


# LANGTON NEWS



February/March 2014

Issue no. 156

Editor : Susan Begg



## Inside this water-logged edition:

### First Science Link Day

A day of experiments with young scientists from Canterbury Academy

### Now Your'e Talking!

Why mastering a foreign language can help you throughout your life

### Dicing with Death in Swaziland

Tom Churhyard's continuing adventure in Africa

### Elsa's oar-inspiring challenge

Former student takes to the high seas

all this and more .... much more!

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# From the Head of School

Mr Ken Moffat



At the school, we often talk about the Langton Family and this has never been demonstrated to me better than over the past three months or so. I try not to write to the parent body more than is necessary, I am aware it can be annoying, but the occasions that have recently forced me to write to you have led you to demonstrate a level of support and commitment to the school that is quite staggering. Whether it has been OFSTED or the school boiler misbehaving, I have been inundated with kind regards that really demonstrate how much you care. So a big thank you for that.

The boiler is staggering on and Darren Watson is pestering County to have it replaced. It seems illogical that it sits in the bowels of the tower building with the electrics on the underside and my heart really went out to caretaker Les Hollands when I found him desperately bailing out three feet of water on a Sunday lunchtime three weeks ago. I am pleased the disruption was kept to a minimum and I am sure the boys enjoyed wearing their own kit for a week. They behaved impeccably throughout the whole experience with not one complaint.

The age of the building is a concern to us. Building Schools for the Future never made it this far east and so we are stuck with it, but we will not rest in our endeavour to improve the schools facilities. Dr Baxter and I have been in discussions with architects to look at ways of improving the school aesthetically and practically and we will continue to pressure County to provide adequate facilities for one of its flagship schools. Watch this space.

Nor will we rest with the curriculum. Following on from our outstanding OFSTED report we are determined not to sit on our laurels and renew our endeavour to deliver a world class education at the Langton. The appointment of Professor James Soderholm to co-ordinate the additional work done in the Arts and Humanities is significant. James was a Professor of English Literature in several US universities and is widely published on Byron and the Romantics. Already, his appointment has brought a stir of excitement to the Arts Sixth and it has been interesting to watch the emergence of a Feminist Reading Group and a new Philosophy Society to take our students that bit further.

These additional societies are not to be under-estimated. The Faculty of Langton Economists, Biomedical Society, Langton Politics Society, Geographical Society, and others, are largely student led and allow the students to become the architects of their own learning. Crucially, they add on to the length of the day's learning – that alone should please Mr Gove – and allow our students to deepen their understanding of their areas of specialism. Indeed, we believe that this increased understanding is the real reason why we enjoy such success at Oxbridge and Russell Group universities. Sixteen students have gained Oxbridge offers this year, coupled with twenty last year. I think only the super selective Judd School in Kent can better that; and we will better them in time.

We are also looking at re-developing the Key Stage 3 curriculum so that we can demonstrate a Langton curriculum that works all the way through from Year 7 to Year 13 and is consistent in its thinking and develops incrementally.

Lastly, it was a pleasure to lead the inaugural dinner of the school's 1248 Society, arising from the ashes of the OLA. A really pleasant dinner was enjoyed at the school and my thanks go to Gay and Gwen in the canteen for outstanding food and wine. Attendees ranged from 19 to 83 years old and we enjoyed happy memories of our times as part of the Langton Family. We do want our students and parents to remain with us forever and this is an excellent vehicle for just that purpose. Obviously, if we can raise money through it as well, then that is all for the better. We have recently been granted Charitable Status and so can accept gift aided donations. It is important to us that we have another funding arm to help us achieve our goals and my thanks to those of you who have donated generously. The government gives us enough to deliver an adequate education, but neither we, nor you, want just that, so if you do feel you can contribute even a small amount per month, you can find details on the newly refurbished school website of how to do just that.

Meanwhile, best wishes to all as we enter the period of preparation for the end of year exams.

*(Work commitments mean that Dr Baxter was unable to write his usual 'From the Head' column for this edition of Langton News.)*

**Canterbury Rugby Academy**

# **2014 TOUR**

**26th - 31st August**

The Tour is open to  
rugby players from  
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys  
Canterbury High School  
and members of CRFC U17s

For more information contact Mr Nicky Little  
[nlittle@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:nlittle@thelangton.kent.sch.uk)



# Langton Student Aims High

My name is Lucas Crow and I play a sport called roller hockey, basically hockey played on roller skates but with a special hockey stick - both edges of the stick are flat with a longer curve than a field hockey stick, but shorter than an ice hockey stick.

There are 5 players on a team, 4 outfielders and 1 keeper which is my position. I started skating on the Herne Bay pier when I was 8, my old primary school friend told me about roller hockey and I decided to try it out. The reason why I am a goal-keeper is my team's keeper fell ill on my first ever tournament about two years ago and I decided to be the cover keeper. I was unable to move in all the pads at first but once I was in goal I think I did a pretty good job! I love the sport and have made many

friends all over the country. We play in leagues as far away as Manchester, but most games and the national training are held in Peterborough. Each month I go to National training and I have practiced so much I am now able to play for the under 15's, and believe me they can hit a ball hard! About 60mph on some shots! I get bruised even wearing all my pads and occasionally they dent the cage on my helmet!

I am very lucky to go to Portugal twice a year as our National coach is Portuguese and he arranges for his better players to gain experience against foreign teams.

In Portugal roller hockey is the national sport, just like football is over here. It is a great honour to be selected to go so I was thrilled to

be invited to go with the Under 15 Team last December. This squad is in the process of being selected for the European U 17 championships to be held in France in September. You can get the chance to play for England while you are in Year 10 or, if you are very, very good, in year 10.

I am training really hard as I would love to play in a European tournament. There is also talk of roller sports in the youth Olympics. How cool would it be to represent Great Britain in the Olympics? That is why every weekend I compete; I train in the gym every day and on the rink for 4 hours a week. Homework has to be done in the week as we spend most weekends away, so after training and dinner I hit the books as I also want to do well at Simon Langton!



Lucas is front row, second from the left, in black

# Langton Student Takes Top Award for Top Marks

The prestigious Salters' Institute Annual Awards Ceremony was held at Salters' Hall on 29th November. The ceremony celebrates high levels of excellence within the science education sector. Over 185 guests attended the Prizegiving Ceremony and lunch reception, one of whom was Langton Student Louis Wilson who was there to receive his award for being the highest scoring student on the OCR Salters Chemistry course last year (599 marks out of 600).

Sir William Castell, Chairman of the Wellcome Trust, delivered a keynote address and presented the Awards at the Ceremony.

Head of Chemistry, Dr Duncan Armour, travelled up to see Louis

collect his award.

'Louis's award was the result of his dedication to his studies and his focus and determination to succeed. I was delighted to see all that hard work recognised by the Salters' Institute. Louis is currently studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge and I have no doubt he will continue doing well in whatever direction his future career takes.

Everyone at the Langton sends their best wishes to him.'



# ON THE ROAD

*The senior drama students' production of Jim Cartwright's "Road" presented challenges which they proved more than equal to.*

*Review by Sarah Lawrence.*

First performed in 1986, the play demands the realisation of an impoverished street in a Lancashire town in Thatcher's Britain and the mastery of a local dialect far removed from East Kent. A confident ensemble achieved a compassionate portrayal of lives blighted by unemployment yet clinging to a robust sense of individual identity. It was social realism at its best, rooted in time and place, yet universal in its emotional truth, its pathos and humour.

The promenade studio performance began in the foyer, transformed into The Millstone Pub - PTA bar staff - where actors in role played darts and mingled with the audience. Led into the studio by the homeless Scullery (Liam Cavanagh) and layabout Blowpipe (Mohamed Abdelrahim) the audience moved about the road, in and out of homes and the chippy, sharing an evening with the residents. The young preened themselves for a night out, domestic tensions flared, people told their stories and a picture emerged of a community desperate for better times, finding temporary solace in alcohol, nicotine and brief sexual encounters.

By contrast, Ben Esdale as Joey and Belinda Roy as Clare gave a sensitive portrayal of unemployed teenage lovers who opt out and starve to death in a locked room - leaving a shocked audience to move to the welcome relief of DJ Bisto's lively interval disco (Jerome Evans).

Other exceptional performances were Alice Winter-Taylor's abused wife, emotionally torn between contempt and pity for her husband and Nick Young's alarming and very funny Skin-Lad. The final quartet of young revellers whose anger brings the play to an eloquent and moving climax was superb.

Noah Weatherby (Eddie) and Nick Young (Brink) partnered Alice Golton (Louise) and Amy Petts (Carol) in a ritualistic display of disappointment that stunned the audience. The older characters - stoical survivors - were played with humour and understanding by Oliver Braddy (Professor), Grace Lyle-Coddington (Brenda), Gwen Grynfeld (Molly), and Annabelle Peppiatt (Marion). Abi O'Neill and Maddie Ford gave well judged performances of touchingly glamorous and optimistic women on the pull. Several actors played multiple roles with aplomb, including Alix Jones. Fergus Carver gave a winning cameo as the chip shop proprietor and Ricky Hitchcock gave a masterclass in silent inebriation.

A key element in the evening's success was the superb work of the technical team who created an ever changing tapestry of locations with sound and light, all precisely cued.

The episode of "Dynasty" at full blast on a vintage TV, the noisy upright Hoover, and the vinyl records "played" by the cast were a delight. Attention to period detail was the hallmark of this production and Fleur Elkington's costume design worked well to evoke the 1980s and the characters' circumstances.

History teacher Matthew Rushworth's school lecture on Thatcher's Britain was reproduced in the programme - a thoughtful touch that shared the cast's research with the audience, inviting it to make its own assessment of the period. An evening spent in the company of the residents of "Road" is certainly as entertaining and thought-provoking now as it was nearly thirty years ago.

The play was directed by Head of Drama Alice Taylor and Sixth Form student Rhys Jones.







# News Update

*Dr Parker summarises the work that has been going on in the Star Centre since the last edition of Langton News.*

Students have been busy doing fantastic work in the Star Centre on the many projects we have running.

The launch of LUCID (Langton Ultimate Cosmic ray Intensity Detector) on 25th May has allowed time for simulation work on what LUCID might see. This has led to the latest paper from the Star Centre by Dr Tom Whyntie and Matthew Harrison, LUCID project leader, on 'Simulation and analysis of the LUCID experiment in the Low Earth Orbit radiation environment.'

Matt and I have been up to the Satellite Applications Catapult Centre at Harwell and there is great excitement getting ready for the launch of TechDemo-Sat-1 with LUCID. It will take off from Baikonur in Kazakhstan on a Soyuz rocket, and we will be so excited to receive the new data it will give us. We hope many hundreds of schools will take part in analysing this data and we already know that the Space weather community and NASA are interested in what it will tell us about the Low Earth Orbit radiation environment. You can read more about LUCID in Matt's report on the next page.

The MoEDAL team leader Katherine Evans was interviewed by New Scientist magazine about the school's

involvement in the new Monopole and Exotics Detector at the LHC (you can read her article on the following pages) and we eagerly await test data to analyse so that we can apply our knowledge of the detectors to this amazing search for magnetic monopoles.

The Myelin Basic Protein Project continues to break new ground and prepare to publish a paper with the names of all the hundreds of students over the years who have worked on this brilliant project. Dr Colthurst reports on the Second Authentic Biology Symposium elsewhere in this edition.

The approach of the Langton Star Centre, giving students opportunities to take part in authentic research alongside scientists and engineers has gradually become more recognised and a number of key educational leaders have visited. We have welcomed many schools from the UK and also particularly from Australia! Our students always give fantastic presentations to these visitors and if you are keen to be updated on all the latest research in the Star Centre come along to the next Langton Guide to the Universe 19th March 7 – 9pm. Students will be giving short updates on the projects and then we are delighted to welcome as our guest speaker Jen Whyntie who is a Producer at the BBC Radio Science Unit.

Coming up we have Public Observing 7.30pm on Friday March 7th. We will once again have activities to do just in case it's not a clear night! In February we had 40 cubs and scouts build satellites, look at impact craters and see a toilet roll solar system. I made a comet and everyone had a great time thanks to the brilliant students and Mr Champion's wonderful marshmallow satellites!

We must also wish Matt Harrison, Dimitrios Theodorakis and Ellis Skinner all the very best for the final of the National Science and Engineering Competition at the Big Bang Fair in Birmingham. They are finalists with their wonderful achievement of making the Langton telescope robotic, an achievement which has rivalled the system for the Faulkes Telescope.

We will be encouraging students to get involved in using the telescope robotically and already have some fantastic year 7 and year 8 astronomers. We welcome all ages to observing sessions so please come along.

If you have any questions about the Star Centre please email me at

[bparker@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:bparker@thelangton.kent.sch.uk)

# The Langton StarCentre

CERN

## CERN Competition

by Robert Beesty & Johnny Allain-Labon

The CERN beam line is a competition run by the world famous physics laboratory, offering the chance to test an experiment using one of their particle accelerators. The goal here is to design a unique and innovative experiment.

Although still in its infancy, our project has a clear aim - to test the hypothesis that cosmic rays could be responsible for life on Earth. Building upon the renowned Miller-Urey experiment, we plan to change the energy source from an electrical spark to high energy protons. This will hopefully result in the formation of amino acids, the building blocks of proteins, vital for life.



This is a cross-discipline project, incorporating elements from physics, chemistry and biology - we are always looking for volunteers!

## LUCID Update

by Matt Harrison

The LUCID team has been very busy this term. In February Dr Parker and I went up to Satellite Applications Catapult in Harwell, Oxford. This was a review meeting to see if satellite missions similar to TechDemoSat-1 (the satellite LUCID will fly on) are viable. As it turns out, the support for future missions is huge and also people are very supportive of the idea of more student projects. A LUCID-2 could be on its way!

Other good news is that we have just got our first paper through peer-review entitled "Simulation and analysis of the LUCID experiment in the Low Earth Orbit radiation environment". Unfortunately this good news was met with bad and we found out only a week after this meeting that TechDemoSat-1 will now not launch until May 25th 2014 rather than April 29th. Hopefully this will be the last of these launch slips.

The rest of the team is also very busy; Hector Stalker is doing a lot of great programming to calibrate the LUCID science data to we can get the actual energy of the particles that hit our detectors. Sam Kittle and Will Furnell are designing an experiment to allow us to estimate the direction of particles which hit our detectors by extrapolating back from the energy distribution of particle tracks on the detector. James Grieg and Joe Ray are doing excellent work on both controlling LUCID and understanding the data we get back, which credit to them, involves reading and analysing some pretty heavy-going technical documents.

Finally Ben Richards and his group are reading a lot of very interesting literature which covers the background science around the experiments we intend to do with LUCID.



## Creating Clouds

Not content with the grey, rainy days we have been experiencing Matt Harrison and Ellis Skinner took advantage of a lull in star gazing and created some clouds of their own.

Matt takes up the story ...

During public observing on Friday 7th February when the weather - typically - was bad, Ellis Skinner and I set about making a cloud chamber. The physics behind this is very simple: a felt pad is supersaturated with propan-2-ol (thank you chemistry department!) which is placed in the bottom of a petri dish, which is then sealed shut.

The petri dish is heated over a carbon filament lamp to evaporate all of the propan-2-ol into the container which condenses onto the lid. This petri dish is then laid on a layer of dry ice to cool it down rapidly. The condensation on the lid now moves back down the container by forming a cloud in it.

This is where the interesting physics comes in: when an ionising particle ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\mu$  etc.) passes through the cloud in the container, it causes a very obvious condensation around the particle. Thus it is a very primitive (DIY) particle detector. We managed to see two such condensations which indicate we successfully created a cloud chamber! It only took 2.5 hours...





# Langton Students Join the Moedal Collaboration

The principal investigator for any institute joining an experimental collaboration is generally a self-assured researcher with evident leadership skills and an in-depth knowledge of their subject gained over many years. Katherine Evans fits the brief in every respect, except that she is 17 years old and her research institute is the Langton Star Centre. The school has just joined the MoEDAL experiment.

MoEDAL, the latest LHC experiment has detectors located close to the interaction point of the LHCb experiment. This new experiment is designed to search for the highly ionizing avatars of new physics at the LHC, specifically the magnetic monopole or dyon and other highly ionizing stable massive particles from a number of beyond-the-Standard-Model scenarios. MoEDAL was approved in 2010 and is due to start taking data in the Spring of 2015.

One of the key physics motivations for the MoEDAL experiment is the search for the electroweak monopole, whose mass has recently been estimated to be within the reach of the LHC. "Of all the exotic particles, monopoles are thought to be the most likely," explains Richard Soluk, a MoEDAL scientist from the University of Alberta. "The maths looks better if they exist!"

By CERN standards, MoEDAL is a small collaboration and this makes the involvement of the school even more notable. But we take a very different approach to science, encouraging our students to participate in fundamental research alongside established research institutes and universities.

Katherine Evans is leading the project for the Langton: "We only started the project in September 2013. There are about 25 of us and we meet twice a week to work on MoEDAL. People read up on topics outside the group meetings."

The school has been working with Timepix chips on a variety of projects for some time and, as Katherine says, "some people at school know the chip inside out." It's this knowledge of Timepix, and specifically using it to monitor radiation, that interested MoEDAL.

James Pinfold, Spokesperson for the MoEDAL collaboration, says, "The TimePix pixel device system is key to the measurement, and our understanding, of the radiation background that the MoEDAL experiment will encounter at the LHC. The Langton Star Centre's experience with the TimePix device will be invaluable to the MoEDAL effort. I am thrilled that we have had this chance to directly involve young school students and their teachers in the excitement and

importance of fundamental research. Also, I think this involvement is a first for high energy physics"

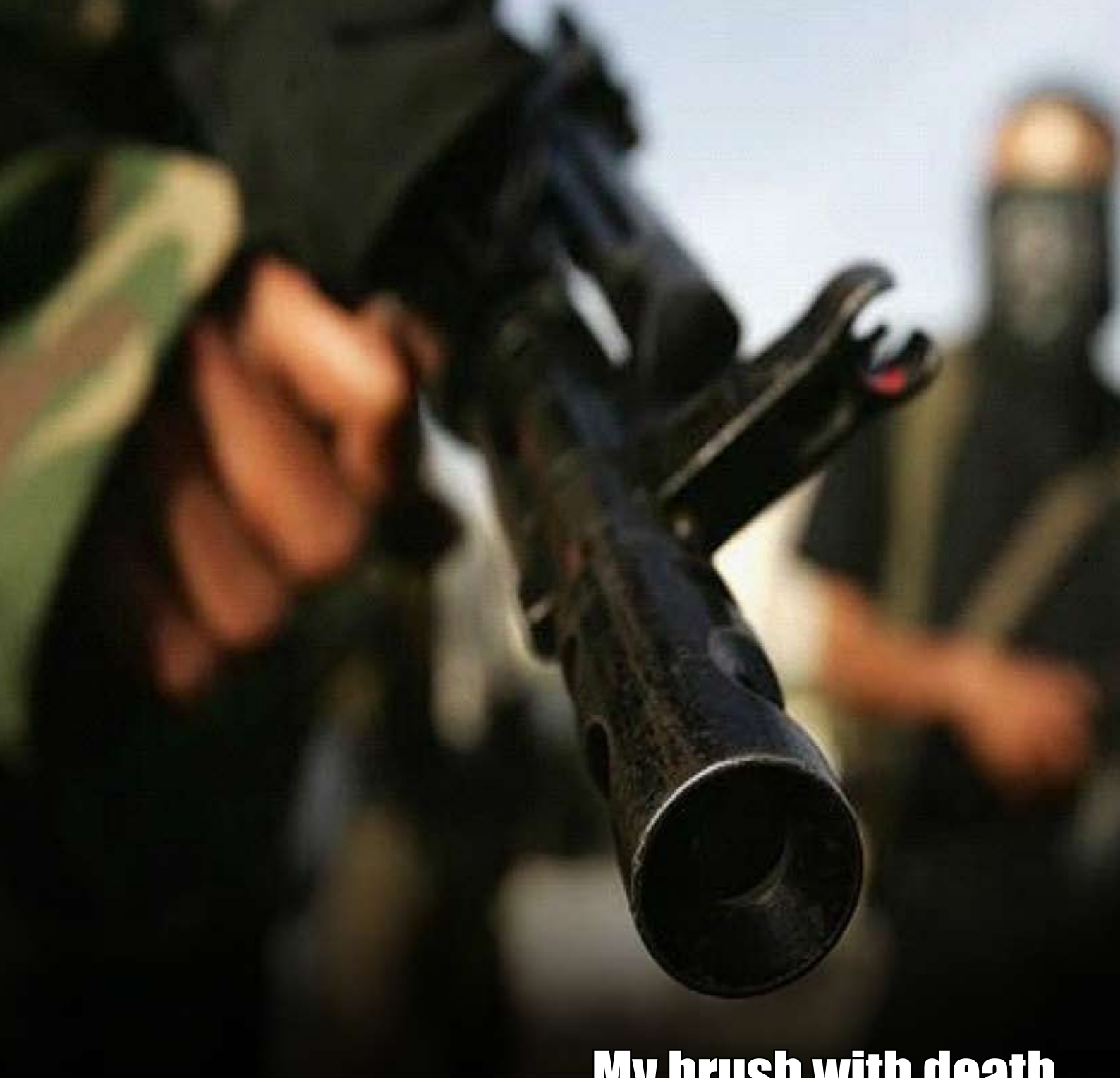
The opportunity to be involved in fundamental research, whether it is looking for exotic physics beyond the Standard Model or producing a UK map of background radiation levels, undoubtedly inspires Langton students: 1% of the current cohort of UK physics undergraduates came from this school. "Physics isn't just something I learn in the classroom," says Katherine. "This project has made me more passionate about the subject. I'm planning to study physics at university and I hope I can stay involved in MoEDAL."

## Moedal - an explanation by Jess Donnelly

*Moedal is an experiment at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, which was first approved and sanctioned by the CERN research board in May 2010, and started its first test deployment in January 2011. The experiment is designed to detect magnetic monopoles and other exotic particles (particles that don't fit into the standard model). If these are detected, then this could mean big changes to our ideas about sub-atomic particles. Magnetic monopoles are hypothetical particles that have a single magnetic pole, as opposed to the dipolar particles we usually observe. Their existence has been predicted in several theories by different physicists. In 1931 Paul Dirac was led to the conclusion that magnetic monopoles can exist at the end of tubes; Dirac strings; by his calculations.*

*The Langton Star Centre has been made a collaborator in this project; we are the first school to ever be involved in a large scientific collaboration. We visited the experiment in November and had a tour, to find out more about the investigation, and the science behind it.*

*So far, most of our research time at school has been taken up researching monopoles, exotics and previous experiments, and learning how to use the Medipix Chips, which are used in the experiment to detect sub-atomic particles that escape the particles being smashed together by the accelerator. We are also working to get more funding to help buy more chips to be used in the experiment. Once the experiment starts taking data in Spring 2015, we will be sent data from the chips, which we will analyse. We are currently waiting for test data for this purpose.*



## **My brush with death drove home the need for mentors and hope**

*A terrifying robbery caused Langtonian Tom Churchyard to ponder the importance of educating young people in southern Africa, to break the cycle of violence*

**When I wrote for the last issue of Langton News that I loved this little country of Swaziland, little did I know that the worst was yet to come. I'd survived recent close-calls with fire, flood, break-in, break-up and a brace of car accidents, but hiking in South Africa later that month, friends and I were suddenly introduced to the true extent of southern Africa's dangers. In the most unequal country on the planet, it is hardly surprising that the most dangerous things in South Africa are men.**



After a monster 23km hike, the final leg of three, we jumped into sleeping bags in our shared chalet with gleeful anticipation of a straight-eight. About four hours later, halfway through the night, each of us were woken to a balaclava-ed figure, the finger of one hand raised to the hole where their lips should have been and the other around the trigger of a gun. God knows how they got in.

Being a notoriously active dreamer, I rolled out of bed and the situation only really hit me when the floor did. Our hands and feet were tied behind our backs and my bootlaces bit into my wrists. Lying there, bound and blindfolded, my trousers around my ankles, my friends and I shared a moment of joint realisation. This is it. Men like this don't leave witnesses to later haunt them in courts of law.

Maybe it was my ego, naivety, or the marvel that is the human mind's capacity to block out unsavoury experiences, but the next hour was spent, cheek to concrete, in hazy contemplation rather than blind panic. Occasionally my irrational meditation would be interrupted by a brief word from my captors as to the whereabouts of my car keys or the value of my iPod, but otherwise, amongst the confusion, I had time to think. Family and friends, my girlfriend, the guilt of having organised the trip all shoved and pushed for attention behind my closed eyes.

Eventually, and miraculously, after repeated shushing sounds made hastily into the dark, there was peace in our ransacked chalet. Only the sound of my car struggling to life under the weight of five men and four people's worldly possessions, confirmed they had, in fact, left us alive.

Later, talking the experience through with a psychologist, I realised that there was not a single positive I could draw from the experience. Try as I might, there was nothing to learn. Life was good to me before and would continue to be so afterwards. It was a void, a nothing; a desperate act made by desperate men who lost life's lottery.

And here's the irony: everyone kept telling us how lucky we were. South Africa is the rape capital of

the world, with over a third of men in its capital region anonymously admitting to the crime. Hijacking, armed robbery and subsequent murder are commonplace, and all who can afford it live behind barriers and barbed wire.

Five months to the day from that awful attack, a Swazi man comes at me with a knife and a knowing smile on his face. I know this man though, and he offers me the handle, not the point. He is here to give, not to take. Mduduzi Beethoven Dlamini: writer, restaurateur and my friend is dressed traditionally, in Lihiya, and has invited me and some friends to his house to bestow upon me a Swazi name.

The knife, as I was shortly to discover, was to be used on his gift to me. Leading me by the hand, Mduduzi ushered us towards the corner of his garden where, tethered to a tree, lay a small, unsuspecting goat.

I knew what this meant. It meant slaughter: a great honour, a recognition of manhood. Animals, for me, were frozen and packaged and tasty. Or else fresh and served with chips, and tasty. Not hairy and smelly and breathing. Mduduzi was smiling as he measured my reaction. There was no malice in his face, just an enjoyment in sharing Swazi custom with a white Englishman.

I'm the kind of person that reaches for a cup and a piece of paper when I see a spider in the house. I didn't know if I was going to be able to do it and had visions of a half-dead, crying goat trotting after me around the small garden.

It didn't make a sound and died in seconds with something as close to dignity as any living thing may muster to such a fate. Afterwards, having learnt how to skin and gut the animal and having cleaned it, we lit fires and I took a knife to the pink carcass, cutting at the joints so that it could fit into the giant cast-iron pot that appeared for the meat.

Goat, onions and stock bubbling away, Mduduzi and the assembly solemnly gave me the name Sibonelo Hlope and embraced me as bhuti lamncane, their little brother. And standing there to the

smiles of well-wishers, rabbit-skin around my waist, rolling my new name over my tongue, I felt a little of the pride of being a strong, unapologetic African man.



Tom becomes Sibonelo Hlope at a Swazi naming ritual involving the slaughter of a goat

With the justifiable focus of the last two decades on women's education, employment and empowerment in the region, men are often left to ill-education, unemployment and social threat. You can tell a woman not to allow herself to be abused, yet without educating the men, abuse will continue.

This is the philosophy of Kwakha Indvodza, a male mentoring project that friends and I founded in 2012. Kwakha Indvodza, which means "building a man", mentors over 40 youths from the Mahlanya area of Swaziland, teaching them skills, positive attitude and the value of hard work and community service.

The boys involved have all begun their lives without regular interaction with a positive male role model. Swaziland has one of the youngest demographics in the world: nearly 60 per cent of the population are under 25. One in 10 children has lost both parents, and one in three lives without a male.

Here, in a country whose national newspaper claims to have identified only "324 gay men" in its 1.2 million population, we need to readdress our visions and expectations of masculinity and allow the traditional to be challenged, as well as revered. Only then will we stop giving out losing lottery tickets to violent boys and asking them to become good men. Only then will tomorrow's girl (and boy) child be truly empowered.

Tom is a teacher at Waterford Kamhlaba, the United World College of Southern Africa.

The Design and Technology Department has recently undergone a makeover and whilst the jury is still out on the 'all white' design of the rooms the increased emphasis on engineering has struck a chord with staff and students alike. Dany Pledger commented 'Design and engineering are intrinsically linked. The cross-curricular opportunities are tremendous and it is immensely satisfying to see the students using their scientific and mathematical learning in conjunction with their design skills.'

# Good Design Changes Lives

Report by Cameron Bigg 13CB

You only have to consider the humble wheel to appreciate how human inspiration can create and evolve great ideas to improve our way of life.

So it was with great relish that a coach load of us from Years 12 and 13 headed up north to see how the motoring industry is deploying good design in its latest manufacturing processes. Our first stop was at the Jaguar plant in Whitley where we were guided around the Jaguar XJ production line and given a detailed talk on the company's history, its progress and plans for the future. While robots do some of the work, much is still assembled by human hand. Robots construct vehicle frameworks and outer shells plus fitting the panoramic sunroof, while humans put together everything else from wheels to sat navs. This visit gave a great insight into the efficiencies needed for mass production of a global manufacturer. Cars made at the plant are shipped all over the world, with about 20% supplied for the UK market, it was difficult trying to spot the right-hand-drive cars.

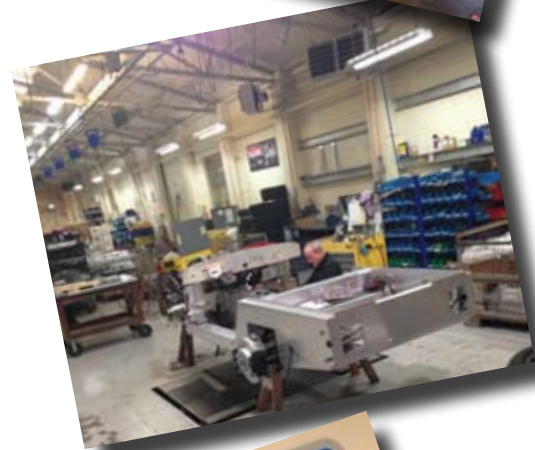
Next on our schedule was the Morgan factory at Malvern. It couldn't have been more different. The sports cars are built to a classic design and each one is made to order with many variations based on customer requirements. While the Jaguar plant was carefully planned for maximum efficiency, the Morgan factory resembled a hobbyist's shed

on a larger scale where employees clearly felt personally about what they were doing – more like working on their own cars albeit for someone else. Staff were friendly, more relaxed but were mindful of their deadlines. This family-owned business demonstrated how old techniques, skills and craftsmanship are still used in modern day production. A labour of love that's very much in demand.

After our busy day, the evening and overnight stay was in Birmingham. The next day, after a hearty breakfast, we travelled to the Design Museum in London. On display were some iconic products along with some historic duffers such as the Sinclair C5. Top of my list was the iMac G3 with its colour transparent edgeless design and its use of the first integrated USB port. It also fascinated us to see the range of design in many everyday products that have revolutionised our world. These included the Anglepoise Lamp, motorway signs, post box, polyprop school chair, and products influenced by the Bauhaus Movement in the 1920s – check out the Wassily chair. It was certainly inspirational to see the museum's collections of old and new with cleverness and ingenuity bundled together with the aim to make our lives easier, playful and thought-provoking.

The Design Trip – and thanks to Mr Pledger who organised it – really helped to demonstrate in a practical, see-for-yourself way the importance

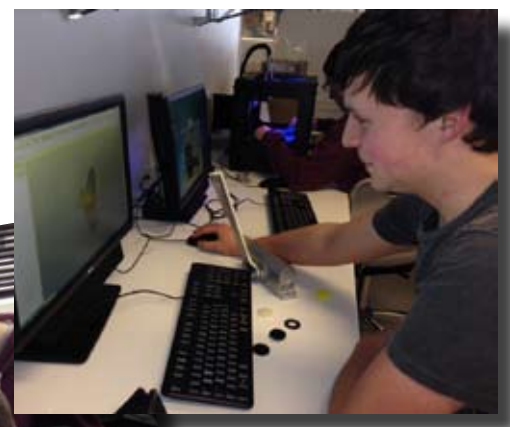
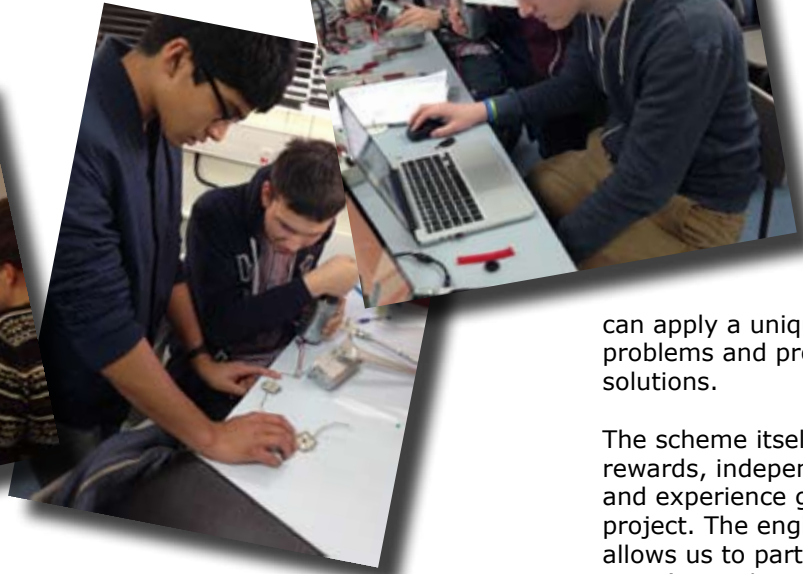
of good design and how it influences us all. I would strongly recommend those studying DT and those fascinated by the 'stuff' around them to take advantage of this trip in the future.





# Good Ideas Save the Planet

Report by Michael Thundow



If I were to say 'renewable energy', it's likely that the first thoughts to cross most people's minds would be of legions of wind turbines lining the coast, or perhaps the solar panels being installed across many homes to save energy and reduce their household bills.

Pavegen, the brainchild of former Langtonian Lawrence Kembball-Cook, is an attempt to challenge former assumptions about how this potentially revolutionary, but often inaccessible, technology can be applied to an entire area, with inexpensive and eco-friendly power being generated from right under your feet. The idea of the act of stepping onto a square tile, embedded into the pavement and actually creating electricity is one which is taking steps (excuse the pun) towards making energy generation accessible to the public.

So accessible, in fact, that you can experience this technology by simply heading down to the Design Department, where the energy-generating tiles have already been installed.

The company however, is looking to expand this ideology for energy generation into other areas, and through a partnership between Pavegen and the lower-sixth year of

the school through the 'Engineering Education Scheme' (EES), a team has been assembled to explore the possibility of creating electricity through another method.

A method that uses the simple act of opening a door to generate power.

The team, comprising of Nick Leary, Sam Watkins, Jagan Annamaraju, Ben Molony, Bartek and myself (Michael Thundow) have been given the brief of designing and prototyping a device that could connect to a common-place swing door and generate power from the energy used to open and close it.

Our 'Engineering Tutor', Mr Pledger, has organised the first year of the scheme and provided the advice, tools and guidance needed for the team to work efficiently and effectively.

To say that you have to be adept at maths-based subjects in order to be a member of the engineering team isn't necessarily true. We have a huge variety of educational abilities in our six-man group, ranging from those who excel at physics and maths, to those who study product design and computing, and even to those who come from a humanities-based background. We all

can apply a unique view on various problems and provide different solutions.

The scheme itself has its own rewards, independent of the skills and experience gained from the project. The engineering scheme also allows us to participate in the 'Golden Crest' Award, similar to that of the Gold DoE, along with all of the accompanying UCAS points. The project is not only a great opportunity to work alongside a company helping to achieve their goals, but to advance our own knowledge and understanding of engineering - an especially useful skill that will serve us well in the future.

The project will take place over a six-month period and will include meetings with Pavegen to discuss and develop ideas, a workshop event at the local university to experiment with potential prototypes, and, eventually, we will produce a project report to accompany a final presentation to a hall full of family members, students, teachers and engineers alike.

There is still a lot of work ahead for our own project but we hope that the results of this first year of the scheme will be rewarding and also encourage those who are entering the sixth-form later this year to consider the opportunities that this scheme has to offer.

# Programming Evening - Robotics

Report by Mr Chris Boucher

It has been a busy six months in the Computer Science Department. In September Mr George started a Programming Evening for boys interested in NXT Robotics (Lego), web design, programming in python on Raspberry Pi and Arduino boards.

In October a team from NIC Instruments Limited were invited to give a demonstration of their new product, the First Responder, a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) pictured right. The NIC team described the development of the mechanical systems, electronic circuitry and the programming needed to create an effective tool to neutralise the danger posed by mines, bombs and improvised explosive devices.

The ROV is controlled by an operator but many of its functions run autonomously such that, while the operator tells it where to go and what to do, its on-board computers decide how it will carry out the tasks. Students were then allowed to 'drive' the ROV around the Design workshop. My lasting memory will be of the ROV driving itself up into the boot of the NIC car, seemingly with tail wagging, pleased to have escaped from our boys.

This year the school had two teams entered for the Kent FIRST Lego League (FLL) Tournament, both teams had worked hard since September to get ready however the stronger team members gravitated to James Meakin's Langton Lions team. Thus it was felt that the younger team really needed a more time to prepare so only the Lions competed at the tournament. I say 'only' but I have failed to mention that a third, independent team, Team Invicta formed by Carlos Purchase-Galarza, and Oli and Emma English, were also competing in the FLL tournament.

The Kent FLL Tournament was held at the beginning of December. On the Tuesday Team Invicta performed flawlessly. They managed to gain 530 points on the mission table, a score that doubled that of their nearest rival. Team Invicta came away with the Overall Winner's trophy and the



Robot Design Trophy and a place at the all Britain final at Loughborough. On the Wednesday the Langton Lions performed well but were plagued with laptop and software problems which spoilt their chances on the mission tables. However, James really impressed the judges with his robot design and his ability to explain the really complex mechanical and software systems that he had employed.

There is no doubt in my mind that the faulty laptop robbed the Langton Lions of a well-deserved victory. As a consolation they did get the Robot Design Trophy, our teams have won this trophy every year since we started competing in 2005.

Langton Lion team members are; David Pattison 8B, Finlay Adamson 8B, Jake Popplewell 8B, Sam Steadman 9H, James Robinson 9H, Harry Shave 9B, Abhishek Shenoy 9H, Ross Price 9H and captain James Meakin 10H2.

Team Invicta produced another fantastic performance at the finals in Loughborough this February. They managed to reach 542 points on the mission table, nearest rivals on the day got 410 and the world record then stood at 558 points. They took the Robot Design Trophy again and really impressed the judges with their research project.

For most teams the research project presentation is based on statistical or surveyed findings but this year Carlos has been working on an earthquake victim locator that uses a pulse sensor wirelessly linked to an Arduino. So the project judges were presented not only with the usual visuals but also a working prototype. Team Invicta came away with the overall winner's trophy and the invitation to compete in St Louis, Missouri, for the world FIRST Lego League championship title. This will cost an estimated £9000 so they will be on the lookout for sponsors, last year NIC Instruments Limited and IET sponsored the Langton Lions in

the FLL European Championship, held in Germany.

The Programming Evening buzzes with activity, the PC suite is filled each Wednesday evening and many also spend their lunch and break times in D2. We have received a grant of £500 from the Institute of Physics and bought a set of Arduino controlled robots. Next year's Lego robotics team is training hard, most of the Arduino programmers have their robots following lines, the table tennis club website is nearly ready and Cal Hewitt is close to playing a tune using a Kinect sensor bar controlled program written in Python.

We need to thank Mr George for his tireless commitment to running the computer science program. As for the future I know that Mr George wants students to produce their own sensors ... and perhaps design their own circuits.... watch this space.

## What's What

*Arduino is an open-source electronics prototyping platform based on flexible, easy-to-use hardware and software. It's intended for artists, designers, and anyone interested in creating interactive objects or environments.*

*Arduino can sense the environment by receiving input from a variety of sensors and can affect its surroundings by controlling lights, motors, and other actuators. The microcontroller on the board is programmed using the Arduino programming language (based on Wiring) and the Arduino development environment (based on Processing). Arduino projects can be stand-alone or they can communicate with software running on a computer (e.g. Flash, Processing, MaxMSP).*

*The Raspberry Pi is a credit-card sized computer that plugs into your TV and a keyboard. It is a capable little computer which can be used in electronics projects, and for many of the things that your desktop PC does, like spreadsheets, word-processing and games. It also plays high-definition video. its creators want to see it being used by kids all over the world to learn programming.*





**Retired Langton English teacher, Mrs Pauline Waters, loves being transported to new worlds when she indulges herself in her favourite passtime - reading ...**

# FABULOUS FANTASY FICTION

There's a general view that fantasy fiction is for teenage boys and adults who should know better. I'm seventy this year and must be young for my age.....

My early memories of reading are of being a friend's house (her mum was much older than mine) having exhausted my own library and it being too cold and too dark to go to the local library, my second home. In a glass-fronted bookcase in a stuffy front parlour were ranged thick, hardback books that I could hardly wait to investigate. They'd been published at the turn of the century and had titles like *A Queen Among Girls* and *Away with the Circus* and had virtually the same plot - poor girl who's really the long lost daughter/ niece/ granddaughter of some aristocratic or just plain rich family has been fostered/adopted/ lost and, after sufferings bravely borne and many adventures, is restored to her true inheritance.

Then it was anything and everything by Elinor Brent-Dyer and Angela Brazil, Malcolm Saville and others, and on to grammar school and an introduction to *Moonfleet* and *Treasure Island*, *The Trumpet Major* and *Silas Marner*, the Greek myths in year seven and a whole new world of stories old and new, fact and fiction. I seem to have missed out completely on Enid Blyton, having read none of her books until I introduced *The Magic Faraway Tree* to my own children.

I have one sister and we used to

fight like cats. She wanted to play dollies and I wanted to read. I used to hide and hear her coming to find me and she'd shout and cry until our mother came and made me play. My sister still feels aggrieved that I was so boring.

Anyway, on to fantasy. Was there such a thing forty or fifty years ago? There was Science Fiction and I read some - I'll come back to that another time -but the only fantasy I recall was *The Lord of the Rings* and I didn't read that until I was in my twenties. Instead, I read everything I could find, including reams and reams of complete [rubbish that I borrowed from the local library.

The trouble with books is that they don't shout out to you, 'Come and read me because I'm brilliant,' so what do you do if no one suggests what to read? So, for those of you who want some ideas, here goes. [By the way, if you read the first twenty pages and it's a drag, get rid of it. Try something else.]

Before you come to the Langton (so for smaller siblings) *Narnia*, *Harry Potter*, *The Dark is Rising* series, the *Green Knowe* books.

KS3 boys try *Eragon*, *Watership Down*, *Artemis Fowl*, *Cornelia Funke's* books, *Redwall* although you may think it's a bit eighties, *Stormchaser* series, *Nicholson's The Wind Singer*, the wonderful *His Dark Materials* [and every adult should read this for sheer

inventive genius] and Hoffman and Tracy Canavan in Year 9.

These are for slightly older people, definitely including adults:

Terry Pratchett is my favourite fantasy author. Start reading the Discworld series with either *Guards, Guards* or *Wyrd Sisters*.

Hearn's *Across the Nightingale Floor* is fabulous.

*The Hunger Games* (much, much more riveting than the films)

*The Sabriel Trilogy* by Garth Nix, equally, timelessly good.

Robin Hobb's *Farseer* books and *Liveship Traders*.

David Gemmell's *Drenai Tales* and the *Rigante Quartet*

Feist's *Riftwar Cycle* and, with Wurts, *Daughter of the Empire* trilogy.

Sanderson's *Mistborn* books.

Julian May's *The Saga of the Exiles*

*The Twilight* series is brilliant, even if it is about vampires.

Do go on to websites that give you ideas, just type in 'Best fantasy books' and there are hundreds of suggestions with detailed comments and plot synopses. Good hunting and happy reading.

# Learning a Foreign Language?

## Now Your'e Talking!

*Subject Leader Mrs Leticia Santan explains why language skills are important.*

English, Spanish, German and French are widely spoken throughout the world, and are the official languages of many world organisations.

Learning a modern language is enjoyable and rewarding – it opens doors to other cultures and gives the learner an experience of the world that goes deeper than the average tourist trip. It can also provide a key to the global workplace.

We believe it is important for children to learn a language because:

- Learning a foreign language makes their minds stronger and more flexible.
- It improves their chances of employment.
- Languages connect the world and have the potential to make it a more peaceful place.
- It is a lifelong skill – to be used in business and for pleasure to open up avenues of communication
- It develops a broader cultural understanding and promote
- better relationships with others.

There is no doubt that in the workplace a second language can be invaluable. For example:-

**French:** There are currently 67.8 million people with French as their first language, and it is spoken in 60 countries around the world. Most native speakers live in France, but there are also a high number living in Quebec (Canada), Switzerland, Belgium and a number of African countries.

French is one of the official languages of the European Union, and is the official language of three political centres of the Union: Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg City. If you add France and Belgium together, they are our second-biggest trading partner.

**Spanish:** A number of British firms are now Spanish-owned and speaking the language will open doors. With tourism in Spain thriving, and the economic importance of Spanish growing in both Latin American and the United States, there has never been a better time to learn

Spanish. Businesses operating in global markets in the future will need to rely more and more on Spanish language skills.

**German:** After the US, we do more business with Germany than any other country. There are currently 90.3 million people with German as their first language, and it is spoken in 43 countries around the world. It is the most widely spoken first language in the European Union and accounts for 4% of internet use.

Employers value language skills. Research has shown that using language skills in business opens the door to a wide range of economic, social and personal benefits. Lots of employers are looking to employ people with conversational language skills.

In addition to the three main languages taught throughout the school, students also have the opportunity to learn Mandarin, Russian and Italian as extra-curricular activities.

## Attention Parents! Can You Help Us?

If you use languages at work, the MFL Department would like to hear from you!



We wish to make contact with anyone who uses languages in the workplace so that we can find out where, and how, languages are being used in everyday life.

Please send us an email to [office@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@thelangton.kent.sch.uk) telling us what you do and which languages you speak. In this way we can build an accurate picture of just some of the opportunities available for our students when they enter employment.

If you would like to come into school to tell our students about the ways that language skills have helped you in your career that would be better still!



# Video Link Inspires Students

The MFL department recently organised a video link to Hong Kong so that Mr Simon Childs could talk to Year 10 students about the benefits of learning a foreign language.

Mr Childs explained that he had not really enjoyed learning languages at school at first but as his interest grew he soon realised that it would benefit him greatly in the future and, when he moved on to Higher Education, he studied Swedish and history. As the demand for bilinguals grew he went on to study Cantonese and, after that, Japanese.

Mr Childs' message to the students was clear 'the study of languages opens up the whole world to you. Having a language under your belt is a valuable asset and one that that employers the world over recognise. It represents the ability to work independently, that you are confident and adaptable.'

Elliott French of 10S2 said 'I found the talk very interesting and it was good to hear about all the many opportunities that are open to you once you can speak a foreign language'. Oskar Lacina-Moser (10M) and Charlie Mower (10S) agreed. 'Mr Childs's whole career came about because of his language skills and he is now one of the top people in one of the largest recruitment companies in the world' said Charlie and, added Oskar, 'he encouraged us to continue to learn languages even after we leave school and to use the skills we already have as much as possible'.

All the boys agreed that it was a brilliant way to get them interested in languages and that they were grateful to Mr Franczak for arranging it for them.



*Simon Childs is Managing Director of RGF, the global brand of Recruit Co Ltd Japan's largest recruitment services company and among the top*

*four worldwide by revenue. RGF operates offices across Asia including Japan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, India and Vietnam.*

# Bodas de Sangre

(Blood Wedding)

Report by  
Pippa Goodman

Students studying Spanish at A Level are studying *Bodas de Sangre* (blood wedding), a traditional Spanish play, written just before the Spanish Civil War.

Set against the backdrop of rural Andalusia, *Bodas de Sangre* is a love story, based on true events, that ends in tragedy. Underpinned by passion, pain and family loyalty, the play particularly focuses on the challenges of escaping the confines of a traditional society, where hierarchy is more important than love.

Last term, as part of the "Society of Linguists" organised by Mrs Santana, Dr Roser I Puig from the University of Kent came into school to deliver a seminar on the play. She focused on the relationship between the key themes of the play with reference to its cultural and historical significance. She also addressed the issue of the inferior position of women in society through to the significance of family honour.

Dr Roser I Puig provided a detailed, contextual overview of Lorca's work and gave us an opportunity to ask questions about the conceptual and supernatural aspects of the play, which had seemed abstract to us before. Dr Roser was great in clarifying how Lorca uses metaphorical and abstract concepts to reiterate reality at the time and emphasise how the tragedy will unfold. For us, as a class, it was a fantastic opportunity to be able to have this kind of lecture in Spanish, where we are able to discuss a play and to analyse it in depth.

It was particularly interesting to listen to Dr Roser's insight into the life of the playwright himself and his other works that reflect his feeling of an outsider in a Francoist society that did not accept his sexuality and political beliefs, enhancing our knowledge not only of the Spanish language and the play itself, but also going beyond the curriculum to explore and to get an insight of this period of time in Spanish history.



We would like to thank Dr Roser for the seminar and we hope to have similar lectures in the future as part of a continued partnership with the Language Department at the University of Kent.



*Dr Montserrat Roser-I-Puig is a very well established Catalanist who works on Spanish and Catalan theatre and poetry. She was president of the Anglo-Catalan Society between 2002*

*and 2005 and was instrumental in the establishment of the International Federation of Catalan Societies. She has attracted the Anglo-Catalan Society's web-pages and the Journal of Catalan Studies on-line publications to Kent. Her international collaborative activity has funded a post for a Catalan lector and has seen her contributing annually to research projects and "cursos de doctorado" in the Universitat d'Alacant and the Universitat de Lleida.*

Year 7 Student Ben Deery recently won a competition to be

# Lord Mayor For the Day

Miss Grant, my English teacher set me and my class (7M) some homework to fill in and complete the 'Lord Mayor for the day competition'.

All people under 18 in the Canterbury area had the chance to enter this competition. One night my family and I were getting ready to go on a 6 hour drive to Yorkshire when suddenly, the phone rang and I picked it up and that's when I found out I won!

Unfortunately, we had no time to let this sink in and we set off up north as planned. After careful consideration we decided to go back all the way to Canterbury to claim my prize during the half-term holidays.

The Lord Mayor said that the reason she chose me was because I said such things as I would give out awards and give money to any animal charities as I love animals. It seems that everybody else who entered just said things like they would get themselves a new car and other similar things. Another reason why she chose me is that we are similar because we both like animals a lot!

I wrote: *'If I was Lord Mayor of the day, then I could best of all give out awards to people who deserve it, for instance, for people who have helped people with disabilities or for being a hero and saving someone somehow.*

*Secondly, I will arrange activities to raise money for charities, such as a massive barbecue or something like that. I would fund charities such as the RSPCA or for another animal caring charity as I love animals so much.*

*Next, I would arrange national events to save precious, ancient and pre-historic items or buildings, so that Canterbury becomes a better known, popular town and everyone will be attracted to come here.*

*If I was Lord Mayor of Canterbury I would improve or build new facilities, for instance an improved swimming pool, so everyone will be better swimmers and stuff like that.*

*To conclude, I would love to be Lord Mayor of the day.'*

To be Lord Mayor of the day was very fun even though my dad insisted that we had to go back to Yorkshire afterwards. In total we travelled 24 hours but it was worth it in the end.

While I was with the Lord Mayor I had the most fun I have ever had.

Probably my favourite thing was going roller skating at Herne Bay where the Lord Mayor struggled to stay on her feet and ended up sprawled on the floor but she was still a good sport.

Also, we went backstage at the Marlow Theatre where we saw all their secrets and watched the ballerinas do their fancy splits. The Lord Mayor wished she could have done the same and in fact she nearly demonstrated one for us in the skating rink! Next, we had a tour of Tower House which was very exciting and I tried all of her equipment and even got a note out of her 900 year old horn.

She also showed me a bell that was rung every time there was a hanging that the Lord Mayor saved from being thrown away. We just hope she doesn't need to use it. Finally, we went to Spring Lane where we took part in a drawing competition and it was amazing to see all the colourful artwork that some people produce.

I really loved my day with the Lord Mayor and I hope to see her again soon.

Pictured right Heather Taylor The current Lord Mayor of Canterbury





**Years before Quentin Tarantino wrote Reservoir Dogs, the Langton had its own**

# Mr Blue, Mr Brown, Mr Green, Mr Grey, Mr Pink and Mr Red.

**Langton students are all familiar with the current House System, with each house named in honour of a Langton student who died during the First World War - Cyril Mackenzie, Eric Sharp, Archie Hardman and William Burgess. But what of the first Langton Houses? Langton Librarian and Archivist Ms Janeen Barker has been looking through old copies of 'The Langtonian' and came across the following article describing the introduction of the House System in 1907.**

The introduction of the House System into our School organisation is an innovation so important as to demand a word of explanation here.

The aim of this system is to make use of the spirit of emulation which is natural in a boy, and, by encouraging and directing it, to draw out his utmost effort in every department of his school life.

To the great Public Schools, which have long used their natural division into 'Boarding-houses' to stimulate rivalry in sports, we owe the name. We have ventured to apply the system to the moral and intellectual as well as to the physical side of a boy's life. But the diversion which in those Schools is natural and automatic, must, in a day-school, be arbitrary and artificial. The School has been divided into six sections, or 'Houses' in such a way as to secure at the beginning as near an equality as possible. No systematic division (such as by locality or initials) seemed possible which would secure this equality, and therefore the members of the 'Houses' were chosen in rotation by the Masters to whose charge they were committed. To each House

was given a distinguishing colour from which it also took its name - Blue, Brown, Green, Grey, Pink and Red. The colour is worn in the front of the school cap beneath the badge. To assist in the organisation and management of each House, a Prefect has been appointed with certain duties and privileges. To him the House-master looks to keep him in touch with those boys of the House who do not come under his immediate control, and on him largely depends the success of the House in many ways.

In the three departments of Conduct, Intellectual Work, and Sports, which make up a boy's school life, a system of marks has been arranged, and shields are to be awarded to the House which excels in each branch.

Such is the organisation. What is its purpose? First, and foremost, to cause each boy to think that he is not alone in the world of school, but that he is one of a society, each member of which shares his glory and would be a partner in his disgrace. No longer will the individual fight for his own hand and gain honours for a selfish enjoyment, nor will the slacker and the idler be allowed to forget that his is

failing to play the part expected of him for the reputation of the House, for in so comprehensive a scheme there will be a part for every boy. The runner or the swimmer, the cricket or football player, will do his share in helping the House to gain the Sports Shield. The boy who excels in the class or in the examination room will do so to make his House the champion in Intellectual Work. For him who is neither athletic in body nor brilliant in brain, there still remains the opportunity of helping to raise his House to the head of the list in Conduct.

Nor is this all. Rivalry is not the highest motive even when others share the laurels. The little coloured badge must be to every boy and outward symbol of the spirit of the House. To every senior it is a call to help, encourage, and lead, every member of the brotherhood. To the smallest it gives the right to ask for the help and guidance of the seniors. And to all, seniors and juniors, it is a challenge to keep unstained, and to hand on unsullied, the fair fame of the House.

## **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

Year 7 students - write a short article about the differences in today's House System from the 1907 system. Explain why you think the aims of today's Houses are similar to, or different, from the aims of the old houses. The best article will be published in Langton News and the writer will win a £10 token. Hand your work into reception by 31st March.



# Elsa's Oar-Some Challenge

Rowing for up to 16 hours a day, encountering unknown creatures at night and spending three months in solitude are just some of the challenges former Langton student Elsa Hammond will face as she endeavours to row 2,400 miles across the Pacific Ocean.

Elsa is the only solo woman from the UK registered to take part in the Great Pacific Race 2014, a new route for ocean rowers from California to Hawaii.

Described as an 'extreme sports event', it's the first rowing race to cross this part of the world's largest ocean. Elsa will take in the tough challenge in a 24ft long, 6ft wide rowing boat as she attempts to conquer storms, seasickness and the psychological effects of so much time in isolation. Along the way she will have encounters with rare marine life, plastic pollution, huge waves, flat calms, and many other experiences unique to rowing thousands of miles alone across open ocean.

The current world-record for the route is 64 days, set in 1997. Organisers predict that lone rowers, like Elsa, will complete the race in between 45 to 90 days, depending on weather and conditions.

Completing the challenge isn't her only aim; Elsa also wants to be the fastest solo woman to row this stretch of the Pacific Ocean and to raise money for the Plastic Oceans Foundation, a UK-based charity tackling plastic pollution in the oceans.

Although she rowed for her college, Elsa - a PhD student from the University of Bristol - will have to learn a whole new technique for the ocean - including learning to row with both oars instead of just one. She will also need to take and pass a number of different courses to help her survive alone in the Pacific.

She said: "I've done a fair bit of river rowing in the past, but ocean rowing is very different - you need more upper body strength to propel such a large boat forward through choppy waters and you're certainly more at the mercy of the elements. Some days the wind will be so strong that rowing will be impossible - I will just need to put the sea anchor out and wait for the storm to pass."

The boats are built to withstand heavy weather and will self-right in the event of capsizing. Conditions are basic, with a bucket for a toilet and desalinated seawater as drinking water. Aside from needing to be incredibly fit in order to row solidly for three months, the costs of taking part in such a challenge are sizable. Elsa estimates that she'll need to raise £100,000 in total through sponsorship and fundraising endeavours for the row to go ahead.

Elsa explained: "There are many more costs involved than people might realise. Not only do I have to buy a boat, there are also race fees and insurance to consider. I'm going to need lots of equipment such as a satellite phone and a desalinator to purify water, enough food to last three months, plus the cost of shipping everything out to California for the race. Once I have covered the core costs of undertaking the row through sponsorship, then I will be fundraising for the Plastic Oceans Foundation.

My mission to get sponsorship begins now and I'm hoping a variety of businesses will want to get involved and support me in different ways. I'm also really keen to share my experiences with schools and different organisations before and afterwards."

Elsa's hoping to secure a second-hand boat from a UK team, which is when the training will get fully underway. Ocean rowing boats are ruggedly designed and built from glass fibre, carbon fibre or other composite materials to withstand the worst of the weather that the ocean can throw at them. Each boat has a water tight cabin at each end. Generally one is used for storage and the other is used as the accommodation, where the rower can rest. Elsa added: "I've wanted to row an ocean for over seven years, and realised that entering the inaugural race in the Pacific Ocean would be an excellent way to start. I feel really excited, although I've got a lot to achieve in the next months before the race even gets underway.





## The Boat

An ocean rowing boat, fit to cross the Pacific, must be sturdy and self-righting to withstand rough weather and seas.

Elsa is working with expert craftsman Justin Adkin of SeaSabre – one of the only ocean rowing boat builders in the world who is also an ocean rower himself – to build a boat fit for the race. Elsa's boat will have a small cabin at each end, one for sleeping and comms, one for storage of rations.

Fully fitted with communications, water-making and safety equipment, the boat alone runs at nearly £50,000. On top of this, transportation, insurance and race fees push the total cost of Elsa's entry to the race close to £100,000.

## Training

Elsa is undertaking a wide range of training programmes, covering both the physical fitness she needs to power her journey across the Pacific, and the knowledge and skills required to do it effectively and safely. World record breaking ocean rower, Roz Savage MBE, is advising Elsa on all things ocean rowing. David Whitehead of Penguin Sailing is guiding Elsa through her Yachtmaster course, covering advanced navigation and meteorology. Gordon Trevett, the University of Bristol's High Performance Sports Manager, along with the University's Centre for Sports, Exercise and Health, and Nuffield Health, are advising Elsa on nutrition and exercise and providing facilities for her training.

## The Race

The inaugural Great Pacific Race will depart on 7 June 2014.

The race is 2,400 miles long as the albatross flies, although ocean currents, weather and wind mean that the actual route will be much longer. Of the 20 boats entered, Elsa is one of only five soloists, one of only two female soloists, and the only solo female entrant from the UK.

Of the ten women who have ever rowed an ocean alone, only two have rowed the Pacific.

This is the first ocean rowing race

to attempt the largest ocean in the world, and the odds are high that the current world record will be broken. Unlike the Atlantic, these waters are not tried and tested by numerous races and rowers.

## Life on the Ocean

Although Elsa will be competing in a race of around 20 boats, it won't take very long before they are separated from one another by currents, wind, and choice of route. It is unlikely that Elsa will see another boat after the first couple of days.

As well as the physical strain of rowing for up to sixteen hours a day, Elsa will have to deal with the psychological effects of isolation, self-reliance, and facing storms alone. Part of her training will involve preparing for this, so that she is able to maximise her effectiveness on the water.

Hopefully, she won't be entirely "all alone," however.. The North Pacific is home to a huge variety of wildlife, including whales, dolphins, sharks, albatrosses, flying fish, tuna and pelicans! As Elsa will be moving so slowly and quietly through the water, she is more likely to have encounters with wildlife than more 'traditional' ocean-going vessels.

Aside from all the rowing, Elsa will be kept busy making water (converting salt water into fresh water by passing it through an electric desalination device), keeping up to date with navigation, making sure everything on the boat is in working order, keeping herself fed, sleeping, and making sure she is sending back regular blogs and audio updates about life aboard the boat via satphone.



## SUPPORT ELSA

Elsa needs your help to get her across the Pacific!

There are several ways in which you can support Elsa's Row:

### DONATE

A direct donation is a straightforward way to support Elsa in her voyage across the Pacific. It can be publicly acknowledged or anonymous.

### SPONSOR

There are a range of PR and branding opportunities that can be of benefit to organisations of any size

### PURCHASE KIT

How about purchasing an item of kit for the boat? Elsa will be able to thank you when she uses it in the middle of the Pacific

### FOLLOW ELSA



@elsahammond



go to [www.elsahammond.com](http://www.elsahammond.com) for more information

## The Cause

Plastic Pollution has become a man-made global catastrophe.



Over the last 60 years plastic has become central to our lives and mankind has subjected the planet to a tsunami of plastic waste. Plastic Oceans provides a powerful and effective platform campaigning for, supporting and funding targeted solutions aimed at significantly reducing plastic pollution in the environment.

In 2014, 300 million tonnes of plastic will be made – about half of this will be used just once then thrown away.

Annually approximately 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide. More than one million bags are used every minute.

go to [www.plasticoceans.net](http://www.plasticoceans.net) for more information

# Passed Your Driving Test? Now You Need To Learn To Drive!

Learning to drive with an instructor in the passenger seat, you will have learnt to drive in a carefully managed environment where distractions were kept to a minimum. It is when you get out on the road on your own that you are exposed to everyday distractions and all the potential dangers of driving without the calming influence of your instructor. It can be compounded by the fact that young drivers often over-estimate their ability to control the car and think it's perfectly acceptable to multi-task when behind the wheel.

We all get distracted at times, that's only natural. Getting distracted when driving, even for a second, can have disastrous consequences. Being completely focused on the driving task is something that all motorists need to do. It is an essential driving skill.

Dangerous distractions which can divert a young driver's attention most commonly include the following:

Using mobile phone – talking, texting or calling, operating in-car devices such as iPods/CDs/Sat Navs, eating or drinking, smoking, Playing music too loudly (a high energy track can make you drive faster without realising it!), reading maps or written directions, doing make up or hair, talking to friends, listening in to other conversations.

Some of these distractions might be unavoidable, such as talking to friends when driving and listening in

to their conversations. However road safety experts strongly recommend that you keep the number of passengers to a minimum in your first year of driving while you build up your experience. Ideally you should not transport more than one person at any given time.

Research has proven that with each additional passenger carried, the risk of being involved in a crash ALSO increases so the more passengers = the higher the risk. Apart from the obvious safety risk to yourself and others, you will also increase the likelihood of being stopped by the Police. According to the Department for Transport, if the police witness 'poor driving' because the driver is distracted for whatever reason, they can prosecute under Regulation 104 of the Roads Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986.

The penalty is EXACTLY the same as it is for the offence of driving and using a hand-held mobile phone. Once convicted in court you may face: discretionary disqualification, a maximum fine of £1000 three penalty points.

If a fixed penalty notice is offered and accepted instead of court, then the penalty is three points and a fine of £60. With any of these outcomes, your insurance premiums will become substantially higher.

With the introduction of the New Drivers Act, you will AUTOMATICALLY lose your licence if you reach six penalty points within the first two years of passing your first driving test.

So, follow these tips and stay safe:-

## **Don't use a mobile**

Turn your mobile OFF when driving. That way, you won't be tempted to answer an incoming call or text message or make a call your-

self. Remember that using a mobile when driving is illegal and talking on your phone and driving means you are **four times** more likely to be involved in a crash.

## **Don't smoke, eat or drink when driving**

There are many potential distractions involved in lighting up and smoking when driving – getting the cigarette out of the packet, lighting it up, smoke drifting into your eyes and blurring your vision, hot ash or a half finished cigarette falling onto your lap ... the list goes on. That's why smoking is increasingly coming under the spotlight as a serious distraction when driving. Eating and drinking in the car can be equally dangerous.

## **Avoid lengthy conversations**

Where possible avoid getting involved in lengthy conversations with your passengers, especially with those in the back seat as your natural instinct will always be to turn your head when talking to them. Arguments can be particularly distracting.

## **Don't try to impress.**

Don't give in to peer pressure to drive faster or recklessly.

## **Get in the Habit.**

Use your mirrors. All the time. Even if it doesn't seem necessary. That way you won't forget to use them when it is necessary.

## **Music is a distraction**

Music can be a distraction too, either when searching for the right track or playing it too loud which can block out engine noise and the sound of traffic around you; leading to a sense of detachment from your surroundings. The style of music you chose can also affect your driving – a fast tempo played loud, can make you drive faster and miss driving cues such as red lights!

Identify what distracts you, when you are more distracted than usual, and who distracts you so you can consciously limit these as much as possible.

If you want to do any of the above or just to read a map, take a call or adjust your hair or makeup, pulling over where it is safe to do so will help minimize the risks and stay on the right side of the law.





# Not Convinced? Think It Can't Happen to You?



*Brian Wash spent 30 years as a firefighter. Langton News asked him to share some of his experiences of the carnage of road accidents – not with the intent of causing shock or distress, but to highlight the real dangers that young drivers face.*

*Brian is also a member of the South Kent Coast NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and lay lead on equality and diversity. He draws on his expertise from his earlier public service roles with Kent Fire and Rescue Service and the Home Office. He is also a governor at Deal's Castle Community College and a magistrate. He knows what he is talking about.*

Unfortunately I have seen many young drivers killed or seriously injured as a result of some common factors:

- \* Inexperience with poor road conditions (wet roads or country bends)
- \* Distractions such as loud music, mobile phones or "showing off" to friends.

I recall a particularly horrific incident where 5 mates were packed into a small car. The young and inexperienced driver was speeding along a wet country road, when he hit a really nasty bend.

He was travelling too fast, tried to brake and lost control on the wet road. The car subsequently rolled several times at speed and finally came to rest up a bank and wrapped around a tree. The 3 young chaps in the back seat did not have seat belts on as the car was only designed for 2 rear passengers.

We cut all five from the wreckage, 4 were dead in the most horrific circumstances, and the 5th had such severe injuries, he died later in hospital.

Another tragic incident involved a young family (mum, dad & baby) who had pulled to the centre of a main road to make a turn into a side road. A young driver decided to overtake the vehicle in front of him after being encouraged by his mates in the car. Clearly he had not read the road ahead and crashed directly into the car waiting to turn off.

The driver and his mates were injured, but OK. The innocent people in the other car were not so lucky. The young dad escaped with broken bones and a bad head injury. The baby, still in a baby seat, was actually thrown clear and was OK, except for the fact that she then had to grow up without a mum as the young mother was killed outright having taken the full impact of the collision.

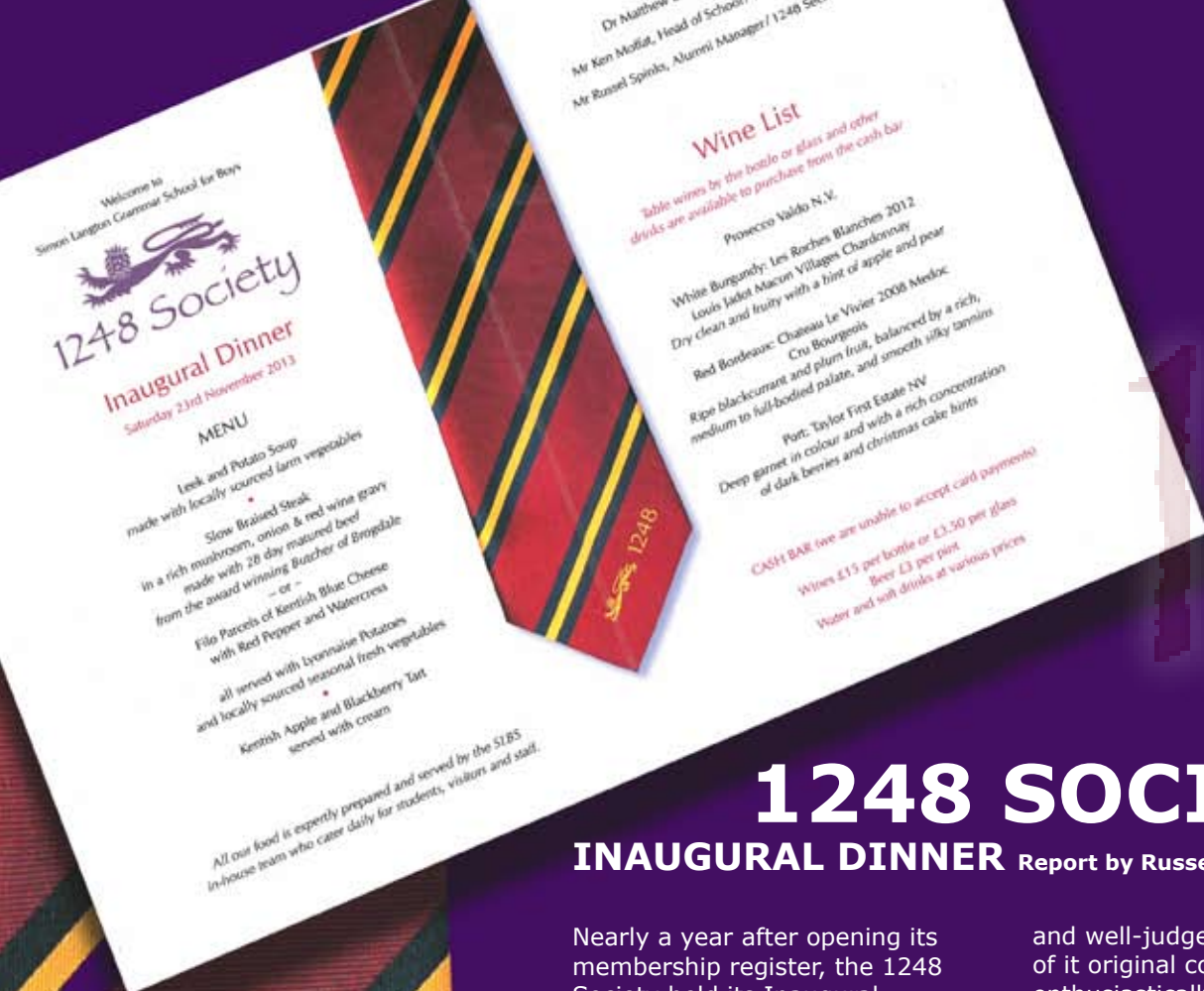
Not all accidents involve speed. A young girl was driving past a local primary school at relatively low speed, she pulled out to pass a parked vehicle, but had chosen that moment to read a text on her mobile phone. She did not see the mother and child in the process of crossing the road.

Sadly we did as we had to cut them free from under the car. The young driver spent the next 5 years in prison, for causing death by dangerous driving. The mother survived, but with multiple injuries. The young child had died a horrible death crushed under the wheels of the car.

These are a very small selection of the tragedies I have seen unfold. These are just a few of the lives I have seen destroyed.

Please do not become part of a similar horror story. When you are driving, ignore your mobile phone, ignore the taunts of your mates, and have a healthy respect for safe driving.





# 1248 SOCIETY

## INAUGURAL DINNER Report by Russel Spinks Secretary

Nearly a year after opening its membership register, the 1248 Society held its Inaugural Dinner last November. This black tie celebration was attended by eighty members of the new body. Gratifyingly, these spanned the full age range, from those individuals such as Arthur Fox, Peter Godden, John Herbert, Anthony Roberts, Dick Young and Malcolm Redding who attended the Langton in the 1940s and 50s – right up to Will Edwards, Nick Beaumont, Joe Howe and Ricky Hitchcock who were students until summer 2013.

The event was catered by the School with great style. As always the catering team excelled themselves. The dining tables in the Hall were resplendent in the School colours, the meal of local seasonal produce was delicious, and the service impeccable. Everybody was impressed by the abundance, quality and professionalism of our catering; quite a contrast to the school dinners recalled by our more senior members who endured war time and post-war austerity with its haunting aroma of boiled mutton and overcooked cabbage.

Throughout the evening we were entertained thoroughly by the stunning musical talents of Richard Pollott, George Challis, George Ogilvie and Nicholas Thurston. Their varied

and well-judged programme, much of it original compositions, was enthusiastically received by all. Playing during a meal is never the easiest of tasks, but Richard and his friends had the measure of it perfectly.

The dinner was hosted by 1248 President, Head of School Ken Moffat, who gave an entertaining and often hilarious and occasionally irreverent address on the history of the School.

## Future Events

The 1248 Society is planning a series of activities during the coming year, culminating with a repeat of our annual dinner in late November 2014. These will all be publicised in due course, but first up is likely to be the 1248 Science Evening on 4th April when a number of 1248 members who are practicing scientists will share their experiences and advice on degrees and careers with current Langton students who are hoping to follow in their footsteps. This evening will comprise presentations, informal buffet and a 'Question Time' session. The Society plans to follow this events with similar events with the focus on medicine, the law, finance, new technology etc.



# 1248

## Membership of 1248 Society

The 1248 Society is for anyone involved with the Langton: any former student (alumnus); any current or former staff member; any current or former parent; any friend of the School. Since opening the register in January 2013 we have registered well over 600 members and are now looking to double that figure. Free lifetime membership is available to anybody who qualifies in these categories.

Registration is quick and easy – simply email your membership request to

[alumni@thelangton.kent.sch.uk](mailto:alumni@thelangton.kent.sch.uk)

and we will then obtain the registration details we require from you – or write to 1248 Society, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, Langton Lane, Nackington Road, Canterbury CT4 7AS.



## Christmas Craft Fair Success!



The Autumn term saw a tremendous response to a new event for the Parents' Association. Following an initial idea (thanks to Lorna Braddy) of running a Christmas craft fair, and having canvassed opinion, we decided to 'give it a go!'

The fair comprised around 25 stalls, the majority run by parents/friends of the School. Their outside interests are many and varied and included hand-crafted jewellery, glassware and wooden items as well as cosmetics, books, art, home-made produce etc. We also marketed the perennial favourite Langton Christmas puddings.

Music was provided by the Yr 13 Skiffle Band and various pianists and we even had our own diablo performer! The PA ran a raffle and very successful refreshments stall. Many thanks to

everyone who lent a hand!

We think that this event may well become a regular feature and would welcome any fresh ideas and support for similar events.

The fair raised a brilliant £770 which went towards the Music Department's purchase of the new grand piano and we are delighted to report the piano has now been purchased and will be unveiled in March!

## Helping Hands

As usual, we have been busy with lots of other events including supporting the school's winter monthly stargazing events at the Star Centre, held in conjunction with the South East Kent Astronomical Society, and the Langton Guide to the Universe evenings.

We have also helped out at the school's Christmas lunch and the many and varied concerts that have taken place at various locations around Canterbury!

The Uniform shop continues its great contribution to the School and has a dedicated team of helpers (led by Kathy Vaughan) that allow this service to be maintained.

Following our AGM we are pleased to announce that Gaia Paolini has taken on the role of Treasurer.

As ever, if you are interested in finding out more, or becoming involved in any small way then please contact our Chair, Margaret Carver

[family@carvers.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:family@carvers.wanadoo.co.uk)

or Secretary, Nicola Barton

[n.barton309@btinternet.com](mailto:n.barton309@btinternet.com)

# Festive Start to Christmas

report by Hugo Filby-Barnett

Simon Langton Carol Service 2013  
The Langton Boys' Choir, Chamber Choir and orchestra took centre stage at the annual Carol Service in the Cathedral. This event is the highlight of the year for many people, demonstrated by the fact that 16 former students turned up to help out, sing in the choir and play in the orchestra.

On the morning of the 16th December the excited boys and girls of the two choirs met in the cathedral for a rehearsal. Mrs Braddy was soon working hard to get everyone into shape to produce perfect music.

After a morning of rehearsing, the choirs were tired and ready for a break but Mrs Braddy was anxious to get the rehearsal finished in time for lunch so we cracked on with more singing, until we were ready for our big performance in the evening.

That evening the weather was atrocious and the rain was lashing the cathedral from every angle but we knew it would take more than a bit of rain to dampen the spirits of the boys inside who were getting ready to raise the roof! The parents, relatives and members of the public came in their droves and settled in for a lovely evening.

The evening began with a beautiful rendition of 'Gaudete' and continued with traditional carols and readings. The readings were given by various members of the Langton community, from a year 7 boy up to the Headteacher, Dr Baxter.

By the end of the evening, some of us were looking a bit tired, but were all very happy and proud of our performance.

The Langton Carol Service heralds the start of the Christmas festivities and so, with rosy cheeks and happy faces, everybody made their way back out into the cold, rainy night carried along on the festive mood.

# Chamber Choir Tour

Report by Arthur Dibiase

As a member of the Chamber Choir, I was one of twenty-four boys who attended a pre-Christmas tour to Cirencester and Worcester.

During the three day tour we packed in a visit to Elgar and Holst's birthplaces and performances in several different churches as well as singing at local venues. Our repertoire included everything from Elgar's Land of Hope and Glory to The Lamb in remembrance of John Tavener, all of which we had spent two months rehearsing. In addition to choral pieces, we also featured performances by a Wind Quintet, a String Quartet and organ solos by Guy Steed.

On our first stop, we were welcomed by some monks at Mucknell Abbey. One of the monks was an ex-Langtonian and we had a very interesting discussion with him about his lifestyle choices, followed by our first performance in their Chapel. Following that, we visited and sang in the Edward Elgar museum. Once unpacked and fed, we were on the road once again where we sang in Vaughan Williams' church, Down Ampney, in front of a large audience. After a few hours' sleep we got up, ready for a jam-packed Saturday.

First, we had a quick tour around Worcester Cathedral and sneaked in a quick performance on the steps! At lunchtime, we sang at St. Andrew's Church in Worcester, which was filled with tourists and visitors.

After a quick bite to eat, another performance, this time in the Catholic Church Elgar played in. Then it was on to Holst's birthplace for a tour and the chance of singing In the Bleak Midwinter in the composer's living room, accompanied on Holst's very own piano; a once in a lifetime opportunity! Our final concert venue was in Cirencester. It was a long evening and with a combination of luck and good planning, we packed it all in and just about made it all on time. On the final day it was back to our first venue, but this time to sing at Holy Communion. Then, with all these amazing experiences behind us it was time to head back home. It was an experience we will never forget.



# Exam Success

Congratulations to all the music students mentioned below for their musical achievements:

Grade 5 Music Theory Exams  
Fergus Carver  
Joseph Cooke  
Michael Green  
Bailey Kite  
Isaac Phillips  
Michael Ratcliff  
Charlie Song-Smith

Distinction in Practical Music Exams  
Henry Baxter Grade 8 Piano  
Eliot Watkins Grade 8 Piano  
Sam Cheney Grade 7 Piano  
Flynn Sturgeon Grade 7 Piano  
James Bradshaw Level 6 Guitar  
Joseph Terry Grade 5 Jazz Piano  
Tom Jefferies Grade 2 Tenor Horn  
Olly Scargill Grade 1 Tenor Horn  
Charles Noble Grade 1 Guitar



# Parental Support Helps Buy Piano



As many of you will know, the Music Department have been raising funds for a new Grand Piano. We are pleased to announce that thanks to a lot of hard work from many wonderful people and a great deal of support from you as parents, we have very nearly reached our target and have purchased a Yamaha Grand Piano.

It will be wonderful to have an instrument that is deserving of many of our talented piano students.

Its first outing will be on Friday 14th March, when our very own Mr Pollott will be performing for us in concert (tickets will be available nearer the time).

Pianists past and present will then present a tea-time piano recital on the piano on Thursday 27th March.

We would like to thank the numerous people that have helped us to reach our goal, including Mrs Margaret Carver and the Parents' Association who have matched our £5,000 in order to purchase this £10,000 piano and Mrs Roshna Ahmed, who willingly gave her time and talents for two wine-tasting events. The Jazz Gig 2013 and the Craft Fair were big fund-raisers so thank you for your support of those events, and we must also thank your sons and daughters who have been part of the many concerts held in aid of the piano fund.



## Playing with the Big Boys

by Oliver Braddy

It was only a week before the event when I was told that I was to take part in a 'Come and Play' event at the BBC Maida Vale Studios in North London. I was joined by various members of both Langton schools and despite the title, the day was in fact a rather auspicious occasion as members of the public joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra to workshop Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony.

To be honest, I was more interested in not sounding like a fool, but once I had eased into playing I was able to appreciate the beauty of Tchaikovsky's writing and marvel at the experience of sitting in a full orchestra. It really was a privilege to play in the same venue as many famous artists and orchestras and to experience the famous acoustics of such an iconic venue. Playing alongside industry

professionals was something else!

It was also amusing to watch those who hadn't practiced sweat (myself included) at the hordes of demi-semiquavers. However, despite this I had a really great day and am very grateful to the music department for providing me with the opportunity.

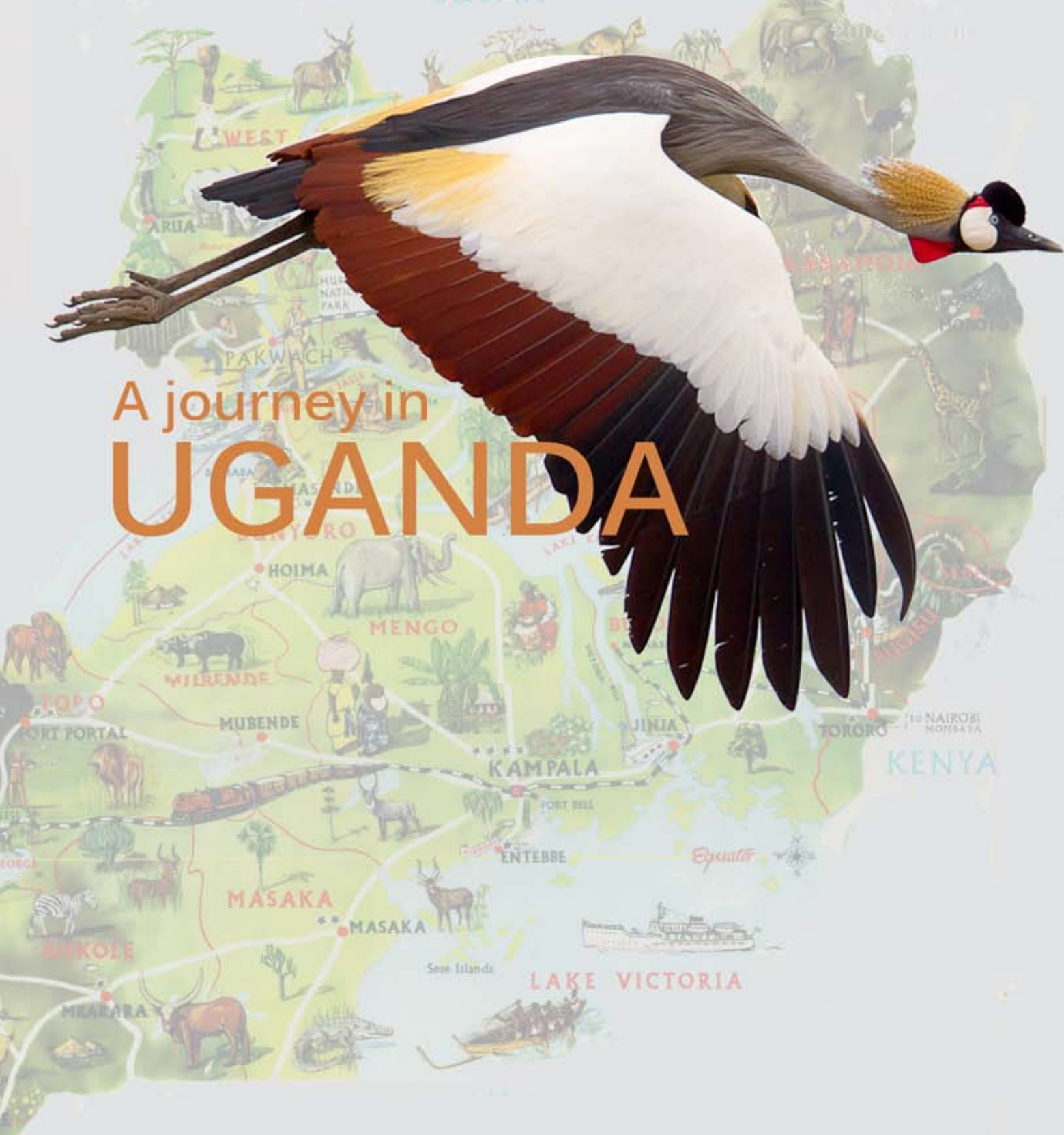
LANGTON MUSIC

SUDAN

ETHIOPIA



# A journey in UGANDA



KENYA

LAKE VICTORIA

Equator

See Islands

© 2008



***The Langton's link with Dr Obote College was strengthened even more when four of our 6th Form students spent several weeks there. They spent time in the classroom teaching the younger DOC as well as taking time out to explore the surrounding countryside. Claire, Sam Rusike, Katherine Epps and Becki Evans all agreed that it was an unforgettable trip and one they would encourage other students to apply for.***

***The following report is by Claire Mount***

As soon as we stepped out of the airport we could feel how different Uganda was be compared to home. We were greeted by members of the school's link committee who shook our hands continuously, hugged us and asked after our wellbeing, Simon Langton's wellbeing, our family's wellbeing and even our home's wellbeing! We would soon get used to the long greetings and numerous handshakes that came with every new person that we met.

We piled onto the school minibus for the nine hour long journey to Lira and it wasn't long before the tarmac ran out and we were driving down a dirt road full of "potholes which seemed more like huge craters to us. With no way to avoid all the holes, we settled in for a very bumpy ride.

Finally we arrived at our destination. We entered our house at 3 am, navigating by torchlight as the power had been cut off (a frequent event which meant we were soon used to writing lesson plans by torchlight).

Our running water was also cut off at times which meant we had to use the dreaded "drop toilet" - going outside to a little concrete shack and squatting rather ungracefully over a hole to do our business. To us it was a true 'African experience', but for the Ugandans it was the most common thing in the world.

Our meals consisted mainly of rice and potatoes as staple ingredients together with chicken, goat or pork. Pretty soon into our trip we were asked to prepare the chicken for our dinner. This meant going outside and sawing the chicken's head off before placing it into hot water, and plucking the feathers off! We all got a chance during our stay to do this and I have to say this was the most 'African experience' I had!

The reason we visited Uganda was to teach some of the students of Dr Obote College. It was a daunting idea once we saw the classrooms filled with about 80 students all cramped in a tiny space. We were asked to choose which subject we wanted to teach and it seemed sensible for us to opt for the subjects we had studied at A-Level; Sam and Claire taught Biology; Becki did Chemistry, English and a few lessons of art; Claire taught Biology and Maths and Katherine Biology and Maths. Our students were from S1 and S2 - the equivalent to Year 8 and Year 9.

During the second week of our stay we observed different classes and how the teachers taught their students. We soon noticed the difference from our own school routine - the students do not move classrooms for different lessons, they stay put, lessons run from 7.30 am -4.00 pm every day and each lesson lasted 1hour 20 minutes. The form groups were called: ERUTE, MOROTO AND OYAM. We all noticed that ERUTE students were the best behaved and OYAM were the most noisy! However all the students were very attentive in lessons and we could see how much they valued their education.

By the fourth week in Uganda we were all teaching lessons, making teaching plans and even setting homework! We wanted the students to really enjoy their lessons with us so we added a game of Hangman at the end of each session which all of them seemed to love. They were moments when we had to teach a lesson to the badly behaved students but even they listened to us. Overall, our experiences made us realise that that the teaching profession really does require hard-work and dedication!

Throughout our 10 weeks we were able to experience first hand the effects and the benefits of our fundraising for DOC. As we all know, some of money goes towards supporting students and we were able to meet the boys and girls who the Langton supported and each of them told us how privileged and thankful they felt and how they would not be able to go to school without our help. All of us were taken back by their sheer enthusiasm for study; it made us feel guilty for moaning about early Monday mornings!

Thanks to money raised from our sponsored walk, DOC has bought a generator enabling the boys and girls to study in the evening. This has made a real difference as students no longer have to buy their own candles or torches and can continue to work after the sun goes down around 6 pm.

During our stay in Uganda we were given the opportunity to visit Murchison Falls National Park located in the Northwest of the county. We were told by our guide that Murchison is the biggest of the 10 national parks in Uganda, and is home to some of the largest African mammals - elephants, giraffes, leopards, lions, buffalo and more.

At the end of the trip we spent 5 days in the south of the country including a few days in the main tourist town in Uganda, Jinja, widely known as the source of the Nile. We spent our time there taking part in a horseback safari and white water rafting - something Jinja is famous for due to the fast flowing Nile running past the town.

Before we left for the airport we stayed with the family of the late Luke Onijungo, DOC's former headmaster. They took us to see the equator and a traditional African dance show, with one of the performers dancing with a huge stack of pots balance precariously on her head! This chance to travel around made our experience all the more memorable and none of us will ever forget the beautiful country and the hospitality we received.

Our Ugandan experience had a very personal impact on our lives; being removed from the western world and taken to place of basic living taught us that it's the simple things that are the most important. The Ugandan culture is based around family, love and hope. Each of us saw the way small amounts of money can change someone life for the good. The children at DOC are all grateful for the chance to study so that they can go on to get a good job and help support their family in the future. We must be in no doubt that the link between the Langton and Dr Obote College is important to both schools and I would encourage everyone to give whatever they can, because it really does help create a better future, for all of us.

# Why is Britain Drowning?

The question everyone is asking lately is just what is going on with the weather? Head of Geography, Mrs Sheila Taylor, has the answers.

The cause of the stormy weather has been the jet stream – the fast-moving ribbon of air five miles up in the atmosphere – that drives the weather that we experience down here at the surface.

It's been particularly powerful this year thanks to extremely cold air flooding off eastern Canada and colliding with sub-tropical tropical air, boosting it to speeds of 200-230mph. The jet stream doesn't only play a big part in creating deep areas of low pressure, but also acts as an atmospheric super-highway – transporting them from one place to another. With the jet stream being stuck in more or less the same position all winter, it has meant that we've been left with a stormy weather pattern for almost two months.

What drives the jet stream? The jet stream is driven by the huge temperature contrast between the cold poles and warm equator and will often follow the zone where the greatest temperature difference occurs over the shortest distance. This varies from season to season, with this zone often being north of the UK in late-spring and summer and close to or over the UK during autumn and winter – giving us our most unsettled spells of weather

of the year. As the temperature contrast has been especially strong this winter, the storms that have affected us have been frequent and intense.

We are not the only part of the world to have weather that has been stuck in a rut this winter. Across the Atlantic in the US, the jet stream has also been locked in the same position for much of the winter, having different effects on different parts of the country. The jet stream has been taking a path northwards to the west of the US, before reaching into central Canada and diving southwards across the Midwest.

When the jet stream heads north, it takes warm air with it, as well as forming areas of high pressure. This has led to California suffering from a lack of rain and snow, with 90 per cent of the state in severe drought and 67 per cent extreme drought.

When the jet stream heads south, it takes cold air with it, as well as forming areas of low pressure. This has caused the eastern half of the US to experience its coldest weather in decades, as well as delivering lots of snow. So, the jet stream being stuck in the same place for

long periods of time this winter has brought extremes, albeit of a different nature, to different parts of the world.

Although heavier precipitation is expected with human-induced global warming, other factors play a vital role. Deforestation can have a big impact as upland forests can soak up a lot of water, but if humans are destroying these areas the water has more land it can run to, increasing the risk to homes and people. Wetlands can also soak up a lot of moisture, but so many are now drained to make room for development that their disappearance also hinders the flooding risk.

It is impossible to say the flooding in Britain or indeed any other part of the world, is a result of climate change but some computer predictions say that we can expect to see more extreme weather events such as flooding in the future.





# How do you make a Mealworm Comfy?



'The Environmental Preferences of Mealworms' was one of the topics covered at the recent Science Link Day held at the Langton.

Nearly 200 students from Canterbury Academy joined our boys in the 20 science lessons which took place throughout the day. The students took part in ten scientific activities which included the electrolysis of salt water, experiments to compare the effectiveness of pulley systems and, as mentioned above, whether mealworms prefer humid or dry, light or dark, warm or cold environments.

The day was co-ordinated by Key Stage 3 Science Coordinator Mr Andy Holloway and Matt Harris from the Academy and they were joined by twelve other science staff and technicians all of whom help make the day a tremendous success.

Andy Holloway said 'We have really superb science facilities at the Langton and it was great to open the doors to pupils from our partner school so that they could experience such an engaging subject through our extremely high standard teaching methods. Allowing pupils to conduct experiments is one of the best ways to teach scientific principles; all the pupils worked hard and were completely engaged in what they were doing. I'm not sure the mealworms were quite so

appreciative, although we did try to accommodate their environmental requirements (dry, dark and warm)!'

It is hoped that the Science Link Day will be an annual event which will greatly benefit students from both schools.



# Lecture by Prominent Artist



Report by Fleur Elkerton

One afternoon in October, students interested in careers or further education in the Art industry attended a fascinating talk by Charles Williams. Charles teaches the life drawing class that many of us go to, so he has become a familiar face, with his pair of very Hockney-esque glasses. Showing a slides of his work, he spoke about the processes artists complete and consider when creating pieces of work, the themes and materials that flit across the mind, (like his series of pictures based on observations made in shops, especially shoe shops). His unique skill of precise recollection of facial characteristics and the placement of objects was amazing, as was his view on perspective and arrangements in pictures, illustrated by showing canvases where he'd used a grid-like placement of smaller paintings.

He told all about the trials and tribulations of becoming an artist - the times where you can't earn enough to break even - but, he said, the love of Art pulls you through. He stressed that luck has a great part to play, and he advised us to make as many contacts as possible if we want to hit the art world by storm. He went to Art College (with our very own Mr. Howe) and gave us a real insight into what that path of higher education could lead us into doing in later life.

Charles Williams is a British artist. A founder member of the Stuckist art group he is also a member of the New English Art Club. Stuckism is an international art movement founded in 1999 by Billy Childish and Charles Thomson to promote figurative painting in opposition to conceptual art. The New English Art Club (NEAC) was founded in London in 1885 as an alternate venue to the Royal Academy. An original painting by Charles is on loan to the school and is hung in the reception area.

The Jazz Night is unlike any other concert or musical production put on at the Langton. The audience sit at small tables, the lights are dimmed and it feels like a relaxed Jazz Club. For the last two years the evening has been held in the drama studio but with it now becoming more and more popular it has outgrown that venue so, this year it was held in the larger 6th form centre. For the entire day before the concert, the technical team and helpers were rigging the lights, setting up the sound and bringing in amplifiers and music stands.

When the time came, people flooded in and soon all the tables were full. Armed with refreshment from the Parent's Association bar, the crowd settled for the first band - Steve Waterman. His big band is full of instruments ranging from a trombone to an accordion and violins. We played tunes by Herbie Hancock, such as Feeling Good as well as ones composed by Steve himself. Solos were played by Sam Dale, his brother Louis, Sam flood, Dan Sherrington and me. The Lead singer for Feeling Good was ill so at the last minute Mrs Temel was called in and performed brilliantly despite never rehearsing.

Steve's big band was the largest group but there were many smaller groups that the students had put together themselves. These included Autumn Leaves played by Fergus Carver on piano with me on the bass, a Bossa Nova groove with Dan Appiah on flute, Fergus on piano, Jacob Turner-Dore on drums and me, again on the bass.

Another exciting band that I enjoyed playing with was made up of Year 8 students. We grooved to the 12 bar blues with Joseph Terry on piano and promising drummer, Ryan Hosier. The last group to perform was one that Steve himself put together. We played Cantaloupe Island by Herbie Hancock with Louis Dale on guitar, Doulton Hall on drums, me on the bass and Steve on his trumpet. We each took turns to do a solo performance.

Other solos that evening were Jacob Turner-Dore who played a stylish, smooth jazz piece on the guitar; Adam Hu played a wonderful rendition of the famous Ragtime number, The Entertainer; Adeel Jafree played his own composition on the piano spectacularly; his hands a blur on the keyboard. Former Langton student George Challis sang a wonderful sensitive piece, accompanied by Mr Pollott on the violin.

One of my personal highlights was when all the peripatetic instrumental teachers performed together with Steve Waterman in one big wonderful band. The rhythm section was fun and laid back while the horns blew a wave of notes into the room. The singing teacher was there as well getting everyone to join in and Mr Pollott, like Mrs Temel, was called up last minute to sing. Mrs Coleman, whom we have to thank profusely for organising the whole event, also sang with the peripatetic piano teacher Perry White and the guitar teacher John Reeves. I hope everyone enjoyed watching their teacher perform as I did mine. He talked to me about it afterwards saying how much he had enjoyed playing

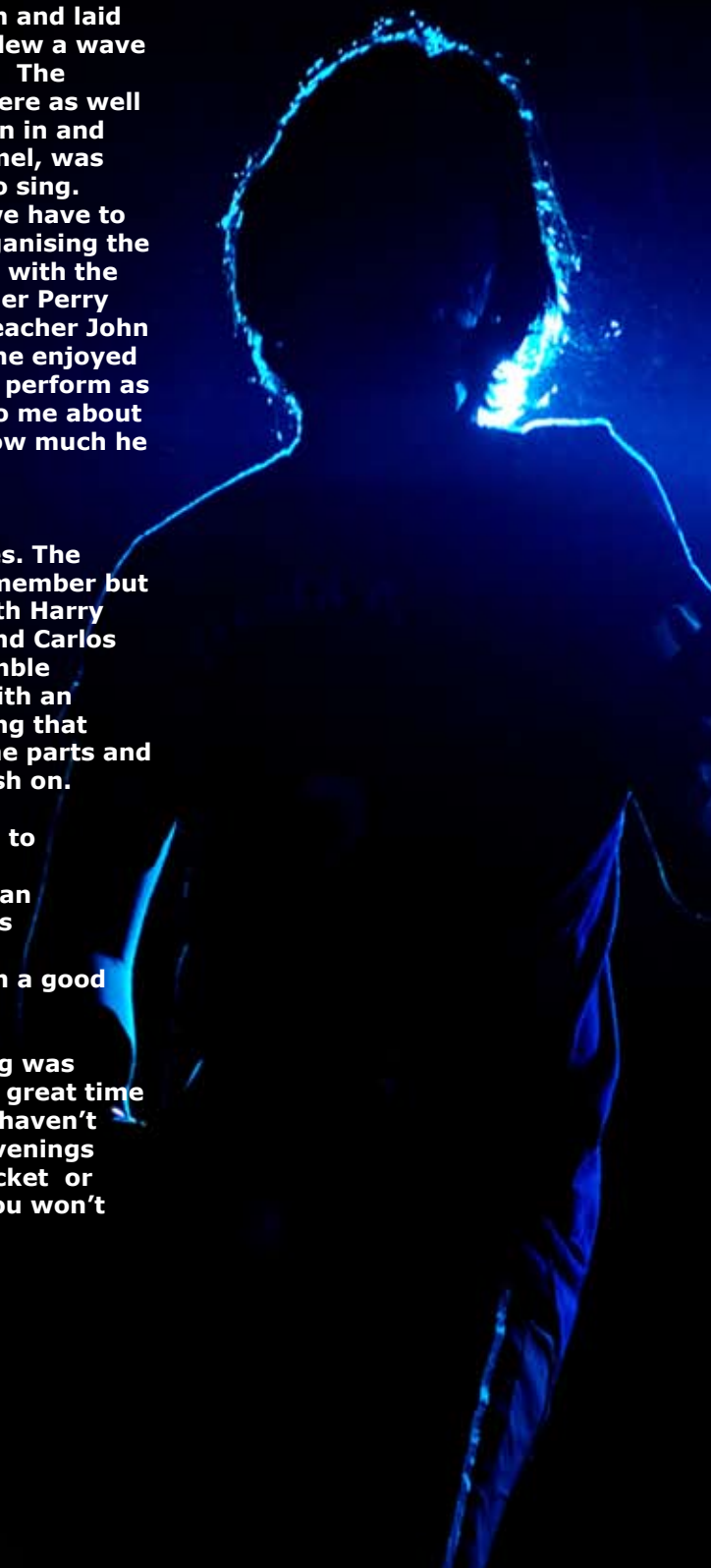
There were also small instrumental ensembles. The flutes were missing a member but still performed well with Harry Butcher, Dan Appiah and Carlos Ignacio. The sax ensemble finished the evening with an arrangement of Cleaning that provided solos for all the parts and was a high note to finish on.

There are many people to thank for such a good evening but Mrs Coleman deserves special thanks for her hard work and devotion to put on such a good show.

This year's jazz evening was relaxed, exciting and a great time was had by all. If you haven't been to one of these evenings make sure you get a ticket or next year, I promise you won't regret it.

# Jazz Night

Report by  
Barney Court





# Dates for your Musical Diary

**Grease** 5th (Sing-a-long) 6th and 7th March School Hall 7.00pm

**Richard Navarro** in Concert for New Grand Piano Fund  
14th March School Hall

**SLBS & Alumni** Unplugged Saturday 22nd March CCCU  
Student Union 7.00pm

**SLBS & Alumni** Karl Jenkins "Gloria" Sunday 23rd March  
Colyer-Fergusson Hall, University of Kent 5.00pm

**Tea-time Piano Recital** Thursday 27th March School Hall  
5.00pm

**Vocal Workshop/Masterclass** With Simon Lepper (official  
accompanist for Cardiff Singer of the World)  
Saturday 29th March School Hall afternoon

**Tea-time Treat** Ensembles and Soloists Wednesday 2nd April  
School Hall 5.00pm

**Leavers Bash** Tuesday 6th May School Hall 7.00pm  
**Commemoration Service** Wednesday 7th May Cathedral 2.30pm

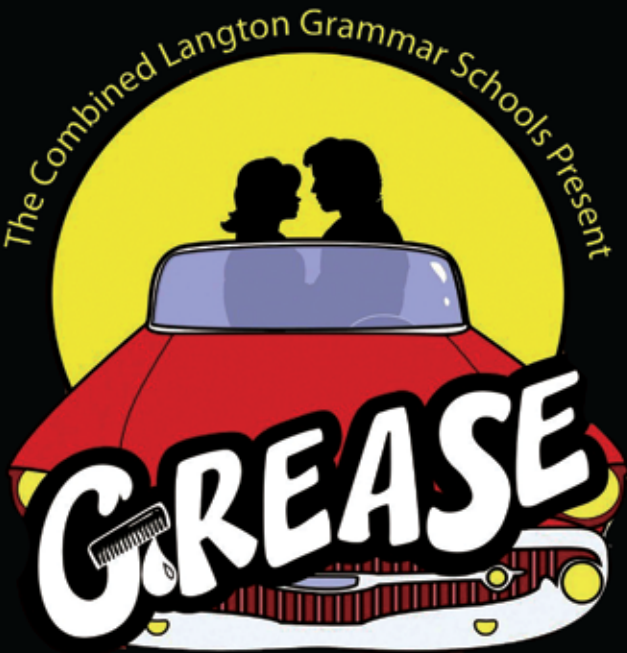


# Chess Brother and Sister to Represent England

Michael Green (10Sharp2) and his sister Emily (from Langton Girls') joined the National Junior Chess Squad of England in January and will now represent England in various international chess tournaments during the coming months.

The siblings have been part of the Kent County Junior Chess team for the past 5 years, and have been working towards the goal of playing chess for England ever since.

Everyone at Langton News wishes them both the best of luck!



**5th, 6th and 7th March 2014**  
special Sing-A-Long Performance  
50s themed refreshments kindly provided by the P.A.

Adult tickets for 5th March £3.50 concessions £2  
Adult tickets for 6th and 7th March £5 concessions £3  
Cheques payable to 'SLBS Funds Account' or pay through Wisepay

Books, Music and Lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey  
Presented through special arrangement with Theatrical Rights Worldwide.  
All authorised performance materials are supplied by, Theatrical Rights Worldwide,  
570 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2100 New York NY10018 [www.theatricalrights.com](http://www.theatricalrights.com)

# Frank Mason Title Retained

Report by Mr Bob Green

The Simon Langton 1st XI hockey squad retained the prestigious Frank Mason Tournament title recently. This 11-a-side tournament, sponsored by Kent College, involves 20 of the top state and independent hockey playing schools in Kent, and is played over one whole day.

In the morning group matches Langton had its traditional slow start with a 1-0 win over Norton Knatchbull. As the weather worsened the Langton performances improved with further wins over Duke of York's (6-0), King's School (2-0) and Skinners (2-0).

As comfortable group winners the afternoon play-offs gave the Langton a quarter-final tie against Sutton Valence, which was won 3-0. In the semi-final against Kent College an intense game finished 0-0. After an endless barrage of penalty strokes Langton came through at the sudden-death stage.

The final saw the Langton play King's School for the second time in the day. Once again King's were defeated 2-0 in a match played in appalling conditions.

This was an outstanding performance by all involved, particularly as the team conceded not a single goal in match time. I am fairly sure this is a one-off. At the presentations the Langton keeper, Chris Wyver, was deservedly named Player of the Tournament.

The last time Langton won the title two years running was in 1994 and 1995. However, they went one better in 1998-2000 winning three in a row. The only other school to do this has been Kent College. The marker has already been thrown down for next year.



# Fly Boys



Ben Dolby and Josh Hillier are both members of ATC and agreed to tell Langton News what they get up to.

The Air Training Corps (ATC) is a youth organisation open to all people aged 13 – 20. Members learn important life skills, such as leadership and collaboration, which will stand them in good stead throughout their lives' said Ben.

He went on 'The ATC has enabled me to take part in a variety of activities from flying and shooting to achieving a BTEC in a unique area of Aviation Studies. I enjoy being a cadet and am building up some great memories for the future. I am sure that it will also help me when I apply to university or go into employment' said Ben 'Many of the students at the Langton are involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and this is something also offered to cadets and with it comes the chance to go on camps all over the area. Other activities include flying, target shooting, BTEC, map reading, gliding, band, camping,

drill, sports, marching, orienteering, rock climbing, radio comms, leadership... the list goes on!

Josh agrees:

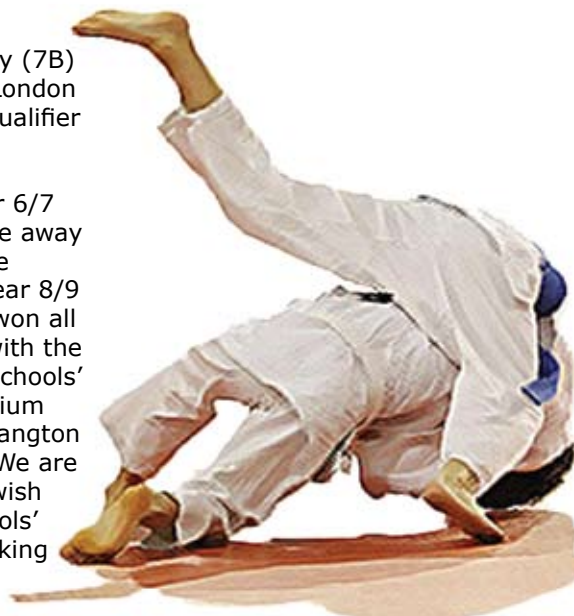
'I am training for my D of E award and spent 2 days in Canterbury selling poppies in aid of the Royal British Legion as part of my challenge. I enjoy the ATC because of the discipline, friendship and the activities on offer. I recommend 312 Squadron to anyone at the Langton who seeks friendship, service and fun. I am proud to be part of the RAF.'

The ATC is always looking for new faces so why not give it a try? Simply go along to their HQ at 15 Cossington Road, Canterbury on a Tuesday evening at 7 pm and see what they are all about or, for more information go to [www.312sqnadc.org.uk](http://www.312sqnadc.org.uk)

# Brothers Throw Their Weight About

On Saturday 8th February siblings Jake (8B) and Lenny (7B) Popplewell took part in the London Area Open British Schools Qualifier Judo Tournament.

Lenny competed in the Year 6/7 under 46kgs group and came away with a very creditable bronze medal. Lenny was in the Year 8/9 under 50kgs category and won all his contests, coming away with the Gold medal! As this was a schools' event they stood on the podium under the name of Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys. We are all very proud of them and wish Jake luck in the British Schools' Championships which are taking place in Sheffield in March.





# England Call-up for Tom

Year 13 Langton Student Thomas Hadler has been asked to represent England and hopes that the call-up will be the 'first of many'.

Tom has been selected for the England Schoolboy squad in this season's Centenary Shield (also known as the Victory Shield) that has seen England take on Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Northern Ireland live on Sky Sports. He is on the books at both Gillingham and Folkestone Invicta, plays for Kent Schools and Kent FA at under 18 levels and also played for Canterbury City in the Kent League last season.

'It sounds corny, but this really is a dream come true' Tom told Langton News. I knew that I had done OK in the trials but I didn't want to get my hopes up. Once I saw it in black and white I could celebrate and I haven't stopped smiling since I opened the letter'. So happy was he that when interviewed for an article in the Folkestone Herald he told the journalist that he was ... yep .... 'Over the moon'. 'As soon as I said it I cringed but, you know what, I really AM over the moon'.

Almost as happy as Tom is Langton football coach Andy Raines. 'It is always great when good things happen to good people and Tom really is one of the best. He has worked hard to achieve his goal (pardon the pun) and he thoroughly deserves his place in the squad. I know that he will continue to work hard and will go on to great things in the future. I will follow his football career with interest'.

So, how has Tom balanced school life with his sport? 'I left the Gillingham Academy to concentrate on my A Levels because, although I really want to become a professional footballer, I know that I need qualifications to fall back on. Making a living out of football is a tough ask but I am determined to do my best and, if I can make the grade, I will be one of the lucky ones. All I can do is work hard, do my best for England and see what happens. But right now I am very, very happy. Over the moon in fact.'



# “Somewhere in this room will be sitting tomorrow’s Director of the Wellcome Trust.”

These words were spoken by the current Director of the Wellcome Trust, Professor Jeremy Farrar. He was not addressing an international conference of eminent academic scientists, he was addressing the school students attending the second Authentic Biology Symposium, including twenty five Langton students all of whom are taking part in the MBP2 project. Dr Dave Colthurst reports.

The Authentic Biology Symposium is an annual meeting which brings together students and teachers from the five schools, along with their supporting university academics. It is an opportunity for the students to present their research work in a formal symposium through oral presentations and through a poster session.

It has also provided the opportunity to invite senior research figures to provide keynote lectures and on this occasion, we were very fortunate to be joined by Professor Lord Robert Winston (Imperial College and numerous TV appearances) and Professor Russell Foster (Brasenose College, Oxford).

The event was held at the Wellcome Trust Headquarters on Euston Road, London. This is a truly impressive building and we were given exclusive use of the entire Sixth Floor with panoramic views across Central London. We had a total of 170 delegates at the meeting, around 120 of whom were students from the five schools. The remaining delegates were teachers and technicians, university research staff, members of the Wellcome Trust and invited representatives from learned societies, research foundations and funding organisations – a hugely daunting audience for the students!

The day began with a welcome from Clare Matterson, the director of Medical Humanities and Engagement at the Wellcome Trust. She pointed out that whilst many of the students in the room were very likely to pursue careers in science, it was equally important that everyone should have a clear understanding of science and its implications so that they would be able to take part in the important discussions that need to take place about the work of scientists. This



*Professor Jeremy Farrar*

need to include a wider audience in science is one of the reasons why the Wellcome Trust have been so supportive of the Langton philosophy and helped us to roll it out to a further four schools.

We were then treated to a fascinating talk from Professor Winston about his work in reproductive biology. He included a number of videos of developing embryos, both human and zebra fish and raised a number of interesting potential dilemmas linked to his work.

Despite having said he had to leave early for a meeting, he in fact stayed for over an hour after his talk and listened intently to the student presentations, asked lots of questions and clearly enjoyed his introduction to Authentic Biology.

Following Lord Winston (no pressure ...) students from the Tupton School in Sheffield presented their work on cardiovascular disease. Working with Dr Tim Chico from the University of Sheffield, they are looking at genes that are expressed in individuals following a heart attack.

They have identified 82 possible

genes and they are now using in situ hybridisation of labelled probes on zebra fish embryos in their school labs to identify the physiological impact of these genes on the embryo development.

The next talk was given by students from the St Paul’s Way Trust School in Tower Hamlets, East London. Approximately 85% of students at the school have a Bangladeshi background and their project is looking at the development of type II diabetes, which is particularly prevalent in their community. They have devised a programme of collecting blood samples from local people (taken by the medical staff at the Health Centre and processed by staff from Queen Mary University of London staff) and using the DNA from these samples to identify differences in the FTO gene, which is linked to the onset of diabetes. They are also matching this data to health style questionnaires which were completed by patients when the blood samples were taken. The students described their experiments where they are using PCR, restriction enzyme digests and agarose gel electrophoresis to examine the gene variants.

The final talks of the morning session were given by students from the Peter Symonds College in Winchester. Working with scientists from the University of Southampton, they have used a number of different practical techniques to complete Practical Extended Project Qualifications (EPQs).

Each student is required to work independently to produce research results which they then present as a short talk and a 6,000 word essay.

The students described experiments on drosophila (fruit





*The Langton Delegation*



*Alice Colthurst*



*Rho Yeanuk*

It was a superb event and, needless to say, our students were outstanding ambassadors for the school and the work we are doing here. The Wellcome Trust staff (from the very top down) were immensely impressed by the students and the level of knowledge and commitment shown in each of the schools. We have already booked the Wellcome Trust for next year's symposium and I look forward to reporting back in a future edition of Langton News.

flies) and *C. elegans* (a nematode worm) where the organisms had been grown on media containing different stimulants (e.g. caffeine or modafnil). The organisms were then timed in races up measuring cylinders or across agar plates to see how the drug affected their mobility – this is one of the recognised methods of assessing the effect of these drugs on humans.

The session was rounded up by Professor Jeremy Farrar, the new Director of the Wellcome Trust. He had managed to hear some of the presentations and was very impressed by the quality of the work being presented and the confidence of the students. He stayed and talked with students and staff over the lunch break – showing a very genuine interest in the work that was being carried out.

Over lunch, there was a poster session. Each school presented at least one poster of their work, and each university department provided an example of work being carried out in their labs. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students to mix and discuss the different project, it also gave the academics the chance to quiz the students about their work (a favourite pastime of theirs).

Lunch was followed by a question and answer session chaired by Hilary Leever, Head of Education at the Wellcome Trust. The panel included academics from Oxford and Bristol and young researchers from Sheffield and Southampton. They were asked a range of questions about their career paths to date, their motivation for their work and the appeal of research as a career option.

The afternoon session was kicked off by Professor Russell Foster from the University of Oxford. He gave an excellent talk about his work on circadian rhythms – the 24 hr body clock that drives everything we do. He highlighted the differences between adolescent brains and adult brains in terms of their “baseline” rhythms and presented a very compelling argument for why you should never undertake shift work – apparently at 4 o'clock in the morning, your responses are worse than if you were too drunk to drive – and it is purely down to your body clock.

The next school to present was the Cotham School from Bristol. They joined the project just over a year ago but have made amazing progress and they reported back on the work they are doing in zebrafish to identify genes involved in inflammation and tissue repair. Initially the work is largely computer based using GWAS to identify target genes, but the next step is to carry out very similar experiments to the ones being done in Sheffield to see the effects of individual genes on embryo development.

The Langton wrapped up proceedings with our talk on the MBP2 project. Abi Collopy, Yeanuk Rho and Alice Colthurst gave a very polished and clear presentation of our work. They introduced MS, explained the role of MBP in MS and then detailed the work we have been carrying out on the protein. The talk finished with our findings about the site of phosphorylation of human MBP expressed in yeast and our future work which will be looking at using site directed mutagenesis to alter the sequence of the protein.

# Design Museum Sparks Imagination



The Design and Technology department were out and about again when they took year 9 students to the Design Museum in London. Joel Porter reports.

One of the most interesting items on show at the Design Museum was the 2012 Olympic Torch which is a real testament to the great tradition of British engineering design, and was indeed 'made great in Britain'. We learned that the torch is made from a double skinned aluminium alloy, as was used for the torch when London last hosted the games in 1948 and that it has 8000 laser cut holes in the sheet metal – one for every torchbearer – however, this had the dual purpose of removing material, and hence saving weight. The 2012 torch weighed in at just less than 1 kg.

There were a lot of ergonomic chairs on display, including the Myto Cantilevered Chair which was designed in 2006 by Konstantin Grcic and was conceived as mono-block plastic injection moulding. This chair was officially selected into the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York as well as having pride of place at the British Design Museum.

Seeing the various designs and finding out how they were constructed helped us understand the basics of design better. In class we are doing a project creating flat pack furniture and the designs we were able to examine in the museum were a huge inspiration. Thanks to Mr Pledger and the other DT staff who organised the trip.



## MEP Gives The Green View

In January an MEP for South East England gave a talk on 'The EU and the politics of global warming' the school. Keith Taylor, the Green Party's Member of the European Parliament for Kent, spoke about his work as an MEP and told the students of the importance of Policy making, something that is particularly relevant with the European Elections coming up in May

Mr Taylor said: "I was very pleased to be given this opportunity to talk to students at the Langton. It's brilliant that the Langton Politics Association is organising these talks and I hope that I was able to share some of my experiences as an MEP and my thoughts on the big issues in politics."

Mr Taylor has been an MEP since 2010 and has visited schools and universities across his region to speak with students about his work.

Year 13 student Alex Hatfield, of the Langton Politics Association, said: "We are extremely grateful to Keith Taylor for taking time out of his busy schedule to speak to the student-run Langton Politics Association. We host a range of different speakers to talk on a variety of different political issues, and, with the European elections coming up it was really exciting to hear from a Member of the European Parliament."

In his role as a MEP, Keith sits on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, the Committee on International Trade and the Committee on Petitions. He is a full member of the Parliamentary delegation to Afghanistan, and a substitute member of the Iran and Palestine delegations. Keith is also Vice President of the UK's Local Government Association Group in the European Parliament – and a member of the Intergroup on LGBT Rights.

## Langton and Open University Work Together

The recently published Open University Annual Report includes an article on their development of the 'Sense Board' which, they say "has the potential to make a huge impact in the IT world. It is putting the OU, its students, and schoolteachers and pupils across Britain at the forefront of the next wave of the digital revolution, dubbed the "Internet of Things".

The term refers to technology that is capable of interacting with us, and with other devices. As of May 2013, that's more than 10 billion wirelessly connected devices around the globe.

The OU has decided to share the content of the Internet of Things course pack as a teaching resource. That's because when the new school year begins in 2014, schoolchildren in England and Wales will be expected to master comprehensive computing skills under a revised curriculum.

Langton CS teacher Graeme George is way ahead of the game and Langton students have been studying the subject for over a year. Graeme has seen how the OU's approach to the Internet of Things enthralls younger students and is quoted in the OU Annual Report saying "The Langton became involved with The Open University when I noticed that students were keen to understand not just what a computer does, but how it works," he says. "It allows them to see a purpose to the theory and practical knowledge."







# Swimming Team at Championships

By Oli Brawn

The Langton elite swim team assembled once again for the hottest (and only) event on the school swimming calendar, for the Kent Secondary Schools Swimming Championships, spread over two weekends in January at the Medway Park Sports Centre in Gillingham.

The first session kicked off on the 11th, with the Intermediate (Yrs. 9 and 10) boys races. The Langton team began their meet with a solid showing in the 200m freestyle team, achieving third place behind Dover Grammar and SJWMS, before repeating the achievement in the Medley relay, only just losing out to a dominant Dover, and the Kings School Rochester.

The afternoons races proved more of a challenge to the Langton lads, as strong competition left Rory Howard, Sam Wilmshurst and Toby Lister all just outside of the finals in their respective events, before George Casey broke into the top six with an impressive effort in the 100m backstroke which landed him fourth place in his heat.

The second session, on the 25th, saw the senior (12 and 13) team competing alongside the younger

swimmers in the junior (Yrs. 7, 8 and 9) category, although both teams were left under-strength after a couple of last minute withdrawals.

It was the juniors who started things off as Tom Gill-Pratt paced out a steady 200m IM, earning him a decent mid-placed finish, but the day really got going when Folarin Ogunsola took to the pool alongside Jamie Hopper in the 100m freestyle. The two senior swimmers achieved third and fifth place in their heat respectively in a set of superb swims, although they were beaten back to fifth and sixth in the finals after deciding to save their strength for the relays. Adam Lynch and Felix Connelly swam well in both the 100m breaststroke and the 110m back, but both finished just outside the medals after they were pipped to the post by some very tough competition.

A lack of junior swimmers meant they were unable to field a relay team, but we were able to turn this to our advantage as we poached Tom Gill-Pratt for the senior relays, where he put in an excellent set of swims, more than keeping pace with the older swimmers, and helped the team to a second place finish in the freestyle, beating Kings into third

behind Sevenoaks after a storming final leg from Hopper. The medley was just as impressive, as we only narrowly missed out on third place by 0.19 of a second to Skinners.

The evening swimming saw Oli Brawn take to the pool for his first set of individual events, where he acquitted himself well with a fifth place in the 200m IM, and a fourth in the 100m breaststroke. Hopper and Ogunsola returned to the pool, swimming together again in the 100m butterfly, where Folarin just missed out on second place by less than a tenth of a second, and Jamie kept up the pace for a safe fifth place, providing a great end to a day of solid swims.

The Langton swim team would like to thank Mr Harris for organising the entries for us, and his efforts in sorting out all the problems we had with the organisers, and also Gill Casey for acting as team manager for the first session, where she did a great job despite the usual disorganisation. I would personally also like to thank all the swimmers who swam this year, and all put in fantastic efforts, represented the school impeccably, and did themselves proud.

# Year 7 Sailor Takes to the Water

report by Charlie Baker

On Saturday 25th January I set out with my dad and my Topper dinghy in tow behind the car. Our destination was the Bule Reservoir where Kent Schools Sailing Association was holding training events.

After unloading the boat and getting it rigged, we were given a briefing and met with our coaches. We soon learned how to make a boat go faster by adjusting the kicker (the rope that stops the sail going up and out) and the downhaul - which does what it says on the tin - it hauls the sail down so it increases

the sail area. Eventually we got out on the water. We did some racing starts - which sound easy but are actually very difficult - and played 'Follow the Leader' which is quite hard to play in boats because it is very difficult to slow down or speed up.

Back on dry land we had lunch but, after another briefing, we were back out on the water. The wind has picked up quite a lot so we had to put two reefs in to stop the boat going dangerously fast.

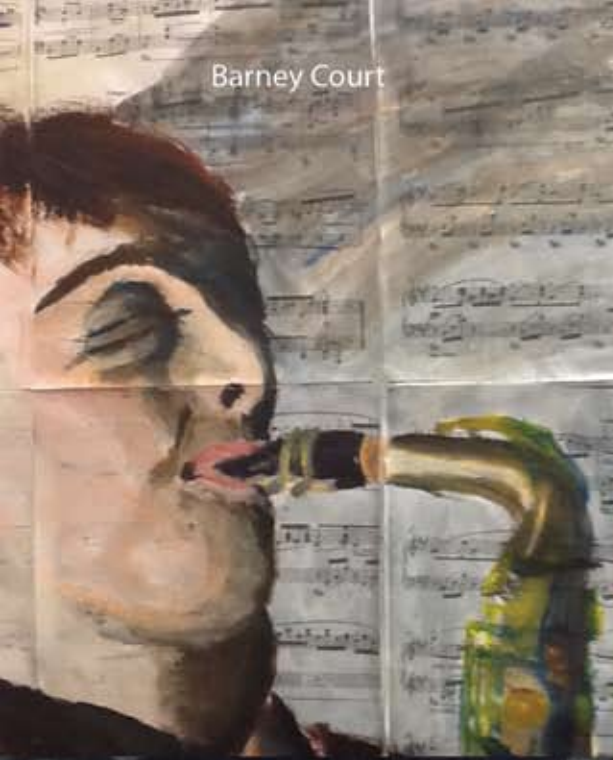
Sadly, our rigging broke and although I tried to carry on, after a couple of capsizes I decided to call it a day.

Losing the rigging wasn't the only bad luck we had - on the way home the trailer lost a wheel and we had to wait for more than 2 hours for the RAC to come and help us.

If there are any keen sailors in KS3 who have had some racing experience and would be interested in competing in the Kent School Sailing Association regatta, please see Mr Lightbody.



Barney Court



Aaron Salter



Jack Andrews



For Unit 1 of their GCSE course Year 10 art students were challenged to create a self-portrait using any media they wanted. These are some of the stunning results

Dom Hopper



Alex Jones



Ivan Galt

