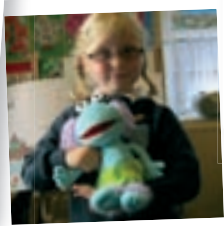
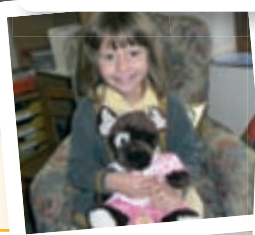
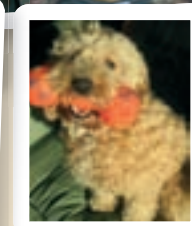
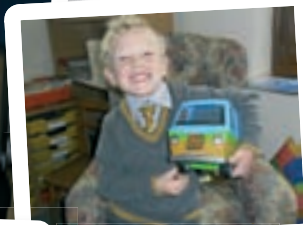
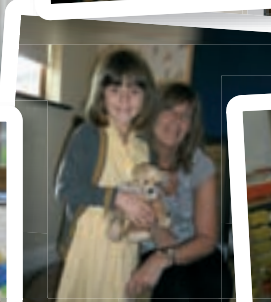
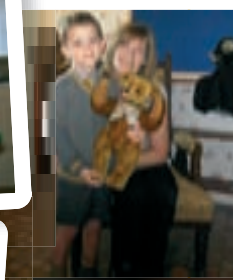
As the culmination of this topic we enjoyed a fantastic day at Sudbury Hall Museum of Childhood. We were shown and able to play with a wide variety of toys. Highlights included experiencing the tight squeeze of a Victorian chimney, washing clothes by hand and the strict regime of a classroom one hundred years ago. This helped us all appreciate how different it was to be a poor child in Victorian England.

Our science topic was all about 'Ourselves', and how we and other animals can stay healthy. We were very excited to greet and meet Rudy (the dog) who helped us to learn more about the needs of a pet. Rudy was so well behaved and left us having made lots of new friends in the Second Year.

Book week was hectic, with a very interesting visit from the inspirational illustrator Carol Thompson and a trip to Ashby library.

The last few weeks of term have been spent preparing our classrooms for Christmas and ourselves for our Christmas performance. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mrs Winfield, Mrs Henderson & Mrs Thurman



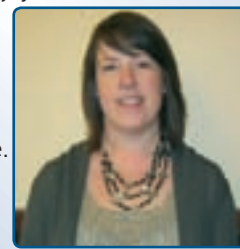
COOKING IN CRUCK COTTAGE

Each week the children take it in turns to go to the cottage to cook, under the watchful eye of Mrs Brownlow and Mrs Orchard. So far this term they have prepared biscuits, cakes and jam tarts. Louis in Class 3O enjoyed making the tarts the most, but unfortunately so did his Dad, who ate most of what Louis had cooked – they were so, so good! *Third Years*



MRS THURMAN

Mrs Thurman has joined us in the Second Year at the Hollies and will be teaching class 2Y whilst Mrs Winfield is on maternity leave. Mrs Thurman has thoroughly enjoyed the few weeks leading up to Christmas with all the festivities, and the children have made her feel very welcome.





CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

The highlight of the term for all of the children at the Hollies has been our Christmas concert 'Children of the World'. Under the expert guidance and supervision of Mrs Mead, the children produced a superb performance with beautiful singing and dance routines.

The concert began with a Nativity performance from the First Years. The Angels (the Fourth Year), then visited children from Poland, China, Ireland, Australia, USA and Malawi (Second, Third and Fourth Years) to see how Christmas is celebrated around the world.

The children's singing and dancing was an absolute delight and a glance at the rapt expressions of proud parents and grandparents in the audience was sufficient evidence that everyone thoroughly enjoyed the show. Well done to Mrs Mead and the children.

Ticket sales raised **£266** for the charity 'Dreams Come True' and **£575.40** for the Air Ambulance. Thank you for your generosity.



MACMILLAN COFFEE AFTERNOON

On a very warm and sunny Friday afternoon in late September, we held a cake sale for Macmillan Cancer Support. Owing to the cookery skills of the children and staff, and the generosity of the parents, this sale raised an impressive £365.

Many thanks to all who baked, purchased and enjoyed the cakes.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

CREATIVE MAGIC IN THE DINING ROOM



IT'S A GIRL!

Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Winfield on the birth of their baby daughter! Eloise was born on 13th December and weighed 7lb 7oz. What a fantastic Christmas present!



ADAM BOSTOCK'S SKYDIVE

As some of you may be aware, my mum, Mary-Anne Bostock, passed away in the summer due to sudden cardiac arrest. Although we lost her, the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance gave my family and me a little bit of hope in the most difficult of circumstances.

The Air Ambulance is completely funded by donations. We are, therefore, trying to raise as much money as possible so that this amazing service can continue to save lives - starting off by trying to conquer my fear of heights with a sky dive (not my idea, trust me!)

To date I have raised £3,360. Thank you for your support. *Adam Bostock*



SANTA COMES TO THE HOLLIES

Thank you to the Meridian Rotary Club (and Mrs Assinder!) for making sure Santa arrived safely on the last day of term!



SCIENCE TAKES TO THE AIR



Practical lessons don't come much better than having to make paper aeroplanes, do they?

This is just what the third year children did with great gusto. Following instructions suddenly became very important if the right aerodynamics were to be produced. The winner of the set task of flying your paper aeroplane the furthest was James Hodgson. I wonder if next year's group will be able to match his tremendous effort. We shall see!

Third Years

POPPY APPEAL 2011

Thank you for your kind contributions to this year's poppy appeal. We raised £63.90. Thank you for your support

THE HOLLIES SHOE BOX APPEAL 2011

This year our children have responded fantastically to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

'Fill a child's life with joy at Christmas' was the logo used by Samaritans Purse, the charity we support at this time of year.

In all, 160 shoe boxes filled with toys, books, games, toiletries, sweets, hats, scarves, gloves and of course a 'cuddly toy' were dispatched to Eastern Europe. They had been lovingly packed by our children, to make another child feel as happy as they do on Christmas morning.

Thank you so much for your support. We appreciate your kindness and wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas. *Mrs Dickinson*



CIRCUIT BREAKERS – CIRCUIT MAKERS

Amazement – Wonder – Excitement – Fun

The faces of our children tell the story. The task they were set was to make a simple circuit with the equipment they were given. Some of their responses were a wonder to behold. The results of 'finding out' in this way make the teachers' job a very rewarding one. *Third Years*



AUTHOR VISIT

Carol Thompson, the well-known illustrator and author, came to spend a day at the Hollies. She read some of her stories and explained how her books were made.



HEALTH AND GROWTH

Keeping healthy whatever our age is something we are never too young to learn about. For our topic we studied food groups, cleanliness, safety and exercise.

We used stethoscopes to listen to our heartbeats as our hearts responded to some vigorous exercise and then we compared this to our heartbeats when sitting at our desks. Sam commented, 'The difference is amazing. How fast it beats when we run around!'

We learnt that exercise is good for us as it keeps our bodies healthy, including our hearts.

Third Years



VISITING A PLACE OF WORSHIP – A SIKH TEMPLE

A school visit is always a time of great excitement and this proved to be a very enjoyable and informative one. The Gurdwara we visited was in Nuneaton and we were welcomed by our guide Jas Sekhon, who told us all about the Sikh way of life, which included worship in the Prayer Hall and the sharing of a meal. Our children were very well behaved, which was commented on by the ladies who served us with a snack in the Langor Hall after our time in the temple.

On our return to school we reflected on our visit and the children produced some lovely pieces of work and pictures of all that they had seen. *Third Years*



TRIP TO SHUGBOROUGH

On Thursday 8th December the 4th years enjoyed a trip to Shugborough Hall as the culmination of their work on the life of children in Victorian Britain.

On our arrival we were treated to a taste of Christmas for the farm workers' children. We heard about the food and traditions that the workers and their families enjoyed.

Later in the day we were treated to a glimpse of Christmas for the rich children of the household and finished our visit dancing a Victorian reel in the grand setting of the hall, fully decked with a Christmas tree and roaring fire.

The children looked magnificent in their Victorian costumes which added to the authenticity of the day. *Mrs Assinder and Mrs Downs*



THE GIANT JAM SANDWICH

The literacy lesson had the key component necessary for great success.....food!

All the children in the class became very keen when they realised that having listed the instructions for the making of a jam sandwich, they were going to put their words into actions. They thoroughly enjoyed the wonderful sandwiches they prepared for themselves, as you can see from their faces and the response they made: 'Please, Miss, can I have some more?' *Third Years*



ASHBY LIBRARY

The Second and Third years went to Ashby Library, where the librarian showed them how to locate different types of books. We had a look at all the types of books we could borrow and found out about all the other things you can do at the library. The librarian also told us a story from an enormous book!





TWYXCROSS HOUSE CHRISTMAS CONCERT

There was not even standing room available in the Sports Hall when 130 performers took the stage to provide our annual Christmas entertainment.

The first half was taken up with 'The Night Before Christmas' under the tireless direction of Mrs Mead. Seventy children from Forms 4 and 5 were on stage throughout in an astonishing variety of colourful costumes. They carried out their choreographed movements expertly in the limited space, while singing with gusto and producing some lovely harmonies. Each child had some lines to deliver and did so with great confidence and enthusiasm. A story of magic and mystery was narrated as everybody (children, mice, toys, snowmen, dog and fairy) awaited the arrival of Father Christmas and his reindeer. The highlight was, perhaps, the ballet dance by five sweet little ballerinas, who turned out on closer inspection to be 'ballerinos' wearing welly boots.

The second half of the programme offered a variety of items introduced by Lily Bird and William Allen of the U6. Some of Mrs Garbett's drama students from S2 had worked very hard to produce three fine Christmas sketches; three GCSE music students, Isabelle Farrugia, Chen Liu and Helen Pigka played 'Jingle Bells' as an

accomplished flute trio; Emma Arnold (L6) sang 'White Christmas' with her accustomed stage presence and sweet tone, accompanied by the wonderful piano playing of Matthew Raybould (U6). The hitherto 'undiscovered' Tsunwan Low (U6) sang 'A Spaceman Came Travelling', during which (according to my sources) more than one heart on the front bench was well and truly broken!

Laura Baxendale, Natalie Milner and Emma Pickens put their classical Greek to good use by reading first in New Testament Greek and then in English the famous opening of St John's gospel.

The combined Senior One forms were joined by other seniors to sing popular Christmas songs directed by Mrs Wortley, during which paper snowballs were showered on to the audience (and thrown back with competitive zeal by some of the fathers!)

In short, the evening was a great success and the enjoyment of performers and audience alike was tangible. Our warmest thanks to all who made this possible and who contributed at the end to the £629.43 raised for the Air Ambulance service.

N. Lilley



BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD

'Raise your bill! Shoulder your bill! Lower your bill!' echoed around Ambion village as Captain Mortimer drilled Form 4. The activity never fails to convey the essential pre-battle discipline necessary for Yorkist and Tudor armies. (The teacher's verdict about the winning team, however, proved controversial with the troops!)

The reception for Mick the Fletcher's wisdom and the 'hands on' activities in the exhibition was equally enthusiastic, making learning History fun! *Mrs J Rose*



NEW SPANISH CLASSES

We are very lucky to have been able to introduce beginners' Spanish to S3 this year. Budding teachers Danielle Newey and Emma Shakeshaft, both studying A-level Spanish, have been putting into practice their excellent Spanish by running early morning lessons on a Wednesday. The S3 pupils have really enjoyed the fun, interactive lessons in which they have been learning Spanish greetings, numbers, animals, the alphabet and more. This is particularly beneficial to anyone who is interested in studying GCSE Spanish in S4. All new members are warmly welcome.

Mrs S Sanganee

POPPY APPEAL

Thank you for your kind contributions to this year's poppy appeal. We raised £188.94. Thank you for your support.



SWALLOWS HILL CHRISTMAS CARDS

Forms 3 and 4 made some fabulous Christmas cards for display in Swallows Hill.

The Form 3s were encouraged to produce detailed and decorative drawn images, while Form 4's cards were intended to be simple in design and made of cut paper.

William Roche (3X) and James Blunt (4Y) were the makers of the winning cards. Both boys were congratulated for their hard work in Art and for producing super cards, designed with originality and made with care.

Other children whose work was commended were Holly Limer, Alexa Richardson, Ethan Shepherd, Amy Nugent and Archie Sanders in Form 3, and Ewan Clamp, Hannah Brayer, Francis Mayes, Ethan Tebbutt and Tim Henderson in Form 4.

Anyone who receives a card made by any of these classes this year will be fortunate indeed! *Mrs J Judd*



TASTING SUCCESS



Form 3X would like to thank everyone who helped to raise £314 for 'Help for Heroes' by contributing to, publishing and buying 'Recipes from Swallows'. In addition the non-uniform day on the last day of term also raised £99 for the charity.

As well as supporting such a worthy cause, the project has given the form an opportunity to plan, work together and celebrate success.

Well done, 3X! *Mrs J Rose*



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Swallows Hill pupils welcomed Rev. Julia Hargreaves to school as part of their Harvest Celebrations. She told an interesting and thoughtful story about the importance of sharing. The following week pupils participated in our Harvest Festival, with readings and songs from a variety of cultures and religions. Parents gave generously to our collection of produce, which was then taken by Sixth Form students to the Leonard Cheshire Home in Netherseal. Many thanks to everyone who contributed. *D. Bray*

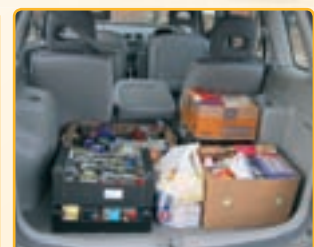


On Monday 17th October, a small group of Sixth Formers visited the Leonard Cheshire Home on behalf of the Swallows Hill 'Harvest Festival Collection'. The residents were very grateful and even gave us a tour around their home. When we were able to see what a welcoming, hospitable and friendly establishment the school had donated to, we Upper Sixth students felt very proud of the lower school pupils.

We were spurred on by Swallows Hill to go back to the home in early December to perform a Christmas concert.

Thank you to all those who participated and for all the effort you put in.

Lily Bird, Upper Sixth





BUTTERFLY ART

Kate Henderson and Emily Burrows have spent many lunchtimes in the art room designing and painting this beautiful butterfly mural. Well done!



RIANE WASCHER



For one month at the beginning of term it was our pleasure to welcome Riane Wascher into the German department. Riane is a student teacher and is currently in her second year at Oldenburg University where she is studying English and Maths. During her time at Twycross, Riane observed and participated in lessons throughout the school and her skills and expertise were fully utilised in the German department. Riane had the opportunity to teach alongside staff, and our pupils from S1 to the Sixth Form enjoyed learning more about Germany whilst improving their speaking skills. Riane was extremely enthusiastic about her experience here at Twycross. I would like to wish her success with the remainder of her studies and every good wish for the future, although I'm sure we will see her again.

Mrs M Cunningham

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Twycross House Sports Hall
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GERMAN EXCHANGE

Wednesday 2 November saw the arrival of the sixth German exchange group from the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Gymnasium in Schweich. Sixteen students, accompanied by group leaders Julie Lennig and Frank Fuhrmann, spent a week staying with students in Senior Four and their families. The exchange partners had been in contact since September, getting to know each other on Facebook, and the week was a great success.

On their first day here the German group joined in lessons throughout the school. The visitors, who normally wear jeans



to school, made the effort to improvise school uniform and fit in with the school community. Twycross House staff were impressed by their very good English and politeness. They invariably left each lesson with a thank-you to their teacher.

Senior Four girls and their German partners were surprised to be taught Zumba dancing in their games lesson and found it an energetic and fun experience. Then the English girls taught their visitors netball – with simplified rules. Meanwhile Mr Perry was introducing the German boys to tag rugby. He was impressed by their powerful running, good side-stepping and by how quickly they picked up the game. In the football which followed, the visitors were more than a match for Twycross boys.

Mr Perry, who will again be in charge of the group on the return trip to Schweich in April, commented: 'This group of German students were not at all reticent, but self-confident with excellent language skills and happy to hold a fluent conversation. They seemed relaxed in using English.'

On Friday the German party spent a day in Stratford visiting many of the famous Shakespeare houses and the church.

At the weekend the host families did all they could to make their guests welcome and many went to London for a day or to Birmingham shopping. Bonfire Night fell on the Saturday. Until now many Germans

had only read about it in English text books - nowhere near as much fun as the real thing.

After school on Tuesday the long-awaited basketball tournament took place in the Sports Hall under the watchful eyes of Mr Assinder and Mr Morrell. It was a really friendly, happy occasion, with all the German and English exchange students playing enthusiastically in mixed teams.

Wednesday 9 November saw a subdued group of parents, students and teachers waving goodbye to their new German friends, after some tearful farewells.

These comments are typical of many more:

'It was really good. We played x-box together and went shooting and paintballing. I taught my partner to drive. At the weekend we went to London together and went on the London Eye.'

'They were all very nice and I had a good time.'

'I really enjoyed the exchange. It was a great chance to practise your German and to socialise, and I think I've made some friends for life.'

'I met a lot of new friends and we all get on really well. It was very emotional when the Germans left to go home. I can't wait to go back and see everyone again.'

'Everyone was really sad to see them leave... I can't wait to go back to Germany next April.'

Thank you to everyone – students, parents and staff – who worked so hard to make this exchange a success. Thanks too to all the participants who contributed their views and reactions to this article: Edward Miles, Ben Parkes, Sam Baker, Elliot Towlson, Abbie Gardner, Amber Morgan, Molly Richardson and Charlotte Baum.

There are still places for students in S4, S5 or the sixth form to join the party going to Germany from April 16 – 23 during the final week of the Easter holidays. Please see Mrs Holder, Mrs Cunningham, Miss Gregory or Mr Perry for details.



BONDING A RANDOM BUNCH OF ALIENS INTO A TEAM OF SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE

Over the past few years the 'bonding' weekend has become a popular feature in the autumn calendar for our, not-so-new, new students in the Lower Sixth. In many ways the itinerary stays the same: head off to Wales on a Friday night (stopping for fish and chips on the way); set up camp in the garden (boys – sleeping in cold tents talking about 'Merlin'; girls – sleeping in the warm converted barn comparing slippers and PJs); spend Saturday at the Red Ridge Activity Centre (getting dirty, wet and scared - and having a great time); have an 'asmuchasyoucan eat' bbq; stand around a bonfire eating marshmallows; boys – watch 'Merlin' on TV: girls – have an intellectual discussion about the universe and watch the stars; spend Sunday morning attempting to build teams capable of controlling 'helium' canes and transporting 'hazardous' toxic waste; take a walk up to the local viewing point and discuss local history; drive home. But actually, every year is absolutely unique! And, 2011 was certainly one of the best (although we tend to say that every year!) Here is what some of the participants thought:

Of the Red Ridge activities:- *"I thought the artificial caving was great; fewer people broke down in tears and begged for death than I had expected!" "The zip-wire was my least favourite – it hurt so much." "Kayaking was... wet. I didn't realise how easy it was to capsize a boat." "The activity stuff was awesome; it helped knowing we all share the same phobias." "The caving was an educational experience – I learned that I didn't like small dark spaces".*



Of the team building exercises:- *"The toxic waste disposal was so tricky. By the time we had learned to collaborate it was TOO LATE!" "The 'helium' stick thingy was the most frustrating ten minutes of my life". "I'm sorry Wales was obliterated by our failure to co-ordinate our team. We were more like a random bunch of aliens". And, from the winners:- "We bossed it and owned the toxic waste. It was an eight man-girl raid and we used our superior intelligence to 'down the tub'. Great!"*

And here is what the staff thought. It was a great weekend because everyone pulled together whether it was helping to get the meals ready, or to clear up afterwards. Whether it was discussing a serious topic, like - how to set up Mr Assinder's reflecting telescope or a less serious one like – why are the boys obsessed with 'Merlin'. The students throughout were positive, polite and perceptive even when tents didn't go up in quite the way they should or 'hazardous' waste wasn't disposed of as safely as it could have been. As always on the bonding trip, the main aim is for the students to get to know one another better. However, of equal benefit is for the staff to see the students at work and play in a totally new and very impressive light.

I Redford



YOUTH SPEAKS 2012

This year Twycross House entered three teams for the Rotary Youth Speaks competition. The standard was extremely high and all teams performed exceptionally well on the night.

Our two senior teams were Tom Dwyer, Jake Everson-Crane and James Makin presenting the topic 'Pride and Persecution' and Isabelle Farrugia, Ben Parkes and Joseph Weston talking on the topic of 'Motivation'.

Our intermediate team Tomas Moghadam, Euan Tebbutt and Simon Wright presented the topic of 'Challenges'.

I would like to congratulate all teams on their performances and commend them on their willingness to spend time on the practice needed to reach their high standard.

Thanks also to the parents for their support on the evening. I am sure that they enjoyed listening to the students as much as I did.

M.Cartlidge



SPANISH THEATRE TRIP

In November members of the Lower and Upper Sixth Spanish A-level groups enjoyed a trip to the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham to see Lorca's 'La Casa de Bernarda Alba' (Bernada Alba's House). They have been studying this famous Spanish poet and playwright as part of their A-level course and were very lucky, therefore, to be able to see a live production of this. Everyone agreed that it was a very impressive and interesting interpretation of the play and felt that they had developed their understanding of and ideas about the play.

Mrs S Sanganee



NEW STAFF



Mrs Gillian Leney
Mathematics

Mrs Leney has had a long association with Twycross House, as her daughters Clerrisa and Aneika were pupils here. A graduate of Coventry University, Mrs Leney is teaching maths to Forms 3, 4, 5 and Senior 2X.



Mrs Claire Fellows
French

We welcome Mrs Fellows from St Chad's in Lichfield. A graduate of Manchester Metropolitan she is enjoying being part of Swallows Hill, where she is teaching French to Forms 3 and 4.



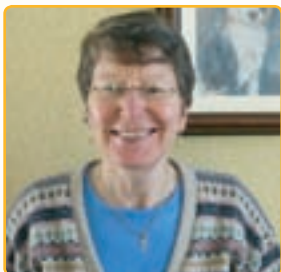
Mr Graham Martin
Economics

Mr Martin comes to us from The Friary School, Lichfield where he was Assistant Headteacher. He graduated from University College, Cardiff and is a keen basketball player and coach.



Miss Emma Marshment
English

Miss Marshment is a graduate of Sheffield University where she read English Literature. She is a keen hill walker and is looking forward to being involved in the Duke of Edinburgh award at Twycross.



Ms Jane Clark
German

We welcome Ms Clark who has joined the German department in the last few weeks of term. She read German at Manchester University, followed by a PGCE at Birmingham. Ms Clark joins Twycross House from QEMS where she was head of the Sixth Form.



Mr Stephen Jackman
Woodwind

Mr Jackman started at Twycross just after half term as our new peripatetic woodwind teacher. He is a graduate of Trinity College, London and teaches flute, clarinet and saxophone.

AN ASSEMBLY ABOUT REMEMBRANCE



On Thursday 10th November we were surprised to have a vicar taking our intermediate assembly. She introduced herself as the Reverend Julia Hargreaves and, as she explained, she is the vicar at Twycross, Sheepy Magna and other local villages.

She began with a memory challenge. She showed us a number of items – a photograph, a medal, a calendar, post-it notes, a newspaper, a diary and a poppy. She then hid them and we had to name them all.

She then asked us what all these items had in common. A forest of hands went up – they were all used to remember things or people. We were very interested in the medal which was from the First World War and then Rev Hargreaves talked about remembering those who had fought and died in that war.

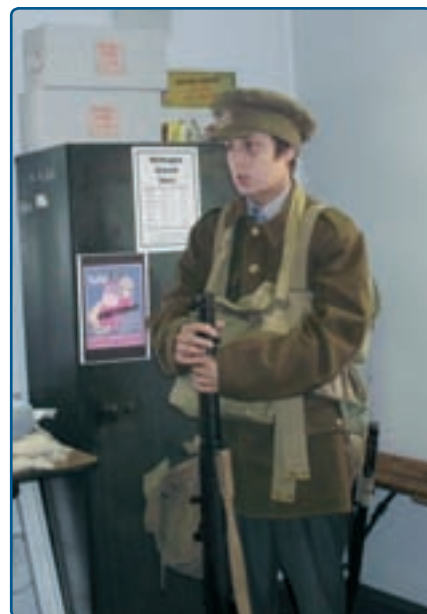
The assembly expressed perfectly the kind of things we should be remembering and respecting during the week of remembrance.

Molly Goldspink, Freya Hartshorn and Abigail Wright, Senior 3Y

SENIOR 3 GO 'OVER THE TOP' AT THE STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

One Tuesday morning in early October Senior 3 went 'over the top'. This was the culmination of their visit to the museum where they investigated the lives of real soldiers who had served with the South Staffordshire regiment during the Great War, tried on uniforms and enthusiastically handled guns and equipment that the soldiers had used during this conflict.

Finally they explored the trench network, where they were able to immerse themselves in trench life so much more easily than reading about it in books, before being ordered 'over the top' into No Man's Land. *Mrs J Powell*



THE DELIGHTS OF BARCELONA

During half term Upper and Lower Sixth Spanish students set out to discover the cultural and architectural delights of Barcelona. We knew it would be fun but were all surprised by how much we fell in love with Gaudi's buildings.

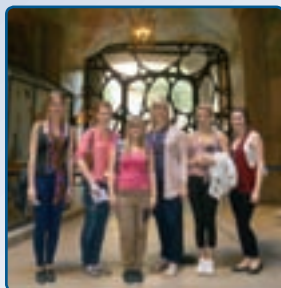
Pausing briefly to drop our luggage in our apartment we headed straight to Las Ramblas to have our first taste of tapas and to take in the 'buzzing' atmosphere. The next morning we took the Metro, a first-time experience for some, and headed for our first Gaudi landmark: La Sagrada Familia. What better introduction to architecture and the symbolism, structure and style of Gaudi's work? After some free time in the shops around Plaça Catalunya the day ended with a fantastic light and music display at the water fountains of the Plaza de España.

Whilst Mrs Sanganee's explanation of Gaudi's buildings was impressive, we were extremely lucky on the second day's visit to Casa Batlló to meet a self-confessed Gaudi fanatic who spoke to us in Spanish and at great length about Gaudi's architecture. This building proved to be most people's favourite due to the amazing use of colour, light and materials and the symbolism behind the structure of the building. The afternoon included a visit to the famous Park Guëll which we all found a little too crowded with tourists to do it justice.

On the final day we enjoyed the glorious sunshine as we visited the last of our Gaudi houses: Casa Milá (La Pedrera) from where we had stunning views of the whole of Barcelona, much of which we had covered over the four days. Indeed, we all agreed that we had never walked so much! A visit to the beach for a lunch of paella and to watch the surfers, followed by a walk through the narrow streets of the Gothic quarter, finished off our visit nicely. We were all pleased with the fact that in such a short time we really felt that we had got to know Barcelona very well and had all developed our own ideas on Gaudi's work. We will now go on to develop this study further as part of the A2 Spanish cultural topic.

Mostly we really had fun together and enjoyed experiencing Spanish life first hand and putting our Spanish into practice. Great thanks to Mrs Sanganee for organising the trip.

D. Newey and E. Shakeshaft, L6



CHILDREN IN NEED



November 18th once more saw Swallows Hill pupils participate in a variety of fund raising activities for the annual Children in Need appeal. Each junior pupil took home a Pudsey box, to be used for either a reward or a penalty. Students organised story-writing and colouring competitions, a sponsored silence, and paid to wear a spotty accessory. With generous donations of cakes from Mrs Sanders, Mrs Towlson and Mrs Wright we held a cake sale at break-time, which was enthusiastically supported by children and staff. An amazing total of £725 was donated to the Appeal Fund - thank you! *D. Bray*



THREE THRILLING THEATRE TRIPS

Good things often come in threes and this was certainly true for the sixth form English students this autumn. Having booked tickets for Marlowe's 'Dr Faustus' at the Globe before the summer holiday, we were thrilled to set off in September sunshine to Greenwich, taking the Thames Express river ferry into the heart of the capital. Splashing past the towers of Mammon at Canary Wharf, Traitors' Gate at the Tower of London and the always impressive Tower Bridge, we disembarked at Bankside to join the thronging crowds of theatre-goers.

We were not to be disappointed with an exuberant performance of the play, full of japes and jokes as Faustus dances his way towards oblivion. The grotesque pageant of the seven deadly sins and the comic buffoonery of the lower orders were probably more memorable than the delivery of Marlowe's 'mighty line' as he questions the orthodoxy of Christian metaphysics and ponders lustfully on the delights of Helen who, as we all know, manages to launch a thousand ships with just her 'face'! The only distractions were the baking sun (the 'wooden O' is open to the sky) and the occasional noise of a passing helicopter.

Having previously seen a performance of the same play in semi-darkness at an indoor theatre, The Royal Exchange in Manchester, the students should be well placed to add comments on the different staging interpretations which can be made from the same text.

Not content with this dramatic excursion we then discovered that one of the other A-level set texts, Arthur Miller's 'The Crucible', was being shown at the small Cox's Yard theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. No boat trips this time (nor delays on the M1) but no less a thrilling experience to be literally within touching distance of the actors and the action in a studio with an audience of less than one hundred. Even more beneficial was when the director asked if the students would like to meet the 'players' to ask them questions about their various roles.

And, having picked up leaflets for their next production, an adaptation of Bram Stoker's 'Dracula', we could not miss the chance of our third theatre trip in one half-term – a Twycross record. Suffice it to say: the vampires flew, the blood flowed and the audience (nearly) fainted. *I Redford*

DUKE OF EDINBURGH



Congratulations to members of Senior 5 who successfully completed their Silver final expedition in October. There were many tales to tell as the groups finished each day's walk with the British weather throwing its finest selection of rain, sun and wind with equal intensity! In addition there was an unexploded bomb, which meant a diversion organised by the police, waist-deep evil smelling bogs, angry horses and electric fences!

Senior 4 meanwhile attended their first training session in November. The group were enthusiastic participants in the day, which included their first taste of Trangia cooked food and a short walk in the local countryside. We look forward to further training next term and our full day navigation walk on Saturday 10th March.



THE OXFORD GREEK PLAY

King Agamemnon returns home after sacking Troy, only to be murdered by his wife Clytemnestra in revenge for his sacrifice of their daughter. His son Orestes now faces an appalling dilemma: he must do the gods' bidding and fulfil his filial duty by avenging his father, but killing his mother will make him an outcast pursued to madness by the Furies.

This was the central theme of Aeschylus' play *The Libation Bearers* written in 450 BC, which was performed in the original Greek by university students at Oxford Playhouse. A party of dedicated classicists and their teachers went down to watch the play on a glorious Saturday in November, paying a visit in the morning to the excellent classical section of the Ashmolean Museum and squeezing in a swift exploration of this beautiful city.

N. Lilley

SIMON WRIGHT'S YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

To raise money for the Air Ambulance I did the Yorkshire Three Peaks walk on Saturday 17th September. It was really good fun and I would like to do it again. The challenge itself was a long trek through Yorkshire (about 26 miles) and also climbing three mountains: Penn-Y-Ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough (in that order.) You walk around in a circle starting and ending in the Penn-Y-Ghent café in the village of Horton in Ribblesdale.

Because the walk is based in Yorkshire there is a lot of bad weather like rain and snow. On my walk there was roughly 8 hours of rain, 1.5 hours of sunlight and 2 hours of cloud. Despite the weather the views were great, especially from the top of Penn-Y-Ghent.

There was lots of training put in before the walk, including a 12 mile walk from Hinckley to Leicester the Saturday before. This was a hard walk, the longest I had ever done in one go, in fact. That was also lots of fun with nice views along the way.

I raised money for the Air Ambulance. I think they are a very worthwhile cause because they risk their lives to save other people from death when normal paramedics aren't around. One rescue operation costs them thousands of pounds. Also the Air Ambulance has been to Twycross. I very much like flying and want to be a pilot myself when I grow up.

The walk was very tiring and took about 11.5 hours to complete. It was very cold in Yorkshire that day but real fun. Altogether I raised about £675.

I really enjoyed the walk and I think more people should try to get outdoors and have fun. I would also like to thank everyone who supported me.

CHARITY CHAMPIONS

Mr Beavan's class S3Y were set an 'apprentice' style task to raise money for charity. Each of the four groups came up with inventive ways to raise money. The combined total from the four groups was an incredible £700! Congratulations to S3Y and thank you to everyone for supporting them.

Amelia, Alex, Lucinda and Athena: We held a cake sale in aid of Cancer Research. We raised over £100 and we chose this charity as we thought it was a great charity and close to our hearts. A big thank you to Mrs Spencer for helping us out. The sale was a great success and people flocked to buy the delicious cakes.

Molly, Abi and Freya: Throughout the last few weeks we have been fundraising for Cancer Research UK. Our activities included 'Guess the flag', 'Guess the amount of balls in the jar', 'Find the treasure' and 'Guess the name of the snowman'. These activities raised a grand total of £50.50! We would like to thank everyone who took part and donated.



Conor, George, Kieran, Harry V. and Campbell: We decided to raise money for Cancer Research. We did a range of activities: a sponsored silence for two whole days, splat the rat (which was great fun), guess how many sweets in the jar (327) and throwing the sponge (15 buckets of water used). This all raised over £500.



Max, Joe, Josh, Will, Harry R. and Justin: In our group we decided to raise money for the Air Ambulance. We organised a raffle with several Christmassy edible prizes, with the main prize being a teddy and going to Maisie Ryan in S2. Overall we raised £70.70. Special thanks to Mrs Lilley, Mrs Fray and Mrs P Bryan for prize donations, and Mrs J Bryan and Mrs Paul for the prize draw.



THE UNIVERSALLY CHALLENGED QUIZ

Taking time out from turning their private study room into a Santa's grotto par excellence, the Upper Sixth quiz team duly trounced the Lower Sixth in the traditional general knowledge test that is 'Universally Challenged'. Competition for places on the L6 team was high and Cleo Henry was called up at the last minute to add some classical and artistic weight to the linguistic and literary skills of Dani Newey, the historical and business acumen of Josh Baker and the all-round scientific and encyclopaedic sporting recall of Bill Arnold. Unfortunately, they faced a formidable quartet: an U6 team trained on 'trivial pursuits' (Deluxe Academic Edition) and in no mood to take prisoners. The audience of students and staff, gathered from near and far, were treated to a whirlwind of brain-power as questions ranging from the speed of a proton in the Large Hadron Collider to the longest serving Dr Who were swatted aside with imperious contempt. The U6 polymaths, Will Allen, Matthew Raybould, Daniel Williamson and Michael Wood raced into a 90 point lead with an impressive range of perspicacious responses. Having allowed the impression to grow that the L6 were out of their depth, the competition suddenly sparked into life and starters for ten and specialist knowledge questions on journeys, medals, minerals, the body and (strangely) cheeses, were dispatched with haughty contempt by the young pretenders. Coming into the final round a mere 40 points separated the cranial competitors. A final flourish from the L6 identifying the profession of a member of the BDS was, however, insufficient as the U6 correctly identified the weight of a litre of water, the HP on a bottle of brown sauce and the more common name of the River Isis. The final score of Upper Sixth 265 points: Lower Sixth 210 points was a fair reflection of the intellectual talents on display. (And, to be honest, the U6 had the best grotto, too!)

I Redford



FRENCH FILM CLUB



The French film club has gone from strength to strength this year, having met regularly on a Friday night once a month for the past four years. It has been particularly well supported this term by the Lower and Upper Sixth A-level groups and we have even attracted the odd historian and scientist who have been most warmly welcome! The season started with a well attended showing of the award-winning "Of Gods and Men" (des Hommes et des Dieux), thanks to the marketing and organisation of Tsunwan Low and Harry Marven. We have also enjoyed "Priceless", a great suggestion from Lily Bird and "Beautiful Lies", a comedy set in a hairdresser's starring Audrey Tautou.

In addition to having watched some fabulous and at times thought-provoking films, we have also enjoyed relaxing with one another at the end of a long week and tucking into some yummy chocolate cake!

Film club will be up and running after the mocks, so see you there!

Mrs V Knight

ENTERPRISE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

An exciting opportunity has been outlined by Simon Wordsworth on behalf of the Twycross House Business Community to the students in the Lower Sixth. Offering a £400 fund to the student or group of students with the most innovative business or charitable proposal, the students will have a chance to hone their presentation skills in front of a professional set of judges from the THBC – think 'Dragon's Den' meets 'The Apprentice'! How the £400 is used is entirely up to the students; it could be used to support a local good cause or as the 'start-up' fund in a more ambitious money making venture. The aim is to stage the event in the less pressured time after the summer exams. The competition will certainly be great preparation for university or work interviews and a positive addition to the students' UCAS personal statements. As an added incentive, the student judged to have made the most impressive presentation will be awarded an iPad. Who knows what budding entrepreneurs and inventors will be thrown up? Further details of the progress of this competition will be reported in 2012.

I Redford



CLEO HENRY SLAMS IT!

I've been writing poetry for quite a while now, but recently I have been breaking into the slam poetry circuit. Slam poetry is a form of spoken word, not quite poetry, prose or rap, but something in the middle. It is performed live in front of a noisy audience who are jostled into clapping and such, as well as a panel of judges complete with 'Strictly'-style score cards. It's a fairly sizeable scene in Leicester, so there are open mic nights to give material a test-run. I have also won a few competitions this year, including the Leicester Luvlyrics slam, Poetry Rivals and The Foyle Young Poet competition. More professional gigs seem to be on the horizon, so fingers crossed!

Cleo Henry, Lower Sixth





FOOTBALL

An interesting first half of the season has seen 69 matches played including B and C team games and tournaments, three pieces of silverware collected, and the highest number of players ever selected to play for District teams, development squads and club academies, including Charlotte Heggs selected for the Milton Keynes development squad. Many congratulations to those players and the cup winners in particular, but also thanks to all the boys (and their parents!) who have regularly played for their school teams.



All the teams have had mixed results with the U15s the pick of the bunch, having won their first four matches, scoring an average of over six goals a game! Tougher opposition in the form of two large state schools,

Kenilworth and Rawlett, has seen them only lose out by the odd goal in their last two matches. The U14 team have also impressed and put in their best ever performance by a Twycross team in the District 5-a-side tournament, becoming champions by winning every match against the strongest footballing schools in the area without conceding a single goal. In Campbell Mason they have the best finisher since the days of the Twycross legend Andy 'Chunky' Morrell.



The U12 team show great promise, too, with an impressive nucleus of Ashby Ivanhoe FC players; they scored twenty goals in their first two matches (despite some of the better players

being 'subbed' off!). The U12s also succeeded in becoming District 5-a-side champions, winning four of their six matches against the best that the area has to offer. They must now progress to the Midlands finals next term under



the captaincy of Coventry City Academy player Angus Osborne.

The third piece of silverware was won by the U11 7-a-side team, who were unbeaten in the District Cup group stages and defeated Croft and Milby in the quarters and semis, before overcoming Middlemarch 2-1 in a close final. The U10s produced a reasonable performance in the annual Foremarke Tournament with Derby County Development players the Hart twins influential before eventually losing out to Nottingham High in the Plate final.

The U18s, 16s, 13s and 9s are the improving teams. The older of the four teams have all under-performed in their earlier matches but are now beginning to find some shape and rhythm, with the U18s and 16s particularly enjoying playing and winning on the wide, flat spaces of Rawlett's 3G pitch. The U13s were hammered by two large state schools in their first two matches but have recovered to win their last two games convincingly, with captain George Rutter leading from the front and impressing even the opposition's parents in their performance against Foremarke. Despite the trickery of Nathan Wright up front and the bravery and alertness of Will Roche in goal, the U9s have found it hard going but they remain extremely enthusiastic and determined to improve.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the only senior team to have lost to a school of similar size was the U18s in a disappointing performance on a small pitch in their local derby with Dixie. It is gratifying to know that Twycross teams are now expecting positive results against much larger schools and have convincingly beaten four state schools so far this season.

C Perry

GIRLS' HOCKEY

A combined S5 and S4 team with Sophie Randle (S3) in goal played a fantastic game of hockey against King Henry's Year 11 team. As some S5 players were unavailable at the last minute, changes to the squad had to be made on the way to the match. Players quickly and maturely adapted to new roles and responsibilities. A fast-paced game developed which immediately challenged our defence, who played some superb hockey, and exceptional goal-keeping from Sophie Randle kept the King Henry attack at bay. Three quick, open-play goals from a dominant King Henry forward unsettled the team at half-time, and into the second half a mix-up with defence and the ball caught in the keeper's feet allowed them to score again. The constant attack saw our defence give away numerous short corners; however, excellent reactions and controlled set play from Alice Gilman, Molly Richardson, Sam Borley, Alex Milner and Sophie Randle saw our defence close down keeping a short-corner clean sheet.

S1 girls played a 7-side coaching game against Dixie. This game saw first time caps for Emily Lightfoot and Phoebe Hunt. Emily quickly settled into her mid-field position creating space and attacking opportunities, while Phoebe as goal keeper maintained an outstanding level of performance. Emily Negus again displayed a high level of understanding for the game and held the team together. All players performed to the best of their ability throughout the match.

The U12 Bablake Invitation Tournament was postponed due to industrial action at other schools. This is to be rearranged for the New Year.

Form 5 girls had their first competitive fixture this term against Dixie. An excellent 7-side evening of hockey quickly developed, and with all Form 5 girls in attendance team places were highly sought after! A good start quickly saw us score but lapses in concentration allowed Dixie to equalise. The games were split in four quarters to allow all players to be part of a competitive match fixture. Throughout the evening the standard of hockey was maintained to a high level which was exceptional for this age group.

Mrs H Williams

THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

Since the introduction of Ultimate the school teams have each year exceeded their previous achievements in competitions and more individuals have been selected to represent Great Britain. In August 2011 17 boys and girls from the school represented Great Britain in the European Championships in Poland with the U17 Girls winning Gold, the U17 Boys winning Silver and the U20 teams gaining 4th place.

The U20 Boys' Twycross House School team returned victorious earlier in the term from the outdoor National Championships. In a close-fought final against last year's winners St Peter's, Exeter, the Twycross team won 9-6 to be crowned champions. This completes the double this year, as they also won the indoor National Championships earlier in the year.



S5 XTREME!

Senior 5 have had a taste of what falls under the category of 'extreme' sports during their PE lessons this term. A sample wake-boarding lesson at Ten-80 Water Ski Centre provided a considerable challenge for the adventurous teenagers who found that speeding along at an arm-aching 25 mph whilst strapped to something no bigger than a wide ironing board as their peers urged the wake to cause them to 'wipe out' and do a 'face plant' and rejoiced gleefully when they inevitably did, made a refreshing change from the mundanity of football or hockey and provided for numerous 'YouTube' clips filmed from the adjacent boat. The indomitable courage and blind determination of the participants left as deep an impression on the onlookers as the novice wake-boarders had in the icy water, as they progressed from holding on to the pole attached to the speed boat like unsteady toddlers holding on to a supermarket trolley to serenely gliding along at the end of the rope like the glamorous blonde in a 1960s James Bond film.

More board action was to follow, with a number sampling a snowboarding lesson at Tamworth's monolithic Snowdome whilst the less adventurous used the time to brush up their skiing technique for their luxury Christmas breaks in St Moritz and Val d'Isere. All found the lesson instructive and entertaining and expressed a desire to repeat the experience although the après ski experience was limited to raiding a lonely confectionery dispenser and fell some way short of expectations.



The third activity was 'synchronized' trampolining...well, there were three trampolines in the hall at the Leisure Centre and they were all in action at the same time! Under the expert guidance of instructor Jo and her assistant Seb Considine, the groups of girls (plus Seb and Alex Considine) performed moves that would not have disappointed an Olympic audience and quickly came to appreciate the immense skill, courage and athleticism required to perform some of the routines they have seen on television.

C Perry



AUTUMN TERM NETBALL REPORT

This term we have competed in 18 different fixtures from league competitions and area tournaments to some exciting local matches.

All teams – U12, U13 and U14 have entered a league this year and without exception have beaten 3 out of 4 schools on each separate night of competition, putting us in a great position for the final rounds.

The U14 squad comprising Olivia Shackleton, Sophie Randle, Molly Goldspink, Ella Parodi, Charlotte Lynch, Mimi Henry, Abigail Williams and Lucinda Roche played some very impressive netball on their league night, winning their second half against Higham Lane with much improved passing and defensive work. Otherwise in their matches this term we secured good wins against Nuneaton Academy and Etone Schools, only narrowly losing against Mount Grace and St Thomas More.

The U13 squad had two excellent wins against Mount Grace and Nuneaton Academy, 19-0 and 22-2 respectively, and only narrowly lost to a strong Stoneygate side. On the league night the U13 team showed some excellent team work to beat 3 out of 4 schools at Higham Lane. Finally at their area tournament we progressed to the semi-finals against Higham Lane A team, who narrowly won by 2 goals.

The U12 squad had a great start, winning their transitional tournament on the 20th September by beating 5 other schools. In their 5 other matches they have won 2 and lost 3, but performed much better on their league night to win 3 out of 4 matches.

JUNIOR NETBALL

The juniors have had a busy netball term playing both friendly and league fixtures.

Form 5 opened their season with fixtures against Stoneygate, the A team losing 7:2 and B team 4:2. These scores were much closer than the results in Form 3 and 4, a clear indication of the team's progress.

Milverton came to play our Form 4 and 5 teams, but unfortunately they only brought seven girls, so the Twycross girls confidently played in their House Teams with Drake and Hillary winning and Scott drawing. A visit from St Nicholas saw the Form 5s win 20:0 and the Form 4s 13:0.

The Form 5 A and B teams have both been playing in the Nuneaton Primary Schools' Sports Association league. These have all been hosted at Ambleside Club in Nuneaton. To date the A team have won five and lost two, the two defeats being very close at 4:3. Olivia Milner is proving to be their main goal scorer with 16 goals. The B team have all been very determined in playing against some tough opponents, losing six and winning one. Hannah Walker's goal was one of their high-lights. The A team is currently in fourth position and the B team in tenth.

Mrs J Thomas

SENIOR BADMINTON

This is the second season now that Twycross boys have entered a team in the Nuneaton and District Badminton League, giving some of the boys not regularly involved in football or basketball an opportunity to compete for the school. The team began the league with a morale-boosting draw at Queen Elizabeth, Atherstone before coming down to earth with a bump against the might of Nicholas Chamberlaine, not helped by some disappointing performers and late withdrawals. Six games remain after Christmas and the U14 and U16 teams will hope to be as competitive as possible in these against some talented opposition. C Perry

JUNIOR TAG RUGBY

The junior tag rugby teams have been in action this term with the focus on giving boys that do not regularly play in the school football teams an opportunity to represent the school in competitive matches. There have been close fought matches against Milverton and Dixie at U9, U10 and U11 ages. Club players such as Frank Burton (U9), Ewan Clamp (U10), Edward Blackman, Jake Bhakta and Richard Austin-Bailey (U11) have obviously 'grabbed the headlines', but it has been pleasing to see 'first timers' to the game also contributing to the team effort and enjoying the thrill of running rugby. Well done to all those involved. C Perry



JUNIOR CROSS COUNTRY

Traditionally Twycross have always hosted the first of the Nuneaton Area Cross Country events. However, this year we were not able to do this because the adjoining field was full of turnips. The three races were hosted at Michael Drayton School in Hartshill, Queen Elizabeth in Atherstone and finally The Pingles in Nuneaton. Once again the teams did exceptionally well. The first race saw both the girls' and boys' team finishing second overall, and in the second race they both finished in third place. The final race saw their best performances with the girls being second and the boys moving up into first place.

Once all the results were calculated the boys were first and the girls came in at second place.

Much to their credit the girls fielded a consistent squad of runners: Hannah Brayer, Esme Hunt, Alexandra Vero, Rebecca Chastney, Hannah Walker and Isabelle Underwood. Individual performances that deserve a mention are



Hannah Brayer, who moved up from fourth place in the first race to gain two thirds; her determination to gain a medal paid off well. Esme Hunt gained twelfth, eleventh and sixth.

The boys performed well with Ethan Morrell coming fifth in his first race and then first in the last race. Tim Henderson moved up one place over the three races from eighth to seventh and sixth; as did Ethan Tebbutt from eleventh to tenth to seventh. Tim Cotterill came home at seventh, eighth and eleventh.



Once again a great performance from the Junior Cross Country runners. Many should now go on to represent the Nuneaton area running against North Warwickshire and Bedworth.

Mrs J Thomas

NUNEATON PRIMARY SCHOOLS SWIMMING GALA

Another exciting NPSSA swimming gala took place on 14th November at the Pingles Pool in Nuneaton. Twycross entered 16 enthusiastic swimmers this year from Forms 3, 4 and 5 to compete against seven other primary schools.

The Form 3 girls and boys started brilliantly in the medley relay, swimming backstroke, breaststroke and two lengths of front crawl to win the boys' event with the girls coming second. The Form 5 girls' and boys' medley relay swimmers both achieved another excellent second place.

In the individual events Hannah Roberts and Lucy Slater both came first in the freestyle and backstroke respectively, and Hannah Brayer, Megumi Austin-Bailey and Nathan Wright fought hard to gain second places in their events.

We finished with the freestyle relays in which Twycross achieved one first place and two second places, making us first in both overall categories for Form 3 and Form 4/5 swimmers. We also won the winner's trophy for boys in Form 3



and the girls in Form 4 and 5. Well done to all swimmers for winning 4 out of 6 trophies!

MINI-VOLLEYBALL

S1 have risen to the new challenge of the Nuneaton Schools Mini-Volleyball League.

Their abundance of enthusiasm and dedication to training have allowed new levels of skills to be accomplished alongside a developing knowledge and understanding of the mini-volley game.

This is our first time in this competition and, with only 2 rounds played, all the teams are positioned well within the league. The competition is played with 2 against 2 over a junior height net on a badminton court and teams play one another in a round robin format. With 20 teams currently competing, S1 have teams positioned 17th, 14th, 11th, 7th and 5th. With 5 more rounds there is still time for positions to change as skills and knowledge improve.

Mrs H Williams

ENGLAND JUMPING SUCCESS

Lucinda Roche in S3 was selected to represent England in July this year at the International Show in Cavan in Ireland.

She jumped in the 138 and 148 teams for England on her ponies Indiana Jones III and Sam Whiskers, winning two silver medals. Congratulations to Lucinda on such a splendid achievement!



A TALENT TO SHOUT ABOUT!

Not many people know this! Alicia Mead has held a squash racket from the age of seven and has been winning tournaments up and down the country ever since. She has been ranked No 1 in England at U13 and has a national ranking of No 3 in the U17s. None of this comes easily and her training involves a heavy and tiring schedule. She trains three times a week in Birmingham with her coach and most weekends with the national squad at the England Institute of Sport in Lilleshall.

Her commitment to succeed is paying off. In December she was invited to play for England against Wales and Scotland. Alicia won all four of her games, contributing to a good win for England.

Where is all this leading? Who knows, but at the moment Alicia is following her dream to become one of the top players in the world.

On a final note she was told this week that she has been put on a short list of 6 players (only 4 are chosen) to be trained up for the 2013 Junior World Championships in Boston. Good luck, Alicia!



BASKETBALL

It has been a successful start to the 2011/12 season for the basketball teams.

The Under 18s started the season with a 40 point loss to Lordswood in a friendly. Lordswood, a basketball academy, recruit players to play for them and this match was arranged in order to give the team a tough test prior to their English Cup pool games. That experience benefited them when they played Northampton School for Boys (who came 3rd in the Country last season and have 4 England players). The boys played very well but were defeated in the end after giving them a scare. A victory at home over William Farr from Lincoln has set up a 'do or die' tie at Bilborough College to see who progresses to the last 48 in the country.

The Under 16s were narrowly defeated by an impressive Willenhall team in their English Cup pool but followed this up with

good victories over old rivals King Edward's in Edgbaston and King Henry VIII at home. Unfortunately they under-performed at Myton in Warwick and were soundly beaten, meaning they play in a 'must win' game after Christmas at Pool Hayes if they wish to progress to the knock-out stages.

The U15s opened their English Schools' Cup pool with a convincing victory over King Edward VI, Stafford at home by 19 points. A trip to Stafford to play Sir Graham Balfour followed where their normal energetic play eluded them, but they still managed to overcome the home team by 6 in a game that they should have won more comfortably. They have two more pool games after Christmas but look good to proceed into the later stages.

The Under 14s have only played one match but won convincingly against Mount Grace at home. They will play in the spring in the English Schools Midlands Tournament and

are looking good to progress. Hopefully they will get a couple of friendlies prior to this so they can hone their skills.

The Under 13s were without a couple of players for their only game and were defeated by Mount Grace at home.

The Under 13 girls have shown great commitment and improvement. They have beaten a tall Under 14 Pool Hayes team in Walsall and were victorious at home against an inexperienced Under 14 Mount Grace team. I am very hopeful that this team can produce great things in the future and have entered them into the U14 English Schools' Cup despite their being a year young. This will be a midlands tournament in March.

All in all it has been a positive start with much potential. I hope there will be a few friendlies for the younger teams to give them experience for the future.

D Morrell

ANDY MORRELL

Andy left Twycross House in 1993 with A-levels in Maths, Geography and Economics. He went on to read Sports Science at Newcastle University and continued to play football for his university and a non-league club. After university he turned professional and was signed to play for Wrexham, with further moves to Coventry, Blackpool and Bury before returning to Wrexham last season. Andy was appointed player-manager of Wrexham after the previous manager left to take up a role at Doncaster. He was asked by the board to take over on a temporary basis for four games in late September. A successful run of results since then led to his being appointed full-time manager until the end of the season and also being awarded October's 'manager of the month' for the Blue Square Bet Premier League. His record to date is won 12, drawn 4, lost 1, which includes a victory in the FA cup over Brentford, who are two leagues above them. Andy started playing football at Twycross under the tuition of Mr Perry, who taught him all he knows!





TWYXCROSS HOUSE SCHOOL PRESENTATION EVENING

On Friday 25th November we welcomed back last year's A-level and GCSE students to receive their certificates. Our guest of honour this year was Phillippa Pyatt, originally from Witherley, who left Twycross House in 1998 with A-levels in Chemistry, Physics, Maths and English Literature. She went on to study Natural Sciences at Newnham College, Cambridge, where she threw herself into student life, rowed, ran the May Ball and appeared on 'University Challenge'.

After graduating Phillippa spent a year as a free-lance sound producer at music festivals, and then took up a graduate traineeship with IBM and worked in a technical capacity for several years. She subsequently worked for IBM as a strategy consultant, advising companies in the energy industry how to steer through change by adapting their technology, processes, culture and leadership style. She returned to the company in December after a break for maternity leave.

Phillippa praised the fine results achieved this year and acknowledged the hard work put in by the students and teachers.



Phillippa Pyatt; Ian Miles studying Chemistry at Nottingham; Stephen Parkes reading Medicine at Leicester and Iola Jones studying Drama and English Literature at Manchester.



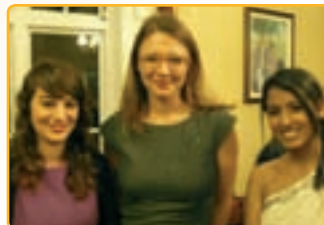
Pictured here, left to right, William Minchin, studying Biology at Bristol; William Moore who whilst taking a gap year has set up his own online business; Yovina Khiroya studying Audiology at De Montfort; Alice Arnold reading Physics at Durham; guest of honour

Pictured, left to right, Harry Springall studying Civil Engineering at Surrey and also now rowing for the university; Ian Miles reading Chemistry at Nottingham and finding the course very good and the university very sociable; Jess Moore, who left Twycross in 2009

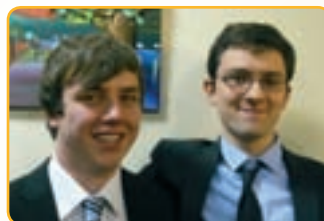
and is in her third year studying Medicine at Newcastle, finding the additional contact with patients this year very rewarding; fellow medical student Adnan Malik who is at Nottingham.



Annabel Palmer is studying business management and marketing at Harper Adams and Beth Blackburn is studying accountancy at Coventry, where she has taken up horse riding and water-sports.



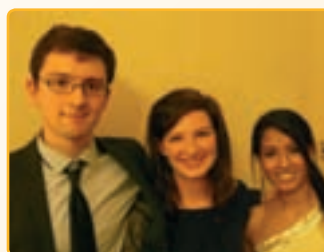
Pictured left to right, Alice Arnold reading Physics at Durham has continued playing Ultimate, taken up rowing, joined the charity committee and is finishing her DoE gold award; guest of honour Phillippa Pyatt; Yovina Khiroya is enjoying Audiology at De Montfort.



Matt Bostock and George Roberts, both at Nottingham studying Electrical/Electronic Engineering and Physics respectively.



Left to right, Dan Boardman-Weston is working in asset management and is studying towards a CISI qualification; Chris Jones is studying Biochemical Engineering at University College, London and also continues learning Japanese; Will Moore has set up an internet business selling remote-controlled vehicles and air soft guns.



George Roberts; Amy Samson reading medicine at Bristol has continued playing Ultimate and is looking forward to a GP placement next term; Yovina Khiroya.

TWYXCROSS HOUSE ASSOCIATION

Katherine Brown – 1985-1996

After studying History of Art at Leicester University I stayed in the city after the sudden death of my father in 2002 and worked for a national charity. CARE (now Self Unlimited) is a residential and day service community for adults with learning disabilities and I spent six years there as a support worker: Supported Employment Adviser and Community Fundraiser for the Midlands. The high point was taking a group of ten residents to perform at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2005 with comedian Charlie Chuck!

From then my passion for Arts in Health grew and I am just finishing a Masters in Cultural Policy and Arts Management together with running my own business, Beauty and Utility Arts. At the moment I run The Gallery in Hinckley; act as a Social Enterprise Development Worker for Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust setting up an arts cafe with mental health service users; run the Comedy Asylum project, winner of The Leicester Comedy Festival Best 'Make Me Happy' Participatory Project; and am about to start work on a short film and hold workshops for disadvantaged groups and those at risk of exclusion. No two days are ever the same, and that's just the way I like it!

Charles Taylor – 1992- 2005

Since leaving Twycross with happy memories in 2005 I studied Chemistry at the University of Southampton. Towards the end of my Bachelor's degree I discovered my major strengths and interests to be in Organic and Biological Chemistry, so I then moved up to Liverpool and completed an MSc in that field in 2009. My doctoral research interests immediately brought me back to the midlands and I am now in my second year as a postgraduate researcher at the University of Warwick.

In the field of bioenergy, my PhD focuses on enzymes for the biodegradation of lignin, a major limitation in the production of second-generation biofuels from plant biomass. So far my project has been an enjoyable experience, especially the discovery of novel bacterial strains that can degrade lignin. It is a privilege to be working in an exciting field as the demand for renewable energy sources accelerates.

Although I've taken a turbulent path and my degree courses have been demanding at times, the long-term career prospects and exciting research are now compensating and any progress made is partly a result of the inspiration and valuable advice offered by my teachers during my final years at Twycross.

Rose Timmis – 1992-2006

I am currently living in London working in Philanthropy at Save the Children. After leaving Twycross I attended the University of Nottingham and studied Zoology. Following my graduation from university I travelled to Tanzania and climbed Mt Kilimanjaro to raise money for Birmingham Children's Hospital and Burton Hospital Breast Clinic. I spent the following summer travelling in China and Japan before moving to London to live with other Twycross leavers, Natasha Banks and Samantha Johnson.

Natasha Banks – 1992-2006

After graduating with a 2:1 in English and Drama from Loughborough University in 2009, I'm now working as a Researcher at ITV. I'm currently working on The Chase, a daily quiz show on ITV1. We've just finished filming the Celebrity Specials (which are on ITV1, every Saturday at 6pm) and we're now hard at work making more fantastic shows for series 5. I hope all the staff at Twycross are well!