



HIGHLIGHTS

February 2018

A WORD FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Halfway through the year...

This half term seems to have whizzed by and the end of winter doesn't seem so far away now.

Despite being less than six weeks long, we have managed to fit in two sets of mock exams (sorry Years 11 and 13!), a memorable A Level Certificate Evening for last year's Year 13 who are now at university, in jobs or travelling the world, two weeks of Year 8 being at Aberdyfi, the launch of Phase 1 of our Chromebook roll-out, a Geography field trip and a variety of sporting and non-sporting competitions.

This week sees students off to Spain, Italy and India, so I hope they and everyone else have an enjoyable week away from school and come back prepared for whatever excitement the second half of term brings.

Alan Rosen

IN THIS ISSUE

Home and Away

Recent Successes

Events

Curriculum

Sport

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HOME AND AWAY

Aberdyfi: A Place We will Never Forget and Always Remember

Before we went to Aberdyfi, or even began packing for the trip, we had a few things on our minds: were we going to get lost while hiking and never be found again? Or were we going to have to live some of our fears and nightmares? We didn't have the answer to half our questions at the time, but when I look back, I realise that this trip has taught me something that I can treasure for the rest of my life: *we lived the unexpected, and we can do it again, if we believe in ourselves and our friends.*

As soon as we arrived at the centre, we were told that in an hour's time, our group would have to run into the freezing sea and plunge our entire heads underwater. Before we knew it, we were just a few steps away from the water. Huddling together and linking arms, we travelled deeper and deeper into the water; laughing and joking about the cold, while our teeth chattered rapidly. Until we got waist deep, then we had to accomplish the ultimate challenge: we had to try to immerse our heads fully underwater ... and we did it! We were all out of our comfort zone in those few minutes and we were all so proud that we had tried and succeeded - as a team.



This created a strong bond between all of us, and we felt that no matter what, our friends will always help us, every step of the way. After that, our activities were as fun as ever, including canoeing (leading to one person capsizing off the boat, but beaming as she came out of the sea!) rock scrambling, hiking, gorge walking, rock climbing, abseiling and so many more exciting activities.

HOME AND AWAY



One of our biggest achievements was the jetty jump. Being told that we could jump off a platform 4 metres high and then splash into the sea (without any goggles!) scared me terribly, but after learning about the chimp paradox and the yin-yang, I was determined to try. So walking slowly with heavy feet, I was on the edge of the jetty, seconds away from jumping off; my friends cheering me on and counting down. My heart pounding, I was shaking tremendously - 3..... 'I was going to die'.....2..... 'You aren't, stop being a fool'.....1.....'You got this, just jump'. And after taking a deep breath I did. I could have given up and let myself down, my friends down, everyone down. But I didn't. That moment, that day, that week, we lived some of the moments of our wildest dreams.

After climbing up several mountains, we could say: 'We did it'; after canoeing on a kilometre stretch, we could say: 'We did it'; after jumping off a jetty, we could say: 'We did it'. After living a week in Aberdyfi, we can smile with joy and shout: 'WE DID IT!!' When I look back at all the wondrous times we've had this year, I see Aberdyfi: A Place We will Never Forget and Always Remember...

Shreeya Srivastava 8A



Visit to BETT

On Thursday 25 January the Year 8 Chromebook ambassadors (accompanied by Mrs Queralt and Mrs Wilkes) went to the BETT Exhibition at the Excel Centre, in Docklands, London, to look at some of the new technology which is being pioneered to help transform Education. We started off the day by visiting ASUS, the company who supply our Chromebooks. We were given the opportunity to contribute to their stand by filming sales pitches and giving an insight into how we had been using our Chromebooks at school. During the day, we also got to speak to many employees from different companies: Google, Microsoft etc to find out more about their jobs in the ICT world and what they were offering education. We also had the chance to collect a lot of freebies! The day was very interesting; we learnt a lot and discovered brilliant ideas that could support and improve our lessons.

Molly Mullaney 8H



Claydon Good Cause Fair

On Friday 26 January, Claydon hosted a good cause fair for their house charity, Sight Savers. 7C organised a sponsored run as well as three game stalls, including: 'Guess the song', 'Guess the Language' and a buzzer game. On the field, 13 teachers and 5 students ran laps, raising £268! A further £44 was donated. Overall, the stalls were very successful and crowds of students were gathered around our tables until the end.

Akshita Sapra 7C



U18 National Winter Tour Tennis Champion

In the last three to four weeks before the tournament I increased my training to about 16 hours a week, which meant waking up at 5 am most days and then returning to training after school. Going into the tournament I felt I was playing well because of the amount of extra court time I'd had but I never thought that I could win such a big tournament because of the players in the past who had won it such as Naomi Broady who won back in 2007 and who has represented GB in the Federation Cup numerous times.

Each match was a battle in itself and my first round was actually the toughest which I won 4-6 6-2 7-6(1) after over 2 hours on court. It was a struggle to walk up the stairs that night so I surprised myself the next morning when I won both my matches that day which was both a physical and mental challenge as I had to play against a close friend in the semis.

I would really like to express my gratitude not only to the coaches that have helped me but also to my teachers and all the staff at AHS that have been supportive of my absences and made the tournament possible for me.



Izzy Marshall 12B

Rotary Public Speaking Competition

After winning the local Final before Christmas, Emma Harrington, Libby Volokh and Maiwa Banda competed in the District Intermediate Semi-Final of the Rotary Club Public-Speaking Competition on 6 February at Fulbrook Middle School in Woburn Sands. They faced stiff competition from seven other schools from all over Bucks, Beds, Herts speaking on a range of subjects including artificial intelligence, doping in sport and testing on animals. As in the previous round, the AHS girls chose to speak on the subject of 'Social Media and Mental Health'.

The girls did themselves proud, speaking with great passion and articulacy about the dangers that social media can have on girls' mental health and self-esteem. After a nerve-wracking wait whilst the judges retired to consider their verdict, Emma, Libby and Maiwa were named the winners for the 2nd round running. They will now go on to compete in the District Final in March where their next challenge awaits.

Mr Jones



RECENT SUCCESSES

Rock Challenge 2018

Congratulations to the 80 strong cast of dancers and 13 crew members assisting with costume, makeup, lighting and set design, who gave a stunning performance at the regional competition in Stevenage on Monday night and came third overall

The AHS piece was called "Life & Liberty" and was centred around climate change, in particular a group of young American activists who call themselves "Earth Guardians". The piece showed these teen activists suing the US government for failing to act on climate change. The whole piece aimed to raise awareness of climate change and the changes we all need to make to save our planet.

The judges were very impressed with the performance and AHS was awarded best choreography, stage crew, video, student leadership, entertainment and music - very well deserved!

As well as congratulating the cast and crew, we must say an enormous thank you to Miss McKendrick for all the time and energy she has put in to Rock Challenge - she is a true star!

Mrs Queralt



RECENT SUCCESSES



Congratulations to
all involved on
winning third place
overall



Geography Field Trip

As preparation for our A Level independent investigation, 29 keen A level geographers swapped the urban town of Aylesbury for the peat bogs, coastal towns, and forests of Devon. After acclimatising, day one was spent in the local towns of Bideford and Barnstaple. In teams we conducted questionnaires and completed several data collections in order to answer our own investigation questions. After presenting our findings to the rest of the group that evening, we then found out about our next location, the beautiful woods of Brownsham. Here we spent the day measuring physical factors and admiring the variety of wildlife. This data helped us to identify if there was any relationship between the soil

environment and the growth of trees in the area and allowed us to find out more about just how important carbon sinks such as these are to the environment. Our last day was spent in an AONB, the peat bogs of Exmoor. Once there, we were able to see how much effort had been put in by the local community to help maintain peat levels for the environment. Our task was to measure soil infiltration rates, water turbidity, and see how these are affected by the peatland moss. Overall, despite the hail storms(!), wind, and slippery mud, spirits remained high and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Lucy Gunson 12B



Multi Skills Festival

On Monday 22 January our Year 12 Level 2 Sports Leaders ran a Festival as an introduction to badminton for Key Stage 2 children. They ran a series of stations that develop coordination, agility and balance. The main aims of the Festival being fun and enjoyment and to introduce as many students as possible to the sport of Badminton. Well they certainly did that, with 120 Year 3 children from 4 different local primary schools there was a real buzz in the sports hall. The leaders were outstanding in their leadership, which counts towards their assessment for the Level 2 Qualification in Sports Leadership. The children loved the activities and the leaders, as these comments from St Edward's Primary School show:

'I'm writing to thank you for organising the Multi-Skills Festival for the children from St Edward's. They were really happy to be there and they thoroughly enjoyed all the activities prepared for them by their team leaders. They only wished it lasted a bit longer! Once again, thank you for sharing your time with us and we look forward to seeing you next year.'

Well done, girls your enthusiasm, organisation and leadership skills were excellent and I am proud of you all.

Mrs Carpenter



Making a Splash - AHS Swimmers at Wycombe League Swimming Gala

Last Wednesday Team AHS Swim set off for Wycombe Abbey for their 3rd League Gala. Currently sitting in first position out of 5 teams, with Wycombe High hot on our heels, we had everything to swim for. We had first timers in our junior team who gave their all, records broken, Personal Bests and as usual, great team spirit. Our Seniors were missing several squad members and deserve special mention for having to swim back to back and additional events - this also meant we swam a couple of Inters in the Senior events. They were unfazed! I was proud of you all girls. Thanks again to Wycombe Abbey for their fantastic hospitality and those amazing donuts; all parents for your continued support and Dr Guest for braving the coach and your help on poolside! Wycombe High were the deserving winners of this gala. This means we are in for an exciting final gala in March to establish the winning team!

Mrs Carey



Basketball

Congratulations to the AHS basketball teams who are storming away this term. The U17 team scored an 82-67 victory over Nottingham Academy after wins over Northampton and Rawlings Academy. They are second in their group, only having lost to a basketball academy.



And the U19 team won 56-45 against Norwood, so are now top of the table as they move in to compete in the last 4 in the country. Watch this space—their next game will be the semi final, away against Blackpool!



It was an awesome 111- 52 win for the U16 against Bristol. They have run away with their group after beating St John's, Marlborough and Uffculme in Devon. They qualify for the next round in first place.



Year 7 are competing for the first time in the Junior NBA London tournament as Milwaukee Bucks! In their first game, they played against Chicago Bulls (AKA St Angela's Forest Gate) and won with a convincing 46—21 . **Mrs Arber**