

Sackville News

2nd May 2014



Dear Parents

I hope that you all had a good Easter break with your families and enjoyed some well-earned rest.

At Sackville, many staff and students were busy during this time. A programme of examination revision classes took place over four days of the Easter holidays and was well attended. At the same time, several year 10 students were enjoying an incredible experience on the World Challenge trip to Ethiopia.

The trip leader, Miss Jakubowska, has kindly written an article to give us a flavour of the adventure.

April 6th was an important date for 21 Year 10s and four excited staff. After two years of preparation and fundraising it was finally build-up day for a two week trip to Ethiopia with World Challenge. The trip took place with two teams both doing similar activities at slightly different times.

The project section of the trip was a highlight for both teams in the ancient city of Gondar, one in a rural primary school where the challengers were making a difference by constructing a water station, and the second in a primary and secondary school where the tasks were fence building, classroom painting and a bit of teaching. Both teams camped in the grounds of their respective schools getting a real feel for the life of the Ethiopian students. It was a real eye opener for the



Sackville students who were amazed at how happy and friendly the children were with such a challenging lifestyle.



The second part of the trip was a trek in the stunning Simien Mountains. Alongside the views from the 3000m plus plateau both teams encountered the fascinating gelada baboons and some saw the Simien wolf and the walia ibex, all only found in Ethiopia. The trekking was hard work, especially as the altitude was an added challenge, but very satisfying when done!

The rest and relaxation part of the expedition

included visiting the spectacular Blue Nile falls, a short ride out of Bahir Dar. A boat trip was also included across the vast Lake Tana to visit hippos and a 14th century monastery complete with amazing paintings (and some cheeky vervet monkeys).

The World Challenge ethos is about independence and so much of the organisation of the trip was down to the challengers, with guidance from the leaders. This was a big ask especially due to the hard living conditions but they all rose to the task magnificently and made a true success of their time in Ethiopia.

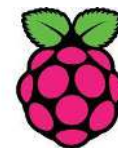


It is so important that such rewarding experiences are offered to our students at Sackville and I am delighted to report that another World Challenge trip – this time to Malawi – is entering its final stages of preparation. This sits alongside summer term trips with the town twinning association and to Spain not forgetting, of course, the array of opportunities offered during our Curriculum Enhancement Week in July. All of this is dependent on considerable staff commitment, going above and beyond the ever-increasing demands for staff and students in the classroom. The positive morale at Sackville is therefore key to this extensive offer.

Many parents may have noticed the artwork produced by our year 9 students on the subway beneath the A22 Lewes Road. Mr Andrews and the students worked hard to produce this much improved environment which had an official opening in the mayor's presence on Tuesday 22nd April. Schools should be at the heart of their local community and such projects are a welcome reflection of that. Teenagers can often attract a bad press but, as this and many other events covered in Sackville News have shown, our students frequently show much generosity of spirit.



Daniel Carney, 8VOS, and his family recently attended the Big Bang Fair at the NEC Birmingham where he entered the Mars Rover competition. The challenge was to work out how many rotations the wheels of a Mars Rover made around a set course. A set of measurements and the circumference of the wheels were given. The calculations were then entered into a computer and the result sent to the Rover which carried out the instructions. Daniel completed the challenge with one of four fastest times recorded and won a Raspberry Pi activity pack for Sackville. Well done Daniel! We look forward to receiving your prize.



RaspberryPi



Congratulations to Sam Howes, 11BME, on his selection for the England U17 football squad taking part in the finals of the UEFA European under 17 championships in May. Consequently, Sam will be sitting some of his GCSE exams in Malta and parents can probably imagine how many staff have been keen to volunteer their services to help! We wish Sam all the very best for the Championships and for his exams.

Students in our younger years also had an active end of term. Our year 7 students had a great STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) day and a full report appears about this later on. A good time was had by all.



During the same week, many year 7 and year 8 students went on an ice skating trip to celebrate doing so well this year. This was a very enjoyable event, accompanied by several staff who were happy to demonstrate their varying talents on the ice rink. Maya Burrell in year 7 tells us more:

"I went ice skating it was really fun. The coach ride was quite long but it was definitely worth it! When we got to the Spectrum at Guildford we put our skates on and headed to the ice. When we got onto the ice it was slippery at first but once you got used to it, it wasn't that bad! You just had to be confident and think you can do it. My friend and I slipped over and we got up giggling. I would totally recommend it to anyone, it was super fun."

On a more traditionally academic note, we were very pleased to receive a detailed report on our A level results recently, produced by Oxford analytics. It showed that:

- Our A level Further Maths results place us within the **top 25 state schools in the country** for value added progress since GCSE – a fantastic achievement.
- Many of our A level subjects produced a better value-added performance than in any other school or college in West Sussex. This includes maths, PE, business studies, law and travel. Our fine art results were second best – and there were many other strong performances.
- At AS level, we also achieved above the national average for value added progress.

Such success shows that our 6th form is, indeed, thriving and this gives us compelling evidence for strong recruitment. Please do recommend our 6th form to those around!

Meanwhile we have just received the results of the Biology Challenge 2014. Over 30,000 students nationwide took part. Hannah Carney achieved our top mark, just missing out on a gold award; a fantastic effort! This was closely followed by silver awards for Katie Balmer, Anna Davison, Sophie Gallimore and Joseph Roberts-Percy. Other achievements included 20 bronze, 27 highly commended and 12 commended awards - our highest number of certificates yet!

Congratulations to all involved and of course there will be a chance for year 9 to beat this in next year's competition!

This term we have some leadership role changes in the school which, I believe, clarify responsibility of and accountability for key areas of ongoing development. Parents will be aware of various appointments made from Sackville News last term. We did not replace Miss Kelly, who left Sackville last year as Deputy Headteacher, but instead have reorganised the leadership structure of the school from within. We therefore have a smaller team, but have been joined by Mrs Beeney as Senior Leadership Support Manager. Mrs Beeney has extensive experience at senior level, in addition to having been a Head of Maths for many years. Her work will enable others in the team to focus more on student progress and learning in the classroom. Mr Whitehead and Mrs Valentine now lead the 6th form as Head and Deputy, with Mr de Souza retaining an oversight role. Miss Jones will now coordinate our transition programme from primary to secondary school, with Mr Street retaining an oversight of those very important links.

I hope all of this makes sense and please do feel free to contact me or any of the staff above if you would like any further clarification.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our forthcoming events, such as the Year 10 Parents' Evening and the Sports Presentation Evening.

Best wishes.

Julian Grant

Mission to Mars... STEM Day, Thursday 3rd April

By Mr Bush

So, how do you land a human on Mars? That's the question year 7 were considering in their first STEM day, where they investigated the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths challenges of a mission to our nearest planetary neighbour.

After a mission briefing students were invited to consider three key issues to be overcome. In chemistry they investigated rocket fuels, generating hydrogen and testing it to hear the famous "squeaky pop". They also tested for oxygen and were thrilled at the loud bangs their teachers made when igniting a mixture of the gases in a large volume.



In technology they could test their rocket designs by building a compressed air launch vehicle, complete with payload and fins. These were launched and their range measured to prove whose rocket was most efficient. Unfortunately, all rockets fell back to Earth and did not reach orbital speeds. However, students were able to learn why this was so in the hall, also investigating artificial gravity and its consequences for human exploration of space. They successfully calculated the average trip time for the mission, with help from our maths teachers, which posed questions about how much food, water and other consumable cargo would be needed.

As you can see from Emma's account here, the students enjoyed the day at least as much as the teachers!

Emma Oglethorpe writes:

We pumped up the rocket launching machine and placed our handmade rocket called "Popsicle" onto the hollow tube ready for take-off.

We held down the red button and at the same time pressed the green button. The rocket shot off into the air. It climbed quickly and silently. It went very high, but we could still see Popsicle making an arc in the sky.

Our rocket was made from a roll of paper, strips of Sellotape for extra streamlining and a plastic cap on its nose. It also had a fin on each side and one on the top.

This project was part of STEM Day, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. The day was divided into different lessons for each of the above subject areas. In maths, for example, we calculated how long it would take to get to Mars...

In science, we were shown an experiment called "screaming jelly baby", which showed us how much energy would be needed to launch a rocket. In technology/engineering, we made our rockets ready for the launch in the afternoon.

We all felt so excited when we saw how far our rocket, Popsicle, had travelled.

At the end of STEM Day, we all filed into the hall and the teachers announced which rocket had flown the furthest. It was Popsicle at 42 metres! We felt so proud when we realised that we had won the mission to Mars competition.

Our team included Rosie Baird, Mimi Ward and me all from FAMS.

Sackville Observatory seeks student ambassadors

As the winter observing season ends we will shortly be installing the solar telescope in our dome for summer viewing of our nearest star. We will also be cleaning, maintaining and planning in preparation for the autumn.

We are looking to recruit a small number of observatory ambassadors to help run our observatory. Ambassadors will help in maintenance of the telescope and dome, and receive full training in the use of the observatory. We hope they will then help run open evenings and after school events as well as solar viewing at lunchtimes. They will have access for their own observing too. This is a fantastic opportunity for anyone interested in astronomy to use a semi-professional resource.



If you are interested, please see Mr Bush, Mr Tyrrell or email sbush@wsgfl.org.uk

For further information about our observatory, visit www.facebook.com/SackvilleObservatory

Henry Wermuth, Holocaust survivor

By Miss Yendell

On 18th March year 10 went to the hall after break to listen to Henry Wermuth, a 91 year old Holocaust survivor, talk about his experiences during the Holocaust. He spoke about the 8 different concentration camps he was forced to work in, his separation from his mother and other family members and his brushes with death. He described his failed attempt to assassinate Hitler and the death of his father. Many students were so moved by his experiences that they decided to buy his book "Breathe Deeply My Son" so they could find out more. Mr Wermuth took the time to sign each book individually. Below is a selection of the comments made by year 10 students after Mr Wermuth's talk.

"I was touched when he recounted the story of how he lay between the two bodies in the camp, pretending to be dead until his father could help him. Finally, I was inspired greatly by his ability to remain mentally strong throughout the ordeal, even as his father died in his arms."

"I believe he is an inspiration."

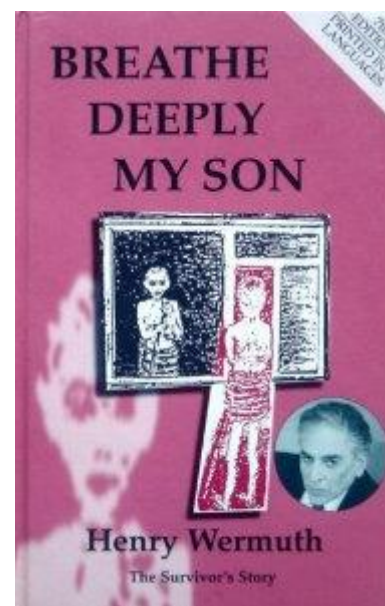
"The talk that Henry gave was extremely interesting. He is an incredible man to still be giving his story. I will remember it for the rest of my life and I am grateful to have had the experience. Cannot wait to read his book."

"I feel like I learnt a lot from him, he was very sassy."

"I learnt things I never thought I would."

"It really made me think about what I would do in that situation."

"I learnt a lot about the Holocaust in history, but it was quite different coming



from someone who was actually there."

"I appreciated the experience to learn about it through people and not facts and figures. I would have liked to hear more about what happened after the war to the survivors."

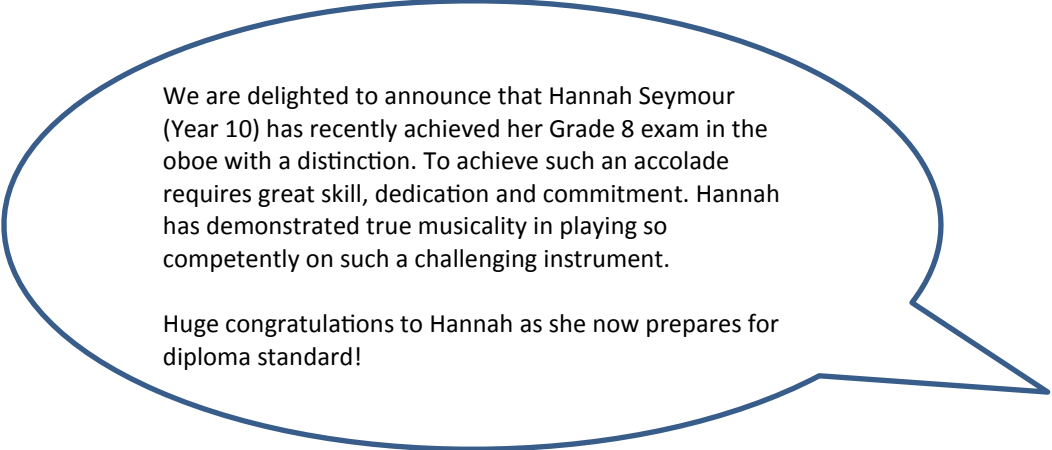
"I thought it was really eye-opening for our year to see an actual Holocaust survivor."

"It was great to learn everything you did."

"I feel the speech was very interesting and inspirational, it taught me to always believe that everything is possible, even if it doesn't work the first time. Thank- you."

"Mesmerising- when you come to the realisation that you are in the same room (as a Holocaust survivor) you are truly absorbed into someone else's life-changing and threatening story which makes you exalt in your own life and its luxuries. It puts everything into perspective and teaches the new generation of what should never happen again and that we should perpetually remember those who suffered."

You can sample something of the students' experience by looking at some of this extensive memoir uploaded by the Shoah Foundation. Click [here](#)



We are delighted to announce that Hannah Seymour (Year 10) has recently achieved her Grade 8 exam in the oboe with a distinction. To achieve such an accolade requires great skill, dedication and commitment. Hannah has demonstrated true musicality in playing so competently on such a challenging instrument.

Huge congratulations to Hannah as she now prepares for diploma standard!

Personal Accident Insurance

From Mr Burke

Very secure health and safety policies are in place in school which make it a very safe place for students. Nonetheless, there is an optional personal accident policy arranged by WSCC, via their insurers, AIG, for parents who wish to insure their child for any permanent injury or death caused by accidental means. The policy offers a benefit in the event of death or permanent bodily injury following an accident. The cover applies **24 hours a day**, whilst at school, home or on holiday anywhere in the world, and even whilst undertaking hazardous or adventurous pursuits.

It is a common misconception that students in our schools would be automatically covered by the Council's insurances should they be injured in an accident whilst at school. Unfortunately the Council can only consider a claim of this nature if it has been negligent in some way.

The policy is optional and available to parents or guardians of children aged between 3 and 19 attending any school, further education or sixth form college in West Sussex.

Although the policy is individual to each child, it is a block policy which runs from the 1st September 2014 to 31st August 2015. Benefits are offered under a continental scale of compensation, the maximum benefit being £100,000. The premium for this policy is currently £15 per child per annum. Application forms are available from the Finance Office.

Emma sails onwards

Emma Baker in year 11 has qualified to represent Great Britain at the 420 World Championships in August.

Emma moved from the Junior Optimist class of boat to a 420 dinghy in the late summer of last year. The 420 is a two person dinghy and is an official Youth RYA class. Emma is crew and her helm is Jenny Cropley from Hampshire. They qualified for the RYA Transitional Squad which has been training throughout the winter/early spring.

From 14th to 18th April Emma and Jenny took part in the RYA Youth Nationals at the Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Centre (where the Olympic sailing took place). This was the third event in a series which the 420 Class were using as qualifiers for their Worlds Team. Emma qualified to represent Great Britain as one of the seven female 420 boats.

The RYA Youth Nationals themselves were also used as a stand-alone event to qualify for various other events. Emma and Jenny qualified as one of two 420 girl boats to represent the British Youth Sailing Team and the EUROSAF Youth Sailing Championships in Gdynia, Poland, 18th to 23rd August.

Emma is the one hanging out on the trapeze in the picture!

Well done Emma – and of course good luck.



"Hi Mr Maywood

I would like to thank you and all the staff for the fantastic support they are giving the year 11 students in the run up to the exams, everything seems to be calm!"

Mother of year 11 student

Finally, a message from Kay Masters, from the nest Strategic Group

"Please find with this Sackville News the first newsletter for the nest SEND Hub Network for East Grinstead and the Surrounding Areas that gives you a flavour of this exciting new initiative. Also attached is a flyer for the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum Summer Roadshow. The nest Strategic Group would love to chat with you at the Jubilee Centre."