

Summer 2011

edition



BEACON HILL COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE AND RURAL ACADEMY

# Newsletter

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Mrs J. Richardson, B.Ed. N.P.Q.H.

## Head's View

Dear parents and friends of Beacon Hill

Just a quick word from me before you settle down to read this bumper summer edition of our newsletter. There has certainly been a lot going on!

As we near the very end of term and of course the academic year I would like to thank my staff and in particular Mr Millne for keeping 'the ship afloat' while I was absent earlier this year and ensuring that we have had another successful year at Beacon Hill. I also want to thank the students for all their hard work and effort especially the year eleven students who are now enjoying a well earned rest before they begin their next step in education or training.

We say goodbye to Miss Shackleton who provided maternity cover in Art during Mrs Clitheroe's absence as well as delivering the One to One programmes, Mrs O'Donnell who has supported a student in year eight, Mrs Young from her role as Cover Supervisor and two of our part-time teaching assistants Ms Fitzsimmons & Mrs Sealby. Finally I am sad to announce that following a successful promotion to another school in Gloucester Mr Gardner, our Network Manager, will be leaving at the end of term. I wish him all the very best and thank him for the many years of trouble free ICT support!

### A reminder about uniform and hairstyles

The Governors wish to make it clear that extreme hairstyles and hair colours are not our uniform policy and students may be sent home from school if they return in September with unacceptable styles and colours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Richardson'.

HEADTEACHER

## College Students Excel



Adam Mitchell and Scott Donald are pictured above with the College Schools Trophy, awarded for excellence, attendance, effort and achievement. They were chosen out of all the schools in West Cumbria. This was in recognition of 2 years hard work on the Motor Vehicle Maintenance course every Wednesday at Lakes College, Lilyhall. Adam was also the proud and worthy winner of the individual Student of the Year award for commitment to the course.

**Mr Millne**

## REMINDER

•The school will close early at 1pm on the last day of the Summer Term, Friday 22nd July.

### Aimhigher Year 7 & 8 Visit to Newcastle University Campus

On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May thirty five Year 7 & 8 students visited Newcastle University accompanied by



some of their parents, Mrs Cruickshank, myself and Andrew Wallam our school Connexions Cumbria Personal Adviser. Aimhigher Cumbria provided funding for this visit to raise aspirations and give the students and their parents the opportunity to find out more about university.



Students were met at the university by several Student Ambassadors along with the Widening Participation Officer and were taken to one of the university lecture theatres where they watched a presentation about the advantages of gaining a degree (better jobs in the future, the opportunity to make more money than they would without a degree as well as having the time of your life at university itself!!!!). Students were then asked to draw and describe a 'typical university student', the results were interesting (and some hilarious!) but it soon became clear that **THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A 'TYPICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENT'** – anyone who has the ability should consider going to university.

The students and parents were then put into small groups each accompanied by a Student Ambassador who took them on a fast paced 'monopoly themed' campus tour where they had to find answers to LOTS of questions. It was great fun and it gave everyone a real insight into university life – one amazing fact they discovered was that during exam season the library is open 24 hours – WOW!!!!

A great day was had by all and hopefully many of the students will now consider going to university to gain a degree and progress onto a successful (and very well paid!) career. **Mrs Moore**

### Students of the Month 2010 –2011

Every half term teaching and support staff are given the opportunity to nominate two 'Students of the Month' – one student in Key Stage 3 and one student in Key Stage 4. Once all the nominations have been received the staff vote for the students that they feel deserve the awards the most. These awards (which include a certificate and prize) are only given to students who have worked particularly well across several academic areas throughout the half term. Consequently the students who achieve these awards should feel very proud of themselves!

Month	KS3	KS4
October	Keris Mitchell	Luke Kershaw
December	Bradley Thomson	Callam Walton
February	Lucy Shardlow	Katie Heaney
March	Rebecca Beattie	Adam Mitchell
May	Hannah Donald	Callum Fawcett
July	Hannah Donald & Chloe Tordiff	Tiffany Alderson



WELL  
DONE!



## Beacon Hill Goes Starry Eyed



Every lunch time behind closed doors, students and teachers are rehearsing songs, dances and sketches. There are hushed voices and muffled music as each group and solo artist endeavour to fine tune their performance to make it perfect. Brows sweat with the challenge of finding the perfect routine and the most eye catching outfits. Students gossip on corridors about the rumours of mystery guests. Mr Eley does battle with the technical side of the lighting and curtains. In the art department posters are created and sets are designed. Beacon Hill is coming to the stage and they are 'gonna' entertain our socks off.

The response to our talent show this year has been overwhelming. Reach for the Stars promises to be a mind blowing fusion of talent and torture. Our panel of celebrity judges will be keeping the contestants holding their breath as they wait for the verdict. Our hilarious home-grown compare duo will ensure that the event goes with a swing. But the ultimate decisions are with our studio audience, who will have the almost impossible job of choosing a winner.

Congratulations and thanks to everyone who takes part, you are the ones who make it happen. Thanks also to everyone working behind the scenes to make this event a success.

Tensions are high, the spotlights are ready...  
... the time has come to touch the stars.

**Mrs Baxter**



## Taste of Shakespeare

Last month forty-two students from years 8 & 9 descended on Hutton in the Forest for a rare opportunity to see some of Shakespeare's work in all its glory in an open air theatre.

Arriving at 11.30, we had an early lunch after which we were able to explore the area before settling down on a grassy slope to await the start of Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night. We were introduced to five very talented actors who played several different roles each from the Illyria professional theatre company, . At the beginning of every scene the actors helped us to understand what was going to happen by giving

us a brief introductory explanation as sometimes the Shakespearean language was hard to understand.

Overall this trip was very educational and will help us all later on in the year with our English GCSE work on Shakespeare.

**By Beth Tovey & Rebecca Beattie YR9**

## First Impressions



Way back at the beginning of the year I signed up to a challenge to read 10 books nominated for the Cumbrian Schools' Book Awards – Spellbinding. I was surprised at how new the books were; I hadn't read any of them, although I'd heard of some of the authors.

At first there were a lot of students taking part, we lost a few readers along the way and in the end only 2 of us read ALL 10 books – me & Shane Warwick YR8. This meant that Shane & I were the only ones chosen to attend the Awards Day on the 14th June.

When we first started Spellbinding I took a look at all the books, chose the book that appealed to me most and it remained my favourite throughout. Sometimes first impressions do count!

At the Awards ceremony I was sure that my favourite book wasn't going to win especially as in our discussion groups hardly anybody wanted my favourite to win. On the whole they mostly preferred *The Enemy* by Charlie Higson, Shane's top book and also *Beacon Hill's* overall winner in the pre-voting round. BUT in the end they were all wrong!!!

Mike Garry, a famous poet, was the MC leading us through the day, he was so funny telling us lots of stories about his childhood growing up in Ireland and how he discovered reading & poetry.

In the end I must say the best book did win – *Unhooking the Moon* by Gregory Hughes, Shane of course was devastated. A close call as there was only 1 vote between it and 2nd place, *The Enemy*. I'm just really glad I went and I'm delighted that my favourite book won!

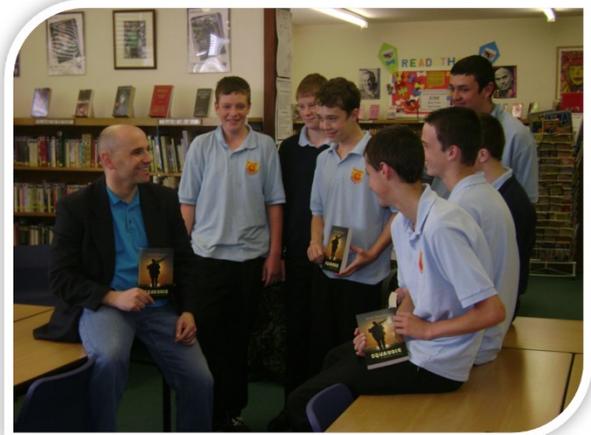
**Jasmine Wilson YR7**

## A Squaddie's Tale

Last month my GCSE History class met author and former soldier Steven McLaughlin. The visit came about after I suggested his book *Squaddie* to Mrs Cruickshank for inclusion in the annual school book fair. Waterstones were then kind enough to offer a visit from Steven where he would talk to us about his book and experiences in the Iraq War and Conflict in Northern Ireland.

We were lucky enough to spend two lessons listening to Steven talk about his life and the trouble he had encountered joining the army. He then talked to us about his experiences in Basra with the Royal Green Jackets (now the Rifles, about the troop's combat role there and what their job mainly involved. All of this gave us great insight into the Iraq war. After the Iraq war he told us about his role as a peacekeeping soldier in Northern Ireland in South Armagh. It was all very interesting and gave us all a greater understanding of a British soldier's life and what missions they are likely to undertake as peacekeeping soldiers as well as differences between the 2 conflicts. Finally Steven answered any questions we had about his time in the army and the talk finished with photos for the Local Paper. Overall the experience was very good as it really helped us prepare for our history exam.

**Jack Askew Yr10**



"I greatly enjoyed my visit to Beacon Hill School and it was an honour and privilege of the best sort to deliver a lecture to English and History students, in its quite wonderful library. When I was at school these were my two favourite subjects and my old school library felt like a second home at times – a place of safety, learning, growth and joyous discovery. The Beacon Hill library had the exact same atmosphere, and coupled with a class full of young, eager and enquiring minds, it reminded me of my own youth and that special feeling that you get when you unexpectedly bump into an old and treasured friend. I can't thank Sue Cruickshank enough for asking me to visit and organising such an enjoyable and productive day."

**Steven McLaughlin**

## Hard Work + Dedication = Success



After graduating with BA (HONS) English Language & Linguistics I undertook a full time job in 2006 as Cover

Supervisor at Beacon Hill Community School, Aspatria. Unpredictably, this experience fuelled my passion to become a teacher within Physical Education (P.E) and after researching possible routes into teaching, in 2008 I started a further 3 year BA (HONS) degree in Physical Education at the University of Cumbria, Carlisle. Each year my hours working at Beacon Hill flexed around my university hours and as such, for 3 years I had a full timetable consisting of my job, the commute to Carlisle and attending lectures. Evenings, weekends and school holidays were spent completing my university work; balancing my time I discovered to be very challenging due to my passion for the outdoors, in particular biking. In my final university year, I was promoted to the position of 'Unqualified P.E teacher' in addition to my original role as 'Cover Supervisor'.

Although I was studying for my P.E degree, I also needed to apply for the highly popular routes into teaching to attain my teaching certificate - this could be done either by the Graduate Training Programme (G.T.P), training on the job at school or by the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (P.G.C.E), by attending a university. Financially, I decided the G.T.P would be the most viable option and after a 4 stage selection process over a period of 6 months, I was notified I was 1 of 15 successful candidates out of 200 applicants. Additionally, I finished my degree in May 2011 and much to my delight, received a degree with First Class Honours in Physical Education.

After working incredibly hard for 3 years balancing University studies and my important job at Beacon Hill, I was rewarded with the 1st first on this PE degree since its inception in 2004 and a place on the G.T.P starting in September 2011 to finally become a fully qualified teacher! The success I have received over the past 3 years has been greatly supported by the staff and leadership team at Beacon Hill Community School, the staff within the Health and Well-Being faculty at the University of Cumbria, my family and friends. It proves that if you focus on a goal and follow your dreams, it is possible to reap successful rewards.

**Miss Kaye**



'I think Ailsa is a conscientious, hardworking and talented member of our team at Beacon Hill. She is also a fantastic role model for all our students and I am so pleased that she is able to complete her GTP with us at the school. She is living proof that if you really set your mind on something and work hard you can 'reach for the stars'.

**Mrs Richardson**

"Ailsa thoroughly deserves this classification. Her diligence, enthusiasm and 'hunger for learning', coupled with the practical and applied experience Ailsa has used through her securing a part time job with a local PE department, has served Ailsa very well indeed and enabled her to achieve what she set out to achieve at the very start of her degree.



The degree and its classification at the end is simply written testimony to the amount of learning students have done through hard work and perseverance, and the opportunities they have seized upon whilst at University. Ailsa's first class degree reflects this in her case.

It is particularly exciting for us as Ailsa is the first (BA Hons) PE student to achieve a first class degree on this programme since its inception in 2004. It demonstrates that it can be achieved via this partnership of staff and student and I sincerely hope it is the first of many. I wish Ailsa the very best as she now pursues her dream to become a fully qualified teacher of physical education through the Graduate Training Programme. Many future pupils will benefit greatly from Ailsa's knowledge and approach to the teaching of PE."

**Lindsay Sander, Senior Lecturer**

## World of Animation



YR 8 & 9 students from Beacon Hill recently experienced the world of digital animation. Peter Neave from Back in 5/Anim8 was based in school for 2 consecutive days in April passing on his extensive knowledge of the media industry to Aimhigher target students in the form of an Animation and Special FX Workshops where students enjoyed the fun of learning to create & animate their own clay models as well discovering the secrets behind special camera effects.

These workshops required group participation with students working together in production teams to produce short animated films to a basic script and storyboard. Throughout each day students were

involved in media exercises covering basic camera usage, stop frame animation, set design, modelling techniques, storyboarding, film production, Green and Blue Screen & special FX .

Stop motion animation involves meticulous accuracy and patience, some fairly good modelling skills, and a vivid imagination. An average one minute sequence would probably take a week to produce. This is because each second of movement involves taking an average of twenty five still pictures and if the animation involved a set with moving props, moving these in sequence in the process.

The workshop as well as providing information about careers within the media industry also developed teambuilding, communication & tactile skills and aimed to raise student self-esteem and confidence.

Every student who took part received a DVD copy of everyone's work.

**Laura Foster Devaney YR9 "I now know how special effects are made in the film industry and that they are simpler than I thought."**

**Kerry Sim YR8 "I learnt that not all films have amazing stunts, it's just Green Screen and special effects."**

**Dan Proud YR8 "I've learnt quite a lot about media, editing and how films are made."**

**Mrs Cruickshank**

"I run our Animation & Special FX workshops all over the North West with age groups ranging from Year 6 to 6<sup>th</sup> form. My visit to Beacon Hill was especially enjoyable as the students were not only visitor friendly but genuinely enthusiastic about the subject. Everyone involved worked hard throughout the day while at the same time having a great time. I really look forward to working with the school again in the future"

**Peter Neave 'Back in 5 - Anim8 Films'**

## Tennis Superstars

### The Team

**Adrian Scott Daniel James Jack Askew Luke Kershaw**

Beacon Hill's school tennis team was entered in the Aegon Tennis league. 4 YR10 boys, including myself, trained for 6 weeks before the first match to take the team to a high standard.

On our way to the semi finals we played Silloth, Nelson, Netherhall and Trinity. Beacon Hill won all of the matches advancing up the league. The tie break against Nelson Thomlinson was a high moment for us all as we beat them to win the local league and make it to the semi finals of the County Championships.

Unfortunately we were knocked out of the County semi-finals by Kirby Lonsdale where the matches were close, hard fought and very competitive. We all thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and are proud to have reached so far in the Championships.



**By Luke Kershaw**

## Young Engineers Club

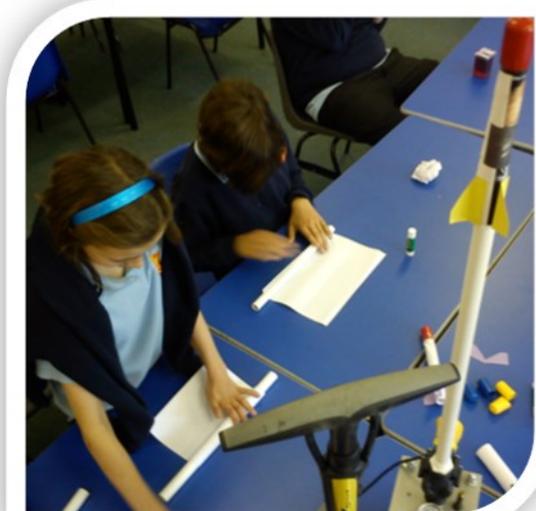
Recently we have been exploring rockets and materials by making rockets from paper that we formed round a tube. The power for the rocket comes from a compressed air reservoir that we have pumped up to about 3 times atmospheric pressure. There is enough power to throw our rockets about 200 feet, 70 metres or so into the air.

We have looked at how the air acts on the rocket and can be used to move the flight of the rockets, making them spin in the air. Our next step is to try and make the rockets fly in a controlled manner as they come down, rather than just falling under the force of gravity. We have now explored how aircraft fly and are starting to make new rockets with different fins to act like wings once the rocket is on the way down. We will need to make sure there is a big enough area round about us when we do this as it may take a few attempts to get it right!

To make sure the fins and wings we make are accurate, we have used Computer Aided Design software to draw the parts, and then cut them out using the laser cutter, which is a lot more accurate than using craft knives or scissors!

The software we have used is 2D Design and don't forget that all students can legally take home a copy of the software **free of charge** as we have purchased a student licence for this. The student version is exactly the same as the school version except that it will not allow printing at home. Students will only need to email the file back to school or bring it in on a memory stick and print in school. The software is in the Global Folder for each year group and will fit on a 512mb memory stick or phone memory card (half a gigabyte).

**Mr Esslemont**



## New Performing Arts Room

At last, after 8 weeks of travelling between different classrooms, the new performing arts room is finally completed.

Gone are the tiny windows, narrow doors, split floor, horrible pink walls, practice room and freezing cold conditions in winter. In are patio doors leading to outside performing space with full disabled access, same floor level, huge bright windows, interactive whiteboard, knocked through alcove for open plan teaching and fantastic PA system which can power band practices as well as microphone work. The room looks fantastic with twice the size of useable space.

Already comments from students and visitors have been totally positive - WOW, can't wait, is it the same room. Consequently more students have found themselves wanting to come back into the room to work on music. Definitely what we want!

Of course, it is not just for music – performing arts will also see the space used for drama. Already, at every possible opportunity Miss Bell and Mrs Richardson are both using the space. Check out the photo above and for those who remember what it was like before, notice the startling difference.

**Mr Deakin**



## ASDAN HONOURS

The following students have successfully achieved accreditation this year:

### Year 10 - Bronze Award

Joshua Armstrong

Michael Fisher



Jordan Best



Daniel James

Serena Phillips

Paige Thompson

### Year 11 – COPE Level 1

Bradley Cass

Devvon Wilson

thrive  africa

Thanks to all who have donated items for our “Gifts to Ghana” project. We have had a great response and it is now time to send our items off via a UK based charity called “Thrive Africa”.

Thrive Africa and UK charity Book-Cycle use our books to create new libraries in schools across the Ashanti and northern region of Ghana aiming to improving access to educational resources. They arrive, they build, they make a change.

Recently an estimated 26,000 books were donated and shipped to their project base in Kumasi. Volunteers sawed, sanded, sealed, varnished, nailed and constructed bookcases for each library. From plastering to painting they did it all in order to get the libraries completed, filled high with books. Each library now offers students access to reading materials both factual and fictional to further their education.

**Mrs Skillicorn**

green britain day 

In May for Green Britain Day we built a bug hotel. First we went to the Innovia Factory in Wigton to collect some pallets and cardboard tubes, transported them back to school, unloaded and carried them around to the poly-tunnel area.



Using these wooden pallets and cardboard tubes we built the frame work for our bug hotel. Each layer of pallet was filled with the tubes so we could start building a number of different living spaces (habitats) for different bugs.

Year 7 students came out fourth lesson to help us as they have recently been looking closely at all the plants and insects in and around the poly-tunnel area within their Creative Futures project. We asked them to collect all sorts of natural materials like grass, dried leaves, bark and stones to give our insects all sorts of different habitats to live in.

When the hotel was finished the Year 7's used it as a base for an experiment to see which colour was the most attractive to insects. We all worked hard and had a good fun doing something useful for our garden!

**The ASDAN Team**

## Perplexing Questions

Can something get bigger and smaller at the same time? Can you square a circle? Why are there 60 seconds in a minute? Exactly where is the centre of triangle?

These questions have probably never kept you awake at night but they are intriguing and perplexing if you stop and give them your consideration. They've certainly baffled mathematicians over the years.

Along with the more conventional mathematical problems some of our students have been exploring these questions. Years 7 and 8 have found that mathematically an object can get bigger and smaller at the same time. A design called Sierpinski's Carpet shrinks in area at the same time as it grows in perimeter. Year 10's have extended this to a three-dimensional version called the Menger Sponge. This fascinating object shrinks in volume as it grows in surface area. In fact, in the limit, it would have an infinite surface area whilst being invisible! What a wonderful paradox.

The Cumbrian dialect even has origins in mathematical history. When I first arrived at the school it took me a little time to realise that when the students answered 'yan' or 'tan' to questions they actually meant 'one' or 'two'. This method of counting (yan, tan, tethera, pethera, pimp etc) was used by shepherds in medieval times to count their sheep. They had separate words up to twenty but none for anything beyond this. They therefore used a base twenty system to count their flocks – even if that amounted to thousands. The students have learnt the words up to twenty (ten is 'dik', fifteen is 'bumfit' and twenty is 'figgit') and counted as the shepherds did. This connects with our own base ten system. Years 8 and 9 have furthered the investigation to the base 2 binary system used by computers and can now write numbers in binary and perform additions with them. Which leads on to the further question of why do we use base ten when base twelve seems to make more sense, after all time is in base twelve. In fact there is a 'Dozenagal Society' whose members campaign for our current number system to be changed to base twelve. Opinions amongst students is mixed!

Nineteen of our students are undertaking the Coast to Coast Cycling Challenge very shortly. This project has involved maths in a number of ways. The students have planned their route using scaled maps and bearings, they have

worked out their average expected pace and the time it is likely to take them. The bikes themselves also involve maths! Knowledge is power and this is true when it comes to the efficient use of gears. Students have learned about gear ratios and explored concepts such as why Mr Gee can push a gear ratio of 53/11 at a cadence of 75 rpm whilst Connor is better suited to a ratio of 42/13 with a cadence of 100 rpm? What average speed can be maintained in these gears and just what is happening to the bike at the time?

The questions are endless and fascinating, there is lots more exploring to be done. The use of maths in everyday life is something that is becoming more of a feature in the new GCSE Specification which started in September. Of course it is important that the necessity and practicality of maths is apparent to students but I also hope that there will always be a few who just appreciate maths for the challenges and wonder it creates in its own abstract way.



## Junior Maths Challenge

This year eight students from years 7 and 8 took the UK Junior Maths Challenge held by the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust. This involves sitting a challenging paper of various mathematical problems and puzzles. It is a National Competition sat on the same day, at the same time by students all over the country. The students taking part this year were Ben Carter (Yr8), Lynsey Rumney (Yr8), Callum Scott (Yr8), Neyve Barton (Yr7), Keris Mitchell (Yr7), Scott Turnbull (Yr7), Jasmine Wilson (Yr7) and Beth Turner (Yr7). Special congratulations go to Ben Carter and Neyve Barton who both were awarded National Bronze certificates for their achievements.

**Miss Laithwaite**

## Ipod App Project

Since September eight Year 10 students have taken part in a North West Gifted and Talented funded project creating an iPod / iPhone application. There were over 180 applications for this funding and Beacon Hill were lucky enough to be one of the 10 chosen.

We used the money to buy in IT specialists from Meglans in Cockermouth to run four workshops where the students experimented with different functions of the iPod Touch devices and had its capabilities fully explained.

Having researched 100's of Apps available on the market the group of students decided on producing a game. In particular they liked the format of "Tower Defence" games. In order to ensure the project had some transferable curriculum content the theme of the game was to be historic battles. The students decided to call the game "Time Defence Force" or TDF for short.

Players will defend Roman forts and Norman castles, fight the Spanish Armada and invading Nazi army. Completing each level players will travel through time to defend Britain in different eras. Music for the game was outsourced to the music department who created music appropriate to the periods. Graphics for the game were created using 2D design with help from the DT department.

The students researched each period and used primary sources to inspire their graphics in order to ensure everything is as accurate as possible. This will allow the game to be used in Year 7 L2L lessons on the Settlement project.

Luke Kershaw said that, "Working on the project and being part of something like this has been amazing, I have really enjoyed it – particularly the new skills we have learnt on the computers."

The App will be available from iTunes App Store from the end of July.

**Mr Gee**



**City Nazi Attack**

## Imperial War Museum & Lowry Art Gallery Visit



One Saturday in June, 33 students from Years 9 & 10 set off to Manchester on a joint History and Art trip. We were so relieved to get there; the journey seemed to go on forever!

Some of us visited the Imperial War Museum and others the Lowry Art Gallery. I opted to go to the Art Gallery - I particularly liked following Lowry's life story and enjoyed the various exhibitions, especially Nadav Kandar's new gallery of celebrity photographic portraits such as Amy Winehouse and Cheryl Cole. Absolutely amazing!

Adrian Scott YR10 who visited the War museum commented, "It was interesting with lots to see. A few modern artefacts on

display but on the whole the exhibition covered WW1 & 2. I especially liked the new exhibition covering war reporting, I thought the more recent news reports came across as less biased."

In the afternoon we went to the Trafford Shopping Centre ... 3 hours of non-stop shopping followed. We literally shopped till we dropped, spending all our money – well in truth our parents money!! As the afternoon progressed I couldn't believe how hot it became in the centre. My feet were definitely relieved to get back on the bus home!! Overall the day was a fantastic experience and I would definitely like to go again but perhaps without the tired shopping feet at the end. Thank you, Mr Gee and the other teachers for such a great day.

**Abbie Ungless YR10**

## Creative Futures

This year YR7 students had the opportunity to participate in a Creative Futures Project which we aimed to bring creativity in Science using the great outdoors as a vehicle to make learning exciting, real and relevant as well as encouraging enquiring minds.

The project ran during April and May and focused on looking closely at nature, particularly on classifying organisms fitting in well with the KS3 Science Syllabus.

Students were encouraged to collect different samples, identify different species and use photography and printing as a means of recording their findings.

We used two creative practitioners - photographer Rob Fraser and artist Aidan Moesby who both had a particular interest in the natural world. Early on in the project we visited Watchtree Nature Reserve. Students were given a tour of the reserve shown lots of different species and habitats of which they took lots of photographs to record their findings.

Back in school we used similar techniques to explore and examine close up what lives in our school grounds, and how living things interact with the environment and other species. Students developed their findings from the two different environments to investigate and display their samples and photographs using a variety of methods such as wordsmithing, printmaking, laminating and journal work as well as using Comic Life, a new computer program.

As a result of the project Yr7 have started to look closer and “see” more of the world around them than before. One YR7 commented, “I liked this project, it made us think of stuff in a bigger picture!”

The students have gained confidence during this project, are more willing to take risks in their learning and are asking deeper and more curious questions. “I think it has made me more confident because now I ask more questions” said one student.

By the end of the project all the students had developed a much greater awareness of the nature around them and all had enjoyed the learning experience. Their work has since been displayed around the science corridors, pop down our end to have a look when you are next in school.

Our thanks go to Rob & Aiden and also to Alex, our creative agent who has been crucial in helping set this up this project.

**Dr Graham**



## Watchtree Nature Reserve

During the day students learnt about a moth breeding programme, examined the number of different grass species in a hay meadow, and saw how animals such as bank voles, hedgehogs and the rare great crested newt were found in live traps.

The highlight for many was the pond dipping exercise. Students used nets and trays to collect and identify the wealth of species that live in ponds. One group even saw an insect hatching from an egg in front of their own eyes!!

Our guide for the day was Tim Lawrence who was extremely knowledgeable and showed us loads of interesting things.

**Dr Graham**



## Bike Club—Coast to Coast Challenge

In the last newsletter I wrote about our bike club members having successfully completed their 6 week basic skills training and completed our first training ride. Since then we have held a training ride every Thursday without fail, regardless of weather or route a core of 19 dedicated students have turned up every week training hard to be able to complete the 140 mile coast to coast ride. The challenge will start on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July and finish on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July with our front wheels in the sea at Tynemouth.

The training rides started small with a flat 10 mile route and have progressed up to a hilly 20 mile route, although students have found the longer, hillier rides difficult they have pushed themselves every week and are now well prepared and fitness ready for the coast to coast.

The coast to coast itself has turned out to be a very costly affair so we applied to various national charities and funding bodies however due to the economic downturn we have received none of this funding. Thankfully Aspatria & District Charity Association and Aspatria Town Council have both given us much appreciated grants of £750 & £500 respectively to help towards the costs involved – extra equipment, food, accommodation and petrol costs for the support team.

All the students are now set for the ride, training completed, chefs are preparing recipes, transport is booked and bikes are about to be checked. We also have to remember why we are doing this challenge, it is obviously fantastic to commit to something and train for it and will be a massive achievement to complete it but we are also doing this for charity. We have set each student a target of a minimum of £50 sponsorship to be split between Help for Heroes and the Great North Air Ambulance.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped with bike club and coast to coast challenge including all financial help, Centre Parcs for the bikes and staff at Beacon Hill for helping us to put together such a fantastic cross-curricular project. Good luck to all riders now, all we need is some decent weather!

**Mr Young**

**STOP  
PRESS**

**Our thanks also go to the Lake District Cheese Company for their welcome donation towards supporting our C2C challenge.**

**Dates for your Diary**

Sat 9th—Tues 12th July	Bike Club Coast to Coast Challenge
Mon 11th July	Primary Induction Day
Mon 18th July	Yr10 Aimhigher More than Dreams Theatre Workshop
Mon 18th July	Sports Afternoon
Tues 19th—Thurs 21st July	YR7—9 Enrichment Week
Tues 19th—Thurs 21st July	YR10 Work Ready Week
Fri 22nd July	School Talent Show. End of term—school closes at 1pm
Thurs 25th August	GCSE Results Day 10-12 noon
Wed 7th September	Autumn Terms starts 8.55am all students
Tues 20th September	YR6 Open Evening 6—8pm
Mon 24th—Fri 28th October	Half-term holidays
Tues 8th November	Leavers of 2011 Awards Evening 7pm
Fri 16th December	End of Autumn term